

LUSK UNITED AFC Rathmore Road		GRADING GUIDELINES
		Under 12's and Upwards
		In conjunction with Football Development Plan
		3 rd April 2019
Football Development Committee beginning 2019 season		

GRADING GUIDELINES

A.1 Purpose

The football development committee has the care and responsibility for the club and its members in the grading of its players. These guidelines are designed to address player and club needs, some of which invariable conflict.

The fundamentals of the grading guidelines are designed to ensure;

- 1.1 That a clear process for the grading of new and existing players exists
- 1.2 Any bias is minimised by using a grading or football development committee which is endorsed by the Clubs executive committee and where possible an independent assessor from the FAI (Football Association of Ireland or similar) may be brought in to assist
- 1.3 That the grading process provides players with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skill and ability as well as their attitude to coaches, managers and peers.
- 1.4 Where possible players are placed in their correct age group and grade and are able to participate in games commensurate with both their football skill and physical development and are able to continue to develop their football ability without undue pressure

A.2 Scope

It is important for players to be given the opportunity to experience a team sport and have fun. Care must be taken to cater for those who have less ability than others but still enjoy the game

- 2.1 In the Under 8's, Under 9's, Under 10's and Under 11's the emphasis is on being given the opportunity to participate and develop friendships rather than the grading of teams. This is based on the fact that the games they all play in are Non-Competitive in relation to no league points or cup games (until U11). However, managers/coaches should be filling out a player summary for all their players at the end of the season to assess the balance of teams and as per the club's PDP teams will be re-shuffled on a yearly basis.
- 2.2 As children progress from Under 11's to Under 18's Lusk United FC and their coaching / management teams (in line with the Player Development Plan) will focus on developing the players' ability, grade children accordingly and not sacrifice development to win football matches.
- 2.3 The decision to grade is to allow each player to grow and advance as footballers. Selecting players of like ability in the same team allows coaches and managers to design specific skills for that team. It is vital that any team who grade maintain a stable and effective training schedule for ALL abilities within that group of players and the coaching time is spread equally amongst the team NOT just on the higher level players.
- 2.4 Past experience at the club has shown that it can be frustrating for some individuals to play in a team which is clearly above or below their level of ability at 11 a side level. It has also been

proven that there is a lower retention of players when clubs grade teams from U7 they tend to lose 25% of the weaker players!

- 2.5 Grading must help all players of all abilities.

A.3 Grading Process

- 3.1 There will be no grading or trials for Under 8's, Under 9's, Under 10's or Under 11's but instead a team allocation/orientation day may be organised. Also called a Reshuffle.
- 3.2 Players who leave Academy to start progressing in their team will be placed in mixed ability groups, a focus on equal spread of abilities (eg: 2 A players, 2B players, 2 C players and so on). For players who are not part of a pre organised team the Academy Director and FDC will ensure that every player is allocated appropriately to a team.
- 3.3 The team allocation day/ prior to the start of the teams kicking off their first games is for players and parents to meet each other as well as for the club to orientate children and parents to the club and answer any questions, recruit volunteers, go through safeguarding and child welfare information and troubleshoot.
- 3.3 Grading of players in age groups Under 12's to Under 18's will be dependent upon the number of players registered, the management and coaching staff having the correct logistical spread and the agreement of the FDC and Parents. If there is enough players for one team only then a formal process of grading would not be required, however a grading type process may be required in order for the club to better understand what grade / league a team should be nominated to play in.
- 3.4 If an age group has enough players registered to form more than 1 team then it will be necessary for the club to grade players in each of those age groups.
- 3.5 Where possible the club will make every attempt to enter gender specific teams (all boys and all girls' teams)
- 3.6 At the conclusion of each season coaches are requested to complete a player summary that evaluates an individual's skill and ability throughout the year. The coaches will also be asked to recommend a grade that they believe each player would be suited for the next season.
- 3.7 These assessments will be used as guide only in the following seasons grading process as young player's ability, skill and strength can develop dramatically during the off season. No team will be formed in any group / league without the sign off by the FDC and Committees sign off.

A.4 Specific Grouping Teams (friends / family)

The club acknowledges that there are many players that would like to continue to play with friends and do not wish to be graded in a higher grade. If there is sufficient numbers in an age group to form a second team then this should be discussed with the club's FDC prior to grading. In addition a second / third team may not be possible because as players move through age groups the number of players required to fill a team increases from the number of players that were in that age group in the previous year, the FDC will do everything in their power to assist managers / coaches in recruiting players to fill teams where possible.

A.5 Sibling / Family Grading

If there are siblings all playing in the same age group and they need to play in the same team, then each child will be assessed on their own ability. If all siblings are of similar skill level then it is very likely that all will be graded in the same team. If any sibling demonstrates a higher level of ability than another it is likely the siblings will be graded into different teams. If siblings are graded into different teams and this is inconvenient to the parents/guardians and they would like the children to remain in the same team then the siblings will be placed in the grade where the sibling with the lesser ability was allocated. The Manager / Coach FDC should be advised prior to grading commencing if parents/guardians want siblings in the same team.

A.6 Playing up a Grade

Some players may want to be considered for a team in an older age or higher level group. The club recognises that this may be the case for a number of reasons, however players or parents wishing to play up an age group/level must put a written request to their manager/coach who will in turn put the proposal to the FDC prior to the new season start.

All movement of players between teams must be sanctioned by FDC and approved by Executive Committee.

There may be occasions where there are not enough players registered in a particular age group to form a team or teams. Depending on the age groups that are affected the club may be required to combine a lower age group with a higher age group. If this may be the case all parents will be informed accordingly. It is likely that the grading session/s will need to be combined.

A.7 Ethical Awareness

From time to time you may come across a player who may show signs of some form of disability or a very low level of attention or ability and not progressing. Your first port of call is the Child Welfare Officer and then Football Development Committee. It is not acceptable for anyone to have a discussion with the child or parent without someone from the committee present. Every player deserves the right to play football at Lusk United. The player will be assessed and necessary action will follow.

A.8 Method

From U11 one or more FDC members will try to attend 5 games across the season to assess the players on the team. The FDC members will fill in a player summary form to evaluate players. These forms along with the forms completed by the management team at the end of the season will go towards the grading of the players for the following season.

The FDC (or members of) will meet with the managers, head-coach and coaches of all teams (U11-U18) at the end of the season to discuss the make-up of the teams for the following season.

Player Grading will consist of a Basic Skills assessment and Game Play. The following skills are assessed and consist of four categories:

- Fitness
- Touches / Quality of same
- Ball Control
- 1 v 1's
- Strike/passing of the ball

The assessor/s will be observing the following:

- Positioning
- Communication
- Decision making
- Attitude

Players will score points in each skills criteria and game assessments on a scale of 1 (Poor) – 4 (Excellent). The scores are summed and a total score calculated. All players in the age group are given a score and the players are placed into teams based on highest to lowest. Players are then placed into a team, according to the likely best fit between the player's skills, and abilities and the requirements of the team/s.

9. Grading Decisions

In the end the grading of players is an opinion. Some player's will stand out which is usually due to an early physical or personal skill development. It is the requirement of the club to grade players each year after the age of 12, so every player has the opportunity to progress. It is important to note that junior players differ in their ability and move through the various stages of development at different rates. The club encourages parents and players not to focus on which team a player is in, rather on the player's own football development. The aim of the club is to grade players as fairly as possible and for the benefit and welfare of the player.

Some parents & coaches / managers place undue pressure on their children expecting them to always be in the top team. We suggest they all help their children through the grading process by being supportive. Our request is that, in cases where a parent is in disagreement with the end result, they accept the final decision of the club officials. We ask that you trust our ability and honesty in selections.

10. Assessment Appeal

There won't be an appeal process and the decision of the committee will be final.