



# Team Formation & Grading

## OBJECTIVE

To provide clarity on how TCAFC Junior & Youth teams are formed and graded. This policy has been in place since 2018 and is supported by New Zealand Football (NZF) Team Formation & Grading guidance released in 2021. A full copy of this can be found here: [tcafc.co.nz/resources](http://tcafc.co.nz/resources).

This guidance applies to all TCAFC teams entered into the U4 - U19 Grades. Junior and Youth teams, operated from TCAFC's Skills Centre (SKC) and Talent Development Programme (TDP), entered into the WaiBOP Federation Junior and Youth and the NRFL Youth Leagues, are excluded from this policy.

## BACKGROUND

In 2018 TCAFC made the decision to stop conducting trials to select teams based on ability. The decision was based on feedback from members and advice from the club's head coaching group.

The focus was shifted from judgement calls on ability to fun and enjoyment. So teams are formed with age and friendships as the key criteria.

Results released from a NZF survey conducted in 2018 provided feedback on why junior players play football. The responses backed the TCAFC change and showed that:

- 69% play for fun.
- 10% play to be with friends.
- 7% play to learn new skills.

At TCAFC players are placed in grades based on their birth year. For example, players turning 10 years old in the current calendar year will be placed in the U10 grade.

## OUR PROCESS

- During Registration, members will be asked for any team or teammate preferences.
- After registrations are closed, teams will be formed. This will be based on the team played for the previous season and where possible player preferences will be taken into account.
- Teams communicated.

## EXCEPTIONS/DISPENSATION

Dispensation can be approved for players to play in a different grade, based on the criteria below. This does depend on playing numbers, if the grade is full, players who are the correct age will be prioritised.

1. Social - In the same school year as player(s) older/younger than the player.
2. Development - Identified by our qualified FCTM Coaching Team to require a higher challenge point.
3. Team Numbers - Different grades requiring additional numbers.

You can email [hello@tcafc.co.nz](mailto:hello@tcafc.co.nz) with any relevant information to request a dispensation review.