



Athlete Selection Policy

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| Version | 2023.01 |
| Date of version | September 2023 |
| Contributors | MUL Committee |
| Approved by | MUL Executive |

Change History

| Date | Version | Created by | Description of change |
|-------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Sept. 2023 | 2023.01 | Michael Hutchinson | Review and update |
| Nov. 2021 | 2021.01 | Lindy Murphy | Review and update |
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A. General

1. This policy and process applies to the selection of the following Melbourne University Lightning (MUL) teams:

- a) Championship (Victorian Netball League)
- b) 23 & Under (Victorian Netball League)
- c) Lightning Reserves
- d) Lightning Bolts (Development)

2. A team of up to 15 athletes will be selected for each Victorian Netball League (VNL) team, Lightning Reserves and Lightning Bolts. A Head Coach and Assistant Coach/es will be appointed to each team, where applicable.

The Head Coach shall oversee the training program for the team and will be supported at training sessions and matches by the Assistant Coach/es.

Opportunities may arise for athletes to move between teams during the course of the season.

3. It is expected that Lightning Bolts athletes will receive opportunities during the season to develop and improve their skills in competition.

1. Each athlete should be afforded half a game (two (2) quarters) throughout the preliminary rounds of the season.
2. Where there are more than nine (9) athletes in the team, athletes may be rotated off week by week in order to allow appropriate court time and consistency during a match.
3. An athlete who misses a match (due to illness, injury, or a family or school commitment deemed appropriate by the Coach) may have this match counted as a rotation off.
4. Coaches have the option of selecting the strongest combination of athletes, should the team progress to the finals in any given season.

4. It is expected that the strongest combination of athletes will be fielded in the Championship and 23 & Under teams at all stages of the VNL season.

1. Athletes should not expect to receive equal court time.
2. It is expected that athletes not taking the court on a regular basis with the 23 & Under team will be afforded the opportunity to play with the Lightning Reserves.
3. Coaches are expected to comply with this requirement and work co-operatively to ensure that athletes are given ongoing match play opportunities.

5. Priority will not be given to any athlete (new or existing), however, Club loyalty and/or years of service and/or playing history may be taken into consideration.

6. The decision of each Melbourne University Lightning selection panel is final, however:

- a) An athlete, who is not selected pursuant to the criteria set out in this document, may appeal against non-selection as set out in *Appendix A*. Grounds for such an appeal are

that the selection panel, in making their final decision, failed to comply with the selection guidelines.

b) Any selection queries must be submitted in writing to the Club Administrator.

c) Athletes may request feedback on their non-selection. This request must be made in writing to the Club Administrator within five (5) business days of non-selection notification. The response will be provided as position-specific observations from trials.

7. Athletes must be a (fully paid) financial member of the Club. That is, having paid their Club fees in full prior to the commencement of Round 1 of the VNL season. Non-financial members will not be permitted to take the court. Coaches are required to support this policy.

8. The selection policy and process will be reviewed annually by the Melbourne University Lightning Committee of Management.

B. Selectors

1. A panel of at least three selectors will be appointed to select each team.

a) One (1) selector must be the Head Coach of the team being selected.

b) Selectors may be sought from within and outside Melbourne University Lightning and independent selectors may be approached to assist with selections.

c) In the event that a Head Coach has not been appointed to a team at the time of selections, the Committee of Management will appoint one (1) member of the selection panel to act as Head Coach of that team for the purposes of selections.

d) Decisions on athlete selection will be based on majority agreement of the selection panel.

2. If required, selectors may be involved in more than one (1) selection panel at the same time, i.e. the same selectors may form one (1) selection panel to select all Melbourne University Lightning teams.

3. Athlete parents, guardians or relatives are not permitted to select as an independent selector for any team in which they have a child or relative trialing. If the parent, guardian or relative is the Head Coach and/or Assistant Coach, the selection panel will be extended to include an independent selector or a Committee Member, as appropriate.

4. The Club recognises that at times a parent, as Head Coach, may have a child/relative selected to play in the same team. Discussions regarding the continuation of the coach in the role of Head Coach or Assistant Coach will be made on a per-case basis and involve the Committee of Management.

C. Selection Criteria

1. Selectors shall consider:

a) Individual attributes, such as:

- i. Basic skills – ball handling, footwork, specialist skills
- ii. Physical skills – speed, change of direction, elevation, intensity
- iii. Mental skills – recovery from mistakes, accountable, leadership, works for the team
- iv. Decision making skills – reads entire situation, chooses correct option
- v. Current level of ability
- vi. Level of fitness
- vii. Potential – innate qualities or attributes which may be developed over a long period
- viii. Capacity to take and act upon direction given by coaches

b) Team requirements, such as:

- i. Team balance required for each team. In general, each team may be made up of three (3) shooters, three (3) defenders and four (4) centre court athletes. The additional positions will be at the discretion of the selection panel.
- ii. The best individual athletes may not provide the most viable combination for the team.
- iii. Each team needs a variety of athletes, so there is always the option to change the style of play in a match. Examples of this include: a short/tall goaling or defending option, a defensive or attacking centre court focus, quick and speedy athlete or a slower, more creative playmaker.
- iv. It is the selection panels' prerogative to determine that an athlete may be better suited to a position other than the position/s they have nominated for. In this instance the selection panel must consult with the athlete to discuss being considered in an alternative position. The discussion should be open and direct so that the athlete is fully aware of the circumstances under which they are being considered for selection.

c) Minimum age criteria:

Athletes will be considered for selection based on their ability; however the VNL competition rules must be adhered to in terms of minimum age requirements.

D. Selection Details

1. Selection is open to any athlete that is registered with Netball Victoria or an interstate Member organisation.
2. Athletes shall present for selection in neutral training clothes, which shall be either a white t-shirt or singlet and navy or black shorts. Clothing must not contain any insignia or material which associates the athlete with a particular club or association.
3. All athletes attending selection trials must be appropriately warmed up in readiness to start at the scheduled start time. The official warm up will be conducted by the MUL Strength and Conditioning Coach (if available), with assistance from MUL Coaches as required.
4. Each selection trial will run for a minimum of two (2) hours, and will consist of multiple 8-10 minute "matches". Athletes are responsible for maintaining their readiness to participate through warm up activities, with space to be provided to ensure this is possible. There will be a short break between games to notify athletes of playing positions for the next game and to allow for this changeover.
5. All athletes who wish to be considered for selection must complete the online registration athlete application form by the specified due date.
 - a) Late applications may be accepted, at the discretion of the Committee of Management.
 - b) Athletes must complete all details and indicate at least two (2) preferred playing positions.
6. Appropriately qualified umpires will officiate at all Melbourne University Lightning selections.
7. All athletes, including current MUL athletes, who wish to be considered for selection, must attend a minimum of one (1) trial day. Athletes who are unable to attend or participate in selections due to extenuating circumstance, illness or injury, must:
 - a) Submit their inability to attend in writing with their application form, and contact the Club Administrator in person, as soon as possible to discuss.
 - b) The Committee of Management will determine whether athletes who are not able to attend selections are eligible for selection and will advise the athlete and the appropriate selection panel.
 - c) Injured athletes wishing to be considered for selection must attend at least one (1) trial day. They also must provide written medical evidence outlining injury details and expected recovery time.
8. Any athlete unavailable to participate in selections, who is eligible for selection, will be considered based on current or previous year performance, if available. The selection panel will have the discretion of adding such athletes to the initial squads, if it is deemed appropriate.

9. Athletes who attend selections will be judged on their selection performance, in addition to any previous performance notes, if available.

- a) All athletes will be viewed at least once in two (2) of their preferred positions
- b) It is anticipated that attending athletes will be viewed at least two (2) times at each selection date, however this may vary as this is dependent on the number of athletes attending each selection trial.
- c) It is anticipated that each viewing of athletes will be 8-10 minutes in duration. This may vary and is dependent on the number of athletes attending selections. Sessions will be held using indoor venues to avoid the impact of adverse weather.

10. All athletes will be notified via email of their selection to advance to the next round of the selection process and of their selection or non-selection into a Melbourne University Lightning Team.

11. Coaches and selectors may choose to observe athletes in club team match play conditions prior to the final selection day if deemed necessary.

E. Athlete Expulsion

1. The Committee of Management and Head Coach have the power to:

- a) Exclude an athlete from competition.
- b) Terminate an athlete's membership of the Club.
- c) Require an athlete to leave an event or venue and return home.

2. An athlete may be expelled from the Club if they are unable to fulfill the obligations outlined in the Club athlete Agreement. The decision to expel any athlete will be ratified by the Committee of Management.

Appendix A
Melbourne University Lightning - Athlete Selection Appeals Process

1. Appeals

1.1 An athlete, who is not selected to a team they have trialed for, pursuant to the criteria set out in these guidelines, may appeal against omission from a team as set out in this section.

1.2 The grounds for such an appeal are that the selection panel, in making their final decision, failed to comply with the guidelines.

2. Notice period

2.1 Any appeal against omission from the pool must be lodged in writing to Melbourne University Lightning within five (5) business days of announcement of the selection decision.

2.2 The notice of appeal must be accompanied by a summary of arguments and submissions in support of the appeal.

2.3 An appeal may be withdrawn by the aggrieved athlete at any time through written notification to the Melbourne University Lightning Committee of Management.

2.4 Failure to comply with the appeal time frame will result in the appeal being dismissed.

3. Appeal tribunal

3.1 Where the Melbourne University Lightning Netball Club Committee of Management has authorised an investigation into the appeal, an appeals tribunal shall be established.

3.2 The Melbourne University Lightning Netball Club President will nominate appointees to the appeals tribunal for endorsement by the Committee of Management.

3.3 The appeals tribunal will consist of three (3) members including:

- A person with knowledge of the sport and with VNL Club experience;
- A representative from Netball Victoria to chair the appeal; and
- Any other person deemed appropriately skilled and experienced to the function of the appeals tribunal as appointed by the Melbourne University Lightning Netball Club President.

3.4 Persons part of or directly interested in the appeal may not act as a member of the appeals tribunal.

3.5 The appeals tribunal does not have the power of selection or re-selection. Where appropriate, the tribunal may refer the matter back to the selection panel for consideration.

3.6 The decision of the appeals tribunal will be binding on the parties.

4. Appeal hearings

4.1 The appeals tribunal shall investigate and consider the matter determining whether:

- The matter should be dismissed because there is no credible evidence, submission or argument to satisfy the grounds of the appeal;
- The appeal should be subject to a hearing conducted by the appeals Tribunal.

4.2 The appeals tribunal must conduct the appeal in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

4.3 The appeals tribunal is not bound by the rules of evidence and may inform itself as to any matter in such a manner as it thinks fit.

4.4 The appeals hearing may take place in a manner determined appropriate by the Chair, including by phone, online, or in person.

4.5 The appeals hearing must take place within fourteen (14) days of the appeal being received. This period may be extended with the agreement of all parties.

4.6 Parties of the appeal may be permitted a support person. For the avoidance of doubt, this may not be a legal representative.

4.7 The decision of the appeals tribunal shall be a majority decision and shall be communicated to the Melbourne University Lightning Netball Club President as soon as practicable, including:

- If the appeals tribunal considers the ground/s alleged to be made out, it shall recommend that the selection panel reconsider the selection;
- The selection panel shall comply with the direction of the appeals tribunal;
- Any further selection decision of the selection panel under direction of the appeals tribunal shall be final and binding.