



Wulguru United Football Club (WUFC) – Coach and Player Selection Framework

Revision History

Rev	Date	Author	Update	Approved
00.00	17-09-25	MA & TG	Original document created. Initial issue for discussion and comment.	-
00.01	28-10-25	MA, TG, SB & PW	Document updated with feedback from SB and PW. Further updates to sections of coach volunteering, letters of offer and retention. Added the FFA Player Technical Assessment Guidelines. Added requirement for Coaches and Manager Blue Cards. Added player-first statement.	-
00.02	13-12-25	MA, TG, PW, DP, CH, SN	Incorporated significant work from PW and TG on the "Youth Developmental Philosophy" principles. Added information on the ideal player development environment. Added high level information and timeframes for the Club's Expression of Interest (EOI) and "Welcome to Wulguru" processes.	SN

1. Introduction

This document outlines the Wulguru United Football Club's (the Club) policy for the selection and management of coaches and players. The primary goal is to provide a clear and fair framework that maximises the development opportunities for all participants while fostering a positive and sustainable club environment.

Our developmental philosophy is built on the belief that every player deserves an environment where they can grow, feel valued, and be challenged at the right level.

The ideal player development environment, and ultimately what players need, is created when:

- Players have a similar level of players to train with;
- Players have a similar level of players in their team within games;
- Players have a similar level of opposition in games; and
- Players have a suitable coach who is supported and has the appropriate level of experience for the team.

The Club's football development philosophy is based on the "Go Full 90 Football Curriculum: A Guide for Player, Coach and Team Development" by Kenneth Mitchell and William Mitchell (2017), which serves as the foundational guide for our approach.

The player development journey is structured into the following phases, aligned with Football Queensland's curriculum:

- **Discovery Phase:** U5 to U8
- **Skill Acquisition Phase:** U9 to U12



- **Game Training Phase:** U13 to U18
- **Performance Phase:** Seniors

2. Coach Selection and Management

The Club prioritises the appointment of qualified and experienced coaches to ensure the highest standard of player development.

2.1. Selection Criteria and Process

- **Qualifications:** The Club's preference is for coaches to hold minimum qualifications as outlined in Table 1. Where a qualified coach is not available, the Club will support interested individuals in gaining the necessary qualifications.
- **Experience:** Both coaching and playing experience are valued. Experience at representative and/or professional levels is highly regarded. A balance of formal qualifications and practical experience is preferred.
- **Blue Card:** Club coaches and managers must have a current Blue Card.
- **Coach Volunteering:** Many club coaches in non-profit associations are volunteers and are either the parents or families of current players, or in some cases are people who continue to be involved with the club beyond their own individual or family member's playing years. With this in mind, the Club will take into account that many coaches and managers will have a preference to coach or manage the teams of their children because:
 - They are able to watch their children and family members play football at games while providing support to the Club and getting involved; and
 - They don't have to make the decision to miss football games of their children or family members (occurring at the same time) to coach a team that they wouldn't have otherwise have routinely attended.

It is still important to note that the Club Committee selects coaches and managers prior to each season and season appointments are not at the discretion of a new or existing coach or manager.

- **Formal Process:** In accordance with the WUFC Constitution:
 - The Club will formally advertise for all coaching and manager positions.
 - In cases of multiple applicants for a single position, appointments will be based on merit.
 - All coach and manager appointments must be nominated and approved by the Management Committee.



2.2. Coach Agreements

To ensure transparency and mutual understanding of expectations, all coaches, regardless of whether or not the position is paid, or an honorarium is provided, must sign a written coaching agreement with the Club. This agreement formalises the commitments and expectations of both parties.

2.3. End of Season

All coaching positions conclude at the end of the final game of the season or following the end-of-season presentations, as applicable. The date for start and completion of the coaching position is typically nominated in the coaching agreement document.

2.4. Player First Policy

The Club has a player-first philosophy which is development over winning. This is particularly important for Coaches and Managers to understand when taking on U5 through to U18 teams. For the Performance Phase (seniors), the coach may apply a greater emphasis on team and player performance, however, should also consider that with a long-term view, player development at any age group will yield a better outcome for the Club and player/s than a win-at-all-cost approach.

We prioritise skill acquisition, decision-making, confidence, and long-term growth over short-term wins. Competition is important, but it should never outweigh a child's development or love of the game.

This means:

- Games are viewed as learning opportunities;
- Player rotations support learning, not scoreboard results; and
- Mistakes are embraced as part of the learning cycle.

Our success is measured in progress—not standings.

3. Player Selection

Player selection is a critical process aimed at creating balanced teams that foster individual growth and team cohesion.

3.1. Player Registration and Team Formation

Players develop at different rates. To support all players effectively, the Club aims to provide environments where each child can compete at a level that suits their current stage.

- The Club Registrar will maintain the official list of registered players. The Club Coaching Coordinator will work with team coaches to manage player lists and finalise team rosters.
- Trials are not used by the Club due to their potential negative long-term impact on player development and enjoyment. Player selection is based on a combination of a player's



previous attitude, behaviour, performance, and ability at start-of-season whole age group training sessions.

- The first training sessions of the season may operate as a combined squad (regardless of previous year's teams) until all teams and coaches for each age group are finalised. This addresses potential uncertainty from player registrations and movements.
- Once a player is selected onto a team for the season, they should not be moved to another team during that season, for example due to player – or other players' performance, which includes their attitude, behaviour, attendance at training (unless extenuating circumstances arise which warrant a player movement), and unless required by the Football Queensland Rules of Competition – Borrow Policy. Coaches and the Club should have a focus and commitment of working with and developing players through the entire season after players are selected for a team.
- Player team selections for Football Queensland Premier League (FQPL) for U9 to U12 Kangaroos, U13 to U18 FQPL and U23 to Premier League will be confirmed by the Club via a Letter of Offer (LoO) to the player prior to the season and a Letter of Retention (LoR) if the player is offered a continuation for the next season following the end of the current season. The Club will confirm all other Community league player placements (Wallabies, Division 1, Division 2) by other methods at the discretion of the communication method selected by the approved team Coach.

3.2. Team Grading and Player Development

A grading-informed, multiple teams per age group structure helps us:

- Reduces large ability gaps within individual squads;
- Gives players more meaningful touches on the ball;
- Offers the correct level of challenge to every child; and
- Builds confidence in developing players and stretch advanced players appropriately.

This ensures that all players grow at an optimal pace, feeling both supported and pushed.

The Club processes grading via the Club Coach Co-ordinator role as follows:

- The Club considers that grading of players into teams is not required for U5-U8 age groups as these ages are aimed at growing skills and love for the game. Where teams, age group player numbers and current skill level differences warrant such an approach, grading may start in U9 where a recognised benefit exists for player development and player numbers support more than one squad. Grading of Miniroos teams and players from U9 through to U12 is for the purpose of providing players multiple years of appropriate competition and playing environments in preparation for junior competitive years at U13 for mixed and U12/13 for Girls.
- The Club places an Expression of Interest (EOI) in the community through advertising methods in and around the months of November / December each year for player interest in various age groups and division. Based on interest and feedback from the EOI



process the Club makes initial informed decisions about the preliminary team structures for the following year.

- “Welcome to Wulguru” days are nominally held in December each year (and after in preseason if warranted) to help introduce players to the Club. The Club will assign temporary coaches to take groups of players for these sessions.
- Post-season, pre-season and whole age-group, start-of-season training (~ first 3-4 weeks) will be the time utilised by the Club to grade players into teams to match their ability levels. Grading will be based on a combination of ability and attitude and other considerations such as training attendance. Given the variable nature of player development in junior and youth years, team compositions may change from year to year. The start-of-season training is also a time where new players arriving at the Club can be assessed. A guide to the assessment method is shown in Figure 1: FFA Player Technical Assessment Guideline.
- **Community Leagues (Wallabies, Div1, Div2):** The Club's policy is to prioritise existing players who wish to return from the previous season. This ensures that long-serving players, have a secure place at the Club. If the number of new registrations exceeds team capacity, returning players will be given preference.
- **Football Queensland Premier League (FQPL):** Players and parents must understand that the Club provides an equal opportunity for players to reach FQPL teams (U9 to U12 Kangaroos, U13 to U18 FQPL and U23 to Premier League). The Club is committed to supporting every player's development, regardless of their current ability or team placement. If new players or teams change the grade structure, returning players will be accommodated, either in their preferred age group or another suitable team based on their ability.

Even with multiple teams per age group, we operate as single unified squads with one shared culture. This means, case by case to suit each age group, the coach and the logistics of training days

- Shared warm-ups;
- Elements of joint training blocks in some sessions;
- Common coaching language and expectations;
- Squad-wide camaraderie and belonging; and
- Movement of players between teams when appropriate.

Players may play in different competitions, but they belong to the same “WUFC squad”, same coaches, and same developmental standards.

3.3. Player Choice and Position Preference

The Club understands that players and parents will have certain preferences.

- The Club recognises that some players may be graded into an FQPL team, for example, but prefer to play in a lower grade or different team. The Club respects and accepts



these preferences, as they are likely to lead to greater player enjoyment and better long-term development and retention.

- In Minirooms, players should be encouraged to experience a range of playing positions. In junior competitive and senior levels, a player's position becomes more game-focused. Coaches should consider a player's preferred position when making selections. A player who is a strong defender but prefers to play midfield, for example, may benefit more from playing midfield in a community league rather than being a reserve defender in an FQPL team. Open discussion with players and parents is encouraged to ensure they understand the benefits to the player's development in this approach.

Regardless of the player's preferences, the Club believes that football is a vehicle for developing not just athletes, but resilient, confident, well-grounded young people.

Our program intentionally builds:

- Resilience;
- Commitment and responsibility;
- Teamwork and sportsmanship;
- Respect for teammates, opponents, referees, and the game; and
- Problem-solving and independence.

We want players to grow not just in football, but as people.

3.4. Player Borrowing

Player borrow is important for developing and providing opportunities to all players.

- In age groups with multiple teams (e.g., U15 FQPL and U15 Div1), player borrowing may occur to cover team absences or provide development opportunities.
- Any player borrowing must adhere to the FQ Statewide Rules of Competition.
- Coaches should facilitate borrowing to benefit both the Club and the player's development. This is an opportunity for players in community leagues to experience a higher-level competition.
- Borrowing opportunities should be managed fairly, giving capable players a chance to develop in a higher grade if they wish. This does not apply to senior teams in the Performance Phase.
- Borrowing from a lower age-grade may be a more suitable option for Community league teams due to both FQ Statewide Rules of Competition restrictions, and the development opportunity for capable younger players.

Regular player transition processes within the Club provide pathways for players seeking these opportunities. Our approach ensures:

- A smooth introduction to competition formats;



- Preparation for future graded competitions;
- A developmental bridge toward more advanced age groups; and
- Early exposure to standards that sustain success across the club.

By providing player pathways we set players up for long-term enjoyment, confidence, and success.

3.5. Team Numbers

- Table 1 lists the estimated minimum team numbers, taking into account player borrowing opportunities.
- The Club Coaching Coordinator should discuss with parents and players any known alternative commitments or absences when finalising team numbers at the beginning of, and in preparation for games throughout the season.

3.6. A Positive, Enjoyable Environment

Above everything, players develop best when they feel safe, supported, and excited to come to football.

We commit to:

- Fun, high-energy training;
- Praise-rich, confidence-building coaching;
- Encouraging creativity and expression;
- Celebrating small wins and milestones; and
- Maintaining a family-friendly club culture.

If players love the game at 10–11, they stay in the game at 12–18.

Our development commitment is that we will strive to achieve that every child at WUFC will have:

- The right level of challenge;
- The right level of support;
- Quality coaching;
- A clear development pathway;
- An enjoyable team environment; and
- Opportunities to grow both on and off the field.



4. Document Revision

This document is a living guideline and will be reviewed and revised as needed but at least annually by the Committee. Any revisions must be approved by the Committee before they are officially adopted.



FFA Technical Assessment - Rating Descriptors

BODY & BALL CONTROL	Descriptor
Excelling (9-10)	Excellent fundamental movement skills, very good ball control with both feet, keeps control of the ball under pressure, excellent balance and coordination
Performing (7-8)	Good mover, good balance, sound technique, able to use both feet
On track (5-6)	Good mover, sound technique, only uses one foot
Developing (3-4)	Sound mover, only uses one foot
Under performing (1-2)	Poor movement, poor balance and coordination, poor technique
MENTALITY	Descriptor
Excelling (9-10)	Absolute commitment, engagement, motivation. Encourages teammates. High levels of energy, no effort is too much
Performing (7-8)	Encourages other players, works hard to defend a lead or to score after conceding a goal
On track (5-6)	Encourages other players
Developing (3-4)	Inconsistent effort to come back from conceding a goal or to defend a lead
Under performing (1-2)	No effort to come back from conceding a goal or to defend a lead
EMOTIONAL STABILITY	Descriptor
Excelling (9-10)	Maintains focus and concentration when a mistake is made by self or teammate, maintains composure at all times, fair play, does not show frustration if substituted
Performing (7-8)	Shows fair play after committing a foul, maintains focus when a mistake is made, maintains composure after a foul
On track (5-6)	Maintains focus and concentration on their tasks for most of the game, shows fair play
Developing (3-4)	Inconsistent focus and concentration, shows fair play
Under performing (1-2)	Gets distracted easily, shows frustration when things don't go her way, poor sportsmanship
GAME INTELLIGENCE	Descriptor
Excelling (9-10)	Is aware of opponents in relation to the ball, often receives the ball facing forward and away from opponent, is able to block passing lanes, intercepts passes, after making a pass follows with an action
Performing (7-8)	Attempts to receive facing forward most of the time, knows how to block passing lanes, after making a pass follows with an action
On track (5-6)	Attempts to receive facing forward most of the time, after making a pass follows with an action
Developing (3-4)	Inconsistent body shape when receiving the ball, not always aware of opponents
Under performing (1-2)	Watches the ball and is unaware of where opponents are, poor body shape when receiving the ball, turns into opponents
EXPLOSIVENESS	Descriptor
Excelling (9-10)	Starts very fast and can jump high, reacts quickly and can recover a ball immediately after losing it, fast change of direction, can render an opponent redundant through quick movement, can perform multiple short sprints in succession
Performing (7-8)	Reacts quickly, good vertical jump, can repeat several short sprints in succession
On track (5-6)	Sound reaction, sound vertical jump, can repeat short sprints over time
Developing (3-4)	slow reactions, can repeat short sprints after adequate recovery time
Under performing (1-2)	slow reactions, no change of pace, poor jump
PRESENCE-PERSONALITY	Descriptor
Excelling (9-10)	Takes responsibility, coaches teammates, positive role model, leads by example, recovers a mistake from a teammate, excellent communicator
Performing (7-8)	Takes responsibility, communicates with teammates, recovers a mistake from a teammate
On track (5-6)	Takes responsibility, recovers a mistake from a teammate
Developing (3-4)	Negative reaction when a mistake is made by self, very little communication with teammates
Under performing (1-2)	negative reaction when things don't go to plan, argues with teammates

Figure 1: FFA Player Technical Assessment Guideline



Table 1: Coaching and Player Information Table

Age Group	Competition	Phase	Maximum Players per Team	FQ Coaching Qualification (FQPL Leagues: Kangaroos, FQPL, U23, PL)	FQ Coaching Qualification (Community Leagues: Wallabies, Div1, Div2)
U5	Miniroos	Discovery Phase	4v4 (no GK) + 3 subs	Miniroos Course (2hrs)	Miniroos Course (2hrs)
U6					
U7					
U8					
U9		Skill Acquisition Phase	7v7 (incl GK) + 4 subs	Foundation of Football Course (1 day)	
U10					
U11					
U12					
U13	Junior Competitive	Game Training Phase	9v9 (incl GK) + 5 subs	C-Diploma (4 days)	Foundation of Football Course (1 day)
U14					
U15					
U16-18			Youth Competitive		
Seniors	Senior Competitive	Performance Phase			