

The University of Manchester (“UoM”) Sport Code of Conduct (“Code”)

1. Preamble

- a. This Code sets out the expectations of good behaviour for students who engage in sports at the University of Manchester, the roles and responsibilities of interested parties and the processes that may be followed when needing to address misbehaviour.
- b. This Code is in supplement to the overarching student disciplinary framework at the University under [Regulation XVII \(Conduct and Discipline of Students\)](#) (“**Regulation**”). All students agree to the Regulation when registering at the University and it takes precedence over the Code. The Regulation sets out the broader definitions of student misconduct and applies in all contexts and settings from the point of registration through to graduation.
- c. A copy of this Code will be provided to all students who engage in UoM Sport clubs, teams and activities associated with the University. The Code will also be made accessible [online here](#).
- d. The Code will include members of UoM Sports clubs who are not UoM students. They will also be expected to abide by these expectations when taking part in University affiliated activity. However, it is recognised that internal University disciplinary processes for those individuals would not be applicable and actions could only be taken through this Code.
- e. The UoM Sport department will arrange for this Code to be explained more fully to applicable staff from the department and to UoM Sport Leaders so they know of their roles and responsibilities.
- f. This Code will be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose.

2. Roles and responsibilities under the Code

- a. UoM Sport Department (“**UoM Sport**”) – The University department supporting students, staff and local community to take part in Sport & Physical Activity.
- b. Students’ Union (“**SU**”) – A registered charity providing opportunities, support and student representation to UoM students.
- c. UoM Sport Groups (“**Club**”) – Unincorporated sport and physical activity groups registered with UoM Sport under its [Conditions of Club Registration](#).
- d. UoM Student Member(s) (“**Members**”) – this relates to UoM students who are directly linked and affiliated with a Club e.g. a Club president, team captain, team player, social member.
- e. **Associate Members** - this is a broad category and can include students not directly linked or affiliated with a club (e.g. a supporter), non-UoM students, alumni and wider University community users (e.g. people from external facilities such as opposing teams or community members of Clubs).
- f. Sport Sabbatical Officer – (“**SSO**”) – The student lead officer employed by UoM Sport to act as the student lead voice and supports issues around Club democracy and behaviour.
- g. Club Executive Committee – (“**Exec**”) – The group of elected student leaders who support the day-to-day operations of the Club.

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3. Aims of the Code

This Code aims to:

- a. Complement the University's [Dignity at Study and Work Policy](#) and the Regulation.
- b. Protect members of UoM Sport and its wider community.
- c. Ensure the highest possible standards of fairness, honesty, competition, and behaviour.
- d. Reduce the risk of harm, injury, harassment and nuisance to members and the community in general.
- e. Create inclusive and vibrant student Clubs.
- f. Facilitate an environment to enable all those involved with UoM Sport to be the best they can be.
- g. Ensure a strong reputation both internally and to the University externally.
- h. Detail the actions that can be taken should the Code be breached.

4. Scope

- a. The Regulation is applicable across a student's time at the University. UoM Sport consider that the scope of the Regulation most commonly (but not exclusively) applies to the following settings in the context of sports:
 1. UoM Sport premises.
 2. While a Member or Associate Member is using UoM Sport facilities.
 3. While a Member or Associate Member is attending, representing or acting on behalf of UoM Sport at any event of whatever kind and wherever held.
 4. Where there has been an action or incident between Members or Associate Members outside point 3 above, including issues arising on social media or other form of electronic communication and in the inter-relationships between Members.
 5. Club activities, including socials, demonstrations, and any that can be classed as organised by identifiable Clubs and affiliated to Clubs or Members therein.
- b. All Members and Associate Members of UoM Sport agree to abide by these terms:
 1. Compete in a manner of fair play, respect for opponents and polite behaviour regardless of the nature of the competition, when representing UoM in competitions.
 2. Treat facilities, staff and students, at UoM and externally, including the wider University community, with respect.
 3. Abide by any rules of the sport or game, especially when advised by those officiating the sport or game, such as referees.
 4. To not encourage or pressure others into acting against this Code.
 5. To not engage in any activity which results in significant transient noise or disruption in off campus areas.
 6. To not become unduly intoxicated such that it causes a Member's or Associate Member's behaviour to become unacceptable and unprofessional.

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7. Act as ambassadors for the University and maintain its good reputation and relations with its community.
 8. Speak, engage and correspond with others (including via social media) in a professional manner, avoiding behaviour that may be perceived as offensive e.g. use of bad language.
 9. Avoid actions that may, or do, compromise the safety and wellbeing of others.
 10. To not force or expect anyone to take part in activities in order to feel part of the community (e.g. Initiations as per section 5).
 11. Foster a community within the Club built on respect, trust and support of others.
 12. To not physically or verbally threaten, harass, bully, discriminate, victimise or act aggressively or offensively towards others.
 13. Where such relations develop, to act in a sexually mature and respectful way and to not commit sexual misconduct.
 14. To not damage equipment or facilities belonging to the University, its community, staff or students, whether intentionally or negligently.
 15. Promote good behaviour to individuals affiliated to the Club e.g. spectators and supporters.
 16. Be honest in interactions with the Club and University, using funds and property in good faith and not in a reckless manner.
 17. To not disclose information that may have been identified as confidential or might reasonably be perceived by others as personal and sensitive.
 18. Acting in contravention of UoM Sport policies as defined in the Conditions of Club Registration (e.g. Code of Practice, Club Constitutions) or other governing bodies (e.g. BUCS or National Governing Body Policies).
- c. Behavioural expectations of Members and Associate Members will also encompass more specific areas as highlighted in later sections of this Code (see headings 5 to 9).
- d. Not adhering to the expectations may correspond with definitions of misconduct under the Regulation and may lead to disciplinary action.
- e. In the case of any matter concerning the maladministration or misconduct of a Club, this shall not be dealt with by this Code (instead under the procedure in the Conditions of Club Registration) until and unless the matter is referred to this procedure by the Sport Sabbatical Officer.

5. Initiations

- a. In compliance with BUCS (British University and Colleges Sport) regulations UoM do not permit initiation ceremonies or similar events in any circumstances.
- b. UoM adopts of the following definition of initiations: *“An event at which members of a group are expected to perform an activity as a means of gaining credibility, status or entry into that group. This peer pressure is normally (though not explicitly) exerted on first year*

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students or new members and may involve the consumption of alcohol, eating various food stuffs, wearing inappropriate clothing, nudity and behaviour that may be deemed humiliating”.

- c. Social activities such as welcome evenings, team meals, social nights, trips away and celebration events that welcome new members and create a positive first impression of University life are encouraged.
- d. The following list (non-exhaustive) contains issues that may constitute an initiation:
 - 1. Activities that are not opt-in and have a bearing on the acceptance into the team/squad selection or equivalent.
 - 2. Peer pressure being exerted on individuals.
 - 3. Activities that are humiliating, unlawful or degrading.
 - 4. Activities that involve the forced consumption of any fluid/substance.
 - 5. Forced wearing of fancy dress, taking of alcohol or other banned substance for an activity/event that is made a condition of attendance.
 - 6. Not making non-alcoholic drinks available or seen as acceptable at activities/events where alcohol is involved.
 - 7. Activities that could bring the reputation of The University of Manchester into question or disrepute.
- e. Anyone who is aware of instances or concerns relating to initiation activities within Clubs is encouraged to report this as soon as possible. There are a couple of methods of how this can be done, either through:
 - a. Reporting directly to UoM Sport who can deal with a report confidentially if requested.
 - b. Submitting a [report directly to BUCS](#) here, which can be done anonymously or with minimal personal details should the reporting person feel comfortable.
 - c. Submitting a report through the [Report & Support](#) Team.

6. Competition and Fixtures

- a. Members and Associate Members of UoM Sport must abide by the following rules when on and off the field:
 - 1. Adhere to the laws of the sport.
 - 2. Display and promote high standards of behaviour.
 - 3. Promote fair play.
 - 4. Always respect the official’s decision.
 - 5. Refrain from engaging in public criticism of game officials.
 - 6. Refrain from engaging in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour, whether expressed verbally or via social networking sites or other technology.
 - 7. Refrain from engaging in bullying, intimidating or harassment, whether expressed verbally or via social networking sites or in other forms.
 - 8. Speak to their club-mates, opposition, coach, staff and wider University community with respect.

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9. Win or lose with dignity. Thank the opposition and official at the end of every game.

7. Social Media

- a. The University's Guidance on Social Media for Students is available [here](#).
- b. It is recognised that Members and Associate Members may have various forms of social media, both in a private capacity and associated to their Club. Social media can be a helpful tool to promote sport and keep connected with a sport's community. However, it should be recognised that any misbehaviour online can infringe this Code and the Regulation; good behaviour is expected online in the same way as it is in person.
- c. Arguments can occur online and it can sometimes be the case that an individual is exercising a valid opinion, disagreement with which is not necessarily misconduct. It is recommended that Members and Associate Members pay particular attention to their activity, avoid being drawn into arguments and reflect on, before posting, whether a post has the potential to cause offence.
- d. Any communications that Members and Associate Members make on social media either in a Club capacity or in a private capacity where there is a clear association in the Member's or Associate Member's profile to the Club, must not:
 1. Do anything that could be considered offensive, discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual. For example, by making derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.
 2. Bully another individual.
 3. Post images that are inappropriate or offensive, or links to such content.
 4. Promote use of substances or unnecessarily / excessively promote alcohol consumption. The main focus around events and activities highlighted on social media should be on the sport and not, for example, on intoxication or anything which may influence someone to become intoxicated.
 5. Bring UoM Sport into disrepute by unfairly and insensitively criticising or arguing with student, employees, or competitors, or making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations.

8. UoM Sport Club Members balancing sport and academics policy

- a. For elite athletes (Sport Scholars) there is a [Dual Career Policy and Academic Flexibility Guidance Notes](#) that supports athletes on a dual career and provides guidance for individuals and schools to work together around any flexible study requirements.
- b. For the wider general Club Members, attendance at University other than Wednesday afternoons should not suffer due to sporting commitments. There is an allocated window after 1pm on Wednesdays for sports and other extra-curricular activity.
- c. Any sporting ventures they wish to participate in with our Clubs are additional to, and not instead of, their academic requirements.

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- d. However, for those representing Team Manchester, away fixtures may create occasions when travel will occur before 1pm. In this case the student should contact their academic advisor to make them aware of the circumstances in good time to establish whether any alternative arrangements can be supported.

9. Licensed and Other Premises

- a. The same behavioural standards will apply across any setting where Club activities take place and additional expectations may be required by the venue in question. If a Member or Associate Member is at a licensed premises and the behaviour displayed appears to be contrary to this Code, it may be recommended that the individual does not enter the premises or leaves the premises in a safe manner. Failure to act on the reasonable recommendations of the staff of the premises or any University staff present may result in consideration of the behaviour under this Code.

10. Concerns arising

- a. Concerns may be raised about the behaviour of a Member or Associate Member through various channels at the University or by wider members of the community.
- b. Individuals may reach out to the University's [Advice and Response Team](#) via the [Report and Support](#) platform. Here individuals can report and seek specialist support for concerns relating to assault, sexual misconduct, gender-based violence, harassment and hate.
- c. Within a sport setting, concerns may come about:
 1. Within or around a match itself where there are officials monitoring conditions.
 2. Through reporting to a Club Exec.
 3. Through reporting to UoM Sport, either directly or through escalation.

11. Handling concerns for Members and Associate Members

- a. It is hoped most issues can be managed within the rules of competition, with informal mechanisms, support and without the involvement of the University's disciplinary process. The University considers that some concerns can sit within the purview of Club Exec to address, as might be expected of an independently organised SU Club or Society, but that the University has a role to play, particularly when concerns are serious, complex and require more formal handling and/or affect the University's affiliation to the Club or person involved.
- b. The options open to a match official at the time of an incident will include anything permitted by the normal rules of that competition. For example, issuing yellow/red cards, requiring time outs etc.
- c. The options open to a Club Exec on being alerted to behaviour of concern includes recommending:
 1. Temporary match bans

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2. Having a break from the Club
 3. Non-attendance at / leaving Club activities
 4. Considering whether an individual should remain part of the Club
 5. Accessing support services at the University
 6. Ways to avoid repeating the same behaviour
 7. Non-contact between individuals
 8. Offering an apology to others
 9. Voluntary payment for damage to property belonging to others
 10. Undertaking training
 11. Reviewing this Code
- d. Where an individual receives a recommendation under paragraph 11c that they wish to challenge or have further scrutiny over, they can approach a member of UoM Sport to review the appropriateness of the recommendation, which will lead to advice and guidance being given back to the person(s) involved.
- e. Match officials and Club Exec's should identify any concerns coming to their attention that appear serious, in breach of this Code and beyond their ability to handle. These should be reported to UoM Sport. Equally a person reporting a concern may elect to approach UoM Sport or other parts of the University directly.
- f. Where UoM Sport becomes involved, this will enact the Assessment stage of the Regulation¹. Essentially, this is a stage set out in the disciplinary process, for reviewing concerns, investigation and identifying whether a case requires referral to a disciplinary panel, can be addressed through less formal mechanisms or needs referral through an alternative University process.
- g. In keeping with the Assessment stage, a member of staff nominated by UoM Sport will:
1. Review the concerns being raised.
 2. Gather information to consider the concerns. This may include collecting documentary materials, interviewing people etc.
 3. Seek advice and guidance from other areas of the University if needed e.g. policy contacts or ask that the case is referred elsewhere for consideration.
 4. Identify whether formal precautionary measures, such as suspension from the University or external disclosure, might be needed.
 5. Look at whether the actions of the Member were in breach of the Code and whether this breach aligns with misconduct under the Regulation.
- h. In keeping with the Assessment stage, UoM Sport may identify that *"some form of informal resolution (such as, attendance at an informal meeting or mediation, highlighting behavioural expectations, student offering an undertaking for future good conduct etc.) is appropriate"*. The powers of UoM Sport will differ according to the category of member or whether the behaviour is attributable to the Club or a student. If this is the case, UoM Sport will work to the same options as those listed above for the Club Exec. UoM Sport may also take the following additional action:
1. For Members and UoM student Associate Members

¹ Whilst the behaviour of non-student Associate Members are not governed by the Regulation, the process and principles of the Assessment stage detailed below will still be followed for non-student Associate Members.

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- a. Issue a warning.
- b. Recommend referral through the formal disciplinary process.
2. For Clubs:
 - a. Issue a warning.
 - b. Recommend that the Club collectively makes a financial contribution to rectify and/or recognise any issues identified e.g. property damage.
 - c. Require and/or support a Club to take steps to address any behavioural issues identified e.g. arranging training.
 - d. Suspend or terminate University affiliation to and/or support of a Club.
3. For non-UoM student Associate Members:
 - a. Issue a warning.
 - b. Require an individual to take steps to ensure the behavioural issue is addressed and does not reoccur.
 - c. Require an individual to not attend UoM premises, to not attend Club events and/or to not contact identified persons.
 - d. Suspend or terminate membership entitlements for the individual.
- i. Upon conclusion of the Assessment stage, UoM Sport will write to the parties involved to advise them of the outcome. There is no appeal option following UoM Sport's decision.
- j. If Members or Associate Members fail to adhere to any recommendations, or go on to breach this Code again, issues may be escalated to more formal stages of discipline, during which any previous issues may be disclosed and seen as aggravating factors.
- k. During or following the consideration of a case, UoM Sport may identify issues that are systemic and applicable to the whole of the Club, such as there being a toxic culture. In such instances, UoM Sport may in exceptional circumstances seek to fully pause University endorsement, and the operation, of the Club.
- l. It is important that records of any concerns are made and held in a secure way. The concerns should be kept confidential and disclosed only on a need-to-know basis e.g. escalation to UoM Sport. The Club Exec and any Members or Associate Members should not divulge sensitive information about a situation or individuals to the wider Club, comment on or engage in rumours about ongoing matters e.g. Member 1 reported XYZ about Member 2 and so Member 2 has been suspended.
- m. If an individual who has reported a concern about a Member or Associate Member wishes for their concerns to be kept confidential and not disclosed, their wishes should normally be respected and no action will be taken against the Member or Associate Member. In a similar way, if the person reporting the concern wishes to remain anonymous the actions that can be taken against a Member or Associate Member will be limited, as they would be entitled to see the concerns, and any supporting material, if the case proceeded through the disciplinary process.

12. Formal disciplinary process for Members

- a. In the event that a breach of the Regulation is considered likely, the case will proceed through the:

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- [Procedure for Summary Disciplinary Panels](#); or
 - [Procedure for the University Disciplinary Panel](#).
- b. For Summary Disciplinary Panels, these will either take place within UoM Sport or referred to the Division of Campus Life. The individuals involved in the disciplinary hearing will be independent of the case.
- c. For the University Disciplinary Panel, this is arranged by the Division of Campus Life.
- d. Other formal processes falling under the discipline umbrella and arranged by the Division of Campus Life, include:
- Investigation of allegations of sexual misconduct – see the [Procedure for Considering Allegations of Sexual Misconduct](#).
 - Suspension of a student’s University registration and studies – see the [Procedure for Suspending a Student](#).

13. Non-exhaustive list of examples of previous disciplinary matters

- a. Sexual contact without consent by one Member to another.
- b. Causing a game to be cancelled due to disorderly and threatening behaviour on a pitch towards other participants and a match official.
- c. Risking the health and safety of others, and causing property damage.
- d. Potentially damaging the University’s reputation by getting involved in a large fracas at an external site with lots of spectators.
- e. Posting offensive remarks online from a profile showing association to the University/Club.
- f. Acts of violence towards other Members, Associates Members or wider community.
- g. Breaching of financial regulations through usage of external bank accounts or cash handling.

14. Document control

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| Document control box | |
| Policy / Procedure title: | Sport Code of Conduct |
| Date updated: | 04/01/2023 |
| Approving body: | University & Union Relations Committee |
| Version: | v1.5 |
| Supersedes: | Athletic Union Code of Conduct |
| Previous review dates: | n/a |
| Next review date: | 04/01/2024 |
| Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations: | Regulation XVII (Conduct and Discipline of Students) |

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| Related policies/procedures/guidance: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procedures falling under Regulation XVII ● Dignity at Work and Study Policy ● Guidance on Social Media for Students |
| Policy owner: | James Marenghi |
| Lead contact: | James.marenghi@manchester.ac.uk |

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