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# Men and Women Senior Units: Selection policy and procedure

## Purpose and overview

This document is intended to act as a framework for Waverley Hockey Club (WHC) to make consistent and transparent selection decisions across all men and women's grades and to ensure the goals and objectives of the men and women's unit are achieved.

WHC aims to select the most appropriate team for each grade based on a number of criteria, each of which may be given different weighting depending on the team's circumstances. In doing so, this document recognises that senior teams range from the social to the elite level, and that players join WHC for significantly varying reasons.

Given the nature of hockey, some criteria might have a subjective element and a few criteria might overlap with one another in some aspects.

## Preseason – fitness and conditioning

The club will provide an open invitation to all players to attend fitness and conditioning sessions in December through to the end of February.

These sessions present each individual player with a platform to improve their physical condition. Attending a high percentage of these sessions is strongly encouraged for those players wishing to play in the elite grades or a higher grade than they have played previously.

## Preseason – PL/PLR squad stick sessions

As the season nears, coaches will introduce a Saturday morning stick session and midweek stick sessions after the running component of the session. Players are encouraged to attend these sessions. The coach may seek out individual players who they deem are not up to the fitness or skills standard to continue attending. These players will then need to attend the relevant pennant / metro preseason sessions.

## Players returning from travel – whether it be business, leisure or hockey related

Players may take time off during the season to travel. It is strongly encouraged that this time away from the club is communicated with the relevant coach/s as early as possible. Pending the nature and amount of time spent away from the club, the player may be selected a lower grade than the grade they were in. There is no guarantee that the individual will return to the team they were in prior to leaving. Players aiming to play in higher grades should aim to limit their amount of non-hockey related travel.

## Players returning from injury



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Injuries may mean players can miss varying amounts of time. Players in the elite grades are strongly encouraged to attend trainings and games whilst they are injured (in a non-participation capacity) if the nature of their injury allows them to do so. Pending the nature of the injury and the amount of time they have missed they may be selected in a lower grade than that of which they had been selected prior. It is up to the PL/PLR Selection panel to determine if they are fit and able to then play in higher grades. Players are strongly encouraged to communicate frequently with the coach and team about their condition to avoid any late selection issues or selection which causes further potential injury. If relevant, a return-to-sport plan may be required from a health practitioner, to assist the selection panel with their decisions.

### **Players selected for a lower grade**

Players may be selected in a lower grade on the basis of the selection criteria. Prior to a player being moved to a lower grade, the coach of the team they are being dropped from must be in communication as to why the player has been selected in a lower grade, what the player needs to work on, how they can/should be used, what they do well etc. It is not unreasonable for a player to seek feedback from a coach or coaches following selection to a lower grade. Coaches are strongly advised to be open and honest when communicating.

There is no guarantee of selection in a particular team over the course of the season. An individual's form can fluctuate during the season. If a player wishes to dispute their selection, they are advised to follow the grievance procedure outlined below.

### **Unit Selection panel**

Each Unit will have a Selection Panel for selecting teams. The Selection Panel will be made up of the Unit coaches, the Playing Unit Chair, an Independent Chair of Selectors, and the Hockey Director (role on Executive Committee that is responsible for the playing units).

The selection panel will meet every week leading up to a fixtured round to discuss selections and ensure that coaches are following the selection policy and procedures.

Due to the high likelihood that members of the selection panel will be themselves players in contention and / or parents or relatives of players being considered it may be unavoidable to have panel members who have a conflict of interest. This does not exclude a person from being on the panel (except for the Chair who must be seen to be an Independent Selector) however it may exclude them from participating in certain discussions and in voting where required to finalise a decision.

Where there are differing opinions regarding a decision that needs to be made about the selection of a player, the selection panel will vote. Where there is a declared conflict of interest with regards to the selection of a player, the panel member with the conflict must abstain from participating in selection discussions and voting. This includes selection decisions for coaches who are also players.



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After selection decisions are finalised, it is the responsibility of the coaches to communicate with any players that are moving teams. Communication should occur face-to-face, and where this is not possible, over the phone.

Should a coach and/or member of the selection panel be required to convey a selection decision to a player who is under 18 years of age, then several additional factors will be considered:

- presence of the player's parent or guardian, either in person or via phone\*. Should a parent/guardian be not able to attend the discussion, or not wish to be present, then the parent/guardian can nominate a suitable adult proxy.
- adopting age-appropriate communication strategies - tailoring language to the age and maturity level of the player and ensuring a non-invasive and non-threatening approach to the discussion. The person delivering the selection decision also needs to recognise any signs of discomfort from the player, and if present, pause the discussion and address their concerns, with modification of the approach as required.
- maintenance of privacy and confidentiality (refer to Section 3.3)
- adherence to child safeguarding recommendations.
- players under the age of 18 must not be contacted during school hours.
- if contact to convey selection outcomes occurs via phone, the coach or selection panel member will contact the parent (not the player)

\*The exception to this stipulation can occur when informed consent has previously been obtained from both the player and their parent/guardian about conducting discussions without the parent/guardian requiring to be present at the meeting. This particularly applies to players under the age of 18 who are self-seeking autonomy. In such circumstances, then the coach and selection panel member will re-verify with the player that they are happy to participate in discussions about selections. The player can request the presence of their parent/guardian at any time, even if prior permission has been given for selection discussions to occur with only the player in attendance. No discussions to be conducted on a 1:1 basis with a player under the age of 18 years by a coach or member of the selection panel in a separate space (out of sight of others) and there should always be a minimum of two adults present during discussions with a player under the age of 18 years.

### **Selection Criteria**

Coaches are expected to consider a wide range of criteria in making selection decisions. The importance of the listed criteria will vary overtime depending upon the circumstances. Criteria to be taken into consideration include:

#### **1) Unit Objectives for that season**

The Club's objectives for the Unit for that season will be taken into account when selecting teams.

#### **2) Provide the team with the best available players to win each match**

The primary criterion for selection will be the performance of the players on game day. Areas of performance considered include:



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- The skill level exhibited by the player
- The performance of the player as a member of the team
- The attitude and behaviour of the player on and off the field

### **3) Attendance to training**

In order for registered players to be selected in a team they must be in attendance at training. The only exception to this is where a prior agreement with the team's coach has been discussed. The only grade in which consistent attendance to training will not be used as a selection criterion is the lowest grade of each unit.

### **4) Player fit into the team dynamics**

To be selected for a team, a player should fit within the required team structure. This might include the capacity of a player to play multiple positions if necessary. Fitness, strength and speed of a player will be also evaluated.

### **5) Team development and special circumstances**

To ensure that the goals of the Senior Units are met, team selection will also take into account special circumstances that a team might face during the season, including preparation for finals or avoiding relegation.

### **6) Player development**

Selectors might recommend selection of a player for a lower or higher grade than the one that the player currently plays, in order to facilitate specific aspects of the player's development.

### **7) Player's contribution to team and/or club culture**

This criterion evaluates the player's leadership attitude inside and outside the field, including communication skills and support to their peers. Completion of club commitments, supporting other teams and programs, volunteering and participation in club events may also be considered in selection.

### **8) Disciplinary procedures**

Suspensions and/or punishments due to a breach of the club and/or competition's disciplinary policy will be taken into account for team selection.

### **9) Payment of club fees**

Players must be financially paid in full or have a payment plan prior to being eligible to be selected.

## **Grievance procedures**

A player's initial concern about selection should be communicated to the team's coach.

If the player finds the response unsatisfactory, they should follow below steps:



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1. Discussion with Unit Chair
2. Discussion with Hockey Director or Selection Panel Chair
3. Selection Grievance submission (Formal Complaint)

For more information about a Formal Complaint please visit the club's grievance policy – <https://waverleyhc.org.au/policies-procedures/grievance-process/>

### **Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)**

The Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) are responsible for providing information about a person's rights, responsibilities and options to an individual making a complaint or raising a concern. They can also provide information and advice to sport administrators and complaint handlers with regard to the Member Protection Policy of that sport.

Find out more about how we can support you: <https://waverleyhc.org.au/policies-procedures/member-protection-policy/>