

CHRIST CHURCH
**STUDENTS'
UNION**



'to better student life and enrich students' experiences'

WELCOME EVENTS POLICY

Officer Champions	President (Engagement & Sports) President (Campaigns & Societies)
Staff Champions	Opportunities & Events Manager Head of Engagement & Deputy CEO
Approval bodies and date passed	Board of Trustees, 3 September 2021
To be reviewed by	October 2022

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1. Introduction

- a. Welcome events usually take place at the start of the academic year and are a traditional way of socially welcoming new members into a sports club or society.
- b. Welcome events can involve elements where new members are invited, or even expected, to perform a task or tasks as a means of gaining credibility or status in that club or society.
- c. However, there have also been instances where welcome events have involved significant volumes of alcohol, other dangerous or inappropriate activity, and coercive and controlling behaviour that constitutes an abuse of power and jeopardises the wellbeing of students.
- d. Although this policy focuses on Welcome Events specifically, the principles apply to all CCSU student group events.

2. Policy Statement

- a. Christ Church Students' Union's ('CCSU' or the 'Union') Mission is to better student life and enrich students' experiences. The Union's Vision is to empower, encourage and embrace every Canterbury Christ Church University student. As such, the Union recognises the importance of ensuring students are made to feel welcomed, included, and supported in their time at Christ Church, especially in their first few weeks.
- b. This Policy has the aim and objective of providing guidance and support to clubs and societies, and elected committees in particular, when welcoming new members in a way that is safe, fun, and in line with the Union's values.

3. "Problem Initiations"

- a. BUCS define a "problem initiation" as: "any activity that could reasonably be perceived as resulting in risk or occurrence of physical or mental detriment to participants. It is a problem initiation regardless of whether it has been labelled as such by the group, regardless of an individual's willingness to participate, and regardless of where and when it takes place." (BUCS, 2019)

- b. The following activities are considered examples of “problem initiations” and are not permitted at any CCSU student group event:
 - i. Bullying, harassment and power inequality, often used as a means to coerce participation in activities, challenges and other risky behaviours designed to humiliate, often against a person’s will;
 - ii. Consumption of excessive quantities of alcohol;
 - iii. Taking of illegal substances;
 - iv. Consumption of abnormal/unpleasant substances;
 - v. Forced acts of nudity/nakedness;
 - vi. The humiliation of a person in public (i.e. setting someone up to fail);
 - vii. Isolation or ostracising of individuals through the removal of their mobile phones, geographical remoteness or physical isolation;
 - viii. Physical acts perpetrated against a person’s body (e.g. shaving their hair);
 - ix. Psychological torment;
 - x. Sexual assault;
 - xi. Sexual harassment; and
 - xii. Victimisation of a specific group of individuals (e.g. ‘Freshers’).

4. Guidelines

- a. All Welcome Events will have to abide by the following:
 - i. Any planned event must be brought to the attention of the Union at least 10 days in advance using a [Welcome Event Submission form](#);
 - ii. A risk assessment (created by a trained individual) must be completed by each student group involved to ascertain the safety and appropriateness of the planned event; this will then be assessed by the Opportunities & Events Manager, the President (Engagement & Sports) and/or President (Campaigns & Societies);
 - iii. At all times a responsible person or persons (from within the club or society) will oversee the event. This person will be sober at all times, be responsible for any person participating, and ensure that these regulations are adhered to at all times. For Sports Clubs this will usually be the Wellbeing Officer, and for Societies this will usually be the Inclusion Officer;
 - iv. All individuals should be made aware that the Welcome Event is not compulsory, that they have the right not to participate, and if they decide not to participate this will have no negative bearing upon their position or status within the sports club or society; and
 - v. No peer pressure, coercion, or bullying should be applied to any member at any time.

5. Monitoring

- a. The Union may check planned Welcome Events for compliance with the indicated activity.
- b. The Union operates an [anonymous reporting function](#) to enable students, staff, and members of the public to inform the Union anonymously of any concerns around Welcome Events.

- c. Students, staff and members of the public may also choose to use the University's [Report and Support system](#) to report incidents of harassment or sexual misconduct linked to any CCSU student group event.
- d. BUCS also has a [reporting system](#) for problem initiations, which any person may use to report a sports club directly to BUCS. BUCS may impose additional sanctions on clubs that are reported to them.

6. Breach of Policy

- a. All members have a shared responsibility to uphold this Policy and a general responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others, but particular onus is placed upon social secretaries and committees. Non-adherence to this Policy must be brought to the attention of the President (Engagement & Sports), President (Campaigns & Societies), or the Opportunities & Events Manager.
- b. Allegations of non-compliance of this Policy against individuals, as well as those against whole clubs or societies, will be dealt with through the Members Code of Conduct contained in the Bye-Laws of Christ Church Students' Union and/or the University's Student Procedures Framework.