

Code of Conduct

Oxford University Fencing Club

May 2024

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1. Introduction

- a. The Oxford University Fencing Club (“the Club”) is committed to fostering an environment that upholds the highest standard of integrity, inclusion, fair treatment, and respect for all individuals. This document relates to the responsibilities and behaviour of specific club members. The physical safety of club activities and club members is addressed through the Club Safety Policy.

2. Harassment Policy

- a. The Oxford University Fencing Club (“the Club”) does not tolerate any form of harassment or victimisation and expects all of its members, employees, and visitors to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration.
- b. All members of the Club are expected to read and agree to act in accordance with this Code of Conduct and the University of Oxford’s Policy and Procedure on Harassment. Oxford students are also required to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct set out in Statute XI. Membership may be removed or suspended for failing to do so, and opportunities for members to take part in activities within and on behalf of the Club may be restricted.
- c. All members of the Club are expected to:
 - i. treat other members with dignity and respect;
 - ii. discourage any form of harassment by making it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable;
 - iii. support other members who feel that they have been subject to harassment.
- d. “Harassment” includes, in particular, the following conduct, however carried out (including online):
 - i. verbal or physical bullying or threats
 - ii. sexual harassment including unwanted physical conduct, sexually explicit remarks or sexual assault
 - iii. racist behaviour or comments
 - iv. homophobic or transphobic behaviour or comments
 - v. victimisation
 - vi. religiously motivated abuse
- e. The club designates one or more members of their Committee as ‘welfare officer(s)’ who will act as a source of advice and support for Club members in relation to welfare issues and harassment complaints.
- f. The Club’s designated welfare officers, Carl Hentges and Ruoqi Huang can be contacted for informal advice, including in relation to how you make a complaint, at welfare.oufc@gmail.com or individually at carl.hentges@eng.ox.ac.uk or

ruoqi.huang@psy.ox.ac.uk. Support and advice are also available from the Sports Federation.

- g. The Club Complaints Procedure provides steps for dealing with internal complaints. Clubs are required to have this in place and to follow these steps when they receive a complaint.
- h. University of Oxford students can also seek support from:
 - i. one of the University's harassment advisors;
 - ii. college harassment advisors (for members of Oxford colleges);
 - iii. their college deans or other officers with pastoral responsibilities, the Common Room welfare or equal opportunities officer or a student peer supporter;
 - iv. Oxford SU's Student Advice Service
 - v. Student Welfare and Support Services including
 - 1. the University Counselling Service
 - 2. the University's Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service

More information is available on the Oxford Students Harassment Pages, including a flow chart explaining the steps within the University's complaints procedures (e.g. for complaints against staff and students).

3. Club Complaints Procedure

- a. The Club operates a procedure that allows Club members to raise complaints about issues, which may include the following:
 - i. The safety of Club activities (defined in Section 5)
 - ii. Poor standards of instruction or leadership
 - iii. The standard of equipment used for Club activities
 - iv. Poor Club administration
 - v. A lack of suitable activities for a level of participation
- b. Complaints concerning Club safety or operational matters should initially be addressed to the Club President. If this does not prove satisfactory a written complaint should be made to the Sports Administrator in the Sports Federation. If this reply is unsatisfactory then a written complaint should be made to the Director of Sport or the Sports Safety Officer.

4. Specialist Officers

- a. The Club Committee will consist of at least three of the following officers who shall be fully matriculated members of the University:

1. President
2. Secretary
3. Men's Captain
4. Women's Captain
5. Treasurer
6. Safety Officer
7. Beginners Secretary
8. Social Secretary
9. PR/Alumni Secretary
10. IT Officer/Webmaster

The Club Committee may also contain the following positions:

11. Armourer
12. Intermediates' Secretary
13. An additional Social Secretary
14. Sponsorship and Outreach Officer
15. OUMPA Liaison (non-voting)
16. Welfare Officers (maximum 2)
17. Members Without Portfolio

The duties and responsibilities of these individual officers are outlined in Appendix C.

- b. The Club will appoint a new committee no earlier than 7th week of Hilary Term and no later than 2nd Week of Trinity Term.
- c. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure that the Club's affiliation/membership fee is paid on the due date and to request that any new information on "best practice" be provided. A copy of the affiliation form should be provided to the Sports Safety Officer (SSO) for sports at Oxford as soon as is practicably possible.

5. University Sports Club Activities

- a. The Oxford University Fencing Club will undertake its activities as outlined in section 6 of the Code of Conduct Guidelines (section 13 of this document). Club activities are recognised as being either one or more of the following:
- i. Any Club activity which is being conducted under the name of the University of Oxford
 - ii. Publicised at Club meetings
 - iii. Publicised on Club websites, journals, leaflets, notice boards
 - iv. Funded in any way by the University Sports Federation

- v. Requiring group transport booked through the University

6. Training Courses

- a. In an effort to promote the highest standards of instruction, training and safety the Oxford University Fencing Club actively encourages its members to partake in training courses, gain experience and undertake any form of formal assessment in fencing.
- b. The Club aims to provide members with the opportunity to train in 1st aid, minibus driving and coaching courses, so that the club will continue to have a sufficient number of members qualified in these areas. Where possible these training courses shall be offered, in the first instance, to members who are deemed likely to use their qualifications to benefit the club to the greatest level.
- c. Currently, qualified minibus drivers are:

Name	Position	Email
Carl Hentges	Welfare Officer	carl.hentges@eng.ox.ac.uk

7. Governing Body Recommendations

The Oxford University Fencing Club will operate, so far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with fencing's current NGB guidelines.

8. Appendix A (Equipment)

- a. Members should observe the equipment safety rules outlined in the Club Safety Policy.
- b. When travelling to and from training fencers must ensure that any visible weapons have their blades covered in an appropriate way, ideally by being transported in a bag specifically designed for fencing kit.
- c. Any equipment stored in the Cricket Schools must be registered with the club.
- d. Access to fencing cupboard keys shall be limited to persons who are likely to need them (e.g. committee members, beginners' coaches and a member of OUMPA). The keys will be stored behind the desk in the sports department and identification will be required to access them.

9. Appendix B (Administration)

- a. The Club shall abide by its constitution, as implemented by the committee.
- b. The Club shall keep the following information, such that continuity is maintained between committees.
 - i. A formal record of activities maintained by the Secretary
 - ii. Minutes of meetings, also maintained by the Secretary
 - iii. The armourer's logbook. This shall contain a club inventory, including a record of equipment bought, disposed of (e.g. for safety reasons), lost and that is still on loan.
 - iv. Copies of the captains' reports.
 - v. An annual report from each of the Officers of the Club.

10. Appendix C (Committee Role Descriptions)

- a. The President shall:
 - i. Oversee the day-to-day running of the club through delegating tasks to the relevant members of the committee, or to any other appropriate member of the club;
 - ii. Have the right to preside at all meetings of the members of the Club and at all meetings of the Committee. They shall have the deciding vote in the case of a tied vote at all such meetings. Should the President be absent, or decline to take the chair, the Committee shall elect another member of the Committee to chair the meeting. The Chair shall have the deciding vote in the case of a tied vote;

- iii. Elect the Men's Seconds Captain to office with the agreement of the Men's Captain;
 - iv. Elect the Women's Seconds Captain to office with the agreement of the Women's Captain.
- b. The Men's Captain shall:
- i. Be responsible for selecting and organising the Men's teams. The team selection shall be made with consideration to British and international rankings and participation in Club activities. He shall represent the club at meetings of the Men's Blues Committee. He shall organise and arrange team fixtures and individual competitions in co-ordination with the President and Women's Captain.
- c. The Women's Captain shall:
- i. Be responsible for selecting and organising the Women's teams. The team selection shall be made with consideration to British and international rankings and participation in Club activities. She shall represent the club at meetings of the Women's Blues Committee. She shall organise and arrange team fixtures and individual competitions in co-ordination with the President and Men's Captain.
- d. The Secretary shall:
- i. Maintain a register of the members of the Club, which shall be available for inspection by the Proctors on request;
 - ii. Give notice of meetings of the members and the Committee;
 - iii. Draw up minutes of those meetings;
 - iv. Be responsible for the arrangement of photographs;
 - v. Notify the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) promptly following the appointment and resignation or removal of Office Holders and other members of the Committee;
 - vi. Advise the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) promptly of any changes in the Constitution;
 - vii. Notify the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) not later than second week of every Full Term of the programme of fixtures which has been arranged for that term (e.g. by providing them a copy of the fixture);
 - viii. Provide the Insurance Section with full details of any insurance cover purchased from or through The British Fencing Association pursuant to paragraph 2(b) above;
 - ix. Inform the Proctors if the Club ceases to operate, or is to be dissolved, and in doing so present a final statement of accounts.

- x. Coordinate responding to messages through the club's various social media platforms (with the exception of the club's website, mailing list, and creating content for digital engagement).
- e. The Treasurer shall:
- i. Keep proper records of the Club's financial transactions in accordance with current accepted accounting rules and practices;
 - ii. Develop and implement control procedures to minimise the risk of financial exposure;
 - iii. Ensure that bills are paid and cash is banked in accordance with the procedures developed under (b);
 - iv. Prepare an annual budget for the Club and regularly inform the Committee of progress against that budget;
 - v. Ensure that all statutory returns are made including VAT, income tax and corporation tax if appropriate;
 - vi. Seek advice as necessary on tax matters from the University's Financial Division;
 - vii. Develop and maintain a manual for all written procedures for aspects of the Treasurer's responsibility;
 - viii. Make all records, procedures and accounts available on request to the Senior Member, the Proctor and Internal Audit;
 - ix. Forward to the Proctors (through the Director of Sport) a signed (by the Senior member) copy of the annual accounts to 31st July, as soon as possible after the year-end (and in any event no later than the 1st October following the year-end);
 - x. If the Club has a turnover in excess of £30,000 in the preceding year, or, if owing to a change in the nature of scale of its activities, it may confidently be expected to have such a turnover in the current year, subject its accounts to audit by the University's auditors (or other auditors approved in advance by the Proctors). Accounts are to be ready for audit within 4 months after the year-end and the costs of the audit shall be borne by the Club.
 - xi. Organise the annual Varsity Polo and Novice Varsity Polo orders and advise members on how to purchase other stash.
 - xii. Organise the termly lesson timetable during 0th Week of each term. They will co-ordinate with the club coach on the times that they can come up to Oxford.
- f. The Health and Safety Officer shall:

- i. Ensure that the Club and its members adhere to all relevant safety precautions and requirements as defined both by the BFA and Oxford University;
 - ii. Ensure that the Club's safety procedures and expectations of its members with regards to responsible behaviour when fencing are distributed via email to all members, who must then return a signed form indicating that they have read, understood and agree to adhere to the Club's safety policy before they are allowed to start participating in Club activities. The safety policy shall also be available for download on the Club's website.
 - iii. The Ordinary Committee Members shall be members of the Club elected at a General Meeting. The positions are held until the following Hilary term.
- g. The Armourer shall:
 - i. Be responsible for the purchase and maintenance of the club equipment. Such purchases require committee approval;
 - ii. Maintain an inventory of all club kit and produce to the Committee at least once a year;
 - iii. Take an inventory of weapons at the start and end of each term;
 - iv. Label the club equipment;
 - v. Maintain the club storage cupboards;
 - vi. Ensure that the inventory is available to the Proctors at any time and is passed on to the next Armourer promptly at the end of a period of office.
- h. Up to two Social Secretaries may be elected each year. The Social Secretaries shall be responsible for organising a cocktail party and the Christmas dinner in Michaelmas term, the dinner/ball after the Blues match, an Easter Dinner at the end of Hilary term, a dinner after the Old Blues' match, and a barbecue in Trinity term.
- i. The Alumni/PR/Press Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining contact with old club members, writing and delivering a termly newsletter to those members, inviting old members to the Old Blues Match and Dinner and to watch the Varsity Match, and maintaining the alumni database. They shall also be responsible for maintaining our profile in the media, and for working together with the Sponsorship and Outreach Officer to recruit potential sponsors and negotiate sponsorship deals with these.
- j. The Beginners' Secretary shall be responsible for ensuring that coaches are qualified and available to coach beginner fencers. They shall also ensure that the club takes the beginners' names, details and money. They will ensure that beginners are progressing, and that they are being included in club social activities.

- k. The Intermediates' Secretary shall work with the Beginners' Secretary in furthering the development of intermediate fencers. They shall liaise with both beginner and advanced groups in organising intermediate training. They are responsible for promoting competitions and facilitating matches and other intermediate events that arise.
- l. The Webmaster shall:
 - i. Be in charge of all IT related activities of the club, including, but not limited to, the e-mail account(s) and web facilities provided by Oxford University Computing Services (OUCS).
 - ii. Duties shall include:
 - 1. Maintaining an awareness of the University Guidelines on web and social media publishing,
 - 2. Coordinating and regulating access to the web facilities and social media used by the club, society or organisation;
 - 3. Ensuring compliance with regulations relating to the use of IT facilities provided by OUCS and with the guidelines published from time to time by OUCS for the use of IT facilities by student clubs, societies and organisations (including those guidelines relating to the operation of electronic mailing-lists);
 - 4. Ensuring that all designated persons responsible for the IT resources of the club, society or organisation are competent to deal with the requirements of this section; and where necessary undertaking training under the guidance of OUCS. They shall officially take up the role as the Clubs Data Protection Officer to maintain and enforce the clubs data protection protocols in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation
 - 5. Being the primary creators of content for the social media accounts maintained by the club
- m. The Sponsorship and Outreach Officer shall be responsible for:
 - i. The production of sponsorship materials to promote OUFC to potential sponsors and ensure that these are kept up-to-date. These could include sponsorship cover letters, default cover emails, detailed sponsorship proposals, and presentations.
 - ii. Maintaining a list of potential local, national and international potential sponsors and their contact details so that they may be contacted about the possibility of sponsoring OUFC.
 - iii. Making an active effort to recruit sponsors for OUFC.
 - iv. Working closely with the Alumni/PR/Press Secretary to communicate with OUFC's wide alumni network and investigate the possibility of

recruiting a sponsor from within OUFC's alumni network or with the help of an alumnus's contacts.

- v. Communicating with potential sponsors.
 - vi. Negotiating sponsorship deals with potential sponsors and, in conjunction with the OUFC President, representing OUFC at meetings etc. with representatives from the respective potential sponsors.
 - vii. Liaising with the Oxford University legal department and the Oxford University Sports Federation regarding sponsorship matters.
 - viii. Co-ordinating OUFC's outreach efforts in conjunction with Oxford University and any other bodies with which the Club is associated. They shall be jointly responsible with the Armourer for the upkeep and maintenance of the plastic fencing equipment. They will be responsible for co-ordinating with local clubs who wish to borrow the plastic fencing equipment. They will ensure that this equipment remains a community fencing resource as per Matthew Thompson's bequest.
- n. The OUMPA LOMPA shall be responsible for liaising with the Oxford University Modern Pentathlon Association committee. They will ensure good relations and the proper sharing of appropriate resources.
- o. Up to two Welfare Officers may be elected each year. In years where two Welfare Officers are elected, they must have two different gender identities. The Welfare Officer(s) shall:
- i. act as a point of contact for members of the club to bring personal, domestic or work-related problems as well as issues relating to their sport or sports club and should aid to offer signposting, advice, or assistance to these individuals by exploring the issues presented to them.
 - ii. respect that the problems presented to them can be sensitive and therefore should ensure the confidentiality of club members who wish to approach them with issues. It should be noted that in circumstances where an individual is believed to pose a threat to themselves or others, a Welfare Officer may breach confidentiality, escalate matters as they deem appropriate and inform relevant bodies/individuals in order to maintain the safety of the 'at-risk' individual.
 - iii. aim to attain some level of Welfare/Peer Support Training and Bystander Intervention Training offered by the University, and Mental Health in Sport Workshops run by the Sports Federation.
 - iv. be aware of resources and services offered both by the University and in Oxford to assist with promoting good student welfare.
 - v. offer assistance to individuals to the limits of their capabilities or training and should signpost individuals to more specialist services if it is believed that this would be a more appropriate course of action. Welfare Officers

are not counsellors and should recognise that they have limits. It is important that Welfare Officers only take on what they can themselves handle and look after their own Welfare whilst assisting others.

- vi. represent and advocate for issues of student/member welfare, equality and diversity within the club committee and hold the committee accountable to issues of student welfare and equality of opportunity.
- p. In addition to these posts, there may be up to three committee members without any specific role (MWOPs). They will be elected by a majority vote at the Annual General Meeting and invited to sit at all subsequent meetings, until a new committee is elected. It is expected that these individuals shall be past office holders or committee members.