



2025 Evaluation Policies

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Glossary and related acronyms

Vancouver United FC (VanU or VUFC) – Your club

British Columbia Soccer Association (BC Soccer) – The Provincial association that governs soccer within the province of British Columbia. The BC Soccer runs the BC Premier Soccer League and manages Provincial competitions.

BC Soccer Premier League (BCSPL) – An elite level league for U14 to U18 players operated by BC Soccer. BCSPL is one step below the Whitecaps Academy program and has franchises in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and the Okanagan. (Note: I don't want to edit this paragraph every time a franchise is added or deleted)

Vancouver Youth Soccer Association (VYSA) – A member of the British Columbia Soccer Association, the VYSA is the district association that administers and oversees soccer within the geographic region in which Vancouver United Football Club plays. VYSA also runs the U11 and U12 Div 3 league for its member clubs as well as an opt-in U9 and U10 league for boys and girls.

BC Coastal Soccer League (BCCSL) – A league offering competition for boys and girls teams from Whistler to Chilliwack for U11 to U18 players. The divisions will be Div 1, Div 2 and Div 3 along with some grandfathered Metro divisions until they age out.

Technical Director (TD) – An employee of Vancouver United charged with the management and implementation of technical programs, including player and coach development.

Assistant Technical Director (ATD) - An employee of Vancouver United charged with assisting the TD with the management and implementation of technical programs, including player and coach development.

Technical Lead (TL) – Contracted positions, reporting to the TD, charged with the management and implementation of technical programs, including player and coach development.

Preface: What are Evaluations and why do we have them?

The Evaluation process has one singular goal: to put players on teams that will meet their needs in terms of **developing the abilities required to play the game and develop a love of the game**. As a community based club we achieve our primary objective when we see players stay in the game through U18. To achieve this, we need commitment from parents, a lot of work by our volunteer and staff coaches and the trust from all members that we are all looking out for the best interests of the players. It is the club's belief that by providing a playing and training environment that accommodates the players' current level of ability and motivation, we stand a better chance of keeping their interest in the game alive. Evaluations are one of the main tools we have to accomplish this goal.

Evaluations are the process we use to determine the level of play that is most suited to players at this moment in time. We have moved away from calling them "tryouts" for two reasons:

1. The term "tryout" infers that the goal is to try and make a particular team. The club, however, does not view the process this way. Rather, we strongly believe that our job is to keep kids playing soccer and the best way to reduce attrition and ensure kids want to continue playing is to challenge them appropriately and find a level of play that suits their abilities each season, their commitment level and their social needs. Players who play on teams that exceed their technical abilities, speed and desired level of commitment are much more likely to have a negative experience and leave the sport. While kids may be upset in the short term if they have not made a 'higher level' team, it is generally a safer bet that in the long run it will facilitate their continued love of and participation in the sport. Research has shown that soccer is a game for late developers. By keeping kids playing we ensure not only a positive outlet for recreational players but a patient environment for late bloomers.
2. The term "tryout" also infers that team selection is based solely on how well players do in evaluated, on-field sessions. This methodology is obsolete. Some players may over-perform in this kind of an environment while others get 'stage fright' and under-perform. Too often, this process does not provide an accurate picture of a player's overall capabilities. As such, 'tryouts' can result in unbalanced and skewed team formations.

Our in-season and season-long Evaluation process is aligned with the CSA and BC Soccer. Our Evaluation process provides more opinions from more people involved in the player's season. Here are some examples of our current Evaluation process:

- Staff and Team Coach Reports through Game Evaluations, VanU Academy, VanU Plus Program, VanU Team Support Program, Friday Plus Program, VanU Skill Centre and/or U10 Game Support Program
 - For the 2024-25 season this has been expanded with team coaches asked to provide online reports on each player after each game
- Standardized Player Assessment Forms submitted by current coaches
 - This goes beyond providing scores on game play to asking qualitative questions around commitment and behaviour at training and games.
- End of season Evaluation Sessions
 - Increasingly this is used to determine the overall strength of an age group and to determine how many teams we will form in that age group and in which divisions they will be affiliated. It is also the main opportunity we have to evaluate players who are coming to us from another club
- Prospective coaches' input
 - There are years where the coaches change between seasons. It's important that an incoming coach has input into the roster she or he is taking on and where coaches remain the same that they are consulted on the process.

This approach ensures that the Evaluation period is extended throughout the season to attain a more complete picture of a player's abilities, skills and level of commitment. This approach also provides checks and balances that guard against nepotism, both conscious or unconscious, and the occasionally errant opinion on a player, as well as accounting for the fact that different coaches value different aspects of the game more than others. It is critical that players and parents realize that the Technical Director does not score players at any of these phases. The TD is responsible for overseeing that the entire process that involves over 1,200 players is managed properly and that all the sources of scores and input are

collected and presented at team formation meetings where rosters are finalized. The role of the TD at the Team Formation Meetings is to present all the data and lead the discussion on team formation with the coaches of the teams that are there and to ensure EVERY player is considered fairly.

Multiple sources are involved in the Evaluation process including current team coaches, VUFC staff coaches, and coaches for the team(s) being formed. In so doing, we receive several perspectives and are much more likely to make the right decisions regarding player placements. There can be up to 20 data points for a player in the Evaluation process.

With team and staff coaches participating in evaluations and discussions about player progression we have a very good idea of their appropriate level of play for most players before they step on the field at the Phase 3 Evaluation Sessions. However, **these sessions provide an opportunity for parent coaches to see the players and get familiar with those who might be on their team next season. It is also the best opportunity for players new to VUFC to be evaluated if they want to play at the club next season.**

For parents of players coming out of our U10 Second Kicks program we are often asked why we have Evaluations or why we have them for players at the younger age groups. The answer is down to how youth soccer is governed. Clubs, like VUFC, belong to Districts. Districts are charged with entering teams into leagues on behalf of their clubs at the U11 to U18 age groups. VUFC is part of the Vancouver Youth Soccer Association (VYSA). These leagues operate within a structure that is tiered into multiple levels of play by ability.

Finally, tiering helps to ensure that players of a similar ability play with and against one another. By U11 there are some very athletic, technically strong players who have been playing the game since they were very young. They are committed to the sport and some are on their way to becoming very good players. To put them on the same field of play with and against players playing their first season of soccer and/or with those who aren't as technically adept yet does not make sense. Neither player will benefit or enjoy the experience. One player will not be challenged and may get bored; the other player will likely feel marginalized and unable to participate or contribute to the team effort. By offering multiple playing environments, we meet the needs of far more players in the hope of fostering a love for the game and continued play. That is the essence of tiering.

Soccer is a sport for late developers. If we don't engage and keep kids playing at levels that work for them then they will likely quit and will never have a chance to develop to their full potential and enjoy playing the game long into their adult years with friends. We regularly see 20-30% of players change their level of play between U11 and U14. This is normal and a good indicator that the Evaluation process works well.

These procedures have been designed and refined over several years in response to membership requests for more transparency in Evaluations, that are overseen by neutral, experienced soccer personnel and which respect the time, knowledge and effort of volunteer parent coaches. We encourage you to talk to your son or daughter more than once about Evaluations to help them to understand what it is and what purpose it serves, especially for those going through it the first time. This policy document is intended to help you, as a parent, understand the process and to answer the questions your child may have. The more they talk about it, the more it will become normalized and they will just show up ready to enjoy playing soccer when it's time for their on-field Evaluation Sessions.

Lastly, all the information you will need for Evaluations can be found on the club website here:

<http://www.vancouverunitedfc.com/evaluations>

Gregor Young, Executive Director
Vancouver United FC

November 2024

1. U11 to U14 Evaluations Information

A. General Description

There are four phases in our Evaluations. They are as follows:

Phase 1: The collection of scores from staff coaches and team coaches after games. These are collected through an online form accessed by the coaches.

Phase 2: Team coaches complete, near the end of the season, a qualitative assessment of their players that looks at team competitiveness, player commitment, coachability and a recommendation for consideration to remain at the same level next season or move up or down a division.

Phase 3: On-field evaluations at the end of the season. As explained earlier in this document this serves three purposes. The first is to try to finalize the number of teams we will form in each age group and what divisions they will play in. The second is to give players who may have joined a team from another club later in the season additional looks and third is to allow players who want to join us from other clubs a chance to be looked at and considered.

Phase 4: This is the Team Formation Meeting where the TD and/or ATD meet with the current season coaches and any coaches who weren't involved in the current season but will be coaching this age group next season to go over the data collected from Phase 1, 2 and 3 and ensure all players are considered for the various divisions. Rosters are selected at this meeting and then communicated at the earliest feasible time to players and parents.

The following is a description and chronology for VUFC player evaluations and team formation for age groups up to U14.

i. In-season Period

Through the season the TD, the ATD and TL's will assess each age group's numbers, strength and results to develop a plan that will facilitate the Evaluation process for each age group. These efforts are done in consultation with team coaches.

The final number of Div 1, 2 and 3 teams cannot be 100% decided until late in the process as there will be external factors such as B.C. Soccer Premier League (BCSPL) evaluations, players coming in from outside clubs, and general attrition that may affect the final number of teams at each age group and their levels of play.

ii. Evaluation Information Meetings

There will be a **Coach and Age Group Coordinator Evaluations Information meeting** (please refer to the schedule below) to explain the evaluation process and to address questions and concerns. The TD and TL's will also go over what the players will be asked to do during the Phase 3 Evaluation Sessions so coaches can familiarize players with them ahead of time.

We also host **Parent Information Meetings** (please refer to the schedule below). The meetings will target parents of players heading into this process for the first time (i.e. parents of 2014 born players), as well as those who have older players but want to learn more about the process. **Below is the meeting schedule. All meetings will take place via Zoom. Register on our website to get the link.**

Dates	Meeting topic/age group
Mon Jan 30, 8:00 pm	Info mtg for current U10-17 AGC's and coaches
Sun Feb 5, 6:30 pm	Info mtg for parents of 2014 born players (entering U11)
Sun Feb 5, 8:00 pm	Info mtg for parents for 2011 born Division 1 & Pre-BCSPL
Mon Feb 6, 8:00 pm	Info mtg for parents of 2006-12 born players (entering U12-18)

B. What level of play should my child consider being evaluated for?

i. BCSPL (U14-18):

BCSPL is the only league that is designated as elite by BC Soccer for youth players. Players should generally be among the strongest U13's and be prepared for a considerably longer season that has 80-90 training sessions and 20-30 games played across the Lower Mainland, the Okanagan and Vancouver Island. This level of play requires a strong commitment to the game and team. Evaluations for this level of play are handled differently than for all others so as to be in accordance with league rules and timelines.

BCSPL staff coaches, in conjunction with the TD and ATD, regularly consult with the Div 1 coaches in their age group and invite recommended U14 to U18 Div 1 players to train in the BCSPL team environment and play with the team on a permit as the main means of evaluating players.

ii. BCCSL Div 1 (U14 to U18)

Div 1* is the highest level of recreational play in the Lower Mainland. It starts at U11 and goes through to U18. **Potential U14 and older Div 1 level players should be able to do the following consistently well, relative to other players their age:**

- 1) Control the ball comfortably with all parts of their body including both feet.
- 2) Control the ball from a variety of service (i.e. balls arriving in the air, bouncing, on the ground).
- 3) Strike the ball with both feet and in specific ways that allow them to accurately hit the ball the way they intend to (i.e. to shoot, volley, chip, and pass with intended velocity) over short and long distances.
- 4) Move with the ball under control at speed while changing direction.
- 5) Recognize when and how to shield the ball from opponents.
- 6) Defend with good awareness, patience and technique.
- 7) Make good, early decisions with the ball that show good tactical awareness.
- 8) Involve teammates in the game appropriately.
- 9) Have the fitness, speed, coordination, and strength to play at this highest level.
- 10) Be committed. It is expected that efforts will be made to attend all games and practices.

**For players/parents considering playing Div 1, please familiarize yourself with the VanU Plus Program outlined in Section G when deciding which level to be evaluated for.*

iii. BCCSL Div 1 players (U11-13):

Potential Div 1 level players should be able to do the following consistently well, relative to other players their age:

- 11) Control the ball with all parts of their body. [U11-U13]
- 12) Control the ball from a variety of service (i.e. balls arriving in the air, bouncing, on the ground). [U11-U13]
- 13) Strike the ball with both feet and in specific ways that allow them to accurately hit the ball the way they intend to (i.e. to shoot, volley, chip, and pass with intended velocity). [U12-13]
- 14) Move with the ball under control at speed. [U11-U13]
- 15) Defend with good awareness, patience and technique. [U12-13]
- 16) Make good, early decisions with the ball that show emerging tactical awareness. [U11-U13]
- 17) Involve teammates in the game rather than doing everything themselves. [U11-U13]
- 18) Have the fitness, speed, coordination, and strength to play at the highest level. [U12-13]
- 19) Be committed to play and practice on a high level youth team. It is expected that efforts will be made to attend all games and practices. [U11-U13]

**For players/parents considering playing U11 Div 1/U12 Div 1, please familiarize yourself with the U11/U12 VanU Plus Program outlined in Section G when deciding which level to be evaluated for.*

ii. **Div 2 players:**

Div 2 level players may demonstrate some or most of the characteristics above, but may not meet the Div 1 level requirements as they may still be developing one or more of these components or may not be able to do them consistently or on demand. For example, a Div 2 player may demonstrate very good ball control and tactical game awareness but has not yet developed the fitness, speed or strength to compete at the Div 1 level, or vice versa. They may also be able to demonstrate a strong ability in a particular aspect of the game in a drill that has no opposition but then not be able to do the same thing under pressure in a game-like environment. Commitment is also given consideration. Having said that there is generally less of a time commitment than that of the Div 1 program.

iii. **Div 3 players:**

Div 3 level players may not meet the Div 2 level requirements as they may still be developing most of the components outlined above. The time commitment required is one practice per week (60 to 90 minutes) and one game per week. There is a much higher tolerance for accommodating other activities in Div 3 and because of this we try to make the rosters on Div 3 teams bigger.

Divisional formats

Age Group	Division	Game Format
U11-12 Boys & Girls	Div 1-3	8 a-side
U13 Boys & Girls	Div 1-3	9 a-side
U14 – U18 Boys & Girls	Div 1-3	11 a-side
U14 – U18 Boys & Girls	BCSPL	11 a-side

**Aside from the BCSPL teams, all the teams above compete in the BC Coastal Soccer League (BCCSL) which is governed by the Districts in the Lower Mainland. BC Soccer Premier League (BCSPL) is governed by BC Soccer directly.*

C. Registration for Phase 3 Evaluations

Phase 3 of the Evaluations is the on-field sessions at the end, or near the end, of the current season. These are run by the TD, the ATD and VUFC senior staff coaches who score and rank players in a variety of small-sided games.

All players wanting to play Div 1 or 2 level soccer next season must **pre-register online for Phase 3 Evaluations**. It is essential that players are registered **at least one week before their first on-field evaluation session**.

Players that want to play Div 3 do not need to register for or attend Phase 3 sessions. They will be placed on a Div 3 team once they register to play next season. Please register early if there is a specific Div 3 team you would like to be on as teams fill up on a first come, first placed basis. Registration for Div 3 for the 2024-25 will open in early February.

Please note that while you can select that you would like to be considered for Div 1 or 2, if you played at a lower level than the one you are requesting this season your selection will be treated as a request and scores from Phase 1 and 2 will be used to ascertain whether an invite will be extended to attend the Phase 3 sessions you have requested.

For players in U10, a more liberal use of invitations is utilized given the players are coming from a non-tiered level of play and it is the players first year participating in Evaluations. All players are welcome to request consideration for Div 1 teams but the TD may use Phase 1 and 2 scores to contact families to let them know that the player is not suited to that level at this time.

WHAT DOES THE EVALUATION FEE COVER?

Players who were registered with VanU on a U10 to U17 team during the 2024-25 season and are in good standing regarding fees being paid do not need to pay an additional registration fee for Evaluations this year. The costs for all four phases of the Evaluations are incorporated into your registration fee. You do still need to register for Phase 3 sessions though so we can manage the numbers attending those sessions.

Players who did not play for VanU in 2024-25 need to register for our Phase 3 sessions. You will be charged \$100. If you are offered a spot on a team that you attended Phase 3 sessions for, \$75 of the Evaluation fee will be discounted from the registration fee. If you decline a spot on a team at the age and level you registered to be Evaluated for and choose not to play at VanU you will not receive a refund on your Evaluation registration fee. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Players can find the link to register for Phase 3 on the club website here:

<http://www.vancouverunitedfc.com/evaluations>

If you wish to play Div 3 level soccer next season please register online for the 2025-26 season and select the box saying you plan to play Div 3 next season. You DO NOT need to register or attend Phase 3 of the evaluations; you will be placed on a Div 3 team but the pre-registration really helps us in forming and affiliating Div 3 teams as they must be submitted to the District by a set deadline with that meet the minimum number of players and team officials.

D. Div 1 Player Commitment Letters

Players trying for these levels will be required to adhere to the Player Commitment letter that will be part of the online registration form for Phase 3. It is important that players realize that **playing on a Division 1 team is a considerable commitment**. Coaches will expect players to be motivated to develop and attendance at games and training will be monitored. A player's inability to adhere to the Player Commitment in the Spring may result in players being removed from these rosters. Players choosing to accept a spot on these teams should not do so lightly. Please give it careful thought before committing.

WANT TO PLAY pre-BCSPL or U11-13 Div 1?

Please familiarize yourself with the information related to these programs before registering for evaluations. **More info on our website under "PROGRAMS"**.

Players who specify that they want to be evaluated as a goalkeeper must similarly agree that, if selected, they will play at least half of each game in goal. The registration form for Phase 3 will ask if players wish to be considered a full time or part time goalkeeper. Goalies at U13 and under must also be able to demonstrate some ability to play other positions at the level they are being evaluated for or close to it. This will be taken into consideration but will not necessarily be the deciding factor when teams are formed.

E. Detailed Evaluation Chronology

It is important to understand and remember that VUFC Evaluations consist of **four phases** and that team formation is not simply a function of how players perform at the end of season on-field Phase 3 evaluation sessions. The club, in keeping with national and provincial policy, is committed to ongoing, in-season evaluations. Those phases occur throughout the year and have events associated with them (e.g. a registration period or info meetings) that precede the bulk of the work being done. Below provides a sense of what and when you can expect regarding each phase.

January

- All coaches are now required to check in with their players and the player's parents twice through the season to both see how they are doing and feeling about the season and to let them know how they, the coach, feels they are doing. These meetings are to be held in late October/early November and late January/early February. Parents who have questions relating to the strengths and/or weaknesses of their child should be consulting with their team coach around this time. This is the best time to ask as coaches have had several months working with the players and can therefore give constructive feedback

NOTE: Phase 3 is not designed to provide individual feedback. It provides a ranking of players to assist in team formation and is just one of four phases used to select team rosters. Therefore, please do not ask for such feedback from the TD or staff coaches during or after Phase 3.

Late January/Early February:

- The TD or ATD will forward a link to the online Player Assessment Form (Phase 2) to coaches. Coaches must fill out the Player Assessment Form for each player on their team by the date specified. Coaches will consult with their players' parents to identify the level they want to be considered for next season at their second scheduled meeting in late January/early February**. All information will be submitted on the Player Assessment Form. This is a critical part of the Evaluation Process.

****NOTE:** This decision is not binding at this point in the process. When completing the online evaluation registration, players may change their target level, however, getting an early indication helps us plan for how many players we will have at each on field session.

- Links to the online Intent to Coach Forms will be distributed to coaches. A deadline for applying will be provided at this time. Coach selection is open to anyone to apply each season. Our Coach Selection Policies are available here: <https://vancouverunitedfc.com/coach-selection-policy>

NOTE: As a community-based organization, VUFC tries to encourage collaborative coaching efforts. This may take the form of fostering a co-coach situation for teams where competition to coach exists or by endorsing a coach/assistant coach(es) scenario presented by two or more coaches who wish to work together. Coaches wishing to present such arrangements should try to do so at this time. The TD retains final say on all coaching appointment decisions.

- An information meeting will be held for coaches and managers in age groups where U11 to U14 evaluations are being run. At this time, all duties for the evaluations will be assigned and described (see Roles and Responsibilities page) and examples of the types of activities the players will be put through will be discussed. At this meeting, coaches and managers will have the opportunity to ask any questions and address concerns. There will also be a meeting for parents new to the Evaluation process. See the meeting schedule in Section 1a (ii).

- All players wanting to play Div 1 or 2 level soccer next season will be required to pre-register online for Evaluations unless directed otherwise by the Technical Director. The online registration system will be open in early February. VUFC staff will also distribute the registration link to team coaches/manager by email once the link is open. See **Pre-registration for Evaluations** under Section 1c for more details.

**When deciding which team/level (Div 1, 2 or 3) you intend to coach, try to estimate the level your son/daughter is most suited for playing (see section A for guidance on playing levels). All coaching appointments are subject to confirmation by the TD during evaluations. Therefore, if you choose a level your child is not selected for, we are able to make adjustments then. For example, if you are scheduled to coach a Div 2 team and the evaluations reveal that your son/daughter is more suited for the Div 1 level, they will be offered a spot on the Div 1 team and we will find another coach for the Div 2 team. You will be considered to coach the Div 1 team. All of this is assuming that you only intend to Coach a team with your child on it.*

*Where there is competition for coaching positions the TD will consult with relevant Club staff and will make the final decision. Ideally all coaching positions should be filled as early as possible. **Prospective coaches of Div 1 and 2 teams will be identified before Phase 3 evaluations and confirmed during these Evaluations when it becomes apparent which level their child, if applicable, is most likely to end up playing.** Where there is competition for coaching positions for Div 2 teams the Club will place coaches as per the process outlined above for Div 1 coaches.*

NOTE: If a player wants to play Div 3 level soccer next season the player does not need to attend Phase 3 evaluations. However, we request that you register the player for the 2025-26 season as early as possible and select the Div 3 team option. This will be a tremendous help to those charged with forming and affiliating Div 3 teams with the VVSA.

- All Phase 3 session dates will be finalized and published on the club website. These will be subject to change as some circumstances are beyond the clubs’ control (such as field closures). All attempts will be made to set evaluation dates and locations as early as possible. These will be posted on the Evaluations page of the club website and communicated through the Age Group Coordinators. Please be patient and flexible and accept that last minute changes are a possibility. Check the website just before your scheduled Evaluation date to make sure there have not been any changes to dates, times or fields.

Late February to late April

Phase 3 sessions begin.

f. Coach Selection

As part of the club’s commitment to community and volunteers, parent coaches in good standing that have current experience within an age group from the past season that spans back at least one season will be given priority over non-parent volunteer coaches and other parent coaches to coach at the level their child is assessed to be at.

Moreover, coach selection will be tied into the club’s “Game, Club, Community” ethos using the criteria in our Coach Selection Policy. You can read that policy here: <https://vancouverunitedfc.com/coach-selection-policy>

g. Phase 3 Evaluations: On-field Assessments

Evaluation Flow Chart

Please refer to the **Evaluation Flow Chart (Table 1 at the end of this document)** to help determine which parts of Phase 3 your child needs to attend.

- Once posted, review the Evaluation Session schedule to determine when your child needs to attend.
- For age groups that have been tiered from the season before (i.e. U11 moving into U12 and up) players who have played Div 1 that season will proceed directly to Div 1 Sessions. Stronger Div 2 players may also be directed to Part B based on in-season evaluations from team coaches and/or staff coaches.

NOTE: An invitation to any Phase 3 Session does not mean that a player is ensured placement on a team at that level as all players participating will be objectively looked at for placement into next season's teams, not just returning players.

- All players not selected for Div 1 or 2 teams will either be directed to the Phase 3 sessions for the next level down or a small number may be selected for that level directly if the TD feels we have enough info to do so (i.e. If they did not make a Div 1 team but were close the TD may offer them a spot on a Div 2 team without them needing to attend further Phase 3 sessions for the Div 2 teams).
- Div 2 Sessions are scheduled to be two sessions. Two may or may not be necessary, depending on the age group, total number of players, anticipated number of Div 2 teams in the age group and assessment data gathered in previous phases. In these cases, there will only be one Div 2 Session.

NOTE: U14 Div 1 and 2 Evaluations will occur after BC SPL Evaluations. Dates may not be known until after the initial Phase 3 schedule is posted but will be posted as soon as they are known.

- The results from each part of Phase 3 will be sent by email with clear direction of next steps. Players will be notified as soon as we feel we are able to. It is not uncommon for there to be unanticipated delays in sending out results. We know this is stressful and we appreciate your patience in these situations. Please note that players need to register and pay their fees within 72 hours of accepting their spot on a team.

h. Phase 3 Evaluation Criteria

Note: Different scoring systems may be used depending on the number of players attending an evaluation. For example, while the descriptive categories may be used evaluators may simply score players as Div 1, 2 or 3 in some cases; particularly older age groups.

For most Phase 3 sessions, players will be evaluated on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is low and 10 is high. Evaluators are encouraged to use the full spectrum of marks available to them so as to allow for a ranking that will better differentiate between players.

9-10 – (Impact) – Absolutely superior, *relative to others*, in terms of first touch, striking the ball, vision, decisions. May also be physically dominant in terms of speed, strength and work rate. Show great understanding of basic tactical elements of the game (shape, attacking principles, defending principles). Can control ball with all parts of body, can strike the ball in a variety of ways. Can make an early decision that is appropriate for the circumstance and quickly employ the correct skill in an effective, constructive manner. A score of 10 is reserved for the top 1 or 2 players overall.

7-8 – (Above Average) – Technically excellent and physically capable, *relative to others*, of handling expected speed and work rate. Easily good enough for team trying out for. Skills are sufficient to ensure they will consistently control and strike the ball in a way that will help team maintain possession, create scoring chances or deny scoring chances. Strength and speed are commensurate with this level of play and player is committed to accepting coaching and becoming a better player.

5-6 – (Average) – Strong basic skills but perhaps deficient in one or two areas *relative to others*. Can control the ball, make an early decision and act on it consistently. Mobile and aware of what is happening around them. Will likely be a bubble player with players having a 6.0 average being much more likely to be placed on a lower level rather than the one being evaluated for.

3-4 – (Below Average) – Does not have skill set necessary for this level *relative to others*. Cannot control most passes directed to them. Does not strike the ball properly. Has difficulty with balls delivered in the air and cannot provide service in the air. Consistently relinquishes possession of the ball and has little ability to regain possession. Lacks pace, strength and has limited work rate. Tends to only become active in proximity to the ball.

1-2 – (Developing) – Should be directed to Div 3.

Station Description

Stations at Phase 3 will be determined by the TD who will base the decision on the age group and level of the evaluations as well as the total number of players expected to attend the evaluation. Stations will be different types of small-sided games. There will be some opportunity for the coach(es) of the teams the players are being evaluated for to request a particular station to evaluate players at.

i. Phase 4: Team Formation Meeting

- Once Phase 3 Evaluation Sessions are complete, the Team Formation Meeting (Phase 4) occurs. These meetings allow those involved in the evaluation process to go over observations and data from Phase 1, 2 and 3 that will help the coaches and TD decide on final team composition. This meeting will finalize team rosters for the next season.
- The team formation process is a lengthy but co-operative effort with the TD and/or ATD, along with staff coaches and team coaches participating. The process will involve ensuring every player who registered for Phase 3, even if they were not able to attend a Phase 3 session, is considered for the level of play being selected.
- The VanU Board may, at its discretion appoint a Board member to sit in and observe Phase 4 sessions. All Phase 4 sessions both in person and those held on Zoom are recorded and available to reference by Board members for a full year after the meeting.

In the event more than one team is formed to compete at the same level, the same process will apply but every effort will be made to ensure relative parity between these teams with the TD/ATD continuing to ensure fair player placement. The TD/ATD will guide this process and ensure all relevant factors are considered and respected by the coaches.

- The TD or ATD will ensure female attendance at team formation meetings for girls teams U11 through U14 based on the following order:
 - a female staff coach familiar with the age group. If not, then
 - a female volunteer head coach for team if chosen by VanU to coach the team (likely dependent on player assessed to play at the level). If not, then
 - a female volunteer assistant coach for team if chosen by VanU to coach the team (likely dependent on player assessed to play at the level). If not, then

- a female board member.

If no female representatives from the list above to attend the team formation meeting, the team formation meeting will proceed and the TD or ATD will record the meeting as is the standard practice.

NOTE: In exceptional cases, the TD may offer roster spots to players at any time in the team formation process. All final team rosters must be approved by the TD.

j. Player Notifications

- Once all 4 phases of the Evaluation Process are complete, parents will be given direction by email on how to access the team rosters.

Players must confirm/accept their spot on the team within 24 hours of an offer being made. Information on confirming your child's spot, generally by phoning/emailing the team coach, will be communicated to all families. Players must then register and pay their 2025-26 fees within an additional 24 hours. If this is problematic for financial reasons, please contact the club registrar who will look at solutions with you discretely.

- **Parents are not to contact the TD, ATD, Staff coaches, team coaches or anyone else regarding results of evaluations.** The Phase 3 (on-field evaluations) sessions are rankings and not individualized assessments. There are no notes on specific players compiled. All questions regarding *the process* must be submitted by email to the TD *after you are sure your question or concern is not already addressed in this Evaluation Package.* **The TD will only answer questions or concerns about the processes used at evaluations and not inquiries related to player placement or player performance. Also, emails/calls with questions that can be answered by information contained in this document may not receive a response. Do not contact any other VUFC staff coaches AGC's or Board members regarding Evaluations questions.**

NOTE: Each year there are players, for very good reasons, who are unable to attend Phase 3 Sessions. Sometimes this is due to injury or a player has moved to the area in the off season. For current VUFC players we will have enough information to fairly place such players using information from the other three phases. Players in this situation should be directed to the TD for consultation. Placement on teams, for players who missed the Evaluations and/or are new to the club, will be at the discretion of the TD and dictated primarily by the club's needs in terms of teams that still need some players. Coaches should not have these players come out to training sessions for their newly selected teams, or games, unless directed to do so.

Adding players to rosters after Phase 4

At Phase 4, all team rosters will include up to three players on an alternate list (unpublished) in the event that spaces open up on a team. As these will be players who have already been evaluated, they will be able to be added to rosters with no further evaluation necessary at any point. Coaches will NOT be able to reach beyond this list of alternates to take other players, absent the agreement of the TD.

Players arriving at the club once rosters have been set will not be considered until:

- They have completed the ITC process (if necessary)
- There is an appropriate avenue for them to be evaluated for the age and level they wish to be considered for.

Administration of new players being added to rosters will be handled by TD and Director of Operations, in consultation with the coach/es of the relevant team.

As with all placements, the final decision on players being added to rosters is completely within the TD's discretion.

k. Roles and Responsibilities

Technical Director and Assistant Technical Director:

- Update information for Evaluation Policies and get Board approval for substantive changes.
- Update all online Evaluation materials including Phase 3 dates, Phase 3 registration form, Coach application forms, staff coach evaluation forms, related admin materials, posting of final rosters.
- Update and distribute forms for Phase 1 and distribute to coaches.
- Ensure coaches continue to fill out Phase 1 scores through the season.
- Collate Intent to Coach forms. Carry out coach selection process for teams and/or levels with multiple applicants. Work with others to place coaches with various team/levels as we move throughout the Evaluation process.
- Collate Player Assessment Forms completed by team coaches for Phase 2 scores.
- Assign staff coaches to evaluate players and teams throughout the season.
- Run Evaluation Information Meetings for team officials and parents.
- Evaluation logistics (i.e. format, times, locations, equipment, evaluators, stations, etc.).
- Ensure master registration list is brought to each evaluation session.
- Manage Phase 3 sessions to ensure they run efficiently. Primary concern beyond logistics is to finalize number of teams being selected for each age group/level, finalize coach selection where possible.
- Serve as an evaluator when feasible and/or necessary.
- Finalize all coaches for the teams being selected.
- Collect any/all evaluator scores and observations and ensure they are compiled for use at Team Formation Meeting.
- Lead Team Formation Meeting and endorse final team rosters.
- Ensure decisions on offers to players are communicated in a timely, accurate manner.
- Ensure that team rosters are finalized in a timely manner and communicated as appropriate.

VUFC Admin staff:

- At Phase 3 (on-field assessments): Coordinate on-site registrations for players that didn't register online. Remind them they need to register after the session if they want to receive communication related to the evaluation session.
- At Phase 3 (on-field assessments): Ensure each player has a numbered bib and record that bib number on supplied sheet.
- Forward Evaluation Session information and reminders (at least one week prior) to coaches and team officials with instructions to pass on the information to their players and parents.
- Remind parents to stay off the field during Phase 3 sessions.
- Collate Phase 3 scores after each session.

Evaluators:

- Evaluate players according to standards provided.
- Ensure correct input of player bib numbers on Evaluation sheet.
- Hand in completed, legible signed evaluation sheets to TD or TL's at end of each evaluation session.
- Respect players' privacy by refraining from communicating any information or opinions relating to evaluation format and/or player performances to any parents or other bystanders.
- Do not coach players at Phase 3 sessions. Observe and record only.
- Use neutral language in all comments to players and parents regarding performance at sessions.

Current season's coaches:

- Complete online Player Assessment forms within the designated timelines.
- Complete Coach Application for next season if you plan to return as a coach.
- Attend Evaluation Information Meeting.
- Notify players of evaluation dates/locations and relay evaluation policies information.
- Consult with players and/or their parents about the level they want to be evaluated for and provide guidance, as necessary, based on their knowledge of players' ability.
- Be prepared to help warm players up while TD and Independent Evaluators get session set up.
- Help with logistics during evaluations including managing subs during small-sided games and helping players rotate through stations.
- Do not coach players at Phase 3 sessions. Observe and record only.
- Remain neutral in comments made to players during the session and support all players equally, not just the ones from your team.
- Those coaching next season should take notes on players; particularly ones you are not familiar with.
- May be asked to contribute, in person or by phone, to Team Formation Meeting to provide additional insights.
- Familiarize yourself with the Evaluations Policies and be main point of contact to answer parent/player inquiries leading up to evaluations.

Incoming Coaches (next season)*:

- Attend Evaluation Information Meeting.
- Attend all evaluation sessions for your team, assist with the evaluation process as required and ensure you see all players over the course of the evaluations.
- Bring list of desired players to Team Formation Meeting along with notes/opinions on other players. These will be compared with Evaluator observations and completed end of season Player Assessment Forms from last season's coaches in consultation with the TD.
- Accept confirmations from team members once roster is posted and advise the TD of player confirmations.

**If you also coached this current season, consider these as being in addition to the duties listed in "Current Season's Coach"*

Parents:

- Familiarize yourself with all the information in this package and discuss it with your child. As a family, decide whether your child wants to participate in Phase 3 and, if so, for which level. Players who opt not to register for Phase 3 will be placed on a Div 3 team once they have registered for the following season. ***For players/parents considering playing U11 or U12 Div 1, please familiarize yourself with the VanU Plus Program outlined in Section G when deciding which level to be evaluated for.***
- Attend the check in meetings with your child's team coach if you are unsure which level your child should be evaluated for.
- Based on that consultation and knowing what your child can realistically commit to, register your child for the appropriate evaluation well in advance.
- Remember that requesting a higher level Phase 3 session than you played this season is treated as a request that will be weighed against Phase 1 and 2 data. You will be notified if your request has been accepted and your child invited to the session they asked for.
- Ensure your child arrives on time and with the appropriate equipment (boots, shin pads, jacket, soccer clothing water, etc). It would also be a good idea to refresh your child's memory on how the Evaluations are structured so they are not surprised or overwhelmed when they arrive at a Phase 3 Session.
- Respect the work of the volunteers and evaluators and allow them to do their work without unnecessary intrusion. Parents will be asked to stay behind the fence of the field being used to allow evaluators and coaches to talk candidly and to keep the evaluation area as clear as possible for players and evaluation staff.
- Regularly check for updated Phase 3 information including dates, times, locations and results throughout the process. At the end of the last Phase 3 session, check online to see which team your child has been placed on. **Players are expected to confirm/accept their spot on the team within 24 hours of the information being posted.** Information about how to confirm your child's spot, generally by emailing the team coach, will be provided online at the time of posting.
- Do NOT contact the TD, ATD Evaluators or team coaches regarding results of Phase 3 sessions or final rosters. All questions regarding the process must be submitted by email to the TD after you are sure your question or

concern is not addressed already in this Evaluation Package. **The TD will only answer questions or concerns about the processes used at evaluations and not inquiries related to player placement or player performance. Also, emails/calls with questions that can be answered by information contained in this document may not receive a response.**

Players:

- Arrive at the Phase 3 sessions ready to listen to instructions.
- Players may be asked to play several different positions in small-sided games.
- Some players may play more than others at Phase 3. This is almost always intentional as we may need more time to get a score for some players
- Understand that the goal of the Evaluations is to find the ideal playing level for them so that they can enjoy the game and develop as much as possible.
- Remember that Phase 3 sessions are different from regular training sessions. They will not be 'coached'. The drills and/or small-sided games won't be stopped so coaching points can be made.
- Arrive at the sessions dressed to play soccer with the appropriate footwear for the surface (usually artificial turf).

2. U11-14 VanU Plus Programs

All players/parents who wish to be considered for a or VanU Plus team next season must familiarize themselves with the expectations and commitment required as outlined in this document. BCSPL is a separate program from VanU Plus.

- All U11 and U12 boys and girls Div 1 teams and U13 Div 1 teams will train three times per week
- VanU+ Div 1A teams are coached by staff coaches. VanU+ Div 1B teams have a blended staff and volunteer coach model
- Through the evaluation process VUFC will select players for this age/level that are highly committed to soccer and meet the technical/tactical requirements of elite players (i.e. approximately 10-20% of the top players in each age group).

a. **Spring/Summer Commitment, Schedule, Objectives**

March/April

- VanU Plus teams formed; players asked to commit and register.

April/May/June

- U11-13 VanU Plus teams follow the program as described on the club website.

July/August (optional for players/coaches)

- At their individual discretion, U11/U12 Div 1 coaches conduct **optional** training sessions or exhibition games through summer.**

***Teams are encouraged to run these collectively as an age group to lighten coaching responsibility and to ensure viable training groups at each age/gender given that numbers will be lower during the summer. Players are not to be pressured to play. Their participation over the summer is entirely voluntary*

b. **Regular Season Commitment (September to March), Schedule, Objectives***

- One game per week on Saturdays (Boys) or Sundays (Girls) in accordance with the relevant league schedule (with some games being scheduled for Friday evenings)
- Training as per the description of the VanU Plus Program (may vary by age group)
- There is no Academy option for U15 and U16 VanU Plus teams but opt-in programming of some kind on a user pay basis may be offered.
- Three practices per week, with one currently being with the Whitecaps Academy staff coaches.

** Subject to minor, Board approved, programming changes*

NOTE: Accompanying the registration form will be a revised commitment clause that makes it clear that attendance at the weekly training sessions is not optional and non-medical absences may result in reductions in playing time. The club expects a full commitment to our VanU Plus Programs.

Those playing U11 Div 1, while still being expected to fully honour the commitment to soccer, will be given the opportunity to try to accommodate both soccer and other commitments. If U11 players are found to have missed a meaningful numbers of soccer practices and/or games due to other commitments, it will play a critical role in determining their placement on U12 Div 1 teams.

This commitment starts with the Spring component of the program.

3. U15 and up Evaluation Process:

The club expects that all team formations between U15 and U18 to be carried out co-operatively and in the spirit of ensuring as many players are accommodated on the teams being offered at each age group. Evaluations will be coach driven and club managed in a fair and equitable manner in accordance with the following:

1. VUFC will host a pre-evaluation meeting for each age group to discuss potential challenges and solutions, team viability for the following season, identification of players who could potentially play at a different level and to establish parameters for the evaluation process. The parameters identified during the meeting will be distributed, in writing, to all coaches in the respective age groups prior to the start of evaluations. At least one representative from each team is expected to attend the pre-evaluation meeting for their respective age group.
2. For Div 2 and 3 teams that were competitive in their division and have enough players to make the team viable, the TD has the discretion to form those teams outside the usual Evaluation process, including without holding Phase 3 or 4 sessions. If a team is formed in this manner, then all players on that team will be required to register within two weeks of being given notice of the team's formation. This will ensure the team is viable for the following season. The TD will not exercise this discretion in a way that will prevent a Div 2 or Div 3 player from attending a Phase 3 Div 1 Assessment should that player wish to do so and is invited to attend a Phase 3 Div 1 Assessment.
3. If a Phase 3 session is required for Div 2 teams at these age groups, the players will be evaluated Club staff coaches. The TD, the ATD and/or a senior VUFC staff coaches are available at any point in the evaluation process. Team coaches will have the ability to provide input on what the team needs in terms of new players and what players would be a good fit for those needs.
4. U15 to U18 Evaluations for Div 1 teams will have a Phase 3, although the format may be modified at the TD's discretion, in consultation with current and/or incoming coaches. All players, regardless of division, must register online though so that players can receive info related to their Evaluations and roster selection for the team they are being evaluated for.
5. The club will set the dates for any Phase 3 sessions required by U15-U18 teams.

All team rosters will be reviewed and approved by the TD prior to notice being sent to players even if a team has not run Phase 3 Evaluation sessions. All coaches in the respective age groups will have the opportunity to review rosters prior to them being published. The number of teams to be formed and/or the levels those teams should play are within the TD's discretion, in consultation with the relevant coach/es.

4. Playing Up Policy

Divisional Playing Up Policy

A player wishing to play up must be evaluated for the highest level team in the older age group, and be in the top 1/3 of the skill/playing level for that highest-level team.

- A request to play up must be made **in writing, by email to the Technical Director, at least two weeks prior to the published Evaluation dates for the age group the player wishes to join**. The request will be evaluated by a committee that could consist of some or all of the following people: the TD, the ATD, the Technical Lead of the relevant age-group and the coach/es of the teams affected.

No underage player can register for a team until approval is given by the TD. This will be strictly adhered to. Please note the following exceptions and factors that the committee may consider in reaching a decision:

- Where a player who is playing in a non-tiered (ie. First Kicks) environment is seeking to play up a year that is tiered, refer to the First Kicks Playing Up Policy (below), the playing up policy will be less restrictive.
- There are no teams available for the player in his/her age level.
- A team in the older age group requires additional players to be viable and there are not enough players in that age group.
- The player's social maturity, motivation, commitment, physical maturity and abilities must be equivalent to the other players on the team to which he/she is seeking placement.
- The parents must be fully informed of the player's options and the pros and cons of each option.

NOTE: Coaches should not recruit underage players. Underage players should not be invited to annual evaluations. However, if under-age players wish to attend evaluation sessions, access will not be denied if they have followed the criteria described above.

First Kicks Playing Up Policy

Vancouver United FC strongly encourages all its players to play in their natural age group. Any First Kicks players wishing to play up an age group must submit a request by email to be evaluated by the TD or TL'S by February 8.

All requests must be preceded by a discussion with the player's current coach and that coach must agree that the request is worth pursuing.

Factors that will be considered in granting or denying a request:

- Will the player requesting the move have his/her development stunted if he/she plays in his/her natural age group?
- Does the player requesting the move have the ability to physically compete with the players in the older age group?
- Will there be negative ramifications on the team/age group that the player is leaving or that the player is requesting to join?
- All requests to play up a year for the 2025-26 season need to be completed by **February 8th**
- Staff coaches can suggest that the TD consider a player be moved up mid-season. These are the only mid-season requests that will be considered.

For any player who is playing in an un-tiered environment (i.e. U10 and younger) and is seeking to play up at U11, the playing up policy will be less restrictive, but players must still apply in writing (to the TD) by February 8. In this circumstance, the underage player must be in the top 10% of all players in their natural age group as defined by the player's coach and the TD. If this requirement is met then the player will be permitted to register for evaluations for the older age group but the player must be ranked high enough to qualify for one of the U11 teams based on their Phase 3 evaluation scores relative to the other, older players and based on the Divisional Playing Up Policy (see above).

Table 1: Evaluation Flow Chart - U11 to U14
Phase 3 Div 1 & 2 Sessions and Phase 4 Team Formation meetings

Which Phase is for you?

Q: Did you play at Div 1 or this past season?

A: Start at the Div 1 sessions unless you want to play Div 2 or 3 next season. If you want to play Div 2 then go to the Div 2 sessions. If you want to play Div 3 you do not need to attend any Phase 3 sessions. Just register for next season and select Div 3 when asked.

Q: Did you play Div 2 or 3 this past season and want to play Div 1 or 2 this season?

A: You must get an invite to the level you have requested. This is based on your Phase 1 and 2 scores. If you played Div 2 and want to play Div 2 next season attend the Div 2 Phase 3 sessions.

Q: Want to play Div 3 next season?

A: You do not need to attend any Phase 3 sessions. Register for next season and select Div 3 when asked.

Div 1 Phase 3 Sessions

- 2 days*; players attend both
- Previous season Div 1 players attend plus invitees from Div 2 and Div 3



Div 1 Phase 4 Team Formation Mtg

- Result/Offer emailed by club
- Players confirm spot on team within 24 hrs and register within 72
- End of Evaluations for players who are selected and register for Div 1
- *Players not selected for Div 1 must attend Div 2 Phase 3 sessions*



Div 2 Phase 3 Sessions

- 2 days*; players attend both
- Previous season Div 2 players attend plus invitees from Div 3 and any others who attended Div 1 Phase 3 sessions and were not selected for a Div 1 team



Div 2 Phase 4 Team Formation Mtg

- Result/Offer emailed by club
- Players confirm spot on team within 24 hrs and register within 72
- End of Evaluations for players who are selected and register for Div 2
- Players not selected for Div 2 must register to be placed on a Div 3 team

*Occasionally, but rarely, a third Phase 3 may be required or only one will be required.