

Oxford University Blues Committee

Constitution

1. Purposes of the Committee

- a) The regulation and recording of awards of Full Blues, Half Blues, Extraordinary Full Blues, Extraordinary Half Blues & Team Colours.
- b) The regulation of conditions for competing in the Varsity Match (See Appendix 1).
- c) The supervision of colours and trimmings worn by OU Sports Clubs.
- d) The mediation and arbitration between clubs should a difference of opinion exist.
- e) The representation of University Sport as a whole where is necessary.
- f) The awarding of the termly 'Blues Grant' (see Appendix 4).
- g) The organisation of an Annual Awards evening for the presentation of new Full Blues, Half Blues and Team Colours in conjunction with the Sports Federation.
- h) Formation of a sub-committee to organize this event.
- i) The organisation of an Annual dinner for the presidents and captains serving as representatives on the committee.
- j) To maintain a database containing the information of past Blues awards and current captains. That is built into the sport.ox.ac.uk website.

2. Membership

- a) Attendance to Meetings
 - i. The Oxford University Blues Committee shall consist of the captains or presidents of all Full, Discretionary Full or Half Blue sports and the elected Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary of the Committee itself.
 - ii. The following shall be invited as observers: The Sports Director of Oxford University, the President of the Sports Federation, Captains or Presidents of clubs who are recognised by the Sports Federation but who do not have a Blues or Half Blues status will also receive an invitation.
 - iii. In addition a member of Sports Federation will be invited to attend in a non-voting capacity as an advisor to the Committee and to representatives of attending Clubs.
 - iv. The Captain or President of a club on the committee may invite their Secretary or Treasurer in an advisory capacity or in their stead to serve as a representative. iv. A club captain or their representative, must attend at least every third meeting of the Blues Committee. The continual sending of apologies is not sufficient as it means the committee is not representative.
 - A. Should a club representative not attend three consecutive meetings the Blues status of their club will be put on probation and their status review brought forward to the following meeting. Should they then fail to attend this their status will be revoked. Whilst on probation, a club will be unable to award any Blues.
 1. Any Blues awarded during the time when a club is on probation may be awarded if the club's status is reinstated at the next Blues Committee meeting.

- v. The dress code is at the discretion of the President.

b) Requirements

- i. An annual affiliation fee of £20 shall be collected from each club (payable to Oxford University Blues Committee).
- ii. Any club that does not send a representative to a meeting, and fails to apologise to the secretary prior to the meeting will be fined 50% of the annual affiliation fee.
- iii. The secretary is entitled to tell the OUSF President to refuse to order Blues certificates for clubs who have outstanding fees or fines.
- iv. The President is entitled to remove the voting rights of any club which has not paid their annual affiliation by the end of Michaelmas Term, with the rights to be immediately reinstated on payment.
- v. Clubs are required to be affiliated with University Proctors.
- vi. Club Captains must send details of Full Blues, Half Blues (incl. Half Blues pending Discretionary Full Blue approval) and University colours to the Sports Federation President within two weeks of their Varsity match (or by a date agreed by the Sports Federation President prior to the Varsity Match).
- vii. Club captains must send all applications for Discretionary Full Blues to the President of the OU Blues Committee within two weeks of the Varsity Match providing sufficient evidence that the sportsperson has met all criteria required for DFB status (see appendix 3).
 - A. If the President(s) of the OU Blues Committee believe the evidence that a sportsperson has met the requirements for DFB, they will contact the Sports Federation President to upgrade the Half Blue awarded to a Full Blue.
- viii. If the deadline for this is missed then the club will not be able to award Blues for the current academic year, the Presidents of the Blues Committee may allow late submissions in extenuating circumstances.
- ix. All voting members of the OUBC are bound by the current standing orders of the Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

3. Management

a) The President(s) shall:

- i. Chair the bi-termly meetings of the committee.
- ii. Oversee the general running of the Blues Committee.
- iii. Attend all Sports Strategic Sub Committee meetings in a voting capacity.
- iv. Attend Sports Federation Sports Council as an observer.
- v. Attend the Joint Blues Committee meetings with Cambridge.
- vi. Produce an annual report.
- vii. Oversee the organization of an Annual award ceremony.
- viii. Approve submissions into the Blues Database.
- ix. Sign Blues certificates.

b) The Secretary shall:

- i. Organise the venue and timing of the Committee meetings.
- ii. Send out notices of meetings, no later than two weeks prior to the meeting.
- iii. Send out an agenda at least 5 days before the meeting.

- iv. Take minutes at all Blues Committee meetings and be responsible for maintaining minutes.
- v. Be responsible for helping the President organize the Awards presentation evening.
- vi. Carry out a contact detail check at the beginning of each term.
- vii. Send the details of the meeting to the Sports Federation President for advertising so that all captains will be made aware in spite of any erroneous omissions.
- viii. Maintain the Blues Website in conjunction with Sports Federation
- c) The Treasurer shall
 - i. Collect affiliation fees, and any fines.
 - ii. Produce signed accounts on an annual basis.
 - iii. Sign over accounts to the newly elected treasurer at the end of their tenure.
 - iv. Pay out the termly OUBC bursary from the OUBC account.
- d) The OUBC Account:
 - i. Both the President and the Treasurer shall be named as signatories on the account.
 - ii. The Treasurer will be responsible for keeping the Committee's financial records.

4. Election Procedure

- a) The Committee shall elect a President, Secretary and Treasurer in Hilary Term to start in Trinity Term each year.
- b) Eligibility to stand for office extends to any person who has sat on the committee but must be a matriculated student for their entire tenure.
- c) The election procedure will start with a short presentation by each candidate in an order chosen at random by the chair. Committee members and observers may then direct questions to the chair to be answered by both candidates. The order in which candidates answer questions shall rotate with each question.
- d) The election for the position of President shall take place first as any unsuccessful candidates may then put themselves forward for the position of Secretary or Treasurer.
- e) Voting members may vote for any candidate or may choose to vote to Re-Open Nominations, but no votes are transferable.
- f) The election of a candidate shall be determined by a simple majority vote.
- g) Voting on the election of officers shall be taken by secret ballot.
- h) A motion of no confidence in any officer may be brought provided it has the backing of ten voting members of the committee. To succeed it must have a two-thirds majority.

5. Voting Rights

- a) Committee
 - i. The quorum of the Committee meeting shall be at least fifteen voting members.
 - ii. Each Full, Discretionary or Half Blue Club shall be allowed to cast as many votes as they have registered subdivisions, with any subdivision previously registered under the women's *and* men's committees able to cast two votes at every merged committee meeting.
 - iii. Any observers to the meeting will not have voting rights.
 - iv. Anyone proposing a motion does not relinquish their voting rights.
 - v. Any status change affecting voting rights will take effect in the subsequent meeting.

- vi. Quorums:
 - 1. For promotion to, or maintenance of Full Blue: ten Full Blue voting members of the Committee shall be required, but such a quorum shall include no more than four representatives.
 - 2. For votes on the maintenance or promotion to Discretionary Full Blue status a quorum of 20 Discretionary or Full Blue voting members is required.
 - 3. For the granting of Half Blues, or a change of Half Blues status, a quorum of twenty Full, Discretionary and Half Blue voting members of the Committee shall be required.
- vii. A two third majority is need for a maintenance or promotion of a sport's status.
- b) Officers
 - i. The President shall not represent any Full or Half Blue sport in a vote or debate on any motion before the Committee. In the event of the President also holding the post of Captain of a Full or Half Blue sport they shall not exercise the voting right of that sport. They may invite a representative of their club to attend on behalf of their club, or they may make an apology for that sport. Any such representative of the President's sport shall vote independently of any instruction or advice given by the President at any time.
 - ii. The President or Secretary shall only have a vote in the following circumstances: 1.
 - 1. In the event of a tied vote, the President shall have a casting vote in which they may not abstain.
 - 2. The Secretary shall only have a vote if they are chairing the debate and the vote on the motion is tied, they shall then exercise a casting vote and may not abstain.

6. Content of Meetings

- a) There must be 2 meetings per term.
- b) Motions and agenda items
 - i. Motions and agenda items must have the backing of the club before they are submitted to the Blues Committee (i.e. all subdivisions of the club must agree to the motion).
 - ii. Motions and other agenda items must be submitted in written form to the secretary at least a week before the meeting.
 - iii. The president and secretary may also add motions to the agenda including reviews of clubs.
 - iv. Any motion submitted to the committee shall not be reconsidered in similar form within one calendar year, unless there have been significant changes to its content.
- c) All votes on status reviews and criteria changes are to be held by secret ballot.
- d) Content of Motions
 - i. Status/Criteria Changes:
 - 1. All motions for change of status must include a written report addressing the General Criteria for the awarding of Blues (see Appendix 2)
 - 2. If the committee does not approve the proposed review the club may present an amended review at the following meeting. If this also fails the club must reapply for Status. Should there be a Varsity Match before a satisfactory review has been completed all awards resulting from this must be proposed to the committee.
 - 3. For the granting of Half Blues or a change of Half Blue status any amendment must carry a two thirds majority vote.

4. For the granting of Discretionary Full Blues or a change to Discretionary Full Blue status only Discretionary Full Blue and Full Captains and representatives may vote. Amendments must carry a two third majority.
 5. For the granting of Full Blues or a change to Full Blue status only Full Blue captains and representatives may vote. Amendments must carry a two third majority in favour.
 6. Any changes in status will come into effect from the following term.
- ii. Awarding of Extraordinary Blues:
1. A report should be included addressing the General Guidelines for the awarding of Extraordinary Blues (see Appendix 5) and include enough detail for the committee to come to an informed decision as to whether the applicant adequately fulfils the criteria.
 2. The motion for an extraordinary award may not been presented by the applicant but by another member of their club or another member of the OUBC.
 3. For the granting of extraordinary Full Blues only Full Blue and Discretionary Full Blue captains and representatives may vote. This vote must carry a 2/3 majority.

7. Amendments to this constitution

- a) The above clauses should be reviewed at least every five years
 - i. Any amendment to this constitution must be carried by a two-thirds majority of which no more than 10 are representatives.

Last revised: 28th November 2019

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Appendix 1

Varsity Match Eligibility as Agreed by the Joint Blues Committee of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge with respect to Varsity Competitions. Drafted and approved by the Joint Blues Committee on 28 February 1983. Alteration approved on 13 November 1997 which came into force from 1 October 1998. Reviewed 12th March 2001 to come into force 1st October 2001. Additional review in May 2013 to come into force 1st October 2013. A further review in June 2014 took place to come into force 1st October 2014*

A resident bona fide student member of the University is eligible to compete in a Blues Status Oxford versus Cambridge sporting contest, subject to the stipulations that he or she is:

- a) A matriculated and fully registered member of both a College and of the University for the current year according to both College and University academic registers; and
- b) Registered for, and actively studying for, a recognised degree, diploma or certificate of the University *where matriculation for all members of said course is compulsory** and;
- c) In residence for at least the undergraduate (8 week) term in which the Varsity match falls, or the preceding one (if the match occurs in the 'holiday' period following the term in question), fulfilling University residence requirements as applied to all undergraduates; the undergraduate University residence requirements therefore would apply to all graduates and;
- d) Not already the holder of 8 Blues or having previously competed in 8 Blues status Varsity Matches in any one sport.

And **either**

- e) Is an undergraduate in which case his or her eligibility continues until 30th September in the year in which he or she completes his or her undergraduate course;

or

- f) is already the holder of a degree from a recognised University and is therefore reading for a further degree or for a diploma, certificate or higher degree of the University, in which case his or her eligibility is limited to four (4) further appearances. These four years need not be consecutive.
- g) The eligibility of such a graduate student is limited until his or her results are published in the Reporter (Cambridge) or the Examination Schools (Oxford). However, should extra work be required after a viva to complete academic requirements, then Varsity eligibility is extended until these requirements have been met but shall not extend beyond the academic year in which the original viva takes place. See Note: 2 below.

Notes:

1. For all other non-Blue status Oxford vs. Cambridge matches i.e. 2nd team competitions, the current British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) eligibility criteria shall apply. This allows any current student on a recognised course of study within the University, irrespective of matriculation or number of years of previous participation, the right to play.**
2. For the avoidance of doubt, the academic register or equivalent must have the student status shown as 'active' for at the very minimum the term in which the Varsity Match falls, notwithstanding all other eligibility requirements.

*Sentence in italics at section b) come into force from September 2015.

**Currently the ISIS/Goldie crews (2nd teams) are eligible for a Half Blues.

Appendix 2

Status of Full and Half Blue Sports

To change the status of a sport a request must be made to the Committee one week before the meeting. Details are required about the results and training of the club. There must have been three Varsity matches before a club is considered for a status change; and after such a status change, the club is subject to three years' probation.

Every three years a club will be called to give a review of their status to the committee. There will then be a vote to approve the status and any changes made to it. The review should be submitted in document form.

Please send the review to the Blues Secretary at least two days before the meeting. The document should include an explanation of how the sport meets the following criteria:

Criteria for Full Blue Sports

1. There must be an annual match against Cambridge.
2. The sport must be a major one within the University.
3. The Club must have a high standard compared with other amateur Clubs.
4. There must be Considerable College organisation, with recognised Colleges playing each other.
5. There must be a substantial degree of athletic ability required.
6. There must be an inveterate organisation and tradition of participation within the U.K. and the University.
7. Comment on the standard of the sport in the UK (or other country as appropriate).

N.B. For Discretionary Full Blue and Half Blue sports, criteria 2, 4 and 6 are not so important.

The following additional details are requirements for status reviews and status changes for men's sports, and non compulsory suggestions for women's sports:

1. Background of Sport:
 - a. Basic rules and point of the sport.
 - b. Simple explanation of rules/point scoring in your VM.
2. Background of Oxford Club:
 - a. Year of foundation of Club.
 - b. Year of first Varsity Match.
 - c. Number of squad members.
 - d. Participants in the University.
 - e. Number of fixtures and leagues play in.
 - f. Cuppers competition.

- g. Popularity of sport Nationally.
- 3. Varsity Match:
 - a. Scoring in the Varsity Match.
 - b. Number of Players in the 1st team (incl how many of them are reserves).
- 4. Current Status:
 - a. What is the current status?
 - b. Explain criteria and what it means.
 - c. Number of awards possible to be given.
 - d. Who takes the decision to award (i.e. Captain's discretion or OU Blues Committee, etc.)
- 5. Status Remain/Status Change:
 - a. Justify current status and why it should remain the same.
 - b. Add in BUSA or National ranking Criteria in line with OUMBC directive.^[L]_[SEP] OR
 - c. Explain why you feel it should change.
- 6. How you would like it to change?

7. Appendix 3

Discretionary Full Blue requirements

Awards made at the captain's discretion, or when a sportsperson has met the predetermined criteria for a DFB written into the Blues status of the club. If at the captain's discretion, they should be to sportspersons who they feel are worthy of such an award. In making this award, they must have regard to six Blues Sport criteria:

- 1. Ability
- 2. Excellence
- 3. Effort
- 4. Determination
- 5. Result against Cambridge, and
- 6. Overall contribution of the individual(s).

Discretionary Full Blues are upgrades of Half Blues and may be awarded when certain criteria are achieved. If a captain wishes to award DFB status to a sportsperson, they must submit them to the Sports Federation President with the status "Half Blue – DFB pending". They must then submit a request to the presidents of the Blues Committee with evidence that the sportsperson has met the required standard for a DFB to be awarded. Such awards must be presented in writing or via email to the President who will approve or disapprove them, in the case of the latter the awards may be proposed before the committee who may vote to override the decision of the president(s).

Awarding of University Team Colours

First and second team colours are awarded at the captain's discretion to players who have participated in the VM but have fallen short of the requirements for a major award. It is an absolute requirement that players have participated in the varsity match.

Retrospective Applications

Retrospective applications for individual Full, Discretionary or Half Blues are only allowed if they were not made at the correct time due to administration errors. They must be submitted within one year of the individual concerned leaving the university. Also, the application must be considered under the criteria for such awards as they were at the time when the application should have been made. The only exception to this is when a person who was awarded a Blue prior to 2019 (year of Men's and Women's Committees merging) requests an updated gender-neutral certificate. This certificate will be provided at the cost of production at the earliest convenience of the Sports Federation President. The year of issue of the original certificate shall be used on the replacement however the President must both sign and date the certificate. Updated certificates can only be given in exchange for the original, which must be destroyed.

Appendix 4

Blues Grant

The annual Blues Grants are open to all sportspeople in the University who have received a Blue, Half Blue or Colours from the Blues Committee. The grant should be awarded to individuals who have shown excellent sporting performance for use towards future personal development (eg. new personal equipment, training camp, travel with national team, etc.).

There are separate grants available to men and women. The Women's Blues Grant of £300 is available once a year to one or more female athletes. The Men's Blues Grant of £300 is available three times a year as sums of £100.

The President and Secretary will shortlist up to four applicants for each grant that the Committee will vote on at the first meeting of Hilary Term by secret ballot. In the event of a conflict of interest that officer should remove themselves from the discussion and be replaced by the Sports Federation President. If the committee are agreed, the grant may be split between individuals. The awarding of the grant shall be by simple majority vote in the meeting.

Applications should be no more than 300 words and countersigned by two people willing to recommend the applicant (eg. club president, coach, etc.). Applicants should include details of funding received from other sources (eg. from colleges, other sports grants and scholarships). Applications must be received by the President at least a week before the first meeting of Hilary Term.

Appendix 5

Sport non-specific guidelines for the awarding of Blues

Absolute Blue requirements

No award (Full/Half Blue or First/Second Team Colours) can be awarded to someone who does not compete in the Varsity Match, thus:

- Non-playing reserves cannot be awarded Blues etc
- People who fall ill or are injured *before* the Varsity Match are not eligible for Blues.

- For all awards requiring criteria to be met: such criteria must be accomplished within the same season as the Varsity Match. Seasons over which this is judged are determined by each sport's respective national governing body (NGB).
- If athletes feel they have received an inappropriate award according to their sport's published criteria they may appeal within one season directly to the Blues Committee President and Secretary.

Extraordinary Full Blues

These are awarded to sportswomen who are deemed by the Blues Committee to have achieved an extraordinarily high standard in their sport. Extraordinary awards are usually considered for achievements at national, or junior international level competition. Extraordinary Awards exist primarily to recognise athletes participating in sports that would not otherwise be able to award a Full or Discretionary Full Blue to a given player.

Such awards are obviously rarely given. The following are some guidelines for Captains/Presidents regarding the presentation of their case to the Blues Committee:

- a) The person who is applying for the award must not attempt to present herself; a fellow teammate or the Coach should do it (usually the Captain is the obvious choice);
- b) The evidence of the superlative performance should be readily available to all the Committee. It is the duty of the applicant's representative to PROVE without doubt the applicant's merit;
Thus
- c) It should not be expected that the Blues Committee know details of the sport regarding the rules of competition, methods of scoring, meaning of the results etc. Such things should be suitably explained to allow the Committee to judge fairly the individual case.
- d) Therefore written-evidence is much appreciated (with independent corroboration, i.e. from the Coach, National team or the like) showing comparison to previous Varsity Matches, County, National and/or International rankings etc.

Thus it must be realised that the awarding of Extraordinary Full Blues is a great accolade and must be taken seriously lest the value of the Blues be reduced (and efforts of others in achieving Blues status). Sport is by its very nature competitive and the awarding of colours is meaningless without rigorous high standards that are applied in a uniform and comparative manner.

Extraordinary Half Blues

Guidance for the standards required to apply for Extraordinary Half Blues is provided here, for cases where an individual has performed to a high standard but would not merit an Extraordinary Full Blue.

It is possible to apply for Extraordinary Half Blue status if:

- a) The individual is a member of an established Oxford University Club and plays a recognised sport which does not currently hold Blue or Half Blue status.
- b) The individual plays a sport which holds Half Blue status but is not able to award Half Blues to the entire team. In this case the individual must have been deemed by the Captain and Coach to have made a contribution to the Varsity match equal to that of the other members of the team who were awarded Half Blues. She must also have fulfilled the standards described in the Status of her sport.

The ability of an individual who is proposed for an Extraordinary Half Blue should be commensurate with performance at County or Regional level in sports in which there is a regular and well defined competition structure. Written evidence of this is much appreciated.

Blues for Disabled Athletes

The pathway for recognition of sporting achievements comparable to a Blue for disabled students is to apply for an Extraordinary Full Blue. Captains should follow the above guidelines for applications with emphasis on drawing parallels in achievement to other disabled athletes and/or holders of blues in that sport in Oxford currently. Full blue and DFB captains will be able to vote and should have the following options:

- Does X representing OU-- deserve an Extraordinary Full Blue through the Blues for Disabled Athletes Pathway? (Yes, No)
- If no, do they deserve an Extraordinary Half Blue? (Yes, No)