



City University London Students' Union

Alcohol Code of Conduct for Clubs, Sports Teams, Societies & Projects Policy

Approved by:	Executive Committee
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Alcohol Code of Conduct for Clubs, Sports Teams, Societies & Projects

As a Students' Union and University, we recognise social activities are an appropriate and enjoyable aspect of being part of a Club, Sporting Team, Society and Project membership. We encourage student groups to hold social activities. Examples of social activities that have proven successful and appropriate include holding a welcome event for new members, club dinners, social nights and post-match refreshments. However any encouragement or enforcement (this can be through peer-pressure) of the consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol must not occur. Social activities should not be organised which encourage the excessive consumption of alcohol.

There are serious welfare and health issues associated with excessive drinking, and students can feel extreme peer-pressure to take part in order to gain acceptance within a student group. This is particularly an issue with students new to the group, such as first year undergraduates, who want to 'fit in', gain acceptance with the established members and who are potentially less aware of their own limits with respect to alcohol. Consumption of excessive amounts of alcohol in such cases can put students in the way of harm, jeopardising their safety and the safety of others. Social activities must always be organised in such a way that no member feels harassed, intimidated or bullied into undertaking activities.

Excessive drinking poses a significant risk to students' degrees and careers. Students who drink to excess and behave irresponsibly as a result can find themselves with a criminal record. In addition the behaviour of students can bring the reputation of both City University London and the Students' Union into disrepute. This can result in disciplinary proceedings from either body, the most serious of which could result in expulsion from the University.

Furthermore a number of new undergraduates are under the age of 18. The Union and University will inform Club, Sporting Team, Society and Project Chairs/Presidents directly if this applies to any of their members. Student groups have a responsibility to ensure those under the age of 18 are not breaking the law while participating in a Club, Sporting Team, Society or Project activity, this applies particularly to activities which are taking place in premises which are licenced to sell alcohol.

It is also vital that activities are accessible and respect the diverse beliefs and backgrounds of our membership. Activities must be inclusive and make allowances for all cultural and personal beliefs. Members should be able to opt out without fear of undue pressure, reprisal, non-selection for teams, embarrassment or any form of discrimination.

Socials

Clubs, Sporting Teams, Societies and Projects that choose to hold social events throughout the year should adhere to the following principles in order to enable all members to participate in activities safely and enjoyably.

- Members should always know what they are consuming
- Non-alcoholic options should always be available

- Club, Sporting Team, Society and Project leaders are responsible for considering how members will get home safely though this may not always be possible, leaders should not intentionally place social activities in areas it is difficult for members to get home
- All leaders and members should consider how they will maintain the positive reputation of City University London and City's Students' Union when in public
- Members should consume alcohol and food of their own free will, free from coercion, bullying or threats
- Members should not be pressured into chanting. Chanting should not include anything that can be interpreted as racist, sexist, disablist, homophobic or in any way discriminatory and harmful to others.

Initiation Ceremonies

The Clubs, Sporting Teams, Societies & Projects Policy states that any initiation ceremony, or other compulsory or effectively compulsory degrading ritual, regardless of the name or advertising of the event, which affects the physical or mental well-being of any individual, is not permitted. An event which falls into this category is not defined by the consumption of alcohol.

Events deemed to constitute an initiation ceremony are likely to result in severe disciplinary action being taken against the Club, Sporting Team, Society or Project, its committee or those involved. This may result in the dissolution of the Club, Sporting Team, Society or Project or a ban on membership to these groups.

Breach of Code of Conduct

Breaches of the Code of Conduct can be reported to any permanent member of Union staff, the Union Support Service, University Sport and Leisure staff, or Sabbatical Officer, but should ideally be reported to either:

- The Vice President of Activities and Development (SU)
- The Student Union General Manager (SU)
- The Head of Sport and Leisure Services (University)

Sanctions may be imposed on any group found to be in breach of this code of conduct.

Additionally sports clubs must be aware that British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) has identified Anti-Social Behaviour in Sport to be an area of concern and have a disciplinary policy which includes incidents which may bring the BUCS name into disrepute. City has signed up to the BUCS policy on Anti-Social Behaviour. This contains the expectation that all institutions develop policies and procedures for managing student behaviour and alcohol misuse within sport. The policy states:

Any grievance or complaint regarding student behaviour at its sporting events, fixtures or competitions should be submitted to BUCS and will be dealt with through its disciplinary process.

Penalties can take the form of:

- Deduction of BUCS points

- Fines
- Individual/Team/Club suspension from BUCS Competitions/Leagues

Policy references

The Union has policies and regulations that are of note in the context of this code of conduct and quoted below. These can be found online at http://www.culsu.co.uk/content/891553/union_policy:

The SU's Harassment and Bullying Policy notes that:

- “1. Harassment is an unacceptable form of behaviour. This Students' Union is committed to protecting members, staff, and any other person for whom the union has a special responsibility, from any form of harassment, which might inhibit them from pursuing their work or studies, or from making proper use of union facilities.
2. All members, staff and students have a personal responsibility to ensure that their behaviour is not contrary to this code, and are encouraged to ensure the maintenance of a working environment in the Students' Union which is free from harassment. Being under the influence of alcohol, or otherwise intoxicated, will not be admitted as an excuse for harassment, and may be regarded as an aggravating feature”.

The SU's Safe Space Policy notes that:

1. The University should be a safe space, where staff and students can speak freely without fear of prejudice and with equality of voice
2. Students should feel comfortable enough to participate fully in classes and social situations with other students or staff around the University
3. The University should be a place which is welcoming and safe and includes the prohibition of discriminatory language and actions to take a zero-tolerance approach to cases of discrimination or harassment”

In addition, the Societies Code of Conduct also makes clear that:

1.2. No member of the Club or Society shall act irresponsibly during activities taking place, nor shall any individual member or members of the Club or Society bring themselves, the Union or University into disrepute.

1.3. All Club or Society members shall show respect to all individuals associated with any Club or Society activities (e.g. fellow members, external speakers, venue employees, Students' Union staff, etc.)

...

1.5. The Club or Society (and therefore all its members) shall work within an equal opportunities framework and shall not tolerate discriminatory behaviour of any kind.

1.6. All members of the Club or Society shall behave in a manner which does not endanger other individuals, and will abide by the Students' Union Health and Safety Policy at all times.

1.7 Any behaviour which is in breach of this Code of Conduct may make the offender liable to University and/or Students Union disciplinary procedures.