



Victorian Amateur Football Association

Amateur Status Guidelines

The VAFA defines an **AMATEUR** as follows:

An Amateur is one who does not receive or agree to receive, either directly or indirectly, any remuneration or reward whatsoever (whether by match payments or expenses or otherwise) in respect to their participation as a player, in the Victorian Amateur Football Association.

Receive or agree to receive – remuneration or reward may not be offered in an immediate sense or at some point in the future at an unspecified time.

Directly or indirectly - remuneration or reward may not be offered to the individual player or any person associated with that individual.

Remuneration or reward – examples of what is permissible or not permissible as a reward or remuneration refer to table below.

The spirit of the “Amateur” definition will always prevail and each case will be looked at individually on its own merits. Any payment, reward, or benefit that might induce a person to play with a VAFA club will be regarded as a breach of the definition of amateur status. The examples below are provided as a guide, but clubs should always seek guidance from the VAFA as to whether a situation is within, or in breach of, the definition. If such guidance is not sought before the event, a club will not be able to complain after the event if it is found, notwithstanding technical reliance on the examples below, that a given situation is not within the spirit of the definition.

Please note any reference in these Guidelines to a “senior” team of a club includes a reference to both the senior men’s and women’s team of that club. Please note any reference in these Guidelines to “pay” or “paid” includes remuneration or reward (as defined above).

	Permissible	Not Permissible
Employment	Clubs, or any person or entity associated with a club, may assist with and/or facilitate a full time or part time employment opportunity for a player, provided the terms and conditions of such employment are consistent with market rates for a comparable position.	Employment cannot be linked to the operations of the club e.g. physiotherapy, fitness/conditioning or working behind the bar or canteen. This applies in a direct or indirect sense as defined above.

Awards	<p>Players may receive awards from clubs and/or sponsors relevant to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • match day performance; • end of season eg. Best & Fairest Awards; and/or • service to the club. <p>Awards must be non-monetary and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the case of match day performance awards, not exceed the value of \$100 and be shared; • with respect to end of season and service awards, not exceed the value of \$200. 	
Paid non-Playing coaches and paid non-Playing Assistant coaches	<p>Clubs may pay non-Playing coaches and non-Playing Assistant coaches at market rates for a comparable coaching position in the VAFA.</p>	<p>Any paid coach is not permitted to play for any team of the Club (e.g. a paid coach of the men's senior team cannot play in the women's Reserves or Thirds, or vice versa). Any paid coach is ineligible to play for that club at any stage of that same season.</p>
Playing Head Senior, Reserves and Thirds coaches	<p>Playing Head coach of the senior teams of each club may not be paid but may be reimbursed by the Club for out of pocket expenses actually incurred in connection with the coaching services (not exceeding a total of \$2,500 per season) upon production of documentation evidencing the expenses incurred.</p> <p>Playing Head coach of the Reserves and Thirds teams of each Club may be reimbursed by the Club for out of pocket expenses to a maximum of \$1,000.</p> <p>Where dual Coaches are employed, the reimbursement of expenses is an aggregate sum to be shared between them.</p>	<p>Playing coaches cannot be offered or receive any remuneration or reward for coaching or playing in the VAFA.</p> <p>(For the avoidance of doubt, "remuneration" in this Guideline refers to any fee or payment in addition to the permitted reimbursement of out of pocket expenses).</p>
Playing Assistant coaches (of a team in any VAFA Grade)	<p>Assistant coaches may play for any team provided they do so as an "Amateur" (refer to VAFA definition above).</p>	<p>Playing Assistant coaches cannot be offered or receive any remuneration, reward OR reimbursement of expenses.</p>

Interchange Players	Tier 1 players (e.g. VFL, TAC Under 18 and other State Leagues) who are also registered players with a VAFA club and have nominated that club as their interchange club by no later than April 30 each year are eligible to play for that nominated club when released from their Tier 1 club, subject to amateur status in the VAFA being observed (refer to VAFA definition above).	Once a Tier 1 player has nominated a VAFA Club as their interchange club (which must be done no later than April 30), they are not permitted to transfer to another VAFA Club in that same season, except where the VAFA determines exceptional circumstances exist. Any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses from the Tier 1 club which is linked to participation as a player in the VAFA competition (e.g. match payments when playing on interchange in the VAFA) shall be deemed to be a breach of the player's amateur status. VAFA clubs may not contribute, directly or indirectly, to funding an interchange player's contract with the Tier 1 club (whether as a player, coach or any other role).
Expenses	Costs directly associated with playing for the club e.g. club related uniforms (excluding boots), insurance, membership, any VAFA player registration fees or out of pocket costs incurred as a result of football injuries sustained whilst representing the club, provided this benefit is available to all players . Meals after training may be paid for by the club provided they are provided to all players and not to individuals or a specific group of players. Expenses to the value set by the VAFA associated with a player's selection to represent the VAFA on its Tour of Ireland may be covered or raised by the Club.	Any expenses not directly associated with playing for the club. This includes the provision of services in- kind e.g. building, landscaping, professional services, fuel, other travel related expenses or accommodation. They are all examples of expenses that are not permitted.
Player Sponsorships	Players are able to source player sponsorships to offset their annual membership provided all funds are to be paid directly to the club.	
Education fees		Education fees cannot be paid for or subsidised either directly or indirectly as per above description of the word "Amateur". Scholarships cannot be provided.
Juniors Coaching	Registered VAFA players are able to coach football at their aligned junior club or school for a fee provided that fee is at market rates for a comparable position in a similar competition.	Appointment cannot be dependent on playing for the senior club.

Motor vehicle or other transport vehicles		A player cannot be provided with a motor vehicle or other transport vehicle as remuneration or reward for their participation as a player.
Other football related roles	Subject to prior written approval of the VAFA, registered VAFA players are permitted to undertake certain non-coaching football related roles at their football club and/or their aligned junior club or school., Upon production of documentation evidencing any out of pocket expenses actually incurred in carrying out this role, the Club may reimburse the player for such expenses, not more than \$2,500 per season. The VAFA may request evidence that the expenses have actually been incurred by the player from the Club or player, at any time.	

PENALTIES FOR BREACH OF AMATEUR STATUS

130A. If a Club or player is found by the Independent Integrity Division (or by the Board following an appeal to it from a decision of the Independent Integrity Division) to have breached the conditions relating to Amateur Status, the penalty to be imposed shall be determined by the Board. Such penalty may include but not be limited to one or more of the following: -

- (a) In relation to a club-
 - (i) Loss of premiership points earned in the games played while the Club was so in breach;
 - (ii) Demotion of the Club up to two sections;
 - (iii) Loss of premiership points for the following season;
 - (iv) A fine not exceeding \$5,000;
 - (v) Suspension from any or all home and away and finals matches in a season or seasons; or.
 - (vi) Any other action that the Board determines appropriate.
- (b) In relation to a player, suspension for such period as the Board deem appropriate.

Provided that, if a club or player voluntarily admits prior to 1 July that it or he has breached such conditions, the Board may, in its discretion, determine that no penalty be imposed.”