

Newcastle University Students' Union

# ATHLETIC UNION CONSTITUTION

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## SECTION 1 – ARTICLES

### 1. MISSION STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Athletic Union aims to encourage the safe development of sports clubs. To maintain a top fifteen ranking within BUCS, while at the same time encouraging a sport for all ethos.

### 2. NAME & STATUS

- 2.1 The full name of the sub council shall be “Newcastle University Athletic Union, sub council of Newcastle University Students’ Union’ hereinafter referred to as the “Athletic Union”.
- 2.2 The composition, work and organisation of the Athletic Union shall be regulated by this constitution and by the constitution of Newcastle University Students’ Union. In the event of a conflict of meaning between the two, the constitution of Newcastle University Students’ Union shall have precedence.

### 3. SCOPE & FUNCTION

- 3.1 The Athletic Union shall be responsible for overseeing the activities of all affiliated clubs at Newcastle University, and coordinate and administrate all their entries into BUCS and equivalent competitions.
- 3.2 The Athletic Union is an equal opportunities organisation, and as such adheres to Newcastle University Students’ Union Equal Opportunities Policy as detailed in Newcastle University Students’ Union Constitution.
- 3.3 The Athletic Union will recognise that not all sport and physical recreation is competitive in nature, and accordingly, will support all affiliated clubs in an unbiased manner.

### 4. AIMS

- 4.1 The Athletic Union aims to promote sport and physical recreation.
- 4.2 The Athletic Union aims to increase student body participation in sport and physical recreation.
- 4.3 The Athletic Union aims to constantly improve the services and opportunities it offers to the student body.

- 4.4 The Athletic Union aims to ensure that all affiliated clubs are health and safety compliant.
- 4.5 The Athletic Union shall promote and protect the interests of its members within the Students' Union, to Newcastle University, and to external organisations on a local, regional and national scale.

## **5. MEMBERSHIP**

- 5.1 The Athletic Union shall be a membership organisation. Membership is only available through payment of a normal annual subscription fee to the Athletic Union, and through payment of an annual subscription fee to one of the Athletic Union's affiliated clubs.
- 5.2 Athletic Union membership is open to all registered undergraduate and postgraduate students of Newcastle University
- 5.3 The Athletic Union has an open club policy. The policy allows Alumni to participate within teams playing in leagues/events outside the University BUCS structure. To qualify for this the club must demonstrate that the individual in question can add to the performance of the club i.e. coaching or previous high level experience. The amount of players will be capped accordingly, in relation to the sport in question. All cases must be presented to the AU Executive.

## **6. ORGANISATION**

- 6.1 The Athletic Union Officer shall run the Athletic Union on a day-to-day basis.
- 6.2 The Athletic Union Officer shall be directly answerable to Athletic Union Executive Committee.
- 6.3 The Athletic Union Executive Committee shall control and manage the general business and policy of the Athletic Union.
- 6.4 The Athletic Union General meeting shall approve constitutional changes and act as the highest governing body of the Athletic Union.
- 6.5 The Athletic Union Officer shall represent the best interests of the Athletic Union to all external bodies and organisations.

## **7. ATHLETIC UNION GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 7.1 An AUGM shall be held at least once a year.
- 7.2 At least seven days notice shall be given prior to the holding of an AUGM.

- 7.3 Each affiliated club shall be represented by at least one of its senior committee members. Senior committee members are defined as the Club President, Club Captain, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer.
- 7.4 Each affiliated club holds two votes.
- 7.5 Voting by proxy shall be permitted, but only where the representative is a current committee member of the club being represented.
- 7.6 An AUGM shall be quorate if half the voting membership plus one are present.
- 7.7 A vote shall only take place if a meeting is quorate.
- 7.8 All documents, minutes and motions for ratification or voting shall be made available at least three days before the AUGM.
- 7.9 Any club representative can make a proposal to an AUGM.
- 7.10 A proposal shall be submitted three days before the meeting, in order for it to be included in the agenda.
- 7.11 Any Athletic Union member, provided the request is submitted to the Athletic Union Officer, accompanied with at least 25% of affiliated clubs senior committee members' signatures, can call an Extraordinary Athletic Union General Meeting.
- 7.12 An Extraordinary Athletic Union General Meeting shall be governed by the same rules and regulations that govern an AUGM.

## **8. ATHLETIC UNION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- 8.1 Athletic Union Executive Committee meetings shall take place normally once a month during term time.
- 8.2 The Athletic Union Executive Committee shall consist of the following voting Athletic Union Officers:
  - 1. Deputy- Officer
  - 2. Deputy- Officer
  - 3. Secretary
  - 4. Finance Officer
  - 5. Policies Officer
  - 6. Fundraising and Membership Officer
  - 7. Entertainments and Events Officer
  - 8. Entertainments and Events Officer

## 9. Media Officer

- 8.3 The Athletic Union Officer shall Chair this committee and be a non-voting member, unless a vote is tied, the Athletic Union Officer will have the deciding vote.
- 8.4 The following shall be non-voting ex officio members of the Athletic Union Executive Committee:
1. The Director of the Centre for Physical Recreation and Sport
  2. The Activities Officer, Union Society
  3. Director of Membership and Democratic Services or the Student Activities Manager
  4. Other Observers that the Executive Committee sees fit to invite.
- 8.5 The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be five voting members.
- 8.6 The meetings of the Athletic Union Executive Committee shall run in accordance with Policy Four of this constitution.

## 9. ATHLETIC UNION AFFILIATED CLUBS

- 9.1 Clubs shall be eligible for ratification only if they comply with Policy Three of this constitution.
- 9.2 Clubs shall have a standing committee that includes the following or equivalent positions
1. President/Club Captain
  2. Secretary
  3. Treasurer
- 9.3 The club standing committee shall meet normally twice a term.
- 9.4 Meetings of AU clubs' standing committee shall be held in accordance with Policy Four of this constitution.
- 9.5 All Athletic Union affiliated clubs shall undertake organised activity in compliance with their national governing body's regulations.
- 9.6 Only affiliated clubs shall be financially supported by the Athletic Union.
- 9.7 Upon dissolution, the property and assets of a club shall be held in trust by the Athletic Union for the benefit of the generality of students.

- 9.8 All Athletic Union clubs shall adhere to all relevant health & safety regulations. All Athletic Union members shall also adhere to all relevant rules and conditions of use of the Centre for Physical Recreation and Sport.
- 9.9 All Athletic Union clubs and members shall adhere to all Newcastle University Students' Union policy and procedure.

## **10. ATHLETIC UNION FINANCE**

- 10.1 The Athletic Union shall receive a share of the annual allocation of funds made available to the Students' Union by Newcastle University, sufficient to allow the Athletic Union to pursue its aims and objectives effectively.
- 10.2 The Athletic Union Executive Committee shall review the Athletic Union budget annually.
- 10.3 Any monies left unspent in club grant accounts at the end of academic year will be claimed back by the Athletic Union.
- 10.4 The funds of the Athletic Union shall only be used for the furtherance of sport and the Athletic Union.
- 10.5 The Athletic Union Officer must approve all external sponsorship agreements involving individual affiliated clubs. The Athletic Union Executive Committee must approve all external sponsorship agreements involving the Athletic Union as a whole.

## **11. DISCIPLINE & COMPLAINTS**

- 11.1 Any member of the Athletic Union who is partaking in sport or physical recreation, competitively or otherwise, either as part of a team or on an individual basis, as a representative of an affiliated club, does so as a representative of the Athletic Union.
- 11.2 All Athletic Union members and affiliated clubs are expected to adhere to the Athletic Union Code of Conduct detailed in Policy Five of this constitution, and the Student Activities Health and Safety Policy.
- 11.3 The Athletic Union reserves the right to discipline any of its members and affiliated clubs further to any action taken by Newcastle University, or any other organisation that holds claim to jurisdiction

- 11.4 The Athletic Union reserves the right to discipline both its members and affiliated clubs according to the Athletic Union Disciplinary procedure, as detailed in Policy five of this constitution.
- 11.5 The Athletic Union reserves the right to place sanctions against individual members and affiliated clubs who, through the Athletic Union Disciplinary Procedure, have been found in breach of the Athletic Union Code of Conduct.
- 11.6 The Athletic Union reserves the right to freeze a clubs finances if requirements are not met, with specific regard to Health and Safety policies and equipment lists.
- 11.7 The Athletic Union Disciplinary Procedure will to as great a degree as possible and practical, be a fair, open, independent, efficient, and consistent procedure.
- 11.8 All complaints received by the Athletic Union will be dealt with in accordance with the Athletic Union Disciplinary Procedure.

## **12. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

- 12.1 A copy of this constitution and all minutes of Athletic Union committees held shall be made available to any Athletic Union member upon request.

## **13. AMENDMENTS**

- 13.1 A proposed amendment to the Athletic Union Constitution must be voted upon by an AUGM or Extraordinary Athletic Union General Meeting.
- 13.2 A proposed amendment to the Athletic Union Constitution must be made public to all members and affiliated clubs at least seven days before it is considered at an AUGM or Extraordinary Athletic Union General Meeting.
- 13.3 A two-thirds majority in an AUGM or Extraordinary Athletic Union General Meeting in favour is required to pass any proposed amendment to the Constitution.
- 13.4 The Athletic Union Constitution shall be reviewed normally every three years from the date of its ratification by the Athletic Union Executive Committee.

## **14. REVOCATION**

- 14.1 All previous versions of the Newcastle University Athletic Union Constitution are hereby expressly revoked.

## SECTION 2 – POLICIES

### 1. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

#### **Athletic Union Officer**

##### *Shall:*

- Be a member of the following University Committees:
  - Safety Committee
  - Partnership Committee (subject to relevance)
  - Strategy for Sport Working Group
  
- Be a member of the following Union Society Committees:
  - AU Executive Committee (chair)
  - Operational Group
  - Trustee Board
  - Finance Committee
  - Union Council
  
- Be a point of contact for students interested in sport
- Co-ordinate AU Clubs' activities in conjunction with their committees
- Co-ordinate Newcastle University's involvement in BUCS and attend all BUCS divisional meetings, including the annual BUCS Convention
- Prioritise the AU budget, including the setting of AU club grants and BUCS expenditure
- Administer the purchase of AU consumables, capital equipment and safety equipment
- Organise the AU Ball and other fundraising events
- Organise elections for AU Executive Committee and chair subsequent meetings
- Establish and maintain a close working relationship with staff at the Centre for Physical Recreation and Sport (CPRS) and meet weekly with the Director of Sport
- Help organise the Stan Calvert Inter-Varsity event in conjunction with the CPRS and Northumbria University
- Organise and deliver an annual training event for Club officers on setting up and running a sports club
- Represent AU Clubs to the University and external bodies
- Lead a team of Part Time Officers
- Help at Union and University events when required e.g. RAG, Freshers' Week, campaigns etc
- Discharge any other duties from time to time required by Union Council or the General Meeting or any of Newcastle University Students' Union's Committees
- Represent Newcastle University at SUNEE meetings in conjunction with the CPRS and the other universities in the North East
- Work in conjunction with the Marketing Department in order to obtain sponsorship for the Athletic Union

- Maintain the relevant sections for the Newcastle University Students' Union Website and ensure blogs are completed four times per term.
- Attend all Sabbatical meetings
- Be a supervisor of relevant Volunteer Module students

**Deputy Athletic Union Officer (2 positions)**

The Deputy AU Officers shall work directly under the AU Officer, assisting him/her, and in their absence, undertake the AU Officer's duties listed above. The Two Deputy Officers will also take two of the AU Exec positions on Students' Council. NB. The third AU position on Students' Council will be designed by the AU Officer.

**Secretary (1 position)**

The secretary shall be responsible for acting as the clerk of the AU Executive Committee, working closely with the Union's General Office to ensure all minutes and documentation is in order.

**Finance Officer (1 position)**

The Finance Officer shall work closely with the Athletic Union Officer, ensuring that the Athletic Union (and all clubs ratified within it) keep within their budgets. The Finance Officer to meet with the Athletic Union Officer on a quarterly basis to check budgets and ensure all club finances are in order. The Finance Officer will also specifically assist the AU Officer in the allocation of AU grants each year.

**Policies Officer (1 position)**

The Policies Officer shall work closely with both the Athletic Union Officer and Student Activities Manager in maintaining all policies of this Athletic Union, including (but not limited to):

- Health and Safety
- Insurance
- AU and Club Constitutions
- Club guidelines

**Fundraising and Membership Officer (1 position)**

The Fundraising and Membership Officer shall assist the AU Officer in fundraising for the Athletic Union, including obtaining sponsorship and organising charitable events. To also be responsible, along with the AU Officer, for sourcing raffle prizes for AU events. They will also assist all ratified AU clubs in expanding their membership bases (if desired) and accessing any potential additional funding.

**Entertainments and Events Officers (2 positions)**

The Entertainment and Events Officers shall assist the AU Officer in the organisation and operation of all centrally run Athletic Union social events, including (but not limited to) the Athletic Union Ball and the annual Stan Calvert varsity event.

**Media Officer (1 position)**

The Media Officer will be responsible for the promotion of the Athletic union across all forms of Media. To be responsible for investigating, creating and maintaining a live results feed on Stan Calvert Day.

*All elected Officers will become a member of the Athletic Union Executive Committee and be eligible to vote on issues brought to meetings.*

**Additional Information:**

- All Officers listed above must be elected on an annual basis at the AU AGM.
- At least one vote must be cast by a senior executive committee member (i.e. President, Secretary and Treasurer)
- Only one member of a ratified Athletic Union club can be nominated for election to the Executive Committee.
- Members running for election and/or voting at the AGM must be fully paid members of the ratified AU Club that they represent.

**2. THE BUDGET**

The AU, allocated by the AU Executive Committee through direction from the AU Officer, awards club grants annually.

Club grants are worked out according to the information on the budget form and the club's activity in previous years.

All club grant accounts are held centrally, and used to subsidise a club's activity  
Grants may be used to contribute to the following, (depending on the type of club):

- a. Affiliation fees
- b. Entry fees
- c. Payment of officials
- d. Coaching fees
- e. Travel
- f. Accommodation
- g. Some Equipment
- h. Repairs and Maintenance
- i. Facility hire

Where money has been allocated, e.g. new equipment, affiliations, insurance premiums, accommodation etc. Try and ensure that **YOUR club is invoiced directly.** Once this is done take relevant materials to the Activities Centre to make a claim.

In situations where the club pays for services, e.g. umpires' fees, petrol) ALWAYS get dated and signed receipts and attach them to a claim form, which should be handed to the Activities Centre. You **WILL NOT** be able to make a claim without proof of purchase/receipts.

Petrol will be paid at rate per mile, therefore route planners must be attached as well as receipts on the claim forms.

The Activities Centre keeps a record of all expenditure from the Club Budget. However, it is essential that each club also keeps an accurate record of its spending.

There is no "overdraft facility" – clubs will have to pay off all deficits incurred. Abuse of the system may result in penalties dictated by the AU Executive Committee (Article 11 and Polices 6)

All money needs to be claimed before the last day of semester two. This is also the last day grant accounts can be utilised.

Some money is allocated in club grants to subsidise travel to friendly and local league fixtures.

When this runs out, clubs are billed individually for minibus use and costs are not refundable.

Travel to BUCS fixtures is subsidised from the BUCS sub-division of the AU budget. The remainder of the expense is paid for out of the standard charge of £6.00, which each member is required to pay on travel to an away BUCS fixture.

The standard charge of £6.00 will be levied for every away match, regardless of whether the match is a weekday match or a weekend match or tournament, and regardless of mode of transport or journey distance.

Failure for the collection of this charge will result in the club being charged. Those travelling by car or minibus should provide route planners attached to a claims form and hand them into the Activity Centre.

The AU will pay up to £10 per person per night (for up to 2 nights) towards accommodation for BUCS away fixtures when necessary. The individuals concerned must pay any costs above this amount. The AU Officer must approve any competition that requires more than two nights accommodation.

For regional and full BUCS competition, subsidies maybe allocated to individuals at the discretion of the AU Officer. Once an individual has received £50.00 of subsidy (excluding that received via team sport events), the AU Executive Committee must approve all further subsidies.

Consumable equipment needs to be renewed every one or two years, e.g. playing kit, balls, and shuttles. Individual clubs are not given equipment grants – these items are Bought in bulk by the AU Officer during the off peak winter or summer season.

All kit used by the club is owned by the AU and has to be appropriately maintained and looked after. A full equipment audit is taken at the end of every summer term.

The Capital Equipment fund is set-aside for clubs who need large, or longer-lasting individual items to participate in their sport. These costs would be too much for club grants. A written request in the third term for items in the next year has to be presented giving information such as reasons for purchase and costs. This fund is extremely limited and the majority of items requested cannot necessarily be purchased. The AU will try to contribute where possible, and will assist the individual clubs to try and source funding from elsewhere.

Other essential items needed at other times throughout the year maybe requested in writing to the AU Officer in the same manner, to pass onto the AU Executive Committee for approval, where possible.

Once the grant has been awarded, the club is informed and again, the actual money remains within the AU. It is then left to the clubs officials to choose a supplier and get a minimum of 3 quotes. **YOU SHOULD LET THE AU OFFICER KNOW** when you plan to order equipment. Your spending should reflect that of your request form in terms of the specific item(s) and money requested (unless the AU is giving only a part subsidy).

The AU **MUST** receive an invoice from the supplier to be approved. Once this has been done the supplier will be paid directly by the AU.

Due to the small amount of money available and the excessive costs of some items of equipment, clubs may wish to spread the cost over a number of years e.g. apply for a third of the final figure every year for three years. This should be clearly explained in the club's application. Alternatively some clubs may wish to buy second hand. In such an eventuality, it is necessary that the AU Officer be given the name and address of the supplier, which the AU Officer can follow up.

Under the insurance section of the budget, the AU pays premiums on the following equipment:

- a. Boats (Rowing and Sailing)
- b. Canoes
- c. Windsurfing
- d. Sub Aqua
- e. Fire Arms
- f. All Club Equipment

Some policy exclusions exist – please note that it is the clubs responsibility to be aware of these.

Due to the occurrence of regular equipment audits all clubs must provide an up-to-date record of equipment. **THE CLUB WILL BE HELD LIABLE FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE.**

Clubs must be vigilant with their equipment and only make claims in extreme circumstances. Claims must be accompanied with a full report and evidence, especially photographic, and be given to the AU Officer to process.

All bills must be paid within two weeks of receipt.

All debts must be cleared by the end of the academic year or punitive action will be taken (Article 11)

In the case of large amounts being owed, the AU may hold the Club Officers responsible for the debt. This can lead to the individuals concerned being unable to graduate as the University will not confer degrees upon any student whom owes it money.

### **3. ATHLETIC UNION CLUBS**

#### Athletic Union Affiliation

Any club wishing to affiliate to the Athletic Union must comply with the following regulations:

1. There must be at least fifteen current club members.
2. The club must present the following documents prior to ratification:

Constitution  
Safety Policy  
Risk Assessment  
List of Members  
Equipment List  
Committee Contact List  
Signatories List

3. It is the responsibility of the standing club committee to ensure that said documents are current, and that any revisions are promptly submitted to the Athletic Union.
4. The club will charge a minimum of £5.00 annual membership fee + £3 insurance fee.

Elections for all club committee members should run in accordance with the AUGM.

Any club committee member wishing to resign from the said clubs' executive committee must give fourteen days notice in writing to the club secretary.

All club committee members shall be required to resign on a vote of no confidence passed at AUGM. Such a vote will be done by secret ballot, and will require majority two thirds of the members of the Athletic Union present and voting at the meeting. Normal AUGM quoracy rules apply.

#### **4. COMMITTEE MEETING REGULATIONS**

All meetings of the Athletic Union Committees and club standing committees shall be governed by this policy.

The chair calls all committee meetings.

All Athletic Union Committee and club standing committee meetings shall be minuted.

The quoracy for all Athletic Union Committees and club standing committees shall be the lowest whole number that is greater than half the voting membership.

All committee members must have a vote.

A vote can only take place if the meeting is quorate.

Any committee member can make a proposal.

A proposal is passed if it receives more votes for than against or abstentions.

The chair of the committee shall never vote except to break a tie.

The chair reserves the right not to vote to break a tie.

#### **5. CODE OF CONDUCT**

5.1 All Athletic Union members and affiliated clubs are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct when acting as a representative of the Athletic Union.

- a. All persons travelling away are expected to uphold the goodwill of Newcastle University, and the Newcastle University Students' Union.
- b. All persons travelling away must adhere to the home institution's rules and regulations.
- c. When acting as a representative of the Athletic Union, members are expected to adhere to applicable health and safety regulations, and particularly the Student Activities Safety Policy.
- d. In competitive environments all Athletic Union members are expected to play within the 'spirit of the game', and to adhere to the governing bodies' rules and regulations.

- e. When at Newcastle University all members acting as representatives of the Athletic Union are expected to adhere to all University rules and regulations and to show respect to those that represent Newcastle University in all matters.

5.2 The Athletic Union reserves the right to discipline its members and affiliated clubs according to the following procedure.

- a. In the first instance, the Athletic Union Officer is empowered to investigate any alleged disciplinary incident. If the Athletic Union Officer concludes that a breach of the code of conduct has occurred, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee.
- b. The Athletic Union Officer will then call for the formation of the Disciplinary Committee, whose members are chosen by the Executive Committee. The committee shall consist of:
  - The Athletic Union Officer.
  - An Officer of the Students' Union that is not an Athletic Union member.
  - An Athletic Union affiliated club president
  - A member of the Executive Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee will vote as to whether the individual, team, or club is guilty of a breach of the Code of Conduct.

- c. If an appeal is made against the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, the matter is brought in full to the Athletic Union Executive Committee, who will, by way of vote, reiterate or overturn the decision of the Disciplinary Committee. In the event of a tied vote the Athletic Union Officer cannot vote. Instead, the matter must be passed to an AUGM.
- d. If an appeal is made against the decision of the Athletic Union Executive Committee, the matter is brought in full to an AUGM. The AUGM will then, by way of vote, either reiterate or overturn the decision of the Athletic Union Executive Committee.
- e. If an appeal is made against the decision of the AUGM, the matter is brought in full to a UGM in the form of a motion that asks the Union to resolve in accordance with the decision of the AUGM.
- f. A UGM is the final internal committee that can address a matter of discipline. If the decision is made at a UGM is appealed against, this must be done so through legal external organisations.

5.3 Sanctions

The following sanctions against individuals, teams, and clubs can be enforced as a result of a breach of the code of conduct being confirmed through the disciplinary procedure

- a. Fines

- b. Suspension of Grant funds
- c. Restrictions on Central Services
- d. Confiscation of club equipment
- e. Limitations of activity
- f. Temporary suspension
- g. Permanent exclusion

The limits of the potential sanctions are defined by the scope of the Athletic Union as presented in Article Two of this constitution.

Sanctions may be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee, the Executive Committee, an AUGM, or a UGM.