



Belsouth Football Club Grading Policy

This document describes Belsouth Football Club's grading policy, objectives and processes. Throughout this document the Belsouth Football Club will be referred to as simply 'Belsouth'.

Objectives

As recommended by Capital Football, players from U10s in a registered club should participate in a grading process. The aim of this process is to group players in a team who are developmentally at the same level so they can play against other clubs' teams with players of similar ability.

The objectives of the Belsouth grading process are to place every player in a team that will:

- o best represent their level of football skill and ability,
- o maximise opportunities to develop and improve their football skills, game awareness and player decision making, and
- o provide maximum enjoyment, fun and a love of the

game. The grading process allows Belsouth to:

- o ensure players are placed in teams in a fair, equitable and transparent manner, and
- o properly assess and nominate team placings (i.e. divisions) to Capital Football for the upcoming season.

Grading participation

All players registered to play in an U10 team or older are strongly encouraged to participate in their age group's grading process - so that the aims and objectives of the grading process can be met. If a player chooses to not participate in the grading process, that player may not be provided with an optimum opportunity to develop their football skills and enhance their technical development.

Generally, players who do not attend grading sessions will be placed in a team in the lowest division for their age group. Exceptions to this are players who miss Belsouth grading sessions due to trials

for teams in divisions not available to Belsouth players e.g. Belconnen United Premier League teams.

Players who register after the first three matches of the season will also be placed in the lowest division for their age group. However, the player may request a review of their playing abilities by the Belsouth Technical Director who may decide to recommend to the Belsouth Grading Committee that the player be placed in a higher division. The Belsouth Grading Committee will make the final decision as to the appropriate team that the player should be placed in, giving consideration for existing team player numbers.

Grading process

Grading will be managed by the Belsouth Grading Committee headed by the Belsouth Technical Director. Additional members of the Grading Committee will be selected based on their skills and expertise to accurately assess a player's level of skill and abilities. The Grading Committee will also contain one member of the club's executive committee.

Grading decisions will be based on:

1. **Formal grading sessions** – Belsouth grading sessions will be fully managed by the Grading Committee, but may utilise the services of an independent organisation (e.g. Coerver Coaching) to provide assistance with player organisation. This will allow Grading Committee members to focus purely on player assessments.
2. **Coach input** – where disputes occur, the Technical Director will seek input from the prior season coach/es in order to make a greater informed decision.

The Belsouth Grading Committee will consider the recommendations made by the Technical Director and make all final decisions.

Steps in the grading process

1. Grading session dates, times and locations are published on the Belsouth website. The number of grading sessions may vary depending on the number of players registered to play in each age group. Additional grading sessions may be added if the Grading Committee deems it necessary.
2. Players are to attend their designated grading sessions at least 25 minutes prior to the start of the session so they can be assigned their grading number and player group.
3. Players will participate in the grading session and be assessed against the grading criteria (outlined below).
4. Following conclusion of the grading sessions, and taking all available information into consideration, the Grading Committee will reach agreement on the relative abilities of each player.
5. The Grading Committee will place players in teams.
6. The Grading Committee will reach agreement on the division the team should be placed in based on the collective abilities of the team.
7. Players will receive an email from their coach/manager welcoming them to the team and providing information about team training schedules and other relevant information.

Grading criteria

Depending on the age group cohort, grading may consist of two distinct elements — basic skills assessment and/or game play.

Skills listed below are **NOT** listed in order of priority or weighting.

Basic skills assessment will consist of National Curriculum's four core skills:

- running with the ball,
- striking the ball (both feet),
- first touch (both feet),
- 1v1 (attack and defence)

Game play assessments will involve players participating in small-sided games and assessed against the following criteria:

- running with the ball,
- striking the ball (both feet),
- first touch (both feet),
- 1v1 (attack and defence),
- coordination and speed,
- game 'cleverness and awareness', and
- attitude, perseverance and 'coach-ability'.

Grading attendance

All players must be registered via MyFootballClub with Belsouth in order to participate in the grading process.

Players are strongly encouraged to attend all grading sessions for their specific age group to help ensure they have maximum opportunities to demonstrate and display their skills and abilities.

Players who are unable to attend grading sessions must notify the Belsouth Technical Department by email belsouthtd@gmail.com prior to the scheduled grading session.

Number of players per team

Ideally, U10 and U11 teams will have a maximum of 12 players (includes three substitutes) while U12s and up will have a maximum of 15 players (includes four substitutes). While Belsouth endeavours to limit the number of players per team, this is not always possible due to number of registered players.

Friendship groups/teams

As outlined above, Capital Football recommends that all registered clubs undertake grading from U10s to ensure teams are comprised of players who are developmentally at similar levels so that they can play against other clubs teams with players of similar ability.

Belsouth understands and acknowledges that this approach requires a shift in thinking for parents and children in the U10 age group who are used to playing in their friendship based teams from U7 to U9.

While Belsouth actively aims to place players in teams with others they know, sometimes large differences in abilities do not make this possible.

Belsouth's aim is to give children the best chance to enjoy the game by playing with and against those of similar ability. If a child is placed in a team of players with significantly higher abilities, it can often affect a player's self-esteem and enjoyment of the game – something Belsouth would prefer to avoid. Conversely, if a child is placed in a team where their skills are significantly above other children in the team, their development will be hampered and potentially their enjoyment of the game.

In the event that an entire team from a previous year wishes to stay together, the coach or manager is to make a request in writing to the Belsouth Committee. Such requests will only be considered for teams playing in the lowest division for that age group offered by Belsouth, and for teams who wish to remain in the lowest division.

To ensure a fair, equitable and transparent approach to grading, friendship teams cannot be graded into a higher division. Belsouth is strongly committed to ensuring that no player is excluded from a team, and that players will be placed in a grade based on their relative abilities to other Belsouth children. Acknowledging that friendship teams are made up of players with varying abilities, placing an entire team into a higher grade has the strong potential to result in players outside the team missing out on playing in a higher level, even though their skills may surpass some members of the friendship team.

Where the Belsouth Committee agrees to a request for a friendship team to stay together, the team will be subject to any other decisions made by the Committee, for example, additional players may be added to the team as appropriate.

Disputes

Wherever possible, the Committee will do its best to address and resolve parent and player concerns.

In the event there is disagreement with the final grading decisions of the Belsouth Grading Committee, the player or their parent/guardian may write to the Belsouth Executive Committee outlining their grievance and provide information or evidence in support of their claim. The Executive Committee will assess the claim and provide a decision to the player and/or parent within 14 days. The Committee's decision is final and no subsequent appeals will be considered.

Frequently asked questions

The following frequently asked questions help understand the Belsouth grading policy.

Q1. Why does Belsouth grade teams?

Belsouth grades players based on recommendations from Capital Football. Players are graded to group players in a team who are developmentally at the same level so they can play against other clubs' teams with players of similar ability. This helps maximise player development and provides higher levels of enjoyment, fun and a love of the game.

Q2. Does my child need to be graded?

No. However, all players registered to play in an U10 team or older, are strongly encouraged to participate in their age group's grading process. Participation in the grading process is necessary to ensure that every player is placed in a team where their opportunity to develop their football skills and enhance their technical development is maximised. Any player choosing not to grade will generally be placed in the lowest division, and so that player may not be provided with an optimum opportunity for development.

Q3. What happens if my child isn't able to attend the grading sessions?

Players are strongly encouraged to attend ALL grading sessions for their specific age group to help ensure they have maximum opportunities to demonstrate and display their skills and abilities.

Players who are unable to attend grading sessions MUST notify the Belsouth Technical Department by email belsouthtd@gmail.com prior to the scheduled grading session.

Generally, players who do not attend grading sessions will be placed in a team in the lowest division for their age group. Exceptions to this are players who miss Belsouth grading sessions due to trials for teams in divisions not available to Belsouth players e.g. Belconnen United Premier League teams.

Decisions regarding grading for children not able to make grading sessions will be made on a case by case basis taking into account all available information.

Q4. When are grading session held?

Grading sessions take place prior to the start of the season. All registered players will be advised via email regarding the grading date and time. Details will also be available on the Belsouth website.

Q5. What will my child be required to do at the grading sessions?

Your child may be required to participate in individual skills sessions and game based play. They will be assessed based on the specific criteria set out in the Belsouth Grading policy.

Q6. Will my child be able to play in the same team as their friends?

Where possible, Belsouth actively aims to place players in teams with others they know. Sometimes large differences in abilities do not make this possible.

Q7. Who makes the final grading decision for each child?

Decisions on grading are made by the Belsouth Committee based on recommendations made by the Belsouth Grading Committee, taking into account the outcomes of grading sessions and input from coaches from the previous season where necessary.