



# Alcohol, Initiations and Social Events Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Hull University Union (HUU) acknowledges that social activities can be an enjoyable aspect of student life, particularly where they complement a club's or society's activities.
- 1.2. The encouragement of excessive consumption of alcohol is a breach of this policy.
- 1.3. HUU has a duty to ensure that members can participate in all student activities in a safe, non-threatening and enjoyable environment where no member feels harassed, intimidated, or bullied.
- 1.4. Such activities must be inclusive and make allowances for all cultural and personal beliefs. Members should be able to opt out without fear of undue pressure, reprisal, non-selection for competition, embarrassment or any form of discrimination.
- 1.5. Sanctions will be imposed on any club, society or member found to be in breach of this Policy.

## 2. Alcohol Statement

- 2.1. HUU is aware that student life often involves alcohol consumption, but it condemns any behaviour that damages students' health and wellbeing or has any adverse effect on the local community.
- 2.2. HUU asks that all of its members take a responsible attitude to the provision and consumption of alcohol at activities on and off campus.
- 2.3. Excess alcohol can lead to ill-health, anti-social behaviour and in extreme cases death. HUU expects all of its members to ensure that the consumption of alcohol at activities is managed appropriately, promoting moderation and responsible behaviour at all times.
- 2.4. Participating in 'Student Activities' at the University of Hull is a great way to develop skills and make new and lasting friendships, adding value to the overall student experience. However, participation should never put students in situations where they feel pressurised into participating in activities they do not wish to.

## 3. Social Events

HUU understands Social Events to be any event or activity which takes place on a regular basis from a club or society (Student Group). They could also be, Annual General Meetings, Christmas parties, presentation nights,



alumni dinners, or Varsity matches. HUU expects the following aspects to be considered:

- 3.1. The Members Code of Conduct must be upheld at all times.
- 3.2. All Student Groups' members must recognise and adhere to HUU policies including but not limited to Equality and Diversity Policy & the Zero Tolerance Policy.
- 3.3. It is an individual's choice whether or not they attend any Social Event. Non-attendance must not be a barrier within the activity or have repercussions perceived or real of a barrier to competition.
- 3.4. It should be each Student Group's objective that every member has an enjoyable time. It follows that each member will have a different response to activities, and 'peer' pressure (intended or not) must not be placed on any member to participate.
- 3.5. The Committee of each Student Group is responsible for the welfare of all members and must take the necessary measures to ensure that a good level of safety is maintained at all times. This includes having at least one named designated sober member during all Social Events.
- 3.6. All members of the Student Group must show respect towards each other, members of the public and other members of the University, at all times. This includes online over social media and in person.
- 3.7. HUU recognises that Social Events are an important part of activity groups; however they must not involve degrading, demeaning, humiliating acts and/or the abuse of alcohol, food or other substances.

#### 4. Initiation Ceremonies\*

- 4.1. HUU believes the practice of problem initiations is a dangerous and degrading exercise that jeopardises the safety of its members and can be a source of negative publicity for HUU and the University. It is also considered that unforeseen circumstances that may result from such ceremonies can cause anguish that may affect students both personally and academically.

**\*HUU Definition:** *A problem initiation ceremony is an event in which members (often but not always new members) of the Student Group are expected to perform a task or tasks as a means of gaining credibility, status or entry within that Student Group. This may involve peer pressure (though not explicitly) exerted on students, and may compromise a person's inherent dignity as a person by forcing or requiring an individual to drink alcohol, eat mixtures of various food stuffs, nudity and any other form of bullying and behaviour that can cause intimidation, humiliation, or degradation, which cause emotional, mental or physical danger and/or harm to Student Group or non-Student Group members. This definition is regardless of a person's willingness to participate.*

#### Initiations and online harm:

The features of problem initiations and related activities increasingly play out online via social media and other internet-enabled communications. Although the experience of most university students with technology is useful and positive, the use of online media to harass and/or coerce people is a growing concern for students and universities. This behaviour can have severe and long-term repercussions for physical, emotional and mental wellbeing and affect academic achievement and career prospects. Even so, for many young people, this behaviour is embedded in their digital lives and to some extent is normalised and expected, emerging as part of the wider dynamic of their peer group and intimate relationships.

(UUK Initiations in UK Universities 2019)

- 4.2. Individual members, or Committees who organise Social Events in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in line with HUU Disciplinary Policy. As well as the Misconduct process at the University of Hull.
- 4.3. It is the belief of HUU that every student has the right to participate as a full member in all activities and have the freedom of choice over what they take part in. Selection for competitive sporting activities should be based purely on ability, skill, fitness criteria and attendance at training. Selection for activity with a society should be based purely on their skills and ability to take part in competition or performance.

## 5. Behaviour

- 5.1. Every Student Group shall be responsible for ensuring that its members, players, officials and all persons purporting to be its supporters or followers conduct themselves in an orderly fashion whilst attending or taking part in an event, match or competition in which it is involved, whether on University premises or elsewhere. In accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.
- 5.2. Any of the following action will in accordance with this policy and the Members Code of Conduct be seen in breach and with therefore be subject to the HUU Disciplinary Policy:
  - Violent, threatening, abusive, obscene or provocative behaviour, conduct or language including online content.
  - Throwing missiles, bottles or other potentially harmful or dangerous objects.
  - Every Student Group or member shall be responsible for ensuring that its members, officials and all persons purporting to be its representatives do not conduct themselves that may bring HUU into disrepute.

- Members must not consume alcohol whilst partaking in any sporting activity. This includes travelling to and from a game/event. Public service vehicle ruling states that if transport is attending a sporting fixture, then alcohol is illegal on the vehicles.  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1995/2908/made>

## 6. Breach of this Policy

- 6.1. Anybody who becomes aware of conduct by a Student Group, member or any individual associated with HUU which may be in breach of this Policy shall be able to report the matter in confidence in line with our the HUU Complaints Policy or Disciplinary Policy.
- 6.2. If a member or member of the public feels that this policy has been breached, HUU welcomes any grievance or complaint. This can be done by contacting us through our website [www.hulluniunion.com/contactus](http://www.hulluniunion.com/contactus)

Review Date

Originator	Sponsor	Date of Review	Next Review
Chief Executive	President of Sports	January 2020	January 2021