**ENSA Societies & Sports**

**Initiation Policy**

**Summary**

This document details the policy and processes for Sports Clubs/Societies who wish to hold social events or any other team bonding group activities.

**Effective Date:** 26/05/2022

**Approved by:** Head of Student Communities and Engagement

**ENSA contact:** Student Activities Coordinator

**Last Reviewed/Updated:** 20/05/2022

**Date due for review:** June 2023

**Applies to:** Sports Club & Society Office Holders/Members

1. **Reason for policy**

This policy sets out the parameters for Sports Clubs and Societies to run safe and welcoming activities. This policy when followed correctly will ensure all social activities are inclusive, promote positive choices and don’t involve peer pressure.

Initiations can come in many guises and lead to:

* Inappropriate or dangerous activities or behaviours associated with 'problem initiations'
* 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
* Consumption of excessive quantities of alcohol
* Consumption of abnormal/unpleasant substances
* Forced acts of nudity/nakedness
* The humiliation of a person in public (i.e. setting someone up to fail)
* Isolation or ostracising of individuals through the removal of their mobile phones, geographical remoteness or physical isolation
* Physical acts perpetrated against a person’s body (e.g. Shaving their hair)
* Psychological torment
* Sexual assault
* Sexual harassment
* Victimisation of a specific group of individuals (e.g. “Freshers”)

We recognise that the consumption of alcohol is for many students part of the ‘student experience’ and University life, however, this consumption should not be irresponsible and to an excessive degree. ENSA recognises the need to encourage safer drinking habits amongst the student population and encourages all clubs to be inclusive in all sporting and social activities.

1. **Initiations Policy**
   1. ‘Initiations’ are not an acceptable form of social activity for any ENSA club or society. These are defined as any annual/termly event promoted by a club, which can create an environment of fear, humiliation and peer pressure, or where excessive alcohol consumption or any form of ‘hazing’ is encouraged.
   2. All social activities must be organised in a safe and inclusive manner, without fear of harassment, bullying or undue pressure.
   3. Sports Clubs/Societies must respect the cultural/personal beliefs of all members, when planning and hosting social activity.
   4. Participation in any social activities must be opt-in only. Members must be free to opt-out of any activities without fear of undue pressure, reprisal, non-selection for teams or competitions, denial of membership or any other form of discrimination.
   5. Any member responsible for organising an ‘initiation’, as defined above will face disciplinary action directed by ENSA.
2. **Breaches of Policy**
   1. Failure to follow the policy outlined above will result in disciplinary action being taken, against individuals, full Committees and/or entire Sports Clubs/Societies. (See ENSA’s Sports & Societies Disciplinary Policy).