

STRATHMORE SOCCER

Rostering & Tiering Policy



Policy Purpose & Scope

This policy establishes a standardized, fair, and transparent process for player evaluation, team formation, and tier placement across all age divisions. By providing clear guidelines for roster balancing, age exemptions, promotion, and relegation, the club ensures aligned player development, maintains competitive balance, and optimizes opportunities for every athlete to participate in meaningful play while complying with governing body regulations.

1. Evaluation & Assessment Framework

- **U12 and Younger:** Player evaluations are conducted strictly during observed game-play environments.
- **U13 and Older:** Assessments may incorporate specific skill evaluations (e.g., structured technical drills) in addition to observed game-play environments.
- **Standardized Evaluation Criteria:** Assessments utilize the official evaluation rubric, scoring players across five main pillars:
 1. **Technical Skills:** Ball Control/Dribbling, Passing, Defending, Shooting, and Goalkeeping (Scored 1–5; 25 pts total).
 2. **Game-Like Pressure & Intelligence:** Performance under pressure, 50/50 win rate, decision-making, speed, and recovery.
 3. **Sportsmanship & Coachability:** Feedback receptivity, teamwork, communication, work rate, and attitude.
 4. **Player Mentality & Stress Response:** Defensive mindset, distribution vision, and emotional composure under stress.
 5. **Positional Performance Notes:** Contextual evaluation feedback for technical and mental attributes.

2. Integrity & Absences in Evaluations

Evaluator Conflict-of-Interest Standards

- **Mandatory Disclosure:** Evaluators, coaches, board members, and volunteers involved in assessments or roster decisions must disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict before evaluations begin.
- **Conflict Scenarios:** Conflicts include assessing immediate family members, privately coached players, close personal connections, or any situation affecting impartial judgment.
- **Recusal Protocols:** The club may require recusal from scoring, roster discussions, or decision-making where impartiality could be affected.
- **Oversight:** The Technical Director, Evaluation Lead, or designate will review disclosures and establish mitigation steps to safeguard fairness, transparency, and process integrity.

Injury, Illness, or Absence Accommodation

- **Notification Requirement:** Players unable to participate due to injury, illness, emergency, school commitments, or other reasonable circumstances must notify the club as soon as possible and may be asked for supporting context.
- **Assessment Data Points:** Placement considerations may incorporate prior evaluations, coach feedback, training history, game performance, previous placement, medical readiness, and available observation opportunities.
- **Player Safety:** Players will not be required to participate if doing so risks worsening their condition. The club may request confirmation of readiness before placement or game play.
- **Scope of Accommodation:** Accommodations do not guarantee a specific placement, tier, or roster spot. Decisions remain contingent on available data, roster capacity, safety, and meaningful play.

3. Multi-Team Formation & Seasonal Roster Continuity

- **Multi-Team Scenarios (Combined/Odd-Even Age Groups):** When player numbers allow for more than one team across combined age groups (e.g., U12/U13), rosters are filled based on players who demonstrate the technical and tactical ability to compete effectively at that level.
- **Seasonal Transition & Format Fluidity:** Team rosters are reset each season and do not carry over automatically from outdoor to indoor (or vice versa):
 - **Roster Size Variations:** Outdoor seasons (e.g., 11v11) require larger bench capacities, whereas indoor seasons (e.g., 7v7) feature smaller roster sizes.
 - **No Guaranteed Roster Spots:** Placement on an outdoor roster (e.g., an 11v11 team) does not guarantee an automatic spot on the corresponding indoor team (7v7), as roster availability shrinks significantly.
 - **Seasonal Registration Dynamics:** The player pool fluctuates seasonally, with approximately 50% of club players competing year-round while others register exclusively for either indoor or outdoor seasons.
- **Single-Team Tier Placement Criteria:** When only one team is formed in an age category, tier selection is guided by:
 - **Evaluation Results:** To gauge baseline player capability.
 - **Historical Performance & Retention:** High player retention rates favor placing the team in a tier reflective of their previous season's standings.
 - **Roster Turnover:** An influx of new players shifts placement toward a lower tier to allow proper development. A high proportion of returning players leverages past performance to select a higher tier that ensures meaningful play.
- **Roster Balancing & Player Reallocation:** If a team exceeds its minimum roster capacity while another team in the program struggles to meet minimum roster requirements, player movement will be executed to ensure balanced team rosters. Movement will prioritize selecting the player whose skill set most closely aligns with the level required for meaningful play on the receiving team.

4. Promotion, Relegation, & Tier Adjustments

Tier movements between seasons are governed by final league standings, team performance, and contextual circumstances to prioritize competitive balance:

Final Standing Placement	Movement / Action	Decision Factors
1st Place	Automatic Promotion	Mandatory move up to the next tier to ensure ongoing player challenge and development.
2nd or 3rd Place	Considered for Promotion	Evaluated based on overall season performance and roster circumstances.
Middle Standings	Maintain Tier	Retained in current tier level.
2nd or 3rd to Last Place	Considered for Relegation	Evaluated based on overall performance to determine if staying or dropping down provides a better environment for success.
Dead Last (Final Place)	Automatic Relegation	Mandatory move down to a lower tier (where a lower tier exists).

Player Age Exemptions & Gender Rostering Guidelines

Male Player Age Exemptions

- **One Age Group Playing Down:** If a male player registers to play and is one age group older than a younger team's age category, he may apply to register under an age exemption.

- ***Provincial Tournament Restriction:*** In accordance with Alberta Soccer play-down regulations, any male player granted an over-age exemption is strictly ineligible to participate in Provincial Championship competitions should the team qualify.

Female Player Rostering & Transfers

- **Female Team Priority:** Creating designated female teams is prioritized across combined odd-number age brackets (e.g., U12/U13 combined, U14/U15 combined). All female players within these age ranges are automatically rostered to the female team.
- **Direct Transfers Prohibited:** Discretionary requests to move a female player from her age-appropriate team to a boys' team will not be accepted unless all specific criteria below are met.
- **Over-Age Female Exemption Options:** If a female player is older than the designated female team age group:
 - **Option A (Female Team Age Exemption):** She may apply for an age exemption to play on the female team.
 - **Option B (Younger Boys' Team):** She may play on a boys' team up to two age groups younger, provided she competes for and earns her roster spot against the younger male players, and provided her departure does not leave the girls' team under-staffed.
 - ***Provincial Tournament Restriction:*** Players utilizing Option A or Option B are strictly ineligible to participate in Provincial Championship competitions, as Alberta Soccer regulations prohibit older players from playing down in sanctioned postseason events.
- **Equal or Older Age Placement (Provincial Eligible):**
 - To maintain eligibility for Provincial Championships, an older female player must compete on a boys' team that is of equal age or one age group older.
- **Boys' Team Roster Replenishment:** A female player may only move to a boys' team if the female team maintains sufficient roster depth to sustain her departure.

6. Appeals Process

- **Submission Timeline & Grounds:** A parent or guardian may submit a written appeal within seven (7) calendar days of placement notification. Appeals must strictly address process, policy application, administrative error, or undisclosed conflict of interest. Appeals may not re-evaluate scores, compare individual players, or challenge placement based on personal preference.
- **Required Documentation:** The written appeal must explicitly state the specific policy or process concern, relevant factual details, and supporting evidence.

- **Review Protocol:** The Technical Director, Evaluation Lead, or an impartial designate will review the appeal. The review may include consulting evaluation scores, coach logs, evaluator notes, and roster capacity constraints.
- **Appeal Outcomes:** The club may uphold the original decision, correct an administrative error, request additional evaluation information, or adjust placement where warranted and capacity allows.
- **Final Ruling:** The written appeal decision is final within the club's rostering and tiering process, subject to applicable district, league, or governing body regulations.

7. Withdrawals & Refund Eligibility

- **Placement Dissatisfaction Excluded:** Player evaluations, tier placements, and roster assignments are final (subject to Section 6: Appeals Process). A player's or parent's dissatisfaction with a tier placement, team assignment, or coach assignment does not constitute valid grounds for a refund.