## 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 '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 organise 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 Senior Member, the Captains or Presidents of all Full, Discretionary Full or Half Blue sports and the elected President, Treasurer, Secretary of the Committee itself.
ii. The following shall be invited as observers: The Director of Sport, the Sports Services Manager, a Sports Federation Representative, 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.
v. Full Blue Clubs must send a Captain, President or representative to every meeting except for in exceptional circumstances, in which event the club should send apologies to the Secretary prior to the meeting.
(1) The President is entitled to place on probation the status of any Full Blue Club who fails to attend a meeting without valid reason and bring forward their status review to the subsequent meeting. Should they fail to attend their status will be revoked. Whilst on probation, a club will be unable to award any blues.
(2) 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.
vi. Discretionary Full Blue and Half Blue Clubs must send a Captain, President or representative to the first meeting of Trinity term and a minimum of one meeting per term in Michaelmas and Hillary.
(1) The President is entitled to place on probation the status of any Discretionary Full Blue or Half Blue Club who fails to meet attend meetings as per 2.a.vi without valid reason and bring forward their status review to the subsequent meeting. Should they fail to attend their status will be revoked. Whilst on probation, a club will be unable to award any blues.
(2) 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.
vii. 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. The secretary is entitled to tell the Sports Federation to refuse to order Blues certificates for clubs who have outstanding fees.
iii. 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.
iv. Clubs are required to be affiliated with University Proctors.
v. 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 within two weeks of their Varsity match (or by a date agreed by the Sports Federation prior to the Varsity Match).
vi. 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).
(1) 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 to upgrade the Half Blue awarded to a Full Blue.
vii. 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.
viii. 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 Senior Member shall:
i. be a member of the Committee ex officio;
ii. meet the Executive Committee on at least one occasion during each University Full Term;
iii. keep abreast of the actions and activities of the Committee;
iv. consider whether the accounts of the Committee are in order and, if so, sign them;
v. be available to represent and speak for the Committee in the public forum, and before the University authorities;
b. The President shall:
i. Chair the meetings of the committee.
ii. Oversee the general running of the Blues Committee.
iii. Attend Oxford University Sports Council meetings.
iv. Attend the Joint Blues Committee meetings with Cambridge.
v. Produce an annual report.
vi. Oversee the organisation of an annual award ceremony.
vii. Approve submissions into the Blues Database.
viii. Sign Blues certificates.
c. The Secretary shall:
i. Organise the venue and timing of the Committee meetings.
ii. Send out notices of meetings, no later than three (3) weeks prior to the meeting.
iii. Send out an agenda at least seven (7) days before the meeting.
iv. Take minutes at all Blues Committee meetings and be responsible for maintaining minutes.
(1) Minutes shall be taken, reviewed by the President, and then distributed to the committee. The committee shall then approve the minutes and any alterations at the
following meeting.
v. Be responsible for helping the President organise 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 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
d. 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.
v. Maintain the OUBC Account:
(1) The Senior Member, the President and the Treasurer shall be named as signatories on the account.
(2) The Treasurer will be responsible for keeping the Committee's financial records.
e. The President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Committee will be known as the "Executive".

## 4. Election Procedure

a. The Committee shall elect a President, Secretary and Treasurer in Hilary Term.
b. The incoming Executive Committee will assume office on Sunday of the 9th Week of Hilary Term.
c. Eligibility to stand for office extends to any person who has sat on the committee, as per clause 2.a.i., but must be a matriculated student for their entire tenure.
d. The election procedure will start with a three (3) minute 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.
e. 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.
f. Voting members may vote for any candidate or may choose to vote to Re-Open Nominations, but no votes are transferable.
g. The election of a candidate shall be determined by a simple majority vote.
h. Voting on the election of officers shall be taken by secret ballot.
i. A motion of no confidence in any member of the Executive may be brought provided it has the backing of at least ten voting members of the committee. To succeed it must have a two-thirds majority.
5. Senior Member
a. The position of Senior Member is not a contested position. They are appointed by the Executive Committee which is subject to the approval of the Committee at a meeting. Approval must be renewed upon the completion of a five-year term.
b. The Senior Member must be a member of Congregation and must not be directly involved in or employed by the Sports Department.
c. The Senior Member will be appointed to a five-year term, unless and until:
i. his or her voluntary retirement; or
ii. agreement is reached between the Executive Committee that the Senior Member be replaced; or
iii. a vote in favour for the removal from office by two-thirds of those present in person at a Committee Meeting.

## 6. Voting Rights

a. Committee
i. The quorum of the Committee meeting shall be at least fifteen (15) voting members.
ii. Each Full, Discretionary or Half Blue Club shall be allowed to cast as many votes as they have Varsity Blues Teams with Full, Discretionary or Half Blue awards status.
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.
b. Quorums:
i. For promotion to, or maintenance of Full Blue: ten (10) Full Blue voting members of the Committee shall be required, but such a quorum shall include no more than four (4) representatives.
ii. For votes on the maintenance or promotion to Discretionary Full Blue status a quorum of twenty (20) Discretionary or Full Blue voting members is required.
iii. For the granting of Half Blues, or a change of Half Blues status, a quorum of twenty (20) Full, Discretionary and Half Blue voting members of the Committee shall be required.
iv. A two-thirds majority is need for a maintenance or promotion of a sport's status.
v. A two-thirds majority is needed for a change in criteria to pass.
c. 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) 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 notabstain.

## 7. Content of Meetings

a. There must be at least two (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 two (2) weeks 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.
v. For all motions, whether Club Reviews, Status Changes, Criteria Changes, Extraordinary Blues Applications or otherwise, if the Executive believe the proposed motion violates the constitution and/or its associated appendices, they can prevent it going to committee.
(1) For the avoidance of doubt, the committee cannot pass a motion that contradicts the constitution and/or its associated appendixes.
(2) A club may appeal the Executive's decision by writing to the Director of Sport.
c. All votes on status reviews and criteria changes are to be held by secretballot.
d. Motions and voting:
i. For all motions in front of the committee, whether Club Reviews, Status Changes, Extraordinary Blue Applications or otherwise, the proposer shall have up to three (3) minutes to present to the committee.
ii. Following this presentation, members of the committee may address questions to the proposer.
iii. At any point during these questions, any member of the committee may propose an amendment to the motion's wording. Should this amendment be seconded by another member of committee, the motion's proposer can choose to either accept the amendment or reject it. If any amendments are accepted, the motion that shall be voted on by the committee shall be the amended version.
iv. Following the presentation and questions the proposer will leave the room and the President will lead a discussion between committee members about the motion.
e. 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 Blue Captains and representatives may vote. Amendments must carry a two-thirds 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-thirds 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) For the avoidance of doubt, Extraordinary Blues should only be awarded based on performances and achievements in the academic year in which the award is applied for. They are not lifetime achievement awards.
(3) The motion for an extraordinary award may not been presented by the applicantbut by another member of their club or another member of the OUBC.
(4) For the granting of extraordinary Full Blues only Full Blue and Discretionary Full Blue Captains and representatives may vote. This vote must carry a two-thirds majority.

## 8. INDEMNITY

a. So far as may be permitted by law, every member of the Executive Committee, shall be entitled to be indemnified out of the Committee's assets against all costs, charges, losses, expenses, and liabilities incurred by them in the execution or discharge of their duties or the exercise of their powers. This indemnity extends to any liability incurred by them in defending any proceedings, civil or criminal, which relate to anything done or omitted or alleged to have been done or omitted by them as a member of the Executive Committee and in which judgement is given in their favour (or the proceedings are otherwise disposed of without any finding or admission of any material breach of duty on their part), or in which they are acquitted, or in connection with any application under any statute for relief from liability in respect of any such act or omission in which relief is granted to them by the Court.

## 9. Amendments to this constitution

a. The above clauses should be reviewed at least every five (5) years.
i. Any amendment to this constitution must be carried by a two-thirds majority of which no more than ten (10) are representatives.
ii. Once 7a.i. is satisfied, any amendment to this constitution is effective immediately.
iii. If an approved change to this constitution or its associated appendixes affects the status or criteria of a club, then the status-quo will be maintained until the club's next review or a time in which they voluntarily seek to change their status or criteria. At any time, the Executive may call the club for review and seek they bring their status or criteria in line with the current constitution.
(1) The Executive Committee will at all times seek to maintain an up to date list of all clubs affected by any constitutional changes and notify the clubs accordingly.

## 10. INTERPRETATION

a. Any question about the interpretation of this Constitution shall be settled by the Executive Committee.
b. This Constitution shall be binding on all members of the Committee and the clubs they represent. No regulation, bye-law or policy of the Committee or the clubs represented on the Committee shall be inconsistent with, or shall affect or repeal anything contained in, this Constitution.

Last revised: 15 October 2023
Proposed by: Thomas Renshaw (OUBC President 2023-24)
Seconded by: Olivia Allen (OUBC Secretary 2023-24)
Witnessed by: Phoebe Baggott (OUBC Treasurer 2023-24)

## Appendix 1

## 1. Varsity Match Eligibility

The current Varsity Match Eligibility Criteria, decided upon by the Joint Blues Committee, can be found on the sport.ox.ac.uk website. As per clause 2.b.viii. of this constitution, the members of this committee are bound by the current standing orders of the Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

## 2. Changing the Varsity Match Eligibility Criteria

a. The Eligibility Criteria are decided upon by the Joint Blues Committee.
b. The President, Secretary and Treasurer of OUBC sits on the Joint Blues Committee as this committee's representatives.
c. If the committee would like to propose a change to the Varsity Match Eligibility criteria, then they should pass a motion at a Blues Committee Meeting, addressing the proposed change, which the President will then present to the Joint Blues Committee.

## 3. Absolute Blue requirements

a. No award (Full/Half Blue or First Team Colours) can be awarded to someone who does not compete in the Blues Varsity Match, thus:
i. Each club must clearly define what constitutes their Blues team in the Blues Varsity Match.
ii. Reserves or substitutes who do not play cannot be awarded Blues etc.
iii. People who fall ill or are injured before the Varsity Match are not eligible for Blues.
iv. Members of a second team, B team or equivalent cannot be awarded Blues (although they may be awarded Second Team Colours).
v. For all awards requiring criteria to be met:
(1) such criteria must be accomplished within the same academic year as the Varsity Match.
(2) The academic year shall be defined as beginning on $1^{\text {st }}$ October and finishing on $30^{\text {th }}$ September the following year.
(3) The Sports Federation will check all members submitted by clubs, for Blues or Team Colours, have achieved the defined criteria.
vi. If athletes feel they have received an inappropriate award according to their sport's published criteria, they may appeal within one academic year directly to the Blues Committee President and Secretary.

## Appendix 2

## 1. Status Change of Full and Half Blue Sports

a. To change the status of a sport a request must be made to the Executive Committee at least two weeks before the meeting in which the club is to request the change.
b. Clubs must fulfil the following requirements before being able to request a change:
i. 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.
ii. The club must fulfil the Criteria for Blues Sports, as listed below.
c. Evidence for a change in status should not be based just off recent results but represent a longer term trend in the sports at the University. A full list of required details can be found below in 'Details required for Status Reviews and Changes'.

## 2. Status Review of Full and Half Blues Sports

a. 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 including an explanation of how the sport meets the 'Criteria for Blues Sports' and all the 'Details required for Status Reviews and Changes'.
b. Review documents must be sent to the Executive Committee at least two weeks before the meeting.
c. Criteria wording must include the following:
i. Definition of what the Blues Varsity Team is.
ii. Total number of awards available.
iii. For Discretionary Full Blue Clubs, maximum number of Full Blues available and the criteria upon which they are awarded.

## 3. Criteria for 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 high standard within the U.K. and the University.
7. Comment on the standard of the sport in the UK.
8. The Sport must be registered with the Sports Federation
N.B. For Half Blue sports, criteria 2, 4 and 6 are not so important.
9. Details required for Status Reviews and Changes
a. Background of Sport:
i. Basic rules and point of the sport.
ii. Simple explanation of rules/point scoring in your VM.
b. Background of Oxford Club:
i. Year of foundation of Club.
ii. Year of first Varsity Match.
iii. Number of squad members.
iv. Participants in the University.
v. Number of fixtures and leagues play in.
vi. Cuppers competition.
vii. Popularity of sport Nationally.
c. Varsity Match:
i. Scoring in the Varsity Match.
ii. Number of Players in the 1st team (including how many of them are reserves).
d. Current Status:
i. What is the current status?
ii. Explain criteria and what it means.
iii. Number of awards possible to be given.
iv. Who takes the decision to award (i.e., Captain's discretion or OU Blues Committee, etc.)
e. Status Remain/Status Change:
i. Justify current status and why it should remain the same.
ii. Add in BUCS or National ranking Criteria in line with OUBC directive. OR
iii. Explain why you feel it should change.
f. How would you like it to change?

## Appendix 3

## 1. Discretionary Full Blue requirements

a. Discretionary Full Blues clubs are clubs with the ability to award Discretionary Full Blues in a limited capacity when a member of their club has met predetermined criteria.
b. Discretionary Full Blues are upgrades of Half Blues and as such the sum of Half Blue and Full Blue awards cannot exceed the total Half Blue awards available. Discretionary Full Blues may be awarded at the captain's discretion when a sportsperson has achieved the predetermined criteria for a DFB written into the Blues criteria of the club.
c. Additionally, Captain's should demonstrate they are sportspeople who they feel are worthy of such an award. In making this decision, they must have regard to six Blues Sport criteria:
i. Ability
i. Excellence
ii. Effort
iii. Determination
iv. Result against Cambridge, and
v. Overall contribution of the individual(s).
d. If a Captain wishes to award DFB status to a sportsperson, they must submit them to the Sports Federation with the status "Half Blue - DFB pending". They must then submit a request to the President 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.
e. All Discretionary Full Blue sports must have additional criteria for the awarding of DFBs to members of their clubs, which benchmark their sporting achievements relative to other clubs or athletes outside of Oxford and Cambridge. These criteria should be based off a high level of sporting achievement at a national (e.g., BUCS) or international competition.

## 2. Awarding of University Team Colours

a. 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.

## 3. Retrospective Applications

a. 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 genderneutral certificate. This certificate will be provided at the cost of production at the earliest convenience of the Sports Federation. 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

## 1. Blues Grant

a. 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 (e.g., new personal equipment, training camp, travel with national team, etc.).
b. The awarding of the Blues Grants will be administered by the Sports Federation as part of their means tested Oxford Sport Student Fund under the condition that they are awarded to students who have received a Blue, Half Blue or Colours from the Blues Committee.

## Appendix 5

## 1. Extraordinary Full Blues

a. 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 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.
b. Such awards are obviously rarely given. The following are some guidelines for Captains/Presidents regarding the presentation of their case to the Blues Committee:
i. The person who is applying for the award must not attempt to present themselves; a fellow team-mate or the Coach should do it (usually the Captain is the obvious choice);
ii. 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:
(1) 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.
(2) 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.
iii. 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 Blues is meaningless without rigorous high standards that are applied in a uniform and comparative manner.

## 2. Extraordinary Half Blues

a. 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.
b. It is possible to apply for Extraordinary Half Blue status if:
i. 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.
ii. 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. They must also have fulfilled the standards described in the Status of their sport.
c. 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.

## 3. Blues for Disabled Athletes

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

