

Newcastle University Students' Union

ATHLETIC UNION CONSTITUTION

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SECTION 1 – ARTICLES

1. MISSION STATEMENT

The AU, as part of NUSU, is responsible for overseeing the activities of all affiliated sports clubs at Newcastle University, and coordinates and administers all entries into BUCS and equivalent competitions. Responsibility is taken for health and safety, overseeing all clubs' finances, grant distributions and the training of club committee members. The AU aims to increase student participation in sport and physical recreation as well as supporting high level performance and maintain a top 10% ranking within BUCS

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 Inclusivity 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.

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.
- 4.6 The Athletic Union will work closely in partnership with Newcastle University in adhering to the joint aims outlines in the 'Sports Strategy' (2014).

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. Staff and non-students are not eligible to become members of Athletic Union Clubs. They may however become a coach of a club if they are able to present the required documentation.

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 the NUSU trustee board and the Students' Council.
- 6.3 The Athletic Union Executive Committee will be the senior sporting representative body and will assist the Athletic Union Officer when necessary regarding the general business and development of 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. The Athletic Union Officer may call an Athletic Union Extraordinary General Meeting if necessary for decisions regarding constitutional changes to be voted upon.
- 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 and one other representative who may also be a senior committee member. Senior committee members are defined as the Club President, 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 but advanced warning must be given to the Athletic Union Officer at least 3 days before the meeting to be included in the agenda.
- 7.10 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.
- 7.11 An Extraordinary Athletic Union General Meeting shall be governed by the same rules and regulations that govern an AUGM.
- 7.12 The Athletic Union AGM shall elect nine representatives through the single transferable voting system to form the Athletic Union Executive Committee

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 9 elected students. All elected officers will be eligible to vote on issues brought to meetings. As a committee they will assist the Athletic Union Officer with the following responsibilities:
- Entertainments and Events (for example The Athletic Union Ball, Stan Calvert Memorial event).
 - Have three members present at every Students' Council to act as representatives of the committee.
 - One member shall record minutes of every meeting, ensure all relevant documentation is in order and circulate within the Committee.
 - Review the finances of the Athletic Union including budgets and grant allocations each year.
 - Review the policies of the Athletic Union with the Athletic Union Officer and Student Activities Manager including:
 - Health and Safety
 - Insurance
 - AU and Club constitutions
 - Club guidelines
 - Fundraising and Membership of the Athletic Union and associated events including sourcing raffle prizes for fundraising events. They will also assist clubs in acquiring external sponsorship when requested.
 - Ensure that the Athletic Union is active on social media to engage with as many students as possible, particularly so around the annual Stan Calvert event.
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- 8.3 All officers must be elected on an annual basis at the AU AGM.
- 8.4 Only one member from a ratified club Athletic Union club can be nominated for election to the Executive committee. If more than one student from a club wishes to run, that club must vote for who they wish to nominate.
- 8.5 Members running for election and/or voting at the AGM must be fully paid members of the ratified AU club they represent.
- 8.6 The Athletic Union Officer shall Chair this committee, will also have a vote and in a situation where the voting is tied, shall cast the deciding vote.

8.7 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 Performance Sports Manager of the Centre for Physical Recreation and Sport
3. The Student Activities Manager
4. Observers that the Athletic Union Officer or Executive Committee sees fit to invite.

8.8 The quorum of the Executive Committee shall be five voting members.

8.9 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 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 and attend all compulsory training each academic year

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 The Athletic Union shall monitor the finances of every affiliated Athletic Union club and make payments on their behalf. Affiliated Athletic Union clubs may not have external bank accounts and if they are found to have external accounts, they must inform the Students' Union and close them immediately.
- 10.4 Any monies left unspent in club grant accounts at the end of academic year will be claimed back by the Athletic Union.
- 10.5 The funds of the Athletic Union shall only be used for the furtherance of sport and the Athletic Union.
- 10.6 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.
- 10.7 Athletic Union Club may not take external sponsorship from bars/clubs/promoters or any other alcohol related company. If the Athletic Union Constitution is broken by a club then they will lose their full grant for that particular year. In order to keep the above 10.7 clause in effect, the Athletic Union will maintain a sponsorship grant in future.

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, the

NUSU members' Code of Conduct 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.
- 11.9 Any complaints against a Club member should be referred to the Club committee to conduct an investigation, and take appropriate action. Support will be provided by the AU Officer or NUSU staff, if required.
- 11.10 Any complaint against a club committee or club as a whole will be referred to the AU Executive Committee

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

The Athletic Union Officer's main role is:

To oversee all of the Athletic Union Clubs and be involved in all sporting activities across campus including development and participation.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Be an active member of the following committees: Safety Committee, Sports Facilities Project Steering Committee, Sports Strategy Board, University/Students' Union Operational Group, University/Students' Union Partnership Group (when required)

Be an active member of any relevant Union committees/groups including Trustee Board, Student Council, Operational Group, Finance Committee and Officers' Forum.

Chair the Athletic Union Executive Committee.

Be a point of contact for any student interested in sport at any level.

Co-ordinate AU Club activities in conjunction with their committees

Co-ordinate Newcastle University's involvement in BUCS, and attend all BUCS divisional meetings within the North East

Assist AU clubs with their involvement with local leagues in conjunction with the club secretary

Prioritise the AU Budget, including the allocation of Club Grants.

Administer the purchase of AU consumables and competitive teams' strips, and capital equipment

Organise the Athletic Union Ball

Organise sports specific campaigns i.e. LGBT+ awareness through sport

Organise elections for the AU Executive Committee through the AU AGM that should be organised at the beginning of the Academic Year

Establish and maintain a strong working relationship with CPRS staff and meet regularly with the Director of sport

Actively seek opportunities for greater student volunteering engagement through sporting opportunities

Help to organise the Annual varsity "Stan Calvert" in conjunction with CPRS staff and Northumbria University.

Act as a Student Representatives for all clubs to the University and all external bodies.

Be a Trustee

Work positively alongside the Part Time Officers and offer assistance to their activities

Develop and help at Union and University events whenever possible or appropriate i.e. Freshers' Week, RAG Week etc

Discharge any other duties from time to time required by the Students' Union Council or the General Meeting or any of the Students' Union's committees

Maintain a positive working relationship with all relevant University staff.

Work alongside the Part Time Officer team in all work related to the remit contained here.

Be a member of any University bodies that are deemed appropriate within this remit

2. THE BUDGET

The AU Officer, assisted by the AU Executive committee, awards club grants annually in conjunction with the grant allocation system voted through at the AU AGM. Thus, performance of the previous year, participation levels of the previous year and BUCS status will affect the allocation.

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
- j. Consumables

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 from Newcastle University Students' Union (NE1 8QB) directly to the destination of the fixture. Therefore, a full address of the destination must be provided.

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 and regularly checks their account.

There is no "overdraft facility" – clubs will have to pay off all deficits incurred unless prior permission is granted by the Athletic Union Officer. 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/ tournament, and journey distance.

Failure for the collection of this charge will result in the club member's account 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 night's accommodation; prior notice of 2 weeks to the event must be given for this to be considered

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 second 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, 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. 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 Officer will make the purchase for capital equipment to 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 and approved by the current committee. 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.

Claims can only be made for expenditure that occurred up to 2 months prior to submitting the claims form, except in exceptional circumstances

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 paid current club members unless in exceptional circumstances with prior notice given to the Athletic Union Officer and AU Executive committee
2. The club must present the following documents prior to ratification:
 - Constitution
 - Safety Policy
 - Safety Policy Receipt
 - Risk Assessment
 - Bribery and Finance Proforma
 - Committee Contact List
 - Information Sheet
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 before the deadline given
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 and the Athletic Union Officer.

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 have a vote and also has the deciding vote if a voting is tied.

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. Any complaint or alleged misconduct regarding a club member should be investigated and heard by the club committee, with NUSU staff or officer support (where necessary)
- b. The Athletic Union Officer is empowered to investigate any alleged disciplinary incident against a club or committee. If the Athletic Union Officer concludes that a breach of the code of conduct has occurred or other NUSU policy or procedure, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee. If a club fails to investigate a complaint against a club member, then this may be referred to the AU Executive committee.
- c. 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.
 - Two members 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.

If an appeal is made against the decision of the Disciplinary Committee, the matter will be referred to scrutiny for voting in line with the NUSU disciplinary procedures.

5.3 Sanctions

The following outlines possible 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

Sanctions may be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee, or the Scrutiny Committee at appeal

6. **Athletic Union Official Sportswear**

- 6.1 All AU Clubs representing Newcastle University in either BUCS or other official competitions will be expected to wear the recognised official Newcastle University sportswear and playing kits, and purchase it through the agreed sportswear provider.
- 6.2 The Athletic Union undertake to work in partnership with Newcastle University to agree a centralised sportswear and playing kit deal to ensure that:
 - a. All AU clubs maintain a professional appearance.
 - b. The agreed official Newcastle University colours are worn for all matches and align with the CVI of the University.
 - c. That all clubs have access to affordable sportswear and playing kit.
- 6.3 The following exceptions will apply:
 - a. If the official sportswear provider does not stock a particular sporting playing kit then an alternative provider may be approved by the AU executive Committee (or the SU Officer acting on behalf of the committee); whilst playing kit may be procured from an alternative supplier the club will still be expected to wear the official sportswear.
 - b. During the transition from one provider to another a one year grace period will be allowed where members will be allowed to wear sportswear and kit from the previous year's provider.

- 6.4 For the avoidance of doubt sportswear relates to a range of items which will be selected to wear over playing kit (for example track pants, hoodies, fleece tops) and these will be a standardised design for all clubs. Actual playing kit and styles will be chosen from the provider range by the individual club committees.

Approved at AU AGM on 02.10.17