

MyFootballClub Accreditation

FFA's National Club Accreditation Scheme

Raising Standards in Football

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1.0 Purpose

The overall aim of the National Club Accreditation Scheme is to raise standards and to recognise and reward quality clubs, which contributes to quality football experiences for players, volunteers and parents.

2.0 Introduction

Clubs play a fundamental role in the development of football in Australia. In order to raise the overall standard of club administration at all levels of the game, FFA, in conjunction with our Member Federations, will introduce a National Club Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) that will identify, support and reward development best-practice in our football community. The original proposal contained in the “The Talent Development and Identification Review” highlighted the need to develop an “Accreditation and Rating” for clubs, associations, schools and private academies.

Similar programs have been delivered by a number of National Sporting Organisations in Australia, by the Football Association in the United Kingdom, as well as by other major European football nations. These club accreditation initiatives have successfully raised standards at a club level and assisted to develop a greater connection between grassroots clubs and National Sporting Organisations.

Club accreditation can deliver a range of potential benefits for Football which include:

- a) assisting Member Federations to better support clubs, by facilitating a process which encourages greater engagement with clubs.
- b) enabling FFA and Member Federations to provide direct guidance to clubs relating to Football delivery;
- c) bringing together all elements of Football Development including coach education, volunteer development, refereeing, small-sided football, good governance and the National Curriculum;
- d) directly assisting clubs to sustain and increase football participation; and
- e) promoting and raising the profile of quality clubs across Australia.

3.0 Accreditation Structure

3.1 Accreditation Components

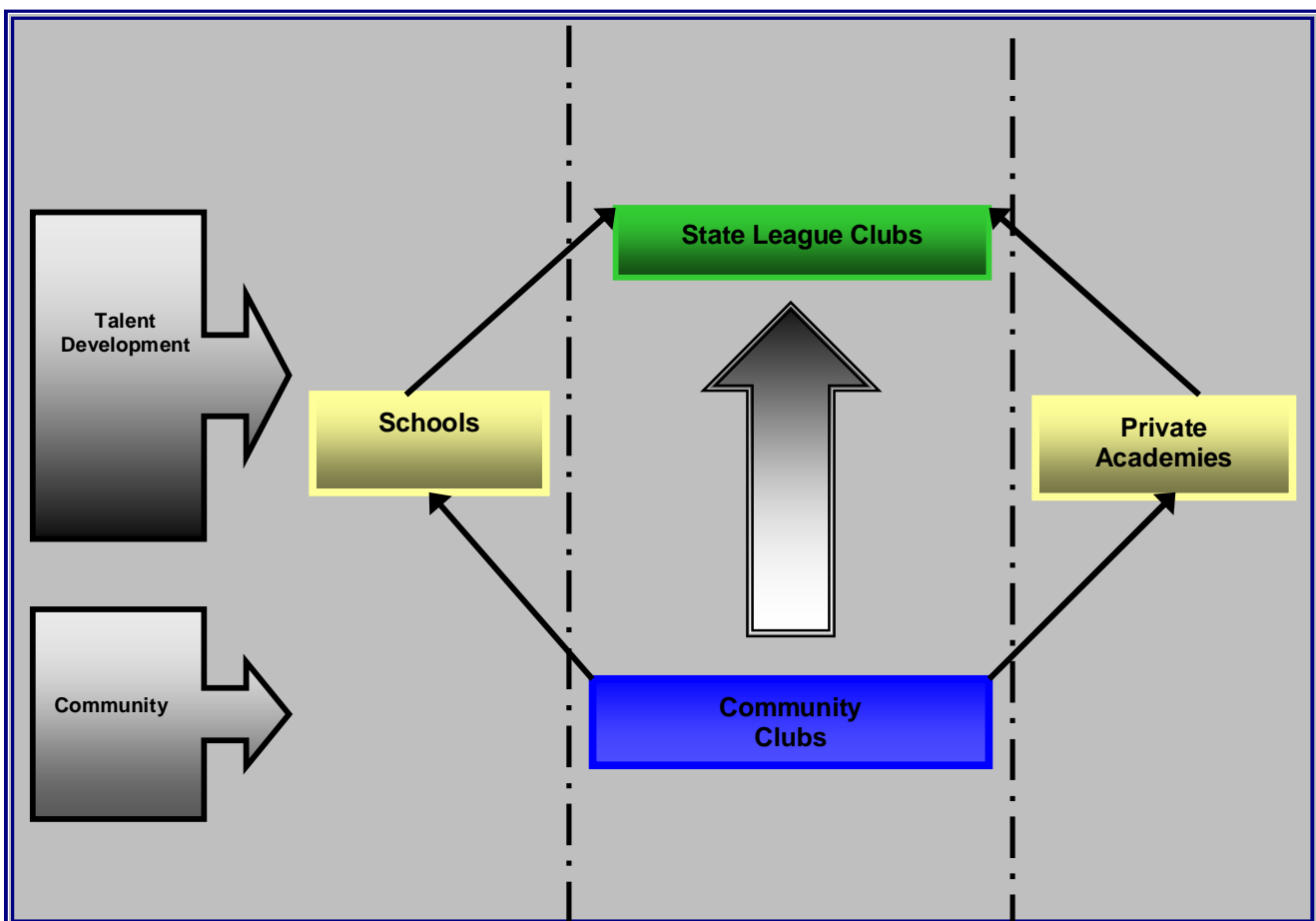
The Club Accreditation will provide recognition for clubs which are well run, sustainable, and provide a safe environment for children. The program will also recognise a club's commitment to quality coaching as well as to player, volunteer and coach development.

To ensure the establishment of achievable standards at all levels within the game, FFA will develop two streams of club accreditation, complementing the approach of the National Curriculum.

1. Community Pathway
2. Talent Development Pathway.

The Community stream will focus primarily on recognising clubs that are well administered, sustainable, and create a safe environment for children. The Talent Development stream will have a greater focus on those entities who concentrate their efforts on the development of talented players, with additional emphasis on the delivery of the National Curriculum.

Accreditation Components presented below:



3.2 Target Audiences

The Community stream will be aimed at grassroots clubs whose primary focus is on providing opportunities for players of all ages and abilities. Grassroots clubs currently constitute approximately 92% of all clubs involved in football delivery. The Talent Development stream will primarily target state/premier league clubs who have a greater emphasis on talent development.

At this stage, only clubs who are registered with FFA under the National Registration Regulations will be eligible to be a part of the NCAS. Moving forward, a decision will need to be made on whether schools and private providers will be able to obtain accreditation through the NCAS.

3.3 Core Content

Both streams will focus on the same core content which will include:

1. Youth Development Opportunities
2. Accreditation of Coaches
3. Compliance with National Registration Regulations, rules, and policies
4. Child Protection and Risk Management
5. Adoption of the National Curriculum
6. Football Development Planning
7. Developing Effective Partnerships
8. Positive Playing Environment (including RESPECT campaign)
9. Volunteer Development

There will be a number of levels within each stream, with specific criteria attached to each level. The criteria will become more challenging as clubs progress through the accreditation.

3.4 Status of the National Club Accreditation Scheme

The remainder of this document will specifically apply to the Community Pathway of the National Club Accreditation Scheme (though there are a couple of references to the Talented Player Pathway). As will be explained, the content for this stream has now been developed whilst the categories and criteria for the Talented Player Pathway are yet to be finalised. As such, the first phase of the rollout of NCAS will be in the Community Pathway, focusing on grassroots clubs throughout the country.

4.0 Community Consultation

FFA has undertaken an extensive consultation process with Member Federations, Clubs and Local Government.

4.1 Consultation Process

FFA invited all Member Federations to participate in the National Club Development working group. The following Member Federations were represented:

1. Football NSW
2. Football Federation South Australia
3. Football Federation Victoria
4. Capital Football
5. Football West
6. Football Queensland

Additional feedback subsequently obtained from Clubs, Zones and Associations, and Local Councils has helped to shape the content and framework for the National Club Accreditation Scheme.

4.2 Football Federation Victoria Pilot

In 2009 FFV, in conjunction with FFA, piloted a club accreditation scheme called Achieving Club Excellence (ACE). This process, including the content of the ACE program, has been particularly useful in helping shape the NCAS criteria as well as the overall approach we take to its implementation. The ACE program has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from clubs and key sporting stakeholders, including the Victorian Government's department for Sport and Recreation.

FFA would like to thank and acknowledge Football Federation Victoria for their contribution to this very important area of Club Development.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Consultation with other Australian sports, and analysis of existing accreditation schemes, has highlighted the need for collaboration between FFA and Member Federations to achieve national implementation of the NCAS.

5.1 Member Federations/Associations

Roles and Responsibilities:

- ü Supporting Clubs; first point of contact for clubs regarding the accreditation.
- ü Promotion of the scheme locally.
- ü Supporting Clubs with the application process (please refer to section 6 for more information concerning the process)
- ü Analyse Club's Applications and provide recommendations to FFA.

5.2 Football Federation Australia

Roles and Responsibilities:

- ü Develop and provide user friendly resources to clubs and Member Federations
- ü Manage application process
- ü Promote the scheme Nationally through appropriate networks
- ü Promote Clubs who successfully reach accreditation status
- ü Provide support to Member Federations and Associations

6.0 Assessment and Application Process

6.1 Accreditation Levels

There are 4 levels within each stream of the National Club Accreditation Scheme (Community and Talented Player Pathway), with clubs progressing from Level 1 up to Level 4. The levels will be depicted as stars, which will be used consistently across both streams of accreditation. Stars in each pathway will be differentiated by colour, so that it is clear which stream of the NCAS a club is a part of.

One star will be used to indicate football's minimum standards, whilst four stars indicates the maximum standard. Although the most logical process for clubs will be to work through the various levels to gain stars, beginning with one star, clubs will be able to enter at any level, providing they meet the criteria from previous levels.

N.B. In the future, consideration will be given to add a fifth star, if it becomes apparent that this is necessary to continue to 'challenge' clubs who have already attained four stars.

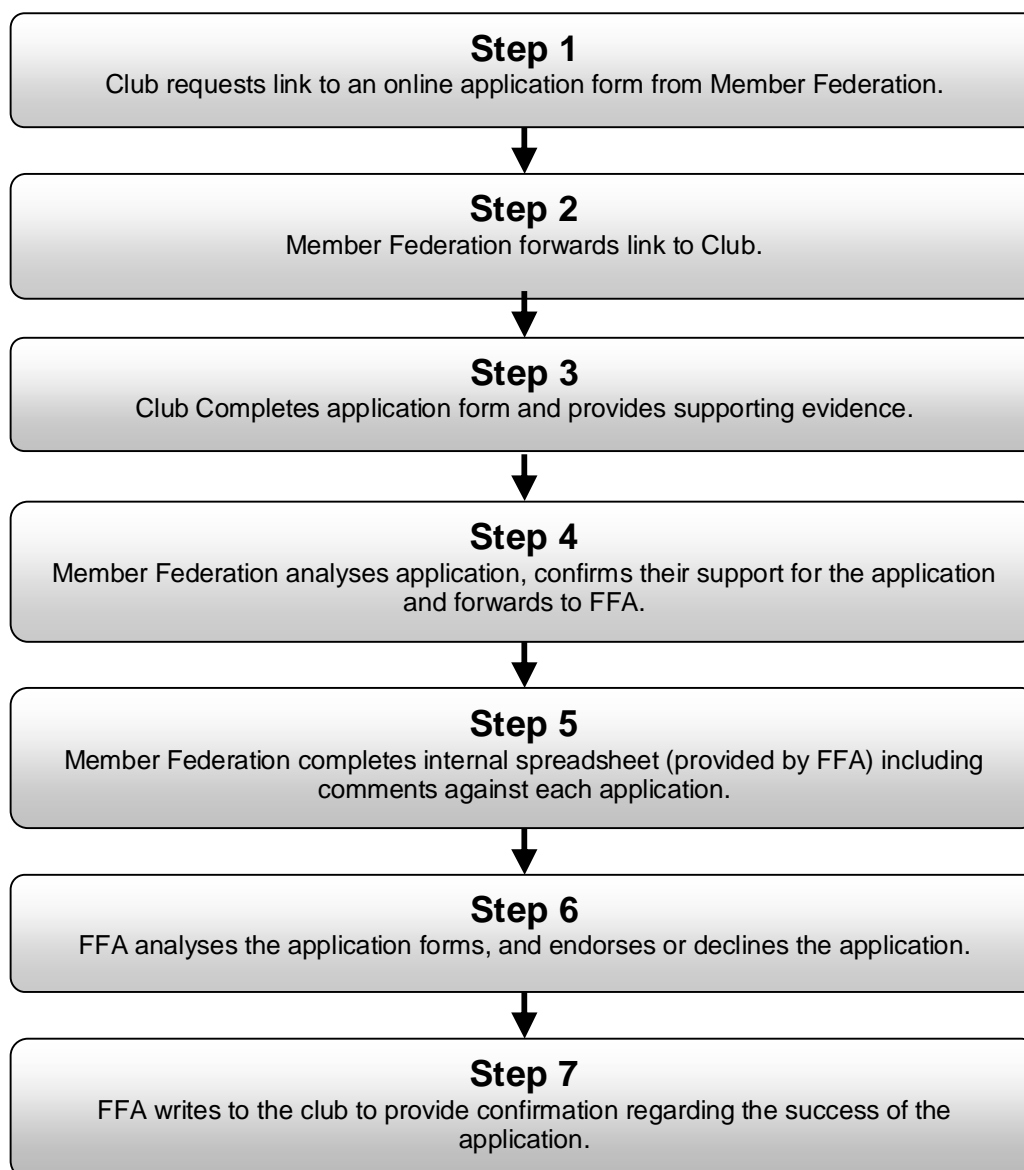
6.2 Online Application process

An online application process will be facilitated through the MyFootballClub website, where a dedicated page will support clubs with their applications. Interested clubs, upon request, will be sent a link to this online application form by their respective Member Federation. The electronic application form will be similar to that used for the Grassroots Football Facilities Fund. In the future, clubs will ultimately be able to upload supporting evidence to enhance their application. During the initial roll-out, however, supporting evidence will need to be provided directly to Member Federations via email, post or facsimile.

6.3 FFA Assessment

FFA will assess all applications, and provide final endorsement for the Accreditation. FFA will accept applications from Member Federations during three application phases within the year. Each Club will be provided with a Certificate and electronic NCAS logo and stars, which can be used in club promotion.

6.4 Application Process



6.5 Application phases

To ensure the effective management of application assessments, at both Member Federation and National levels, FFA will identify three application phases throughout the year when applications will be accepted.

7.0 Support Resources to Assist Clubs

The following list identifies resources FFA will provide to support clubs with the accreditation application process:

- ü Example Constitution
- ü Example Codes of Conducts for players, coaches, and parents
- ü Example Member Protection Policy
- ü Example Smoke Free Policy
- ü Example Alcohol Policy
- ü Example Game Day – Risk Management check list
- ü Example Job Description for Member Protection Officer
- ü Example Risk Management Plan
- ü Example Volunteer Job Description
- ü Example Development Plans for 2, 3 4 Star
- ü Example Volunteer Coordinator Job Description
- ü Example of Strategic Plan
- ü Example Job Description School Liaison Officer
- ü Example Job Description Parent Liaison
- ü Example Job Description Coaching Coordinator

8.0 Incentives and Benefits for Clubs

8.1 Internal Benefits

FFA are committed to striving towards securing tangible benefits for clubs who are part of the NCAS.

Benefits for Clubs

1. Attracting sponsors
2. Priority access to any future funding opportunities through Football Federation Australia
3. Attracting volunteers
4. Gaining members/players
5. Increasing credibility in the community.

Member Federations will be encouraged to set their own incentives for clubs at a State/Territory level. Potential Member Federation incentives could include:

1. reduction in the price of coaching courses;
2. links to Member Federation grants programs.

8.2 External Benefits for Football

FFA will encourage Member Federations to work with their respective State Sport and Recreation Departments and Local Government Authorities to foster links with local club development initiatives and potential small grants opportunities for clubs. FFA will work with Member Federations to promote the scheme among Sport and Recreation departments, throughout Australia.

9.0 Implementation 2010

9.1 Implementation Process

FFA views the National Club Accreditation Scheme as a medium to long term project. The scheme aims to initiate a cultural shift within the club environment and enhance the involvement of MF's and FFA with Clubs beyond simply registration, discipline and governance.

FFA would like to adopt a staged approach to the initial rollout of the scheme in 2010, which will include an annual review of the scheme, including the administrative processes and accreditation criteria.

FFA strongly recommends that every Member Federation takes part in Stage 1 of the implementation. Member Federations will have the ability to determine the speed at which the scheme is rolled out in their respective states/territories. FFA will work with each Member Federation to determine the individual approach to rollout which best reflects the capacity, resources and structure of each organisation (options for MFs are detailed below).

9.2 Management of the Community and Talent Development streams

The two streams within the NCAS will be managed differently;

- ⇒ Community stream will be driven through the FFA Game Development department and will be managed by the National Club Development Manager.
- ⇒ Talent Development stream will be managed by the Technical Director in each state/territory. This will be directed by the FFA Assistant Technical director.

9.3 Member Federation Options for Implementation

- ⇒ Member Federations can select a small number of clubs to target for the scheme in Year 1 of the implementation.
- ⇒ Select Zone or Association for initial implementation.
- ⇒ Roll out each level, i.e focus on rolling out 1 Star in year 1 of the implementation.

9.4 Training for Member Federations

FFA will provide Training to Member Federations staff which will involve providing detail of the application process and criteria.

9.5 Next Steps

FFA will provide more detailed documentation on the approach that will be taken to the rollout of the NCAS including separate information on the criteria. We will also develop a specific resource aimed at clubs that will provide them with background on the NCAS, as well as the overall objective of the program, a detailed explanation of the criteria as well as how they can submit their application.

