

2026-27 RUGBY UNION BEHAVIOUR CHARTER TOOLKIT



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Case Study Opportunity

BUCS is seeking institutions to participate in a case study evaluating the impact of the Behaviour Charter Toolkit. If your institution uses the toolkit and would like to be involved, please contact becca.stone@bucs.org.uk for more information.



Introduction

The purpose of this toolkit is to support institutions in managing behaviour effectively and ensuring adherence to the Behaviour Charter. It is designed for use by university staff and committee members across all levels.

Target Audience:

University Staff: Resources include guidance on managing spectator behaviour, top tips for conducting internal investigations, and a reporting process flowchart.

Committee Members: Resources include fostering a strong club ethos and promoting good sportsmanship.

Both Audiences: Additional materials include an additional resource library and a checklist to ensure preparedness for managing behaviour.

Overview of Toolkit Resources:

1. Prepared for Behaviour Checklist: A checklist to help staff and committee members ensure they are ready to manage behaviour effectively.
2. Sharing Good Practice: A form to share good examples of positive behaviour practices that your institution follows, or that you have observed at other institutions. This could include anything from reporting systems to supporter management techniques. The more good practices we share, the greater impact we can have!
3. Controlling Spectator Behaviour: Guidance on best practices for maintaining a positive and respectful environment. A lite version is included.
4. Top Tips for Internal Investigations: Practical advice for conducting thorough and fair investigations. A lite version is included.
5. Reporting Process: A visual guide to the reporting process from report to result.
6. How to Create a Good Club Ethos: Strategies for fostering a supportive and respectful culture within sports clubs.
7. What is Good Sportsmanship: Key principles of sportsmanship and how to promote it within teams and clubs.
8. Additional Resource Library: A comprehensive collection of resources on behaviour management, sportsmanship and related topics.

Please direct any questions or feedback to becca.stone@bucs.org.uk





Prepared for Behaviour Checklist

For Institutions

- ☐ Review the Behaviour Charter and Create Code of Conduct
- ☐ Review Controlling Spectators Resource
- ☐ Review Internal Investigation Resource
- ☐ Review Additional Resource Library
- ☐ Attend/Review Behaviour Charter Webinar
- ☐ Ensure Students Esign the Behaviour Charter
- ☐ Create Spectator Behaviour Policy

For Committees

- ☐ Promote Good Sportsmanship
- ☐ Feedback and Continuous Improvement
- ☐ Create a Good Club Ethos
- ☐ Education of all club members

Sharing Good Behaviour Charter Practice

Sharing your good behaviour practices is crucial for fostering a positive and inclusive community. By contributing your experiences, you help us build a comprehensive resource that can guide and inspire others. The data collected will be used to create a national repository of best practices, enabling everyone to benefit from proven strategies and contribute to the continuous improvement of our collective behaviour standards. Additionally, this information can be used to recognise and highlight institutions that excel in promoting and implementing exemplary behaviour practices.

This can be anything from a reporting sign to a supporter management technique you have seen. The more good practice we share, the better!

[Click here for the survey](#)

CONTROLLING SPECTATOR BEHAVIOUR

BUCS RUGBY UNION BEHAVIOUR CHARTER



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Controlling Spectator Behaviour

 **INTRODUCTION**

 **PRE-MATCH PREPERATION**

 **CREATING A POSITIVE SPECTATOR CULTURE**

 **MATCH DAY STRATEGIES**

 **DEALING WITH POORLY BEHAVING SPECTATORS**

 **POST-MATCH FOLLOW-UP**

 **CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES**

 **OVERALL**

Top Tips for Controlling Spectators

INTRODUCTION

- Importance of Managing Spectators: Spectators play a huge part in creating a vibrant and supportive atmosphere, as well as the potential challenges posed by behaviour. It is the university's responsibility to control and manage their spectators.
- The aim of this resource is to aid your university in ensuring a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all attendees.

PRE-MATCH PREPARATION

- Communication with Spectators:
 - Use emails, social media, and websites to communicate behavioural expectations.
 - Provide information on parking, entry points, prohibited items, and facilities.
- Clear Signage and Information Dissemination:
 - Install visible signs indicating codes of conduct, emergency exits, and first aid points.
 - Distribute resources outlining expected behaviour and consequences of misconduct.

CREATING A POSITIVE SPECTATOR CULTURE

- Setting Expectations for Behaviour:
 - Clearly articulate the code of conduct during ticket purchase and/or entry.
 - Promote respect for players, officials, and other spectators.
- Encouraging Positive Support:
 - Foster a community spirit of positive support and a zero-tolerance on negative behaviour.
 - Highlight examples of positive spectator behaviour in newsletters or during announcements.

Top Tips for Controlling Spectators

MATCH DAY STRATEGIES

- Effective Use of Stewards and Security Personnel:
 - Train staff in conflict resolution and effective communication.
 - Position stewards strategically to monitor high-risk areas and respond quickly.
- Engaging Announcers and Pre-Match Briefings:
 - Use announcers to remind spectators of the code of conduct before and during the match.
 - Brief staff and volunteers on their roles and procedures for managing crowd behaviour.

DEALING WITH POORLY BEHAVING SPECTATORS

- Identifying Potential Issues:
 - Monitor crowd for signs of agitation, intoxication, or aggressive behaviour.
- Steps for Intervention and Escalation:
 - Approach calmly and respectfully to address minor issues.
 - Have a clear escalation plan involving security personnel and, if necessary, further enforcement where safe for your staff.
 - Ensure procedures are in place for safely removing disruptive individuals.

POST-MATCH FOLLOW-UP

- Reviewing Spectator Behaviour:
 - Hold debriefing sessions with staff, stewards, and security to discuss any incidents.
 - Collect feedback from spectators on their experience.
- Feedback and Continuous Improvement:
 - Use feedback to identify areas for improvement in crowd management.
 - Implement changes and update policies as needed.

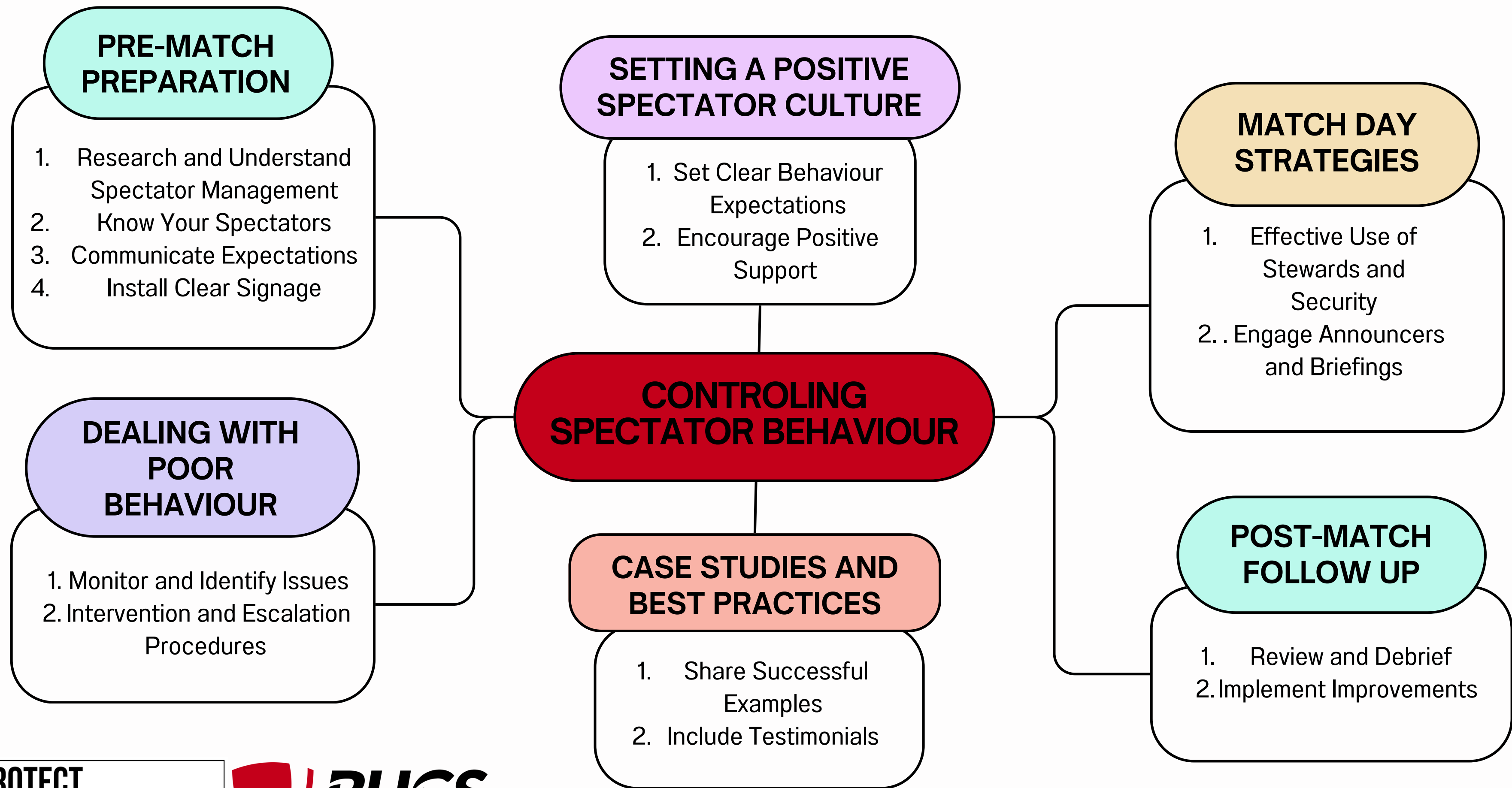
Top Tips for Controlling Spectators

CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES

- Examples from Successful Events:
 - Share stories of well-managed events and strategies that worked.
 - Include photos or videos if available.
- Testimonials:
 - Include quotes from staff, security personnel, event managers, and even spectators about effective management practices.

OVERALL

- Spectator behaviour and safety is paramount, therefore it is important to ensure strategies are in place for incidents.
- Staff safety is paramount, so ensure your strategies train staff well and highlight the importance of their safety.
- Report poor behaviour you see using the BUCS reporting system. If this behaviour is from your university supporters, ensure these behaviours are followed up and a plan is developed to increase spectator behaviour.



TOP TIPS FOR INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

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Top Tips for Internal Investigations

- **ESTABLISH A CLEAR POLICY AND PROCEDURE**
- **MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY**
- **ENSURE IMPARTIALITY**
- **GATHER EVIDENCE SYSTEMATICALLY**
- **DOCUMENT EVERYTHING**
- **ENSURE LEGAL COMPLIANCE**
- **COMMUNICATE TRANSPARENTLY**
- **PROVIDE SUPPORT**
- **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

Top Tips for Internal Investigations

ESTABLISH A CLEAR POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Define Protocols: Ensure that there are clear, written protocols for handling behaviour incidents. This includes steps for reporting, investigating, and resolving incidents. If you're unsure of your universities misconduct investigation policy, contact your SU.

Communicate Policies: Make sure that all students, staff, and faculty are aware of the policies and procedures.

MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY

Protect Identities: Ensure investigations remain confidential to protect the privacy of those involved and ensure a fair investigation.

Secure Data: Ensure that all information gathered during the investigation is stored securely.

ENSURE IMPARTIALITY

Unbiased Investigators: Select investigators who have no conflict of interest or prior involvement with the incident.

Equal Treatment: Treat all parties involved with respect and without bias.

GATHER EVIDENCE SYSTEMATICALLY

Collect Comprehensive Evidence: Gather all relevant documentation, including emails, messages, CCTV footage, and physical evidence.

Interview Witnesses: Conduct thorough interviews with all parties involved, including the complainant, the accused, and any witnesses.

DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Detailed Records: Keep detailed records of all steps taken during the investigation, including interviews, evidence collection, and communications.

Investigation Report: Compile a comprehensive report, using BUCS template, that outlines the findings, evidence, and any recommended actions.

Top Tips for Internal Investigations

ENSURE LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Know the Laws: Be aware of and comply with all relevant laws and regulations, including your university's policies.

COMMUNICATE TRANSPARENTLY

Inform Involved Parties: Keep all stakeholders informed about the progress of the investigation.

PROVIDE SUPPORT

Offer Resources: Provide access to support services for all parties involved in the investigation.

Address Retaliation: Ensure there are policies and measures in place to protect individuals from retaliation.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Regular Training: Provide regular training for staff and faculty on handling behaviour incidents and conducting investigations.

Review and Update Policies: Periodically review and update investigation policies and procedures based on feedback and evolving best practices.

It is important to note all internal investigations should be conducted without BUCS support. Once your investigation is complete, this should be written up and communicated to BUCS for next steps.

TOP TIPS FOR INTERNAL INVESTIGATION

Establish a Clear Policy and Procedure

Clear, written protocols for internal investigations should outline steps for reporting, investigating, and resolving incidents, with all students, staff, and faculty informed to ensure transparency; if unsure of your institution's policy, contact the Students' Union.

1



2

Ensure Impartiality

Select investigators with no prior involvement or conflicts of interest to ensure an unbiased process, while treating all parties with respect and maintaining fairness throughout.

Gather Evidence Systematically

Gather all relevant evidence, such as emails, messages, CCTV footage, and physical items, and conduct thorough interviews with the complainant, accused, and witnesses to ensure a complete understanding of the incident.

3

4

Document Everything

Keep detailed records of every step in the investigation, including interviews, evidence collection, and communications, and compile a comprehensive report summarising the findings, evidence, and recommended actions or conclusions.

Ensure Compliance

Comply with all relevant institution regulations, including privacy laws and data protection policies, while adhering to BUCS and NGB deadlines and communications for an efficient investigation outcome.

5

6

Communicate Transparently

Keep all relevant parties informed throughout the investigation, and upon conclusion, clearly communicate the outcome and any actions taken to ensure transparency and understanding.

Provide Support

Provide access to support services for all individuals involved, including the complainant, accused, and witnesses, and ensure policies are in place to prevent retaliation, maintaining a safe environment for everyone.

7

8

Follow-Up

After the investigation, monitor outcomes to ensure proper implementation of disciplinary actions or corrective measures, and establish a feedback loop for parties to share their experience, enabling continuous improvement in future cases.

Continuous Improvement

Provide regular training for staff and faculty on handling incidents and conducting investigations, and periodically review and update policies to reflect feedback, best practices, and changes in the university landscape, ensuring effectiveness.

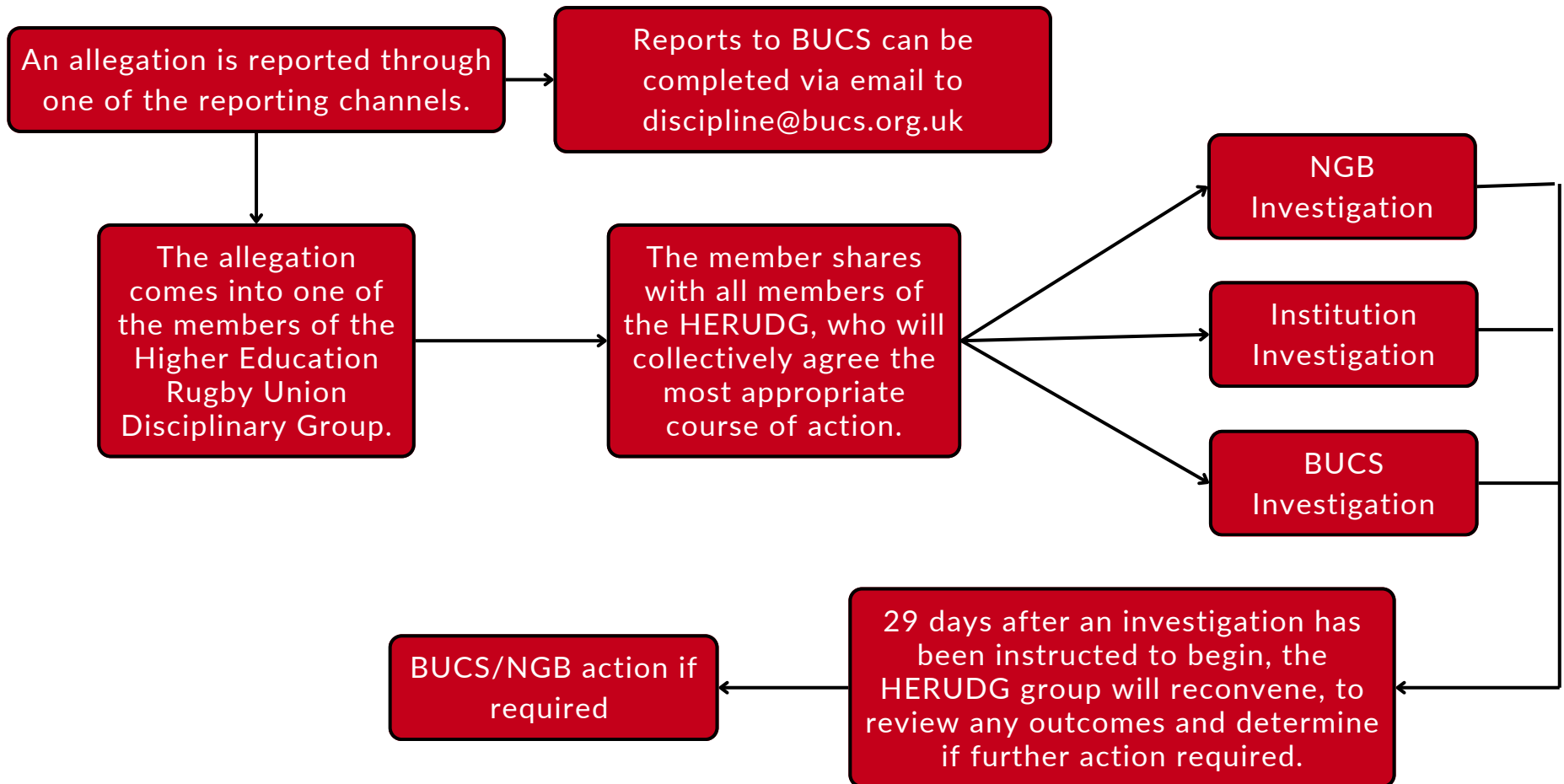
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Timeline

Start an internal investigation and report to BUCS immediately. If needed, BUCS or the NGB will reach out. Begin right away, as early details might be crucial. On the 29th day, the Higher Education Rugby Union Disciplinary Group will review the case, and you may need to provide additional information. Adhere to all NGB and BUCS deadlines.

Reporting Process



For the avoidance of doubt, the actions of one body do not preclude further action being considered by another body.

This guide is designed to assist committee members in fostering a vibrant and positive ethos within their club. It outlines essential principles and practices to help establish and maintain a strong and cohesive club ethos. By adhering to the recommendations within this document, committee members and members can ensure their club thrives.

Definition

A club ethos encompasses the vision, values, and culture that define the identity and operations of the club.

Importance

A good club ethos is important as it promotes positive behaviour, fosters respect, and sets clear standards that guide players, coaches, and supporters, enhancing both performance and character development.

Developing the Club Ethos

- **Vision and Mission**

Develop a clear vision of what the club aims to achieve and its purpose. Removing discrimination. Remember, it's not "just banter".

- **Values and Principles**

Establish principles that guide behaviour and decision-making. Reflect on World Rugby values.

- **Culture and Traditions**

Foster safe traditions that promote unity and a sense of belonging.

- **Involving Stakeholders**

Engage players, coaches, alumni, and other stakeholders in defining the ethos.

- **Establishing Clear Guidelines**

Create a code of conduct that outlines expected behaviours and responsibilities. See BUCS Behaviour Charter for guidelines.

- **Communication Strategies**

Use regular meetings, newsletters, and social media to communicate the ethos.

Promoting Good Behaviour On and Off the Pitch

- **Code of Conduct**

Use your detail Code of Conduct to outline specific behaviours expected from players, coaches, and supporters.

- **Training and Education**

Provide workshops and resources on sportsmanship, ethics, and leadership.

- **Role Models and Leadership**

Encourage senior players and coaches to lead by example.

Encouraging Speaking Out on Negative Behaviour

- **Creating a Safe Environment**

Foster an atmosphere where members feel safe to speak out without fear of retaliation.

- **Reporting Mechanisms**

Establish clear, confidential processes for reporting misconduct within your club, and highlight where to report on the [BUCS website](#).

- **Support Systems**

Provide access to support for those affected by negative behaviour.

Implementing and Sustaining the Club Ethos

- **Review and Adapt**

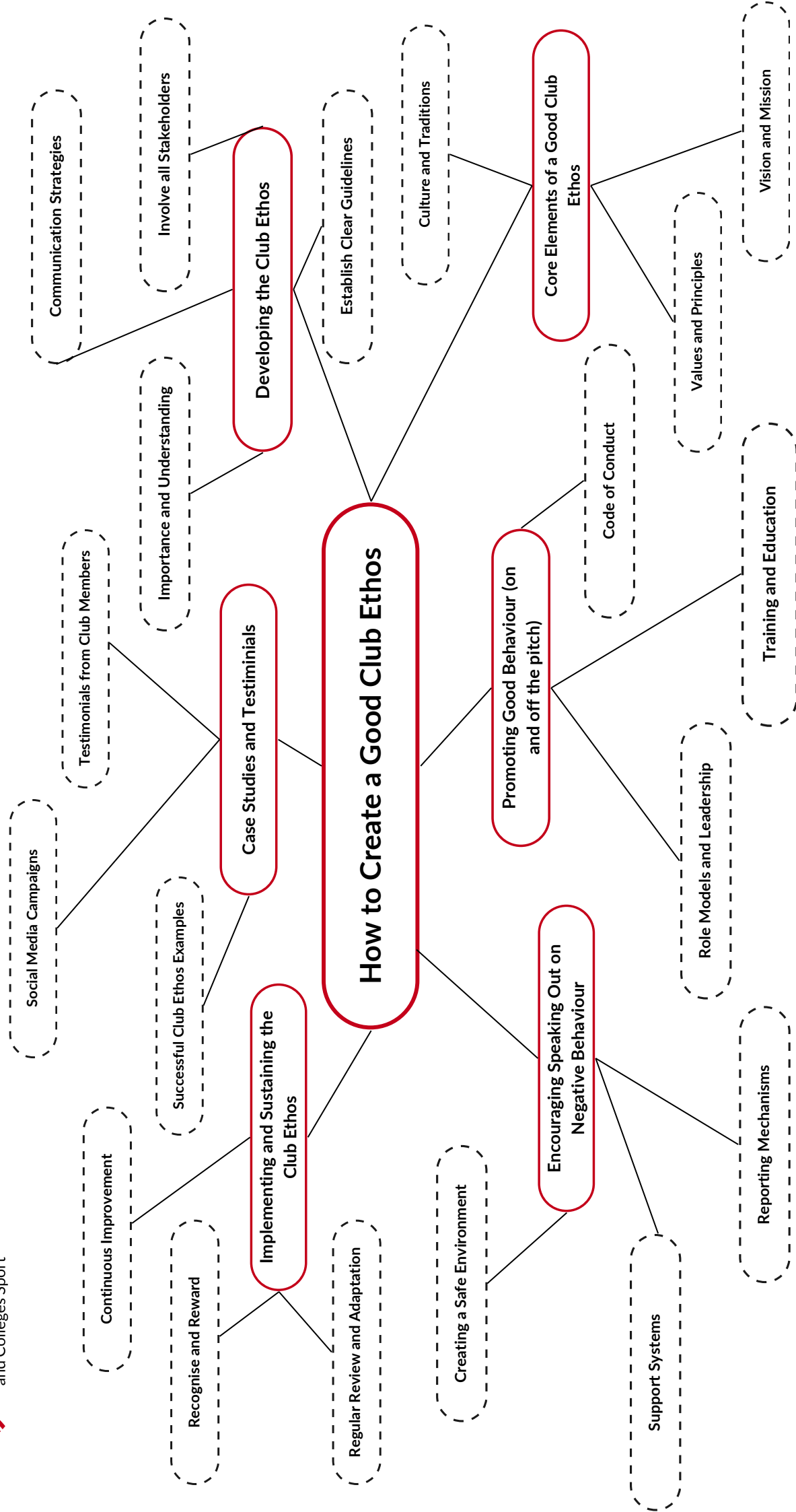
Conduct periodic reviews of the ethos and its impact.

- **Recognise and Reward**

Acknowledge and reward individuals who exemplify the club ethos.

- **Continuous Improvement**

Encourage ongoing dialogue about the club ethos and its relevance.



WHAT IS SPORTSMANSHIP?

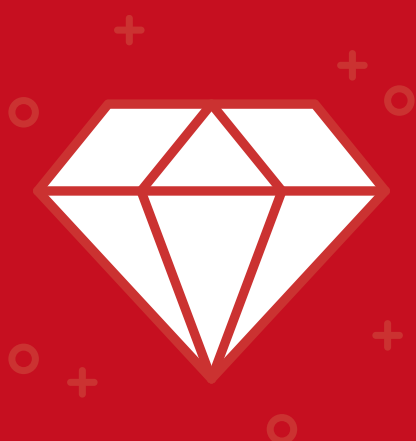
This guide is designed to assist committee members in understanding sportsmanship and how good sportsmanship reflects behaviour. It outlines essential principles and practices to help establish and maintain strong sportsmanship values within your club.

CORE VALUES OF SPORTSMANSHIP



SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS DEMONSTRATING GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

BENEFITS OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP



ENCOURAGING GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

HANDLING POOR SPORTSMANSHIP



CORE VALUES OF SPORTSMANSHIP

Respect

Valuing opponents, teammates, coaches, officials, and the game itself.

Integrity

Playing honestly and adhering to the rules.

Fairness

Ensuring equal opportunity and fairness in all aspects of the game.

Teamwork

Collaborating with teammates and valuing collective success over individual glory.

Discipline

Maintaining self-control and adhering to the principles and rules of the game.

SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS DEMONSTRATING GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

On Field

Shaking hands after matches.

Helping an injured opponent.

Accepting the official's decisions
without argument.

Celebrating wins with humility and
accepting losses gracefully.

Off Field

Positive communication and
encouragement.

Respectful behaviour in training and team
meetings.

Representation of the team and institution
positively in the community

Building connections with the opposition
post-match.

History

Rugby union has a rich tradition of sportsmanship, and over the years, there have been numerous examples of players and teams demonstrating fairness, respect, and humility both on and off the field. Here are a few notable examples of good sportsmanship in rugby union history:

1. Richie McCaw's Fair Play (2015 Rugby World Cup Final)

In the 2015 Rugby World Cup final, New Zealand captain Richie McCaw, known for his fierce competitiveness, demonstrated tremendous sportsmanship after his team's victory over Australia. Rather than celebrating excessively, McCaw went out of his way to praise Australia's performance, shaking hands and exchanging respectful words with Australian captain Stephen Moore. McCaw's actions reflected humility and respect, reinforcing the values of rugby sportsmanship even in the heat of victory.

2. Brian O'Driscoll and Tana Umaga (2005)

In 2005, during the British and Irish Lions tour of New Zealand, Brian O'Driscoll, the Lions captain, was injured in a controversial tackle by New Zealand captain Tana Umaga and Keven Mealamu in the first test. Despite the media storm and personal disappointment, O'Driscoll refused to make public accusations against Umaga. Later, in 2009, when O'Driscoll was voted Player of the Decade by rugby fans, Umaga, now a coach, sent his congratulations, showing mutual respect despite their past altercation.

BENEFITS OF GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Personal Development

Good sportsmanship nurtures important life skills and character traits that contribute to an individual's overall growth. Sportsmanship enhances personal development by:

1. Builds Emotional Intelligence
2. Teaches Accountability
3. Fosters Self-Discipline
4. Promotes Humility

Team Cohesion

Sportsmanship enhances how well individuals work together, creating a unified and effective group. Sportsmanship improves team cohesion by:

1. Builds Trust
2. Promotes Mutual Respect
3. Boosts Morale
4. Encourages Accountability

Community Building

Sportsmanship fosters relationships, trust, and a sense of belonging both within sports teams and in the broader community. Here's why:

1. Promotes Inclusivity
2. Fosters Positive Role Models
3. Builds a Positive Atmosphere
4. Reduces Conflict

Professional Opportunities

Good sportsmanship is beneficial for professional opportunities for several reasons, as it fosters qualities and behaviours that are highly valued in the workplace. Here's why:

1. Leadership Skills
2. Resilience and Adaptability
3. Conflict Resolution
4. Workplace Culture Fit

ENCOURAGING GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

Coaches

Coaches play a critical role in encouraging good sportsmanship, as they are influential in shaping athletes' attitudes, behaviours, and values both on and off the field. Here are key aspects of a coach's role in promoting sportsmanship:

1. Setting Expectations and Leading by Example
2. Fostering Respect
3. Teaching Conflict Resolution
4. Reinforcing Positive Behaviour

Players

Players play a vital role in encouraging good sportsmanship, as their behaviour on and off the field directly influences the culture of respect, fairness, and integrity within the sport. Here are the key ways in which players can promote good sportsmanship:

1. Leading by Example
2. Showing Respect for Opponents and Officials
3. Supporting Teammates
4. Managing Emotions

Institutions

Institutions play an essential role in encouraging good sportsmanship by shaping the values and behaviours of student-athletes, coaches, and the broader university community. Through their policies, programs, and culture, institutions can foster an environment where sportsmanship is prioritised both on and off the field. Here's how universities contribute to promoting good sportsmanship:

1. Establishing Clear Policies and Codes of Conduct
2. Training and Educating Athletes and Coaches
3. Modelling Sportsmanship through Leadership

HANDLING POOR SPORTSMANSHIP

Handling poor sportsmanship effectively requires a thoughtful approach that addresses the behaviour, promotes positive change, and fosters a respectful environment. Here are steps and strategies for dealing with poor sportsmanship:

1. Address the Behaviour

- Recognise and understand that poor sportsmanship can take many forms.
- Players and coaches can call out the behaviour during a game or practice, focusing on how it affects the team and the spirit of the game. An example of a framework for interrupting behaviour can be found [here](#).
- Stadium or event staff can remind spectators of the code of conduct, or issue warnings if their behaviour is disruptive or unsportsmanlike.

2. Stay Calm and Professional

When responding to poor sportsmanship, it's important to remain calm, composed, and professional. Reacting emotionally or aggressively can worsen the situation. Instead, take a measured approach and focus on the specific behaviour, not the individual's character.

3. Discuss the Importance of Sportsmanship

Coaches, officials, or teammates should take the opportunity to remind the offending individual or group why sportsmanship is essential. Highlight how sportsmanship promotes respect, fairness, and enjoyment of the game.

4. Apply Appropriate Consequences

- Any poor sportsmanship may be reported and further investigations may occur. You can report to BUCS [here](#).
- This could lead to being benched for part of the game, losing a starting position, or even potential disciplinary action.
- Ejection from the venue or a ban from future games may be necessary in extreme cases.
- Fines, forfeiture, or disciplinary action can be enforced by leagues or governing bodies if an entire team is engaging in unsportsmanlike conduct.

5. Promote Reflection and Self-Improvement

After addressing poor sportsmanship, it's important to help the individual reflect on their actions and encourage self-improvement.

6. Model Good Sportsmanship

Leaders, coaches, and senior players should model the behaviour they want to see. Demonstrating respect for opponents, officials, and teammates can inspire others to follow suit.

7. Educate on the Value of Sportsmanship

- Team meetings: Coaches can hold meetings to discuss what sportsmanship looks like and why it matters.
- Workshops and training: Teams can bring in experts to lead workshops on conflict resolution, emotional regulation, and ethical behaviour in sports.

8. Encourage Peer Accountability

Teammates and spectators can play a role in correcting unsportsmanlike behaviour. When athletes hold each other accountable, it creates a culture where respect and sportsmanship are prioritised. Encouraging teammates to call out poor behaviour or support positive conduct can be highly effective.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE LIBRARY

Rugby Union Behaviour Charter Toolkit 2026-27

FREE ONLINE COURSES

World Rugby Online Courses

- World Rugby '[Rugby Ready](#)': A course focused on player safety, preparation, and training.
- [World Rugby Laws of the Game](#): Understanding the laws and rules of rugby.
- [World Rugby Coaching](#): Various levels of coaching courses from beginner to advanced.

Ethics and Sportsmanship

- [Ethics, Behaviour, and Culture](#)

Spectator Management

- [Mastering Crowd Management](#)
- [Crowd Management for Sport, Concerts, Festivals & Special Events](#)
- [Spectator Behaviour: Combating Hooliganism](#)

Bystander Training

- [Active Bystander](#)
- [Becoming an Active Bystander](#)

ARTICLES AND RESEARCH PAPERS

Good Sportsmanship

- ["Teaching Sportsmanship and Values" – University of Oregon](#)

Building a Positive Club Culture

- ["High-Performing Teams Start with a Culture of Shared Values" – Harvard Business Review](#)
- ["Developing a winning sport team culture: organizational culture in theory and practice" – Jason Cole & Andrew J Martin](#)
- ["An evaluation of the transition from an amateur to professional culture within Hong Kong's Elite Rugby Programme" – Andrew J Hall](#)

- ["Building a Winning Culture" – Jason Demas](#)
- ["How to Define 'Club Culture; and Why is it so Important" – The Coaching Manual](#)

Spectator Behaviour

- ["A study of student spectator behavior at collegiate sporting events: the role of spectator attachment and interaction" – Sanyung Lee & Young Hoon Kim](#)
- ["Contextual factors associated with poor sport spectator behaviour" – Matthew Nicholson & Russell Hoyer](#)
- ["Crown Management Practices" – Rob Ammon Jr & Gil Fried JD](#)
- ["Understanding crowd management in sports events: a preliminary study" - Lina Munirah Kamarudin, Nur Azyan Raihan Abd Aziza and Asmahany Ramely](#)

BOOKS

Sportsmanship and Ethics

- "Sportsmanship: Multidimensional Approach to Sport" by Tim Delaney and Tim Madigan
- "Sports Ethics for Sports Management Professionals" by Lawrence S. Ruddell, Patrick K. Thornton, Walter T. Champion Jr.
- "Ethics in Sport" edited by William J. Morgan
- "Sportsmanship: Multidisciplinary Perspectives" by Tim Delaney

Club Culture and Leadership

- "Legacy: What the All Blacks Can Teach Us About the Business of Life" by James Kerr
- "The Captain Class: The Hidden Force That Creates the World's Greatest Teams" by Sam Walker
- "The Art of Captaincy: What Sport Teaches Us About Leadership" by Mike Brearley
- "Purposeful Leadership for a Total Engagement Culture" by Michael J Pearsall

Conflict Resolution and Behaviour

- "Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High" by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler
- "Positive Behaviour Management in Sport" by Sports Coach UK
- "Organizational Behaviour in Sport, 1st Edition! By Bob Stweart and James Skinner

BUCS BEHAVIOUR CHARTER WEBSITE

Website

- [BUCS Behaviour Charter](#)

