

**Manly Warringah Football Association Ltd**

# **PLAYER DEVELOPMENT POLICY**



**MANLY WARRINGAH**  
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

**FINAL – 28 April 2021**

Can be downloaded from  
[www.mwfa.com.au](http://www.mwfa.com.au)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 SCOPE

To exclude doubt, the Player Development Policy shall be considered as an addition to the [MWFA Constitution, MWFA By-Laws and current MWFA Playing Rules](#), and any actions taken by MWFA in connection with this policy will be consistent with the MWFA Constitution, MWFA By-Laws and current MWFA Playing Rules. Where there is any inconsistency between this Policy and the above documents, the MWFA Constitution, MWFA By-Laws and current MWFA Playing Rules shall prevail.

### 1.2 BACKGROUND

The Football Australia (FA) was established (as FFA) following the [Crawford Report](#) as a new governing body for Football in Australia. FA published a [National Football Curriculum](#) to guide the development of Australian footballers and also mandated [coaching qualifications](#) for community and professional coaches. For professional coaches, the A, B & C licences roughly align to tiers of Australian football - the A-League, NPL and Association PL, although the qualifications are not necessarily enforced at each level. The FA coaching programs also align with the football development pathway:

- U6 - U8 : Community Sub-Junior
- U9 – U12 : Skill Acquisition Program (Boys SAP), Community
- U9 – U13 : Skill Acquisition Program (Girls SAP), Community
- U13 – U16 : NPL Boys Youth League and Association Youth League
- U14 – U17 : NPL Girls Youth League
- All Age : A-League, W-League, NPL, WPL (Professional tiers)

Alongside this coaching structure, community football has evolved from a system where amateur coaches (usually fathers) coached junior teams, and Private Academies provided additional paid coaching. With increasing demands on time, it has become harder to find parent coaches willing and able to commit to coaching junior teams. Some Private Academies launched team based programs, and entered these teams in community competitions, while promoting themselves as alternative pathways to professional football. NSW [reviewed Private Academies in 2018](#) and relaxed some restrictions on their roles.

MWFA community clubs have, in response to the increased demand by parents for more consistent or additional coaching, added a variety of coaching programs using a mix of Professional Coaches and qualified amateur coaches. The overall goal of these programs is to increase the enjoyment of football by building the technical skills of young footballers, while preparing some players for higher levels. A 2020 review of MWFA programs found that of the 17 Clubs:

- 15 clubs have additional training programs
- 13 of these are optional individual skill programs
- 2 are bundled team & individual programs (Club Academy)
- 9 programs are internal (with coaches paid or unpaid) and 6 are external (via a Coaching Company or Sydney FC/Manly United)

## 1.3 MWFA PLAYER DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The purpose of the MWFA Player Development Policy is to help ensure:

- Parents & Players receive safe, enjoyable and quality coaching
- Clubs understand and comply with legal requirements when establishing a Club Development Program or Club Academy
- MWFA protects the interests of its Member Clubs (including compliance risk management)
- Players enjoy fair competition between Clubs, while skills and coaching quality increases over time

## 2. ACADEMY DEFINITION

### 2.1 DEFINITIONS

**Club Development Program.** A Club Development Program is a set of coaching activities established and run by a Club to develop its own Players:

- Provided by a football club
- May be operated by a third party for profit
- Club branding, identity and playing kit
- May be selective or open to all abilities
- May use Amateur or Professional Coaches

**Club Academy.** A Club Academy is a package of coaching activities established and run by a Club to develop its own Players:

- Owned and operated by a football club, not for profit
- Club branding, identity and playing kit
- Bundles coaching, camps, training kit & other competitions, but not registration
- Selective
- Uses Professional Coaches, either as employers, contractors or via a Coaching Company.

**Coaching Company.** A Coaching Company is a company established to provide coaching services to Clubs or individual players:

- Privately owned, for profit
- Limited branding, does not compete with Club branding
- Uses Professional Coaches, either as employers, contractors

**Private Academy.** A private academy is an organisation established to provide a package of coaching activities to Players, who may also be Club Players or who may only play in Private Academy matches.

- Privately owned, for profit
- Own brand identity and playing kit, often hinting at links to professional football clubs, countries, players or coaches
- Fields junior teams
- Selective
- Uses Professional Coaches

## 2.2 EXAMPLES

Club Development Program: [Wakehurst](#), [Curl Curl](#)

Club Academy : [Mosman FC](#), [Dee Why FC](#)

[Coaching Company](#) : [Jakattack](#)

Private Academy : [Red Devils Football Academy](#), [Nick Rizzo International Football Academy](#)

### 3. PRINCIPLES

The MWFA has adopted ten principles to guide how clubs should create and operate Player Development Programs.

#### 3.1 PLAYERS

##### **1. *The safety, enjoyment and development of junior players is paramount***

Coaching programs should be aimed at enhancing Junior & Youth Player skills to improve their enjoyment of the game. This means Coaches should be qualified for the age group they are coaching, have a WWCC and behave in a professional and appropriate way, including respecting the LOTG, with appropriate oversight by club officials. Clubs should also avoid over-training junior players, who may be involved in multiple sports.

##### **2. *Football is an inclusive sport, open to all, and should aim to retain players for life***

Coaching programs should be open to male & female players regardless of family background, and support CALD players and parents where possible. Consider programs for all ability levels, not just Division 1, and transitions in Players' lives, particularly from Youth to Senior football. Clubs may use selective trials, but such trials should be as fair & objective as possible with multiple opinions from qualified coaches.

##### **3. *Player selection for graded teams should be based solely on skills, not ability or desire to pay***

Player selection for all teams should be as fair & objective as possible with a clear understanding that the MWFA Clubs are Community Football Clubs. This may include using multiple coaches & club leadership, not just a single team coach to make decisions. An appeal process may add procedural fairness. Consideration should be made for late registrations and player movement during the season. Players who register to play for a Club and who are selected to play in the highest graded team in each age group should not be required to pay or participate in extra coaching. Club communications should clarify that paying for coaching programs is a secondary consideration, which can be addressed by:

- A hardship program
- Payment plans
- An opt-out mechanism for bundled or Academy programs

##### **4. *Players should have access to higher pathways at each age group***

In general, football player pathways have selection gates at relatively young ages:

- U9 for SAP
- U13/14 for NPL Youth League

Many players are late developers and there are distinct [relative age effects \(RAE\)](#) in football. Coaching programs should therefore prepare & encourage players to attend trials for high levels of football, even if this weakens a Club team. This investment in players is intrinsic to the mission of the MWFA and is encouraged.

## 3.2 Coach Quality and Integrity

### **5. Professional coaches are an increasingly important part of the football ecosystem, and are expected to be qualified for their coaching level**

Since the formation of FA, the role of coaches & coaching practice in the development of Australian football has been understood & prioritised. Opportunities for players to develop into coaches are therefore critical for the future of the game. Club coaching programs can be designed to provide pathways, for example for 18/1 or PL players to coach U12 teams or deliver additional coaching. This may include encouraging or subsidising players to complete community coaching programs, whether interested in purely volunteer roles or in becoming a professional coach. MWFA can assist clubs in providing and checking coach qualifications through the official coach education data base if required.

### **6. Neither Clubs nor the MWFA should restrict players or parents from accessing alternative coaching programs**

Players or Parents may prefer coaching programs offered outside a Club for different reasons, including convenience, or focus on specific skills. Clubs should not restrict or penalise this choice unreasonably. *This may be anti-competitive.*

### **7. Clubs should not instruct or mandate players or parents to use only endorsed external coaching programs**

Similarly, Clubs should not restrict Players or Parents to using coaching programs offered by specific third parties that are approved or recommended by the Club. *This may be illegal "third line forcing".*

### **8. Services provided by Professional Coaches or companies to Clubs or Players should avoid or declare and manage conflicts of interest**

Coaches offering player development programs or 1:1 coaching may have other roles within a Club or MWFA. These roles may give rise to a [conflict of interest](#) in different circumstances. Where a Club identifies that a conflict may exist, it should be declared and appropriate steps taken to manage the conflict. This could include, for example, leaving a leadership meeting when financial arrangements are being discussed.

### 3.3 CLUB IDENTITY

9. ***The MWFA competition is between not-for-profit clubs owned by their members, effectively their local communities, and club identity should not be compromised.***

The MWFA process for Club affiliation involves each Club agreeing to the MWFA governance arrangements and nominating Club Colours for playing strip. Clubs are generally incorporated not for profit entities, with Players as their members. Player Development activities should not conflict with or compromise this identity, for example by using Private Academy branding on playing kit.

10. ***This policy should not “limit the ability of clubs to improve the level of coaching they can offer to participants”<sup>1</sup>, but rather allow clubs to develop programs that suit their members.***

The MWFA policy does not conflict with FNSW policy, but is aimed at supporting Clubs to develop coaching programs that suit their members.

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<sup>1</sup> This was a finding from the FNSW review



## 4. GUIDELINES

These guidelines are for clubs to use as a checklist to ensure the programs they offer comply with this policy and current NSW and Commonwealth legislation.

### 4.1 ALL COACHING PROGRAMS

- Select teams based on skills, not enrolment in a Coaching Program or payment, using a fair assessment process
- Separate payment from registration
- Consider offering scholarships, a hardship program or payment plans
- Ensure all participants are registered MWFA players
- Aim to stream by age and skill levels
- Offer similar programs to male and female players (separately or together)
- Check age appropriate coach qualifications<sup>2</sup> and WWCC
- Ensure all competitive matches are sanctioned
- Ensure FNSW insurance applies:
  - Run programs on booked fields
  - Register all players
  - Register all coaches, including those not involved on match day
- Promote using club identity and colours for players & coaches

### 4.2 CLUB PROGRAMS

- Ensure paid coaches are either contractors (ABN) or employed (PAYG) or sign a declaration they are coaching as a hobby
- Include GST in payments, if contractors or companies are registered for GST
- Keep optional for players or provide an opt-out mechanism

### 4.3 COACHING COMPANY

- Mandate coach qualifications<sup>3</sup> and WWCC in a clear contract that specifies services & prices
- Keep optional for players or provide an opt-out mechanism
- Ensure Company has insurance:
  - Public liability
  - Personal injury
- Check how Company is promoting its services

### 4.4 RESOURCES

Coach Employee or Contractor? : [ATO Guidelines](#)  
Hiring Employees Requirements: [ATO Requirements](#)  
WWCC : [Working with Children](#)  
[Difference between a business and a hobby](#)  
Hobby Coach : [Supplier declaration](#)  
Team Selection : [Example Policy](#)

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<sup>2</sup> MWFA can assist with this if required

## 5. PLAYING RULES

The MWFA Playing Rules are designed to promote fair competition between teams. These rules have significant modifications from the FIFA LOTG in place for Junior and Youth players to take into account the physical development of players. In addition, the MWFA RGC is tasked with forming divisions to facilitate a balanced competition.

### 5.1 PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS

(1) **Problem:** Player Experience

**Solution:** Player retention is a primary motivation for providing additional Club coaching and Club Academies. If Clubs do not provide a good experience to Players or their parents, players may leave for another club, or a Private Academy, so this problem will likely be self-correcting. If the MWFA becomes aware of systemic issues, it can take further action as appropriate.

(2) **Problem:** Poaching Players

**Solution:** The Playing Rules limit player movements (currently a maximum of 4 players per club per age group and 3 per team per season).

(3) **Problem:** Club Identity

**Solution:** Players must play in Club Colours in all competitive matches, including MWFA competitions and tournaments in any jurisdiction. The words Academy or any affiliation to any extra training program/affiliate/academy is not allowed on any club playing strip under any circumstances.

(4) **Problem:** Finding & Retaining good coaches

**Solution:** MWFA and FNSW offer coaching courses throughout the season. Potential coaches can be found within clubs from parents or Senior Players, and provided with development options. Outside clubs, many Manly United players have the potential to become great coaches, and coaches can also be recruited via Facebook or Football marketplaces. The MWFA could also recruit coaches to provide coaching for a group of clubs.

(5) **Problem:** Fair Competition

**Solution:** All junior competitions are graded each season based on the players registered to play in a team, their recent playing history and results of the previous season. Competitions can be re-assessed after 4 rounds to allow mismatched teams to be regraded (by exception). If imbalances becomes systematic, then competition structures can be modified (eg 12 team competitions, with 2 x 6 team second rounds). If necessary, teams that are persistently (ie 2 seasons) far better than their peers can be registered in a higher age group, at the discretion of the MWFA Grading Committee.

(6) **Problem:** Cost of Football

**Solution:** Professional coaches require payments from some source. For the foreseeable future parents of community clubs will fund FNSW & FA activities, rather than a professional league subsidising the amateur side. Clubs are encouraged to offer targeted scholarships or hardship funds to ensure football remains an inclusive sport.

## **5.2 ENFORCEMENT**

- (1) The intent of this policy is to provide clear principles and guidelines to ensure club Development Programs are aligned with the goals in section 1.3.
- (2) The MWFA may ask clubs to provide information on their Player Development programs, and may use information from other sources, to assess whether a club is compliant with the Player Development Policy.
- (3) If the MWFA deems a club to be non-compliant it may request that a Club takes reasonable steps in a defined timeframe to become compliant.
- (4) If a Club does not take these steps with the timeframe, the Board may initiate enforcement action as it deems reasonable and proportionate to ensure compliance with the Player Development Policy. This may include suspension of a member club or removal of a team from competition in accordance with the MWFA Constitution, By Laws and Playing Rules

## **APPENDIX A : DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

**ASSOCIATION** means the Manly Warringah Football Association Ltd

**BOARD** means the MWFA Board acting via a resolution in a Board Meeting

**CLUB** means an organisation or unincorporated entity that is a MWFA member

**CLUB COLOURS** are the club playing strip. including alternative colours, approved by the MWFA

**COACH** means an Amateur Coach or a Professional Coach

**AMATEUR COACH** means a coach appointed by a Club and not paid

**PROFESSIONAL COACH** means a coach who is employed by a Club, Company, Private Academy or is self employed and is paid

**CLUB COACH** means a Professional Coach employed and paid by a Club

**FIXTURE** means a meeting of Clubs to play a Match as scheduled in all grades applicable.

**GENDER & PLURAL:** Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa and the words importing the masculine include the feminine and vice versa. In these rules:

**JUNIOR** means any competition, or any registered player, 11 years and below (6 – 8 also called Sub-Junior)

**MATCH** means any match played under the auspices of FA, FNSW or the MWFA direction or control.

**PARENT** means the legal parent or guardian of a Player under 18 years old

**PARTICIPANT** means a player or team official.

Where applicable and appropriate in these By Laws and Playing Rules the term Player can be extended to include any Participant.

**PERSON** includes a natural person, body corporate, firm or body of persons.

**PLAYER** during a Match includes a substitute and a substituted player.

**PLAYING RULES** means the MWFA Playing Rules adopted for each season.

**SENIOR** means any competition, or any registered player, within the age group of adults over 18

**TEAM OFFICIAL** means any personnel involved with the management, preparation or participation of a Team including the coaches, managers, medical staff (including team or match doctor), physiotherapists, gear persons and other support staff and any other person permitted in the Technical Area.

**YOUTH** means any competition, or any registered player, within the age group from under 12 up to under 18, both age groups included.

## **ABBREVIATIONS:**

Where the following abbreviations appear throughout this policy they shall have the following meanings:

<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>CALD</b>	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
<b>CC</b>	Competitions Committee
<b>CCF</b>	Council of Clubs Forum
<b>FA</b>	Football Australia
<b>FFA</b>	Football Federation Australia
<b>FNSW</b>	Football NSW Limited
<b>GM</b>	General Meeting
<b>LOTG</b>	Laws of the Game, as updated by the International Football Association Board
<b>MWFA</b>	Manly Warringah Football Association Ltd.
<b>PL</b>	Premier League (MWFA Competition)
<b>NPL</b>	National Premier League (FNSW Competition)
<b>RGC</b>	Registration & Grading Committee
<b>SAP</b>	Skills Acquisition Program
<b>WPL</b>	Women's Premier League (FNSW Competition)
<b>WWCC</b>	Working with Children Check

**APPENDIX B : UPDATED APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**



**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP BY A CLUB  
(Rule 7.2 of the MWFA Ltd Constitution)**

To the Manly Warringah Football Association Ltd

.....  
(Full name of Club)

of.....  
(Postal Address)

hereby applies to become a Member of the Manly Warringah Football Association Ltd.  
In the event of the Club's admission as a member, the Club Member agrees to be bound by

- a) MWFA Ltd Constitution
- b) MWFA Ltd By-Laws
- c) MWFA Ltd Playing Rules;
- d) Player Development Policy
- e) Policies, directions of the MWFA Ltd;
- f) The Laws of the Game;
- g) The Constitution, By-Laws, Regulations and Policies of FNSW;
- h) The Constitution, By-Laws and Policies of FA;
- i) Any alteration, revocation or addition to any of the above made from time to time;
- j) Where there is any inconsistency between the Constitution of the Club Member and the Constitution of the MWFA Ltd, then to the extent of such inconsistency, the Constitution and By-Laws of the MWFA Ltd shall apply.

The Club Member colours are subject to the Approval of the MWFA Ltd. If the Club is re-applying for Membership and the Club Colours are changing the new Club Colours must be submitted for Approval.

The Club Member will provide a list of Committee Members by the commencement of the next Football Year and will notify of any changes within 30 days.

The Club Member is an Incorporated Body.

Club Incorporated Name: .....

Club Incorporation Number: .....

Any other material relevant to the Application should be provided with this Application Form:-

\* Signature of Club Authorised Signatories:

Authorised Signatory 1 .....  
Position of Authorised Signatory 1 .....

Authorised Signatory 2 .....  
Position of Authorised Signatory 2 .....

## APPENDIX C : VERSION CONTROL

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	Oct 2020	Ian Clarke	Initial partial draft
2	Nov 2020	David Mason	Initial comments
3	24 Nov 2020	Ian Clarke	First full draft
4	27 Nov 2020	Dave Mason	Edits throughout
5	27 Nov 2020	Ian Clarke	Added resources & more edits
6	23 Feb 2021	Ian Clarke	Edits after coach workshop
7	30 Mar 2021	Ian Clarke	Edits after Board discussion