



THE AJFC FOOTBALL ACADEMY

One of Abbotsford Juniors Football Club's core values is to promote participation and achievement at all levels (Respect and Development). AJFC is committed to cater for community football players who wish to play for social/friendship purposes and those who wish to play at a more competitive level to further their football development.

In 2017, Abbotsford Juniors introduced the concept of AJFC Football Academy teams and football trials associated with the creation of these teams. Run by the Club's Football Development Committee, the AJFC Football Academy program continues to provide a platform for boys and girls to play at the AJFC's highest competitive age group level within the Football Canterbury Association (community) each year. The Academy provides additional training opportunities for players, both as a team and through paid football skill development training with expert coaches.

The AJFC Football Academy covers teams for both boys and girls, in non-competitive age groups from Under 8 to Under 12 and competition teams from Under 13 to Under 18. AJFC Academy teams are formed each year through public trials open to all players who register for the trial, whether they played for Abbotsford Juniors in the previous year. Participation in Academy trials is optional. Players do not need to attend the trials if they want to play for social/friendship purposes or if they want to continue to play in an already constituted non-Academy team. Players who do not trial will be able to participate in AJFC teams formed by the Club in February and March during the registration period.

Benefits for AJFC Football Academy teams vary according to age group. Under 8 to Under 12 teams are offered priority access to additional paid skills development training as a team. This is coordinated and run by the AJFC Football Development program. AJFC Academy teams are also given prioritised training times including the option to train twice a week. Finally, AFJC Academy players are also entitled to purchase an Academy training kit package for their team (the contents of which may vary from year to year).

The following rules and guidelines govern the formation of AJFC Football Academy teams and the operation of public trials:

1. An AJFC Academy team can only be formed through the completion of an open and public football trial process conducted by the Club.
2. Players must register their interest to trial and participate in the trials when scheduled to be selected in an academy team.
3. Players who played in an AJFC Academy team in the prior season do not automatically qualify for that team in the following season. That is, all players who aspire to play in an AJFC Academy team in the following year must participate the relevant trial process for their age group to be considered.
4. Players who wish to trial but are unable to attend their age group's trial session must email the Club about their circumstances prior to the trial commencing. These players



may be considered for the Academy Team in their age group based on their playing history with AJFC (or other Club) including coach feedback from the previous year.

5. For the avoidance of doubt, players and their teams who are of a Division One standard (as graded by the Football Canterbury Association) and who wish to remain in their playing group for the coming year without an open trial process can continue to do so with support from the Club and play in a Division One graded competition (if confirmed by Association grading) for their age group. These teams will not be considered AJFC Academy teams and will not qualify for any special academy benefits.
6. Players may seek selection in an Academy team as a Goalkeeper. Goalkeepers will be assessed at AJFC Academy trials for their football skills and additionally assessed on their goalkeeping skill.
7. Player selection criteria will be documented and shared up-front with the coach prior to the trials and will cover as a minimum:
 - a. The 4 core football skills – running with the ball, striking the ball, first touch and 1v1
 - b. Ability to take on-board instruction
 - c. Player behaviour and attitude
 - d. Game player and situational awareness
8. The Club, as directed by the AJFC Football Development program, may elect not to conduct trials for an age group where there is insufficient player interest or numbers in an age group, or in the Club's view that players do not meet a minimum skill level sufficient to play in a Football Canterbury Association Division One graded competition.
9. If the Club does not receive sufficient pre-registrations for an age group trial, it may also at its discretion, cancel that age group's trial. No AJFC Academy team would be formed for that age group in that year.
10. Where sufficient skilled players are identified through the trials, the AJFC Academy program may choose to form more than one Academy team in that age group.
11. Should AJFC receive insufficient player acceptance by players, the AJFC Football Development program may at its discretion, elect not to form an AJFC Academy team for the age group in that year.
12. Player selection for Academy teams will be performed by a panel appointed by the Club with input from the Coach. The panel will consist of 3 assessors. These will be appointed by the Club as the Director of Football (where available), a qualified Club



Committee representative and the existing/proposed Coach of the team (where available). Where one role is unavailable, an AJFC Executive Committee representative may substitute.

The AJFC Football Academy Trial and Selection Process

1. Players must register to participate in a trial. Instructions on how to register will be published and sent to all eligible members prior to the trial date. Players are free to register for one or more trials in different age groups.
2. Trials will be run by the Club who will also appoint assessors for each age group's trial session.
3. Trial sessions will be held for each age group at the scheduled times. Players should attend the correct session for the age group they intend to be registered to play for in that year.
4. Trials will typically be run for 60 minutes with drinks breaks as required.
5. All players must arrive at the specified time (generally 30 minutes prior to the scheduled trial commencement time) to sign-in on the day and receive a trial number from the club. Players must wear football boots, shinpads and sunscreen and bring a water bottle.
6. The aim of the trial and selection process is to select a squad per age group as follows:
 - a. U8 and U9 = 10/11 players
 - b. U10 and U12= 12/13 players
 - c. U13 to U18 = 15/16 players
7. Upon completion of the trial sessions, the Club appointed panel will discuss each player and commence the process of selection of the Academy team. These assessments will be provided to AJFC Football Development program, who will finalise the team selection. Trial results will not be communicated on the day. These will be communicated by email within 7 days of the trial completion.
8. The Panel may also nominate one or more players to participate in one or more re-trial sessions to be organized and conducted by the nominated Academy team coach.
9. The AJFC Football Development program may, at its discretion, discuss a prospective player's footballing skill, attitude and behaviour with their previous coach(es) as an element of finalising the team selection.



10. Selected players will be offered a place in the Academy team for their age group via email. These offers must be accepted by a parent or guardian on behalf of the player via email by the specified deadline date.
11. Players not selected in a squad which wish to register with the Club will be allocated in accordance with the Club's standard team formation process in late February / early March.
12. Finalised Academy teams will be announced via email to successful players and published on the AJFC website prior to Christmas.

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