



HIGHER EDUCATION BEHAVIOURS CHARTER - PROTECT OUR GAME

2024 - 25 SEASON

AGENDA



Welcome and Introductions

BUCS Rugby Union and The 2023-24 Season

The Higher Education Behaviours Charter - Protect our Game

Overview of Discipline Processes Across All Home Nation Unions

BUCS Discipline Processes

Sharing of Best Practices and Advice – St Mary's and Bath

Behaviour Charter Toolkit Introduction

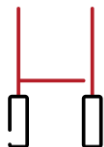
Q&As

BUCS RUGBY UNION 2024-25

THIS IS ABOUT ALL OF US – AT EVERY LEVEL



434 Teams
(317 Men)
(117 Women)
4th largest in BUCS



1959 fixtures
League & Knockout



~12,000 players
2nd largest in BUCS



119 institutions / clubs



Conference Finals
Tiers 2 and below
5 March



BUCS Big Wednesday
National Vase and
National Trophy Finals
Loughborough
18-19 March

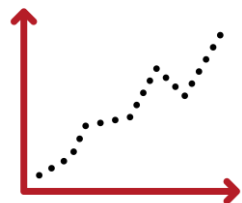


BUCS Super Rugby
Milk Championship Finals
16 April



WHY ARE WE HERE

FOR OUR INSTITUTIONS, OUR STAFF, OUR PLAYERS AND OUR SPECTATORS



To recognise the increase in behavioural challenges across Higher Education rugby union



To share good practice from our clubs and guide positive change



To highlight the resources that may help contribute to making a safe and inclusive environment



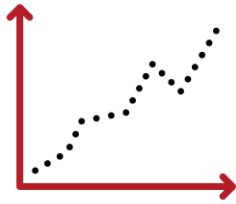
To increase awareness of how to report



To give guidance on sanctions and disciplinary outcomes

2023-24 SEASON REVIEW

WHAT IMPACT DID WE SEE?



Increase in reporting to HERUDG from 6 in 2022-23 to 14 in 2023-24



Increased awareness and confidence in reporting



An increase in understanding of the disciplinary process

A UNITED STAND



OUR PRINCIPLES



The purpose of the *Higher Education Behaviours Charter - Protect our Game* sits across four core principles:

- 1.To ensure our Higher Education Rugby Union environments, and standards of behaviour both on and off the field are as safe and inclusive as possible for all.
- 2.To raise awareness of how to identify examples of poor behaviour when they occur.
- 3.To create a safe and confidential reporting mechanism for all, in order to ensure we proactively investigate and where necessary, sanction such incidents resulting in swift and resolute action
4. To follow the [World Rugby values](#)

THE BEHAVIOURS CHARTER

Institution

Staff

Player

Spectator

BUCS



INSTITUTION

As a BUCS-affiliated institution, we understand the importance of making rugby union a positive and inclusive environment and that we are responsible for the behaviours and actions of our students and spectators. To support this, we aspire to;

- Make our culture as open and inclusive as possible
- Abide by the spirit and values of the game of rugby union
- Hold ourselves accountable for our actions and of those representing our club
- Call out instances of our own spectators', staff and players' poor behaviour
- Actively and in good time, report instances of poor behaviour at matches through the appropriate channels with honesty and transparency
- Not engage in disrespectful or negative activity nor display signs or banners which use inflammatory, discriminatory or inappropriate language
- Ensure our social media channels and posts reflect positive rugby values and content will refrain from being disrespectful, negative or inflammatory

STAFF

As a member of staff at a BUCS affiliated institution who cares deeply about the sport and who wants to uphold the values of rugby union, I aspire to;

- Be an exemplar of the principles of fair play and the values and laws of the game
- Show courtesy, consideration, kindness and respect to players, the opposition, match officials and spectators when playing home and away
- Be mindful of creating and maintaining an inclusive environment
- Be an active listener
- Challenge all instances of negative behaviour
- To treat all colleagues, partners and external staff of our stakeholders with empathy and respect whilst in our rugby union environment.

PLAYER

As a player who loves the game, I aspire to;

- Show courtesy, consideration, kindness and respect for my teammates, the opposition, match officials and visitors when playing home and away
- Treat all my teammates equally and respect other teammates' rights
- Uphold the principles of fair play and the Laws of the Game
- Be open to talk to others about what makes them different and unique
- Be positive in every contribution I make in the club
- Make sure that all team members are included in club activities
- Recognise that banter (teasing/joking talk) can become bullying behaviour. If a teammate asks me to stop, I will
- Challenge negative language and behaviours (e.g., racist, disablist, homophobic)
- Intervene safely, not confrontationally
- Report any anti-social behaviour to the club officials
- Accept victory and defeat, success and failure with dignity

SPECTATOR

Crowds play a huge role creating an atmosphere which motivates and inspires the players on the pitch and a positive crowd, behaving appropriately, can make a match truly memorable. As a spectator who wants to contribute positively to this vision and experience, I aspire to;

- Always be respectful towards all players and coaching staff
- Be respectful towards my fellow supporters, both from my team and the opposition
- Remain outside the field of play and to not confront players or a match official at any time
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour
- Report any anti-social behaviour to the stewards on duty, associated institutions and relevant governing body where necessary
- Be mindful of the image and reputation of rugby and support its values and inclusivity
- Be an active listener
- Hold myself and my peers to account

OUR RESOURCES



Behaviour-based dedicated
webpage

Digital assets made available

Reporting function

Behaviours Charter
Toolkit

All contacts made available

Details of decision-making
processes

DISCIPLINE PROCESSES

HOW CAN A REPORT BE MADE AND WHERE CAN IT GO?

- Disciplinary matters can be reported to BUCS, the RFU (and SRFU), SRU and WRU
 - HERUDG
- On-field disciplinary issues will be dealt with through the relevant Home Union processes and reporting mechanisms
- Misconduct issues can be dealt with by BUCS and/or the relevant Home Union



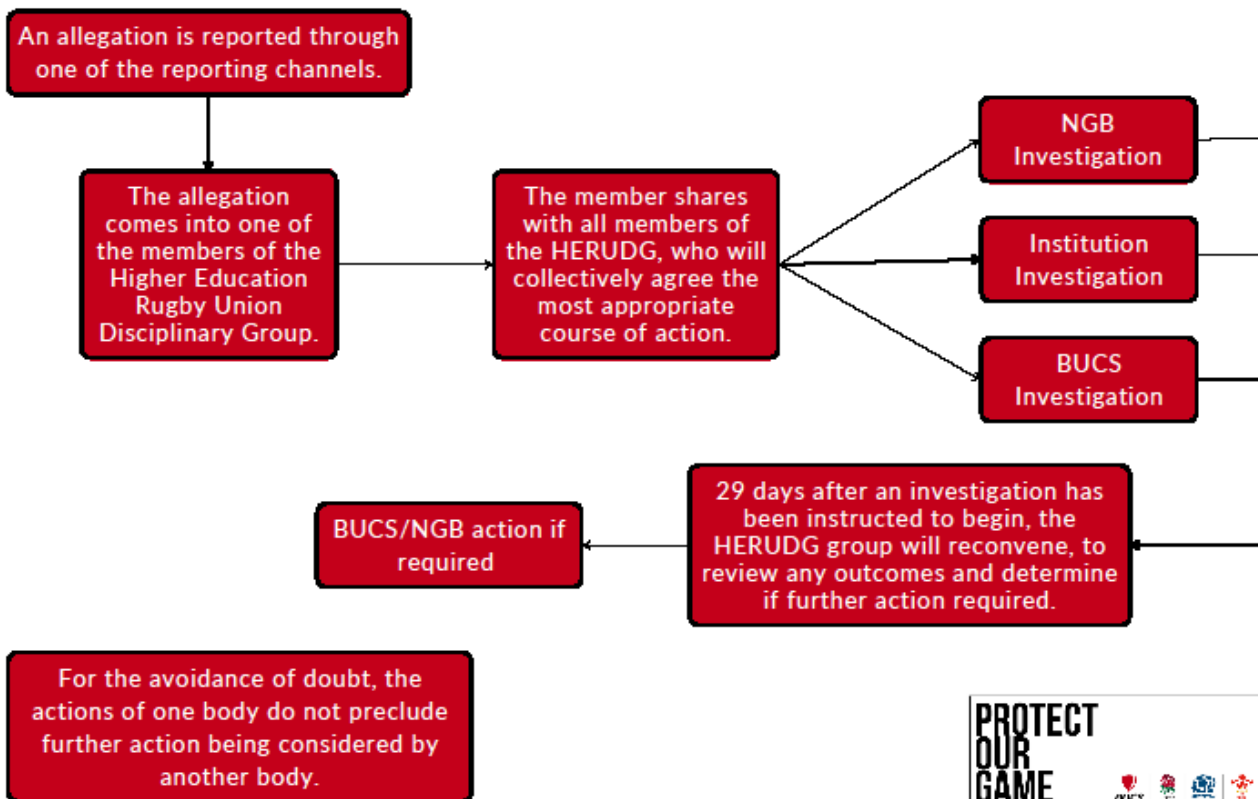
THE RUGBY UNION DISCIPLINARY GROUP

- PRINCIPLES

- Key stakeholders working as partners to provide a fair and consistent approach to dealing with disciplinary matters
- Provide transparency regarding how and why decisions have been made
- Facilitate two-way conversation with clear points of contact
- We want institutions and individuals to be accountable for their actions
- We will operate in a pragmatic way with decisions aligned to both BUCS and Home Union regulations



Reporting Process



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

DAVID BARNES: Head of Discipline

PATRICK CRAIG: SRFU Secretary

JOSH PIETERSE: Discipline case administrator

RONAN MALONEY: Player Registration & Operations Administrator

MARK SALTMARSH: Head of Education and age grade rugby

MARK HYNDMAN: SRFU Chair

KATY YOUNG: University Partnership Manager

RFU: RULES, REGULATIONS AND DISCIPLINE.



BUCS



RFU DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES



If it is felt that the behaviour of any player, coach, spectator or other person at the match, is not in the interests of the Game/Union, they or the institution may be charged with breaching rule 5.12.

- For all breaches of rule 5.12, the Panel can determine any sanction and that may include; a fine, ban/ suspension, education, points deduction or any other sanction it feels is appropriate and proportionate

There have been 6 reported events, but the issues remain underreported

The charter and its accompanying documents also serve the purpose of putting institutions/clubs on notice, as per RFU regulation 19.11.13(b), and to serve as a deterrent

If a spectator is not a member of the club, this does not preclude a charge from being made out

RFU DISCIPLINARY PROCESSES



- We expect clubs/institutions to be proactive and compliant with constituent bodies if applicable.
- The full process is available at RFU Regulation 19.
- Please ensure that you GMS golden roles are up to date.
- Currently 94% of all university clubs are affiliated
- Under RFU regulation 19.2.18 (b) the RFU discipline team will be managing the disciplinary process of BSR & WNL and associated playoffs for both leagues

BUCS



SCOTTISH RUGBY UNION

VICKY COX: Head of Competitions and Compliance

RICHARD MCGHEE: Discipline Manager

GAVIN SCOTT: Director of Rugby Development

SRU: RULES, REGULATIONS AND DISCIPLINE.



BUCS



OVERVIEW

In BUCS, if a player is sent off or otherwise the subject of a Discipline case, it is referred to the Home Union of the player's team.

All disciplinary cases are adjudicated on by an independent disciplinary committee made up of a legally qualified chair and two other panel members with appropriate rugby experience. They are all volunteers who do it for the love of the game.

We deal with over 200 cases a year at all levels relating to:

Red Cards

Citings

Misconduct

The processes procedures are all available to view on the SRU website [HERE](#)

Scottish Rugby supports the Behaviour Charter and will investigate and where necessary prosecute misconduct complaints in the best interests of the game.

MISCONDUCT

- Any club/higher education institution may refer alleged acts of misconduct to the Discipline Manager.
- Discipline Manager has discretion to prosecute Misconduct cases.
- In recent years we have prosecuted misconduct cases for offences including:
- Referee abuse
- Racial abuse
- Homophobic abuse
- Bullying and harassment
- Physical and verbal abuse
- Misogynistic abuse
- Sexual Harassment
- Abuse during initiation ceremonies
- Abuse through social media
- Breaches of concussion protocols and other policies
- Failure to adequately control spectators
- Acts of violence within the venue or traveling to/from
- Acts, statements or conduct which is discriminatory

Referee Abuse

- If referee declares the abuse to be 'red card equivalent', the case will proceed straight to disciplinary process
- Referee Abuse will always attract an enhanced sanction

- Misconduct cases not bound by the normal World Rugby sanctions Table so Discipline Panels have broad scope in sanctioning, including the use of education-based sanctions, e.g. requiring people to attend training courses.

A POSITIVE APPROACH

So robust processes are in place to deal with offenders but prevention always better. To this end:

- The Scottish Rugby Coaching courses all promote and support coaches in building a positive culture and promoting positive behaviours
- Scottish Rugby's 2024-2028 Strategy will create opportunities for us to strengthen/re-establish our core values and behaviours
- The Scottish Rugby Everyone's Game initiative continues to promote, support and encourage clubs to be open, welcoming and inclusive spaces within their communities. <https://scottishrugby.org/clubs-and-schools/everyones-game/>

Institutions can help themselves by following the Behaviour Charter and:

- Being open and inclusive to all
- Being accountable for the culture of the club and the actions of team members and supporters
- Reporting instances of poor conduct and not 'closing ranks'
- Ensuring that the 'public face' reflects positive rugby values

WELSH RUGBY UNION

CHRIS OWER – Head of Playing and Retention

JEREMY ROGERS – Head of Policy and Integrity

WRU: RULES, REGULATIONS AND DISCIPLINE.



BUCS





WRU CODES OF CONDUCT

Which includes:

- SPECTATORS CODE OF CONDUCT
- COACHES, OFFICIALS AND TEAM MANAGERS CODE
- SOCIAL MEDIA CODE

MISCONDUCT MATTERS

- Referee Abuse
- Mis-use of Social Media
- Disreputable conduct (on-field player behaviour)
- Conduct which is deemed prejudicial to the interests of the Game.
- Behaviour that is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.





DEFINITION OF SUSPENSIONS



WRU GAME LOCKER RESOURCES

<https://www.wrugamelocker.wales/en/resources-and-videos/resources/the-game/>

[Welsh Rugby Union | Club & Community | Positive Behaviour \(wru.wales\)](#)

1. Personal Hearing Guidance
 2. Witness Template Form
 3. Applicable Reporting Forms
 4. Definitions of Suspensions
 5. Educational Measures and Sanctions
 6. Guidance around the Judicial Process
 7. The WRU Judicial Panel and Chairs
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- **Consider your behaviour as a role model**, and do not engage in behaviour that constitutes any form of abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or neglect) or poor practice
 - **Promote the welfare and best interests** of the players that you coach
 - **Take action** if you have concerns about the behaviour of another coach, volunteer or staff member
 - **Empower your players** to be responsible for their own decisions
 - **Be accountable for your actions**
 - **Do not discriminate** on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, disability, sexual identity, age, occupation, religious beliefs or political opinion
 - **Challenge discrimination**



BUCS

NICK BURLEY – Sport Governance and Compliance Manager

ASIF NASSER – Sport Compliance Coordinator

BUCS: GENERAL REGULATIONS - BUCS: REGULATION 5 - MISCONDUCT

BUCS: SPORT SPECIFIC REGULATIONS - RUGBY UNION REGULATIONS



BUCS



MISCONDUCT (REG 5)

- **REG 5.1** Each BUCS member institution/Playing Entity shall be responsible for ensuring that its student-athletes, officials, employees, representatives and anyone purporting to be its supporters or followers conduct themselves in an orderly fashion whilst attending or taking part in any BUCS Competition, BUCS Competition Event(s) and BUCS Organised Activity.
- It shall be a defence to a charge in relation to REG 5.1 if an institution/Playing Entity can show that the conduct in question was solely that of a supporter (or anyone purporting to be its supporter or follower) who is not a current member (whether a student, employee, representative or other member) of the member institution/Playing Entity and that it had no reasonable means of controlling or advising on the conduct of the supporter or follower.
- **REG 5.2** Each BUCS member institution/Playing Entity shall be responsible for ensuring that its student-athletes, officials, and all persons purporting to be its representatives do not conduct themselves in a way, or print/have published any material, which brings, or has the potential to bring, BUCS into disrepute, including on social media platforms.
- Failure to adhere to these regulations may render the institution/Playing Entity liable to a charge of misconduct for failing to fulfil its said responsibilities.

CHARGES UNDER REG 5

WHO CAN RAISE A CHARGE?

- BUCS can bring its own charge(s) of misconduct against a member institution, or a member can lodge a formal complaint against another member.
- In the case of a member lodging a complaint, they are responsible for ensuring that their complaint is clear, factual and is accompanied by any supporting evidence. Complaints will only be processed if received from a 'recognised' staff member, such as an Institution Administrator (IA) or Senior Manager.

WHO IS THE CHARGE AGAINST?

- The charge is against the institution, as the institution is the BUCS member and responsible for the actions of their representatives.
- If a sanction is imposed, it will be imposed against the institution, but this can be at a club or team level, for example a points deduction or ban from competition.

CHARGES UNDER REG 5

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- The institution the charge is against will have a chance to respond, providing any supporting evidence they may have.
- The matter will then be heard by a BUCS Judiciary Panel, consisting of an independent Chair and two students/Sabbatical Officers of BUCS member institutions. All parties will have the opportunity to attend.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL OUTCOMES?

- Potential outcomes are outlined in [Appendix 11 \(BUCS Disciplinary Sanction Guidelines\)](#) of the BUCS Rules and Regulations. The Panel can however exercise discretion regarding these sanctions and will always consider the specific circumstances of the case, including efforts and measures taken by the member both following an incident and prior to it.
- The decision(s) reached, and any sanction(s) applied are communicated verbally immediately following the conclusion of the hearing and subsequently emailed out to all parties.

SHARING BEST PRACTICES

SHARING BEST PRACTICE: ST MARY'S AND BATH

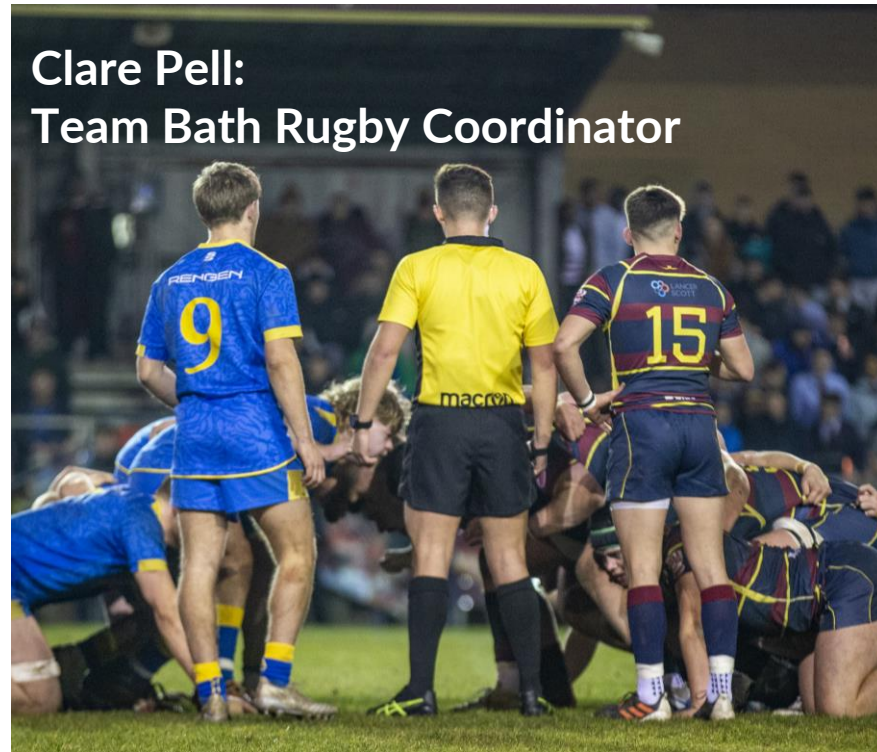


Jen Fairfield
Club Sport Coordinator



BUCS

Clare Pell:
Team Bath Rugby Coordinator





ST MARY'S UNIVERSITY

Men's Rugby Union Culture Shift

BUCS



2022-23 SEASON

- Two red cards and numerous yellows by December
- Spectator behaviour – community complaints
- Students' Union receiving off-pitch complaints
- Poor social media use
- Loss of tender
- Ongoing negative reputation



TAKING OWNERSHIP

- Presentation of how they think they're perceived
- How do they want to be perceived?
- Delivered by committee to club and senior management
- Start of an open discussion for change
- Mutual respect



MOVING FORWARD

- All forms of drums, megaphones, and vuvuzelas banned
- Attended workshops put on by MSc Sport Psychology students
- Help manage confidence and aggression on the pitch
- Change in campus life and reputation
- Continuing to learn..



SHARING BEST PRACTICE: UNIVERSITY OF BATH

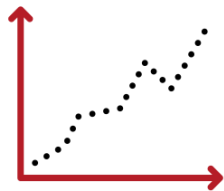


Clare Pell:
Team Bath Rugby Coordinator



THE 2024-25 SEASON

WHAT DO WE EXPECT TO SEE IN THE 2024-25 SEASON



An increase in reporting where necessary

- Refining and improving our reporting mechanism



Additional resources developed and made available including:

- Published charter
- Digital Assess
- Reporting Mechanism
- Online portal
- Tool kit



Clear and resolute sanctions

- Data made available on decisions



Year 1 of a multi-year process

- Ensure we evolve with feedback



Some great initiatives, and actions

- Case studies highlighted and work with good practice



Positive outcomes

- Improved club culture and behaviour within institutions

BEHAVIOUR CHARTER TOOLKIT



The purpose of this toolkit is to support universities in managing behaviour effectively and ensuring adherence to the Behaviour Charter. It is designed for use by university staff and committee members across all levels. Resources were added for committee members because in lower tiers the committee will typically be the primary drive for change.

- **Target Audience:**

- **University Staff:** Resources include guidance on managing spectator behaviour, top tips for conducting internal investigations, and a reporting flowchart.
- **Committee Members:** Resources provide fostering a strong club ethos and promoting good sportsmanship.
- **Both Audiences:** Additional materials include an additional resource library and a checklist to ensure preparedness for managing behaviour.

RESOURCES OVERVIEW

1. **Controlling Spectator Behaviour:** Guidance on best practices for maintaining a positive and respectful environment during events.
2. **Top Tips for Internal Investigations:** Practical advice for conducting thorough and fair investigations when BUCS/RFU asks.
3. **Reporting Flowchart:** A visual guide to the reporting process from report to result.
4. **How to Create a Good Club Ethos:** Strategies for fostering a supportive and respectful culture within sports clubs.
5. **What is Good Sportsmanship:** Key principles of sportsmanship and how to promote it within teams and clubs.
6. **Additional Resource Library:** A comprehensive collection of resources on behaviour management, sportsmanship, and related topics.
7. **Prepared for Behaviour Checklist:** A checklist to help staff and committee members ensure they are ready to manage behaviour effectively.
8. **Sharing Good Practice:** A form that will allow you to submit practices and behaviours you see. This will allow us to provide recognition to those who are excelling and improving their club culture.
9. **Social Media Campaigns:** Visual assets and messaging for universities to promote positive behaviour and respect within their community.



THANK YOU

Questions?