**Initiation Policy**

University of Leicester Students’ Union & Sport & Active Life will not support, facilitate nor endorse any kind of initiation by its affiliated Student Groups, including (but not limited to) societies, clubs, teams, associations and media groups.

Definitions:

 An **‘Induction’** is defined as ‘An event where new members are introduced to the rules, hierarchy and other members of the club/society they have joined. Inductions often take the form of a social event, based on the university campus. Inductions are allowed at the University of Leicester

An **‘Initiation Ceremony’** is defined as:

An event in which members, (often new members) of a club are expected to perform a task or tasks, as a means to gaining credibility, status or entry within that club. This may be achieved by peer pressure (although not explicitly) and may compromise a person’s inherent dignity by forcing or requiring an individual to drink alcohol, eat mixtures of various foodstuffs, nudity and any other behaviour that may be deemed humiliating. This also extends to online initiation activities on social networking sites or blogs, etc. Individuals should not be pressured into divulging personal information, be subject to comments, photos or images that demean or compromise the dignity of individuals or groups.

**‘Initiation Ceremonies’ are not allowed at the University of Leicester. Social events which involve any or all of the above elements are also not allowed at the University of Leicester on or off-site.**

**Initiation Policy:**

1.1. Clubs are permitted, and encouraged, to host events to welcome and include new and returning members in the Club. These events can never be compulsory and must not involve any aspect which could be considered initiating behaviour.

1.2. Initiations or initiating behaviour concerns any events at which members (often new members) of a Sports Club are expected to perform any activity as a means of gaining credibility, status, or entry to a Club.

1.3. These events often involve peer pressure (though not necessarily explicitly) exerted on members. Activities which could constitute initiating behaviour may include (but are not limited to): drinking alcohol, eating concoctions of food stuffs, nudity, or any other behaviour which could be considered ‘humiliating’.

1..4. University of Leicester Students’ Union does not condone initiations and Affiliated Clubs are not permitted to conduct any form of initiation event.

1.5. Initiation events are not limited to being in the first week of a semester. But could occur at any time of the year (including on Club tours) and are at no point permitted or appropriate.

1.6. Members of University of Leicester Students’ Union Clubs are not permitted to apply what could be considered ‘peer pressure’ on any individual in any social or non-social setting.

1.7. Committees (specifically Wellbeing Officers) of each Club are responsible for the welfare of Club members in any Club organised social situation and must ensure that appropriate safety measures are always adhered to.

Should a Student Group breach the policy, they will:

a) Be stripped of the title as affiliated Student Group until investigation is complete, meaning they cannot compete, train, use grant or fundraising accounts, promote their events, sell tickets for their events.

b) The Activities Development Coordinator (or future equivalent) will conduct a full investigation into the event.

c) The Activities Development Coordinator (or future equivalent) will work alongside the Union Activities team and Director of Membership Services to decide the appropriate sanction which could include penalties such as:

* Disaffiliation of the Student Group
* Semi-permanent or permanent bans of individuals or groups of individuals.
* The need to re-pay costs incurred as a result of the incident.
* Referral of the incident to the University Disciplinary Panel or police for further investigation.

*\*Part of the Student Code of Conduct - Organising or participating in initiation activities\**

*Disciplinary Procedures for Non-Academic Misconduct*

*11.56 Allegations of misconduct will be actioned by the Student Conduct Team on receipt of a Misconduct Formal Reporting Form.*

*11.57 Initial consideration of the case is made by the Academic Registrar or nominee, who may determine: a) To dismiss the case; b) To refer the case to the Major Misconduct Review Group (MMRG), in cases of major misconduct; c) To refer the case to a Student Conduct Officer for follow-up, in cases of non-major misconduct.*