

## STUDENT ATHLETE PARTICIPATION POLICY

### Purpose and Context

The University Sports and Activity Board (USAB) has set the strategic ambition of providing physical activity and wellbeing opportunities to enable our university communities to lead healthy lives and fulfil their potential through:

- Enhancing wellbeing and community
- Community sports and activity clubs
- Inspiring achievement, performance and excellence

The University has secured TASS (Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme) Dual Career Accreditation, which recognises our role to provide the opportunity for student athletes to get the very best out of their academic and sporting ability, without having to make the hard decision between the two. The accreditation expects a certain level of academic flexibility and understanding that allows talented athletes to balance their studies with a sporting schedule.

The University in collaboration with the Students' Union provides high quality opportunities for students to represent the University in sporting competitions.

The aim of this policy is to remove or reduce the barriers preventing participation, creating an environment where student athletes feel supported in their academic areas without fear of falling behind or jeopardising their academic attainment.

### Scope

This policy applies to all students at University of Huddersfield.

This policy supports the University ambition in the Strategy 2030 to be “a globally recognised university that transforms lives through inspiring education, groundbreaking research, and international engagement”.

Through sport, students develop friendships, new skills, teamwork, and leadership capabilities. Consequently The policy aligns with Inspiring KPI2 and KPI3, recognising the positive impact athletic participation can have on student continuation and progression outcomes

The national university sporting programme typically operates on Wednesday afternoons, and this policy recognises the University's [Timetabling and Room Booking Policy](#) which that undergraduate teaching normally ends at 1pm on Wednesdays.

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## 1 Introduction

The University of Huddersfield acknowledges the unique challenges faced by elite sporting students, and students who participate in University teams and aims to facilitate their academic and athletic pursuits in a balanced manner.

This policy focuses primarily on elite student athletes and those who represent the University through regular Wednesday competition in BUCS. Sports teams performance is being negatively impacted by conceding fixtures commonly known as walkovers. A single walkover can impact the entire season as a team would lose both league points, but also overall BUCS points in the national universities league table. The most common reasons for teams conceding walkovers are:

- Students being timetabled for classes or exams on Wednesday afternoons
- Early journey times to away fixtures overlapping Wednesday morning teaching sessions
- Relatively small squads for team selection which means when students are unavailable because of Wednesday teaching, there are insufficient players to field a team.

Some staff make informal academic arrangements for students to catch-up to enable them to compete in sport. However, there is need to formalise student and staff expectations to ensure equity of approach and enable the long-term success of the Universities sporting community.

While we expect Schools to support student athletes by making reasonable adjustments, we acknowledge this isn't always possible in professional courses where placements or practical sessions cannot be repeated. In these circumstances we would expect dialogue between students and staff to take place as early as possible to establish clear expectations and realistic possibilities for both parties.

## 2 Student Athletes and Sports Scholars

The University of Huddersfield is committed to developing students both academically and through their chosen sport. The University expects that all students supported by this policy will maintain high levels of both academic and sports performance and will serve as ambassadors for the University.

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions should be used:

- 1.1 **Student Athlete** is a student who holds an active competitive membership to a Sports Club through the Students' Union.
- 2.1 **Sports Scholar** are student athletes who obtain a place on the University's Sports Scholarship Scheme.
- 3.1 **Dual Career Athletes** are students who represent their County and/or Country. They may or may not be members of University Sports Clubs or Sports Scholars but may require support for their studies.

## 3 University approved representations

For the purposes of this policy 'University approved representations' relates to:

- 4.1 All entries in the National or Regional BUCS league and cup programmes where teams or individuals are representing The University of Huddersfield.
  - Non-BUCS national or regional competitions or leagues, annually identified by the Students Union and approved by USAB.\*
- 5.1 Dual Career Athletes who are not directly representing the University but are participating in regional, national, or international events, are also recognized under this policy.

(\*NB not all sports are registered with BUCS and consequently competition is enabled through alternative pathways.)

## 4 Academic Responsibilities

### 4.1 Examinations

Examination period dates are fixed, publicised in advance, and are aligned with other events in the academic calendar. Every effort will be made to give as much notice as possible to students of an exact date and time for their exams. A student competing in sport is not expected to miss any examinations, however if a clash occurred, we would expect dialogue between students and staff to take place as early as possible to establish reasonable adjustments where possible, with clear student expectations and guidance.

### 4.2 Coursework assessment

Deadlines for coursework assessment are given in advance to students. Therefore, student athletes competing around the time of the deadline can plan their work, so it is completed in good time and submitted to the published deadline. Where assignments are “live” for example performance or simulation based, early dialogue to explore any reasonable adjustment to the timing would take place as early as possible with clear student expectations and guidance.

### 4.3 Placements

A student who is on placement cannot use this policy to miss any placement hours, however we acknowledge that early conversations between the student and their placement provider may enable locally agreed flexibility and reasonable adjustments for student athletes to compete in recognised competitions and complete required placement hours.

### 4.4 Responsibilities

#### Responsibilities of Student Athletes

- Student athletes are expected to take a proactive approach to managing their academic calendar alongside representing the University in sport or participating in elite sporting activity.
- Student athletes are expected to have a regular dialogue with academic staff about their sporting commitments and agree clear expectations.
- Student athletes should ensure that they take responsibility for acquiring any lecture notes or information on assignments which are disseminated in sessions they may have missed, and proactively engage with resources and information on Brightspace
- Any assignment due in on competition days must be handed in by the deadline date. Students are aware of hand-in dates and must manage their time appropriately. Students are eligible to make application for extensions to deadlines in line with general University policy, and any reasonable adjustments as specified in individual PLSPs also apply.
- Student athletes should also consider the effects of their absence on their peers and take steps to minimise the impact of their sporting commitments on group work and disruption to classes.

#### Home Students:

- Student athletes who are absent due to approved competitions should ensure that their non-attendance is recorded accurately and promptly using the self-certification process on the Attendance Monitoring System using the ‘University or Elite Sporting Representation’ category.

#### International Students:

- International Student participating in recognised competitions will need to complete a ‘*Student Athlete Notification Form*’ before being eligible for sporting fixtures.

- International Students will need to notify their School Attendance Monitoring Team on **every occasion** they need to miss a class due to sporting representations.

### **School and Registry Responsibilities**

- Module tutors should where possible avoid Wednesdays when setting assignment hand-out and hand-in dates, exams, and in-class tests.
- Module tutors should ensure that any student who is absent when representing the University in sport or participating in an Elite sports event, is given access to the same information as those students attending lectures.
- Attendance Teams will ensure that international student absences are authorised on the attendance monitoring system upon receiving a notification from a student that has been verified by the *Student Athlete Notification Form*.
- Module tutors will report to course leaders any students who they believe are abusing the attendance monitoring system in relation to sports absences.
- The University will keep under review the impact of sports participation on programmes of study to enable adjustments to timetabling where possible and appropriate.
- Students abusing the policy will be subject to the university disciplinary processes.

### **Student Services Responsibilities**

- ActiveHud shall notify course leaders of student athletes who have been selected to join the Sports Scholarship Scheme.
- ActiveHud to note in ASIS selected student athletes

### **International Office Responsibilities**

- Shall countersign and acknowledge the Student Athlete Notification Form for International Students who are competing in University or Elite sporting competition.

### **Students' Union Responsibilities**

- Maintain an up-to-date record of sports club membership.
- Collect weekly participant information for all BUCS fixtures or similar University competitions.
- Share participant data with relevant University departments including but not limited to Attendance Monitoring, Registry, International Office, Timetabling and Course Leaders.
- Shall create, collect, and verify Student Athlete Notification Form submissions from International Students wishing to participate in University or Elite sporting competition.

<b>POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS</b>	
<b>Document name:</b>	Student Athlete Participation Policy
<b>Version Number:</b>	1.0
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	20 May 2024
<b>Approved by:</b>	University Teaching and Learning Committee
<b>Effective from:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2026
<b>Date for Review:</b>	Triennial Review – Nov 2029
<b>Author:</b>	Director of Student Services
<b>Owner (if different from above):</b>	Sports and Participation Manager
<b>Document Location:</b>	<a href="https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Student-Athlete-Participation-Policy.pdf">https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Student-Athlete-Participation-Policy.pdf</a>
<b>Compliance Checks:</b>	University Sports and Activities Board termly monitoring of participation rates and results
<b>Related Policies/Procedures:</b>	Timetabling and Room Booking Policy Attendance Monitoring Policy Student Handbook of Regulations

<b>REVISION HISTORY</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision description/Summary of changes</b>	<b>Author</b>
1.0	1 January 2024	New policy	Director of Student Services
1.1	18 Nov 2025	Updates reflecting TASS status	Sports and Participation Manager