

SPONSORSHIP GUIDELINES AND RESTRICTIONS

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BUCKS
STUDENTS' UNION

Sponsorship guidelines and restrictions

Below are some key things to consider when you are looking to establish sponsorship for your sports team or society.

Sponsorship is a two-way thing

Nothing in life is free. You must remember when seeking sponsorship that any agreement you come to will be a two-way process. You and your sports team or society will be expected to honour obligations in order to maintain the sponsorship. Also, sponsors are demanding a lot more to part with their cash, so don't expect to get something for little or even nothing.

Keep it simple and realistic

The more straightforward your sponsorship agreement, the easier it will be to uphold. Don't enter into an agreement if you are not confident that you and your sports team or society will be able to honour your part of the agreement. Remember, not everyone in your sports team or society will share your commitment, so think of your members and what they will be prepared to give in return for sponsorship. Remember, not fulfilling commitments will harm your sports team or society and the reputation of the Students' Union, which will in turn effect the chances of gaining future sponsorship.

Be in it for the short haul

Your committees and members will change each year, and as a result, what you are prepared to do for sponsorship, and indeed what you will gain from it, will vary from year to year. With this in mind, it can be risky to commit to lengthy sponsorship agreements, as in the future they may not seem such a good deal. Therefore, all agreements will terminate at the end of the academic year (unless terminated earlier), as it is much easier to renew a short term contract you are happy with than break a long term one which no longer suits your needs.

Seek common goals

As sponsorship represents a partnership, it is best to approach potential sponsors to whom you know you can offer something genuine in return. Think about companies or businesses which you and your sports team or society are regularly in contact with, or those who have similar aims to yourselves.

Save yourselves time

It is more than likely that your sponsorship proposals/letters will be very similar. Once you have your first one, keep it as part of the handover document. Then use it as a generic template which you can amend and adapt for other potential sponsors. Larger student groups may want to consider having different tiers of sponsorship, eg gold, silver and bronze, with different sets of proposed activity for different prices.

Sponsorship guidelines:

1. A sports team or society should not enter into any deals where you get tied into spending a certain amount of money that might impact on members' finance.
2. Any sponsor that requires the sports team or society to display branding on social wear or promotional material should provide the additional financial support to cover the cost.
3. If any potential sponsor is offering to fund your kit as part of the sponsorship package, Bucks Students' Union has a contracted supplier who can add embroidered or printed University crests to your kit. All playing/warm up kit must be Under Armour clothing and bought through Bucks Students' Union.
4. Sponsors are not allowed to advertise on the playing kit as this is owned by Bucks Students' Union.
5. The sponsorship deal is between the sponsors and sports team or society. Bucks Students' Union will enforce the above guidelines and failure to comply will result in a penalty (i.e a months suspension) for the sports team or society. Please refer to the AU/Society Handbook.
6. The sponsorship money should be clearly referenced and debited into Bucks Students' Union account and this will then be moved into the clubs/societies fundraising account.
7. All contracts must be approved and signed by a member of the Student Activities team. Once the contract is signed Bucks Students Union will raise the invoice. To raise the invoice we will need to know the contact name and address, any reference or purchase order number from the sponsor, details of what is being sponsored and how much.
8. Clubs are not eligible to reclaim VAT therefore any sponsorship income will be invoiced with VAT included.

The Students' Union has the following restrictions in place for sports teams and societies seeking sponsorship.

- **Pizza companies** as the Students' Union has an exclusive agreement with Domino's
- **Insurance companies** as the Students' Union has an exclusive agreement with Endsleigh Insurance
- **Nightclubs, pubs or daytime eateries** who are in direct competition to the Students' Union catering outlets and The Venue
- **Commission-based companies** where you would be asked to sell tickets on behalf of a venue in town or must spend a certain amount of money at a venue
- **Lap dancing clubs**
- **Tobacco companies**
- **Gambling companies**
- **Recruitment companies**
- **Alcohol-based companies**
- **No gyms or fitness clubs**
- **Pay day loan companies**
- **Credit card companies**
- **Essay, proofreading, checking or writing services**

Step-by-step guide

To help you through the process of finding and securing sponsorship we have produced a step-by-step guide. This guide takes you through the recommended six steps you should follow to obtain sponsorship for your club or society.

- 1. Find your sponsor:** the first step is to identify potential sponsors. Think about companies you use regularly, those to whom you can offer something in return or simply local businesses who may welcome extra exposure.
- 2. Introduce yourself:** once you have identified a suitable sponsor (or sponsors) the next step is to introduce your sports team or society to them. The most effective way of doing this is to send a letter (or email) including a proposal detailing who you are and what you are looking for. You can find templates of both these documents at the end of this guide which you can amend to suit your own group.
- 3. Prepare your proposal and talk to us:** remember to keep your proposal simple and realistic, as this is just an introduction after all. Once you have completed this, you should contact the Student Activities Manager at the Students' Union. We will then check your proposal and your potential sponsor to ensure that your plans do not contravene Students' Union rules or put unnecessary strain on your sports team or society. Once it has been checked, you can move onto the next step.
- 4. Discuss with the sponsors:** once you've been given the green light by the Students' Union, the next step is to discuss your proposal with your sponsors. Think about how you want to do this; face-to-face (if they are small or local), over the phone or by email. You want to give yourself the chance to discuss other options that may not have been considered in your original proposal. If you are happy with both what the sponsor is offering you and what your sports team or society is offering them in return, then progress to step five.
- 5. Complete the sponsorship agreement:** fill in the sponsorship agreement detailing all you have agreed when meeting with the sponsor. It's important that you include as much detail as possible in case there are any later issues with your sponsorship.
- 6. Get it signed:** lastly, to make it official, you need to get your agreement signed. The first signature you need is that of Bucks Students' Union, as this will mean that we recognise your agreement. Then you need to get the agreement signed by your sponsor. Once you have this, you should send a copy of the final sponsorship agreement to both the Students' Union and the sponsor. You should keep the original in your sports team or society records, as this will be useful when handing over to future committees.

What the sponsor can do for you?

It's not all about the money! Although a financial contribution is what most sports teams and societies will seek from their sponsor, there are more varied ways in which a sponsor can aid your sports team or society.

- 1. Provide finance:** the most obvious contribution a sponsor can make to your sport or society is to give you money in return for advertising or use of their product or business. There are other initiatives such as a referral scheme where your sports team or society are given an amount per head, or percentage of profit from any business you direct towards them.
- 2. Provide kit or equipment:** a sponsor may provide kit, clothing or equipment for your sports team or society in return for their name being displayed on it or another arrangement such as being present at events where the equipment supplied is being used. The equipment **MUST** be bought by the Students' Union and payment received before purchase of the kit.
- 3. Discounts:** if you and your sports team or society are regular customers of a particular business, then you may be able to negotiate sponsorship in the form of a discount. This could be money off equipment or supplies ordered from a specific shop, a reduced admission price to events when taking all of your sports team or society along, or a discount when hiring specific services or facilities.
- 4. Offer of facilities or venue:** if your sports team or society has specific equipment, or facility needs that cannot be met by the Students' Union or University, then effective sponsorship for you may take the form of an agreement for the use of a more tailored venue. A company may be willing to let you use their venue in return for advertising or your involvement in their other activities.

What can you do for the sponsor?

It is important to remember that as a sports team or society you can offer much more to potential sponsors than just a t-shirt with their logo on it. Affiliating with large organisations and warm up kit sponsorship may be highly prized in business and professional sport, but there is a chance your sponsors will not see it as such an effective marketing tool at university level. So, be prepared to think outside the box and use the strengths of your particular group to find something that can benefit both your sport or society and any potential sponsors.

- 1. Advertising:** helping to get a company's name into the community is the most accepted form of sponsorship. This has traditionally been done through displaying the sponsor's logo on training or social kit, but this is where you need to think creatively.
- 2. Attendance as a collective:** the business brought by just the members of your sport or society can give businesses quite a boost. Arranging to hold events with potential sponsors, or simply ensuring your members use the sponsor's service or products regularly, could be deemed a significant contribution to a sponsorship agreement.
- 3. Aiding with promotions:** enthusiastic, motivated and vibrant people like you can be great ambassadors for businesses or companies. If your sports team or society is of an artistic nature, an effective form of sponsorship may be to agree to perform at or be involved in a company's events or promotions. Just offering the services of your members to help publicise your potential sponsors could prove valuable.
- 4. Involvement with activities:** the experience and knowledge of your sports team or society is another valuable commodity and you may be able to offer this to potential sponsors for the benefit of your group. For example, if you are working with an external venue, you may be able to get the use of their facilities at a reduced rate if you agree to offer your experience to help with their other activities, such as coaching community groups.

All sponsorship proposals must be agreed by Bucks Students' Union before accepting the sponsorship. If you have any questions or queries on sponsorship please contact Catherine Lymer (Student Activities Manager) by emailing catherine.lymer@bucks.ac.uk or calling **01494 601 600**.