

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX STUDENTS\* UNION  
ESSEX BLADES SPORTS  
FEDERATION CONSTITUTION



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## ESSEX BLADES SPORTS FEDERATION CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE 1 NAME

1.1 There shall be a University of Essex Sports Federation, referred to as the Essex Blades Sports Federation, or simply Essex Blades in this document. The Essex Blades shall be a sub-committee of the University of Essex Students' Union as provided for in Articles of Governance, object 2.

### ARTICLE 2 PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of the Essex Blades shall be to promote and develop opportunities for members of the Union to participate in recreational and competitive sporting and athletic activity. In fulfilling this purpose, the Essex Blades shall seek to co-ordinate its member clubs by offering appropriate support and training and by maintaining links with relevant external bodies at local, national, and international level.

### ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership of the Essex Blades shall be available to all members of the Students' Union who wish to join. The cost of membership shall be approved by the Annual General Meeting of Essex Blades following recommendation by the Essex Blades's Executive Committee in consultation with officials of the member clubs. Only members of the Essex Blades shall be entitled to join clubs affiliated to the Essex Blades. An up-to-date list of the members of each club shall be retained by the Students' Union Sports Office.

3.2 Any Member of the Essex Blades shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension or withdrawal of Membership of the Essex Blades Sports Federation, in accordance with the Essex Blades Sports Federation Code of Conduct.

3.3 The Essex Blades may temporarily suspend the membership of any member who has failed to pay their required fees including but not limited to: Club Membership, Competition Entry, Equipment Deposit, National Governing Body affiliation, BUCS Participation Fees.

#### **ARTICLE 4 STRUCTURE**

4.1 The Essex Blades shall comprise of sporting clubs whose inclusion within the Essex Blades shall be approved on an annual basis by the Essex Blades's Executive Committee.

4.2 Existing clubs shall be approved at the start of each academic year subject to the club having at least 2 elected officials in line with the democratic process recognized by the Union and outlined in the constitution of the member club and no outstanding documentation relating to health and safety and/or risk assessments.

4.3 Requests to form new clubs shall be heard at a General Meeting of the Essex Blades following initial approval by the Essex Blades Executive Committee. All clubs are expected to comply with the Essex Blades's Code of Conduct and associated disciplinary procedures.

4.4 All Essex Blades Sports Clubs are expected to have completed compulsory documentation requested by the SU Sports Office. This includes but not limited to: Alcohol Policy, Budget, Club Code of Conduct, Club Constitution, Risk Assessment, Social Media Charter, Club Equipment Inventory, Financial Policies and Procedures.

4.5 All Essex Blades Sports Clubs and their Executive Committees are expected to attend all compulsory training throughout the year, including but not limited to: BUCS Captains Training, Bystander and Intervention

Training, Finance Training, First Aid Training, Sports Centre Facility Training, Welfare Training and Social Secretary Training.

4.6 Recognition of a Sports Club by the Essex Blades may be suspended or withdrawn if the Essex Blades Executive Committee is satisfied that:

a) The Club has acted outside its Constitution or Code of Conduct, or the Essex Blades Constitution or Code of Conduct, or the University of Essex Students'

Union's Articles of Governance, its Byelaws, or any of its Policies; or

b) The Club is no longer active; or

c) Mismanagement of the Club has taken place, including but not limited to financial mismanagement; and/or failure to comply with any Supplementary Regulation established by the Essex Blades Committee

4.7 Essex Blades Sports Clubs are expected to attend all training sessions facilitated by Essex Sport where appropriate. Failure to attend these sessions without prior cancellation will result in the club being subject to the policies of Essex Sport and potential sanctions

## **ARTICLE 5 REMOVAL OF ELECTED SPORTS CLUB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS & CLOSURE OF SPORTS CLUBS**

5.1 Elected committee members are expected to fulfil the duties expected of their position as listed in each Sports Club constitution and Club Executive training. Committee members consistently not completing their duties and/or bringing the Union into disrepute and/or not responding to contact from other executive committee members or SU Sports Office staff can be removed from their position using the following procedure:

i) The committee member offering their resignation from the position in writing by sending an email to [blades@essex.ac.uk](mailto:blades@essex.ac.uk), indicating their full name, Sports Club and committee position.

ii) A vote of no confidence against the elected committee member.

Any member of a Sports Club may raise a motion for a vote of no confidence in an elected representative of their Sports Club. This must have the support of at least one executive committee member of that Sports Club. The

person(s) submitting the vote of no confidence must also be registered member(s) of that Sports Club.

The motion for a vote of no confidence must be placed in writing and sent to SU Sports Office Staff ([blades@essex.ac.uk](mailto:blades@essex.ac.uk)) and the Vice- President Student Experience ([vpexperience@essex.ac.uk](mailto:vpexperience@essex.ac.uk)).

The SU Sports Office and/or Vice-President Student Experience must then inform the representative as soon as possible, in writing, that a vote of no confidence has been raised against them. An emergency meeting of that Sports Club will then be arranged.

Gross misconduct by an elected representative, including for example, although not exclusively, corruption, fraud, theft, physical violence, threatening behaviour, persistent harassment, intimidation or bringing the Sports Club, University or Students' Union into serious disrepute will give rise to a vote of no confidence.

In the case of gross misconduct, the Vice-President Student Experience will investigate the allegations and present a report to the proposed attendees of the Sports Club Meeting (and to the individual under investigation) not less than seven working days before the meeting will take place.

A vote of no confidence will be the only agenda item for discussion at the emergency Sports Club meeting. A vote of no confidence would require a two-thirds majority at the meeting to pass. Quoracy for the meeting shall be one-third of club registered members or minimum of fifteen members of the club, whichever is smaller.

If a Sports Club Committee member continues to not respond to the contact from SU Sports Office Staff or their other club executive members, they will be issued with a final written warning from SU Sports Office Staff to their registered student email address. The email will provide a 7-day notice, in which time the committee member is required to respond to the email indicating their wish to continue in the role. Failure to respond to this email will result in the individual being removed from their position.

By-elections will be held at the convenience of the Sports Club to replace any committee members removed from their positions. Elections should be held in accordance with usual election policy (using the Students' Union website) and can be set-up by emailing [blades@essex.ac.uk](mailto:blades@essex.ac.uk)

## 5.2 Closure of Essex Blades Clubs

Sports clubs could be closed due to a lack of interest in memberships and/or not enough members willing to run for compulsory committee positions.

Where a sports club becomes dormant (i.e. there is no active committee or activity), its club funds will be held in a suspense account for two years. If the club is restarted within two years from the date of dormancy, all club funds in the suspense account will be made available to the newly restarted club. If after two years, the sports club is not restarted, and club funds will be transferred to the Sports Club Development Fund which will be used to further the development of all sports clubs.

## ARTICLE 6 GOVERNANCE

6.1 The Essex Blades shall be governed by the following bodies, listed in ascending order of precedence, and defined below:

- Trustees
- SU Council
- Essex Blades General Meeting
- Essex Blades Executive Committee

6.2 In the event of conflict between a body within Essex Blades and a body within the Union, the decision of the Union body shall take precedence.

a) Essex Blades General Meeting: Essex Blades General meetings shall be held at least twice in the first term and at least once in the second and third terms. All Essex Blades Sports Clubs are expected to have at least two members of the executive committee present at each General Meeting. The meeting in the third term shall be the Annual General Meeting of the Essex Blades. The meetings shall be called by the Essex Blades President, in writing,

and at least 7 days' notice must be given to members. The business of the SFGM shall be reported to SU Council via the minutes. Where necessary, SU Council may refer issues arising from the minutes back to the Essex Blades's Executive Committee for further discussion or clarification. The quoracy for a General Meeting shall be representatives of one third of the clubs approved by the Essex Blades or fifty members of the Essex Blades, whichever is smaller.

b) Annual General Meeting: An annual general meeting (AGM) shall be held not less than 3 weeks before the end of the summer term. All members of the Essex Blades shall be given at least 7 days' notice of the meeting and shall be invited to submit items for agenda. Items for the agenda must be submitted within 3 days of the meeting. The business of the meeting shall be reported to SU Council through the minutes. Where necessary, SU Council may refer issues arising from the minutes back to the Essex Blades's Executive Committee for further discussion or clarification.

c) Emergency General Meeting: An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called within 3 days of the Essex Blades President receiving a written request from either:

- a) A resolution of the Sports Essex Blades Executive
- b) One (or more) officials from fifteen different clubs within the Essex Blades
- c) Fifty members of the Essex Blades

Those present at an Emergency General Meeting shall discuss only that issue which the meeting was called to discuss. The quoracy for an Emergency General Meeting shall be representatives of one third of the clubs approved by the Essex Blades or fifty members of the Essex Blades whichever is smaller.

d) Essex Blades Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall comprise of the following officers who shall be elected via an official election process through the Students' Union website, with the exception of President, Head of Student Sport. Only members of the Essex Blades who are full members of the Union shall be entitled to vote or stand for election:



- Essex Blades President
- Head of Student Sport
- Essex Blades Vice President
- Treasurer
- Club Development Officer
- Charity, Events & Fundraising Officer
- Community & Volunteering Officer
- Communications Officer
- Welfare Officer
- General Representative

The committee may invite non-voting individuals to discuss specific topics or provide guidance on matters.

The committee shall meet weekly, but no less than 4 times during the first two terms and at least once during the summer term. Quoracy of the executive committee shall be formed by 50% of those in office. The meetings will all be minuted and this will be selected by the chair each meeting. Any member of the executive committee who misses three consecutive meetings without apologies being accepted by the committee shall be deemed to have resigned from the committee. In the event of a resignation, a by-election shall be held at the next General Meeting

The Executive Committee shall have the following collective responsibilities:

- To organise and publicise internal events both for current members and University of Essex alumni.
- To liaise with the appropriate Union staff to ensure that appropriate training and support is available for all club officials.
- Facilitate the nomination procedure for the annual Sports Awards.
- Promote the running of club elections to ensure all elections are held in accordance with Union policy.
- In consultation with the relevant staff, regularly review the Essex Blades's Code of Conduct and documentation relating to health and safety and risk assessment.

- Instigate fair and just disciplinary proceedings against any club or individual alleged to have breached either the Essex Blades's code of conduct or any other Union policy.
- Work towards the organisation, promotion and running of committee-led events and projects (e.g. RAG week).
- Ensure the development of the 'Future Sports Facilities Plans' and progress in changing 'Education on Wednesdays' as implemented by the 20/22 Essex Blades President.
- The elected members of the Essex Blades Executive Committee are responsible for meeting with elected club committee members where relevant, talking to and representing all Essex Blades members and holding the Essex Blades President / VP Student Experience to account through SU Council.
- The organization of annual Essex Blades Legacy Events, including but not limited to Pre-season, Freshers Fair, Charity Tournament, Sports Awards, Derby Day & Club Elections.

The Essex Blades President shall be responsible for drafting a detailed list of responsibilities for each member of the executive committee which shall be approved by the committee on an annual basis. The Essex Blades President is responsible for the development of the 'Future Sports Facilities Plans' as implemented by the 20/22 Essex Blades President and the continuation of Essex Blades legacy events and the personal development of each of the elected officers. To be involved in all areas and collaborate with elected officers to support. Represent the Essex Blades in all Union and University meetings & Committees to the highest standard.

The individual elected officer responsibilities are responsible to but not limited to the following:

**Essex Blades Vice President** – To primarily hold the President to account, to be involved in all overall executive decisions with the President and Union Staff, to promote the progress of future facilities plan, to chair meetings in the Presidents absence and to be involved in all areas and work with officers to support.

**Treasurer** - To be involved in all overall executive decisions with the President and Union Staff in relation to the ESB budget and funding allocations, to review the policies and to collaborate with individual club committee Treasurers particularly when it comes to annual reviews of club inventory.

**Club Development Officer** – To collaborate with all club committees throughout the academic year particularly proposed clubs working towards ratification and clubs in need of further support. To work on the “Essex Blades Community” bringing together all Essex Blades Clubs enhancing the community and involving the Blades in Union and University activities.

**Community & Volunteering Officer** – To be involved in the organization and promotion of all charity, fundraising, community, and volunteering activities. To promote volunteering and work with VTeam regularly and RAG activities to collaborate with individual club committee members with related committee roles.

**Charity, Events & Fundraising Officer** - To be involved in the organization and promotion of all Essex Blades legacy events and further activities requested by the Essex Blades community, as well as Alumni events. In addition to executive committee to collaborate with individual club committee members with related committee roles. To assist clubs and the overall Essex Blades with fundraising events.

**Communications Officer** – To work with the Union on the core communication group involved in Essex Blades branding and image, to ensure there is consistency. To work on the “Essex Blades Community” bringing together all Essex Blades Clubs enhancing the community and involving the Blades in Union and University from a publicity perspective. Ensure communication channels are clear, and Essex Blades Clubs are informed on relevant information and heard to report back in committee meeting and to collaborate with individual club committee members with related committee roles.

**Welfare Officer** – To promote wellbeing and campaigns within the Essex Blades Community. To work on the “Essex Blades Community” bringing together all Essex Blades Clubs enhancing the community and involving the

Blades in Union and University from a welfare perspective and to collaborate with individual club committee

members with related committee roles ensuring all Essex Blades members welfare are supported and feel comfortable.

**General Representative** – To support the President, Vice President, and committee in all functions. To be involved in all areas of the committee over the term. To collaborate with individual club committee members with related committee roles and the promotion of enhancing the community and involving the Blades in Union and University activities.

## **ARTICLE 7 DISCIPLINARY AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

7.1 Members must take care to listen carefully to instructions from whoever is running Sports Club sessions for their personal safety and the safety of others.

If any Essex Blades/Club member is unhappy with any aspect of the club, they can use the following complaints procedure to raise this issue:

- Contact any member of the relevant Sports Club executive committee via email addresses provided, in person before, during or after sessions.
- Contact a member of the Essex Blades Executive Committee.
- Contact the SU Sports staff or Vice-President Students Experience with details of the complaint
- Use the official SU complaints procedure of the SU.

A detailed reporting and disciplinary procedure can be found in the Essex Blades Code of Conduct, item 8.

## **ARTICLE 8 ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURE**

8.1 In the case of minor incidents such as minor sporting injuries that take place members of an Essex Blades Sports Club will inform the Head of Student

Sport at the earliest convenient time and complete an accident report form. In the case of major incidents, club members will follow the following procedure when away from the University campus,

- Identify any first aid trained individuals who could help to ensure the comfort of the casualty but not move them.
- Contact the emergency services on 999.
- Ensure safety of the rest of the group
- Contact the University information desk on 01206 872222 who will advise on next steps.
- When phoning the University, supply your name and where you are calling from, the club/student involved, the nature of the incident, name of the hospital where the casualty has been taken and the name of any police officer involved.

8.2 If an incident happens on the University site the security office will be contacted immediately by a club member via the sports centre during opening times, on internal telephone number 2222, who will then be able direct the ambulance service to the correct area of the University.

8.3 Where an incident requires any form of medical or first aid treatment, a committee member of the club will fill in an accident report form detailing the accident within 3 days of the incident taking place. Any near miss that can be attributed as being caused by Students' Union or University equipment and/or club or individual club member behaviour will require a committee member to complete a near miss form within 3 days of the incident.

## **ARTICLE 9 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

9.1 Amendments to this Constitution shall require the support of a two thirds majority at either a quorate Essex Blades General Meeting or then the same majority at a quorate meeting of SU Council.