



Blaxland Football Club

PO Box 3034 Blaxland East NSW 2774
Website www.blaxlandfootball.com

ABN 55 706 725 353

Voluntary Grading for Under 8 to Under 11 for Season 2026

G'day Redbacks,

We would like to provide you with some information around the process of grading players and nominating divisions/rankings of teams each season. At the beginning of each season, the club nominates an appropriate ranking or division for all teams from U8 through to All Age and beyond.

In Under 8-10's, the club states whether the team is a High, Medium, Mixed or Low ability team. Each ranking is then given the name of a Socceroos or Matildas player. In Under 11 and up, the club nominates a division based on the previous season's results and/or the grading process.

In Under 8 through to Under 11, the nomination process allows teams to be grouped with similar ability teams allowing for a more even "like for like" playing experience. This provides an opportunity for all teams within the group to be competitive throughout the season. Sometimes, teams may not always end up in the correct group at the beginning of or throughout the season, so teams may be re-graded throughout the year to ensure they are playing in a competitive group/division. This helps to keep groups/divisions balanced and allows the association to have a good idea of which teams should be in each group/division throughout each year and into the following season.

To help ensure we had competitive teams, last season we undertook Voluntary Grading for individuals in Under 9-11. This process involved:

- Players registering as per normal and as a part of the registration process, indicated whether they wish to participate in the Voluntary Grading.
- The club completed the grading process with those interested players which involved assessing the players football ability, consulting with the previous season's coach and then grouping similar ability players together. Once completed, the club created teams based on the process.
- Once teams were created, the club then nominated each team for the appropriate grade/division.

From committee observations and member feedback, this process appeared to be successful in Season 2025.

Based on member feedback, we are proposing to extend the voluntary grading process in Season 2026 to include Under 8.

We know friends like to play together; we know that not all friends are of the same ability and we know that some players are more competitive than others. We would like to try and ensure that those players that wish to play in the highest grade possible are given the opportunity and that those players that aren't as competitive, are still able to have fun in an appropriate grade / division.

Players can choose not to participate in the voluntary grading and they may wish to remain with their friends in a specific team. Those players who do not wish to participate in the voluntary grading will be placed, where possible, in a team with their friends and/or with similar ability players. If the entire team wishes to stay together, this is perfectly fine, you just need to let us know. The best way to do this would be by having a conversation with the grading committee and also emailing the club. We as a club will do our very best to accommodate your requests.

We as a club understand the enjoyment that comes from playing the game of football and also playing it with friends. We also see the importance of players playing in a game where they can compete against similar ability players. We see that this process helps with both of these important elements and the best possible solution for our club. We expect the grading will take place in early February 2026.

If your child would like to play in an all girls team in 2026, please select this option during registration. We aim to have at least one all girls team in each age group. If we don't have enough players to form more than one team, current players will have first preference, and any remaining spots will be offered on a first come, first served basis. Any players we cannot place in an all girls team will be included in a mixed team. If there is only one girls team in an age group, the whole team will be graded together and individual voluntary grading won't be required.

If you have any questions regarding the Voluntary Grading Process, please do not hesitate to contact us at coaching@blaxlandfootball.com

Thank you,

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