

# Athletic Union Sports Club Behaviour Policy

June 2023

This policy applies to all members, participants and other persons connected to Sports Clubs affiliated to the Students' Union as well as Sports teams participating in IMG Sports competitions.

This policy includes:

1. University and Union Codes of Codes of Behaviour
2. Athletic Union Standards of Behaviour
3. Social Activity and Initiations
  
4. Club & Members Responsibilities
  
5. Clubs Managing Behaviour of Members
  
6. Actions in the Event of a Breach of this Policy

## 1. University and Union Codes of Behaviour

Clubs and their members are reminded that they and their members are bound by the Cardiff University Code of Behaviour:

*“This Code shall apply to all students when they may reasonably be regarded as being under the auspices of the University. This shall include behaviour arising at any time when the student may be regarded as representing the University as an individual or as part of a team or group.*

*A student shall not engage in conduct which may involve an offence against a person; cause a nuisance, damage, deface, misappropriate or misuse any property of the University and the Students' Union; or otherwise behave in a manner likely to bring the University into disrepute or likely to cause offence to others.*

*A student shall not engage in any form of harassment towards other students which causes, or which might reasonably be expected to cause distress by such means as bullying, verbally or physically abusing, ill-treating or otherwise creating or maintaining a hostile environment for that other, including via the use of social networking sites, other websites or any other forms of electronic media and communication.”*

And the Cardiff University Students' Union Code of Conduct:

*“The Union expects members and guests of the Union to engage in a positive manner with students, staff and visitors to the University and Union when engaged in use of the services and activities provided or when recognisable as a representative of the organisation.*

*The following (non exhaustive list) would be considered instances of where the standard of behaviour of members is a concern and therefore may result in disciplinary action if found to have taken place:*

- *behaviour causing or likely to cause physical harm to others;*
- *any form of harassment, unlawful discrimination or bullying of others;*
- *drunken and disorderly behaviour;*
- *possession or sale of illegal drugs;*
- *bringing the Union into disrepute;*
- *theft or fraud;*
- *deliberate damage to property;*
- *breach of any terms of membership of the Athletic Union or Guild of Societies;*
- *breach of any Policies or Bye-Laws of the Union “*

These codes of behaviour apply to all members of sports teams or clubs and any supporters or associated people connected to clubs including both paid and voluntary coaches and instructors. It applies without geographic restriction, can



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be applied whether activity is official club activity or not and also relates to behaviour whilst travelling to and from club events.



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## 2. Athletic Union Standards of Behaviour

All members of the AU are expected to:

- respect the rights, dignity and values of others
- be fair, considerate and honest in all dealings with others
- take responsibility for their actions
- not encourage or pressure others into acting against the code
- operate within the rules of the sport including national guidelines which govern the sport
- be aware of how their actions may be perceived by others
- maintain high standards of personal behaviour at all times
- refrain from any form of harassment of others
- refrain from any behaviour that may bring the University, the AU or the Club into disrepute
- comply with all reasonable instructions issued by officials
- not act in an unlawful manner

Please note that these expectations apply both at events and activities as well as online and on social media and any other time where individuals are deemed to be acting as or identified to be representatives of the club.

The Athletic Union (AU) recognises the value of social activity to compliment sporting activity for members of sports clubs. Social activity builds friendships, bonds and communities among club and team mates and can support individual and team development. However the AU also recognises that in some situations, such social activity can pose physical and psychological risks if due care is not observed by those involved. In line with this, the AU encourages all clubs and members to conduct themselves and drink responsibly.



### 3. Social Activity and “Initiations”

Social activity enhances the experience of students and allows members to meet, socialise and build relationships within a club or team. We encourage our sports clubs to have a healthy and active social environment. At times however, individuals and clubs have stepped over the line into the realms of unsafe or inappropriate conduct. To provide clarity on what we expect of the behaviour of clubs, committees, members and other representatives, the AU only permits social activity:

- Where students are genuinely free to participate or abstain from any or all social activity as choose, and
- Where there is no fear of reprisal, consequence, non-selection or other discrimination for non-participation in some or all social activity, and
- Where (in the view of the AU) activity it is not seeking to humiliate or degrade participants, nor includes any behaviour that would be considered unlawful, and
- Where the activity does not bring the reputation of Cardiff University, Cardiff University Students’ Union or the Sports Club into question or disrepute, and
- Where it is undertaken in a manner that does not place undue risk upon those involved

The term “initiation” is linked to activities and behaviour that may be seen as a rite of passage, often involving activity that humiliates, degrades, creates fear and includes excessive alcohol consumption.

**The Athletic Union DOES NOT PERMIT SUCH ACTIVITIES and will take a zero tolerance approach dealing with them. We will work closely with Cardiff University Students’ Union, Cardiff University, BUCS and South Wales Police to investigate and take action against those who organise, take part or permit such activity to take place.**

The AU expects that club committee members, captains, senior members and the wider membership take responsibility for ensuring that such activities do not take place and to respond appropriately should they become aware of any such planned or spontaneous activity. Committee members are responsible and will be held accountable for the actions of their members.

As well as adhering to these expectations, we also expect clubs to:

- Consider how the club can be made to feel as welcoming as possible to all students irrespective of personal characteristics
- Consider how others may perceive behaviour
- Consider the barriers to participation for different students and seek to ensure all reasonable attempts are made to remove them

Where social activity is in breach of the standards expected above, the AU will take action as detailed in Section 6. Actions



in the Event of a Breach of this Policy.



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## 4. Member Responsibilities

The AU expects that clubs take all reasonable steps to ensure that it and its members conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the expectations set out in this document.

### Members Responsibilities

All members of the AU and its clubs and teams are bound by these guidelines and should at all times act in a reasonable manner, obey the law, any University or Union Policy and behave in a manner that does not put any other individual at risk.

### What you need to do?

We expect that all clubs, members, committees and other representatives:

- Will show appropriate respect towards members of the public, members of Cardiff University and other institutions, at all times
- Will behave responsibly and not act in a way that may damage the image of the club or bring the organisation into disrepute, or put any individual at risk of harm
- Will not encourage or coerce individuals into undertaking anything that they do not wish to do

In the event that you believe that the standards of behaviour detailed in the document are not being upheld, you can report concerns via:

Cardiff University Athletic Union

[athleticunion@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:athleticunion@cardiff.ac.uk)

02920 781400

Cardiff University Disclosure Response Team

[disclosureresponseteam@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:disclosureresponseteam@cardiff.ac.uk)

02920 874844



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## 5. Clubs Managing Behaviour of Members

A culture of poor behaviour can develop where a club fails to tackle (or endorses) poor behaviour. We expect that:

- Clubs and their committees are responsible for the actions of their members, both on and off the field of play.
- Clubs and their committees work to promote positive culture of behaviour
- Clubs and their committees will take appropriate action to challenge and manage instances of poor behaviour

We expect Clubs to take positive action to challenge inappropriate behaviour. This must include:

- Clear communication of expected standards of behaviour to all members upon joining and through the year
- Club activities and events to be organised with consideration of how to encourage appropriate and prevent inappropriate behaviour of members
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour of members when it occurs and taking appropriate action. This action should be proportionate, but clearly demonstrate that inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Such action could/should include:
  - Official and documented warnings to members
  - Suspension of access to some or all club activities
  - Reporting of individuals/incidents to the Students' Union

All clubs are expected produce, maintain and enforce explicit guidance to be shared with all members and take steps to demonstrate that inappropriate behaviour will mean members are restricted from undertaking sporting activity.

If a club fails to take appropriate action to manage behaviour of its members, both on and off the field of play, the Athletic Union reserves the right to take action against the club as a whole order to challenge inappropriate behaviour. Where committee members are unable or unwilling to challenge poor behaviour, they may considered to be in breach of this policy and face investigation and if appropriate, disciplinary action.



## 6. Actions in the Event of Breach of this Policy

If the Athletic Union becomes aware of behavioural issues, which may have occurred on or off the field, it will work with various stakeholders to ensure a full investigation is conducted. Such stakeholders will include but not be limited to the Union and University staff, other institutions, venues and the police.

Following an investigation under the Students' Union Complaints and Discipline procedures, any breach of this policy may result in one or more of the following:

*(please note this is not an exhaustive list)*

- Suspension of an individual's access to activities or services provided by the club
- Suspension of an individual's access to services provided by the Students' Union
- Suspension of individuals from Cardiff University High Performance Programme
- Suspension of a club or teams access to sports facilities, funding, BUCS or other sporting competition or other services provided by the AU, Union or University
- Suspension or removal of individuals from the club or Athletic Union
- Suspension or removal of committee members from the club or Athletic Union
- Financial reimbursement for damage or financial loss
- Referral to BUCS or other governing bodies for consideration of suspension or removal from sporting competition
- Referral of matters to Cardiff University for consideration under academic regulations including fitness to practice
- Referral of matters to South Wales Police for consideration under criminal proceedings
- Temporary or permanent dissolution of the club

Please be in no doubt that any breach of this policy could ultimately result in a student(s) being excluded from the University.

