

# POWERLIFTING SPORT REVIEW PROPOSAL

PREPARED BY BRITISH POWERLIFTING | June 2021

## CYCLE THREE

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### SUMMARY

Powerlifting is a separate sport from Olympic weightlifting, governed internationally by the International Powerlifting Federation (IPF). It is an individualized sport in which competitors attempt to lift as much weight as possible for one repetition in the squat, bench press and deadlift. Each lifter is classified by several variables including weight class, age group, and gender. Participation in the sport is growing rapidly, nowhere more so than at the University level. There is a gap in the provision of the BUCS Sport Programme, as although Para Powerlifting now features in the BUCS Sport Programme, this is a variation to Powerlifting itself. This gap can easily be filled as there is already an existing annual University competition that is run by British Powerlifting.

This proposal looks to address the gap in student-athlete provision by;

- 1) Bringing the main University Championships under the BUCS umbrella
- 2) As well as including smaller Regional BUCS competitions earlier in the year which would act as qualifiers for the main Championships.
- 3) These offers combined with an increase in attention towards club structures and development as well as coaching offers will see the sport thrive under BUCS.

Powerlifting is already a sport undertaken by many casual gym goers as well as student-athletes from other sports. This proposal will ensure the sport gains more visibility, ensuring that these students have more paths for participation in University Sports. Even though it is not the traditional team sport route, it will open students up to a whole thriving community of passionate individuals who drive one another to be better, enhancing their student experience in turn.

The proposal will also demonstrate strategic alignment with both BUCS and British Powerlifting (BP), as well as financial sustainability for BUCS, BP, Institutions, and Student-Athletes. Lastly, we will show the benefits of this proposal when it comes to wider impact.

Our consultation with universities has led us to find a significant number of BP members believe having Powerlifting as a BUCS sport will engage new participants to the BUCS programme and provide more recognition for their achievements. BP will support the development of the sport pathway in universities by electing BUCS Executives, who will bridge the gap between student-athletes and the BP board, bringing forward relevant improvements.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This proposal is being submitted by British Powerlifting, the main federation for Powerlifting in the UK. This proposal is focused on the inclusion of the sport within the BUCS Sport Programme through the official recognition of an already existing competition for students delivered by British Powerlifting.

At the annual University Powerlifting Championships, since 2016 when the competition was first offered, we have seen an increase in participation of over 200% (Figure 1), proof of the exponential growth of the sport especially as this does not include evidence from 2020 or 2021. Powerlifting also sees representation at an international level with competitions such as both Junior and Senior Worlds, The Commonwealth, The World University Championships, and more. We send the top 5

University squads from the University Championships to the World University Championships annually, a great amount of representation with the meet also now being recognised by FISU. As a fully WADA compliant sport, British Powerlifting is also strongly committed to anti-doping and has a comprehensive testing programme that is used year-round.

Due to the nature of the sport, we often see a great number of people partaking in the lifts whether they are powerlifters or not. As the squat, bench, and deadlift are staple lifts to most gym routines, powerlifting is easily an attractive prospect for many who may wish to be as strong as they possibly can or even for those who simply wish to perfect their technique and limit the possibility of injury. This is further reason as to why we believe powerlifting also works as a perfect steppingstone for many athletes who cease participation in their main sport, or even a supplementary option for those wishing to enhance their training. With evidence such as a previous university Rugby player (Amy Viner) leaving the sport to enter powerlifting in her first year and achieving a world record deadlift only two years later, powerlifting could be an attractive prospect to many.

As evidenced in the testimonies of many club presidents and elite level university lifters, BUCS recognition has the potential to aid Powerlifting and students in several ways such as:

- Ensure that current clubs are encouraged to push the sport and develop further
- Provide the legitimacy and incentive required for more clubs to be set up and supported
- Increase visibility of the sport amongst student bodies
- Empower more individuals through strength as well as developing self-discipline
- Provide communities and competition for those students who otherwise may have none
- Ensure that this first point of entry into the sport for many is as developed and supported as possible
- Give an outlet for students to improve their health without necessarily having to join a traditional sport

Competitions begin with the Squat, progress to the Bench Press, and conclude with the Deadlift. Every lifter is allowed three attempts at each lift, making for a total of nine competition lifts. The highest weight lifted from each lift being added together to create the Total. IPF technical rules govern the performance of each lift and compliance to these is judged by three referees. The individuals are then ranked based on the size of their Total with the winner being the individual who achieved the highest Total. All lifting takes place on a platform with volunteers (spotters and loaders) ensuring the weight is changed and those lifting are safe. Lifters are classed by bodyweight with 9 (8 once past the Junior level) weight classes for men and women respectively, allowing a huge range of participation and accommodating changes in body types throughout time in the sport. In past University Championships, teams have been ranked based on a combination of their top lifter's coefficient scores (currently based on the Good Lift Points Coefficient).

## **2. PURPOSE**

At the time of our first University Championships, 42 clubs existed that could take part. Since then, not only have there been more clubs created, but the previous clubs have pushed for the development of programmes with great potential. The purpose of this proposal is to fill the gap in the BUCS Sport Programme for Powerlifting.

### The gap explained

Currently, the BUCS Sport Programme does not include Powerlifting. Although para-powerlifting has recently been included, this is a very different event with a different target audience to powerlifting. This gap is something British Powerlifting (BP) has been hoping to work to fill for a long time and we now believe that we are ready to do so with the submission of this Sports Proposal. As will be evidenced in the consultation section, British Powerlifting employed student led consultation with its

members who have taken part in University Championships or University meets in the past. This consultation showed a strong desire for Powerlifting to be recognised as a BUCS sport, with 98% of answers to a question of 'Would Powerlifting's recognition as a BUCS Sport be a good step for the progression of Powerlifting in the UK?' and many positive replies to other questions which are also evidenced in section 4.

Our research suggests that those participating in the University Championships are mainly Type 3, 4, and 5 student-athletes. Our research also suggests a number of important factors to students regarding their wish for Powerlifting to be included in the BUCS Sport Programme including but not limited to;

- Proper recognition of achievement
- Access to support and better facilities from institutions
- Exposure to a wider pool of talent
- Higher participation rates as well and more individuals remaining engaged with the sport

#### The existing offer from BP

Powerlifting is structured in a way that inclusivity is a strong feature of the Sport. With an equal number of different weight classes for both men and women, there is great scope for inclusivity with all body types being viewed positively and minimal emphasis on needing to look a certain way, but rather, perform a certain way.

When it comes to qualification for the University Championships, there is a 'qualifying total' which must be met by each lifter at a lower-level regional competition. Although the standard of the sport is always rising, we have ensured that the qualifying total is set to a level where many are able to qualify with only a few months of serious training (a lower level than what is required for events such as Junior and Senior Nationals). This has ensured engagement is maintained while also increasing the standing of the event in the eyes of the students.

As mentioned, student-athletes will need to achieve a qualifying total to compete at the University Championships. These can be set at any recognised event under British Powerlifting (as shown in Figure 1 below). While historically the competition of choice would be a regional meet open to the public, recently, meets such as the North Midlands University Championships have been held to allow a student-exclusive meet for the lifters to achieve their qualifying total at. We intend for both the main University Championships and the regional championships to be within the BUCS umbrella as this would ensure a strong and visible structure within the university system. This will remove the requirement of any long-distance travel and the associated costs. An example of the annual calendar for Powerlifting with these competitions involved is also below (Figure 2). This calendar focuses on events most relevant to the general population of university students, excluding events which some may also take part in such as Junior Nationals or IPF Worlds.

Type of competition	Explanation
National Level competition (e.g. University Championships, Junior Nationals)	Requires a qualifying total to be met and evidenced for entry to be accepted.
Home Nation (e.g. All England)	Has its own separate qualification requirements. Can also be used to achieve a qualifying total (QT) however it is not necessary that students compete at this standard of meet to achieve a QT.

Regional (e.g. North Midland Universities)	Does not require a qualifying total and can be entered by anyone of any strength level. A total achieved at this type of competition is able to be used as a qualifying total for both Home Nation competitions as well as National Level competitions.
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Figure 1.



Figure 2.

As mentioned, powerlifting has become increasingly popular in the past few years and especially in the junior community. The number of competitors at the BP University Champions has increased exponentially. Figure 3 shows the rapid growth of the number of competitors at the competition in the past few years (up to 2019). We have seen an incredible increase from around 130 competitors at the first University Championships in 2016 to over 400 in 2019. The increased support provided in the form of a University-only competition has allowed people to take their sport to a competitive level.

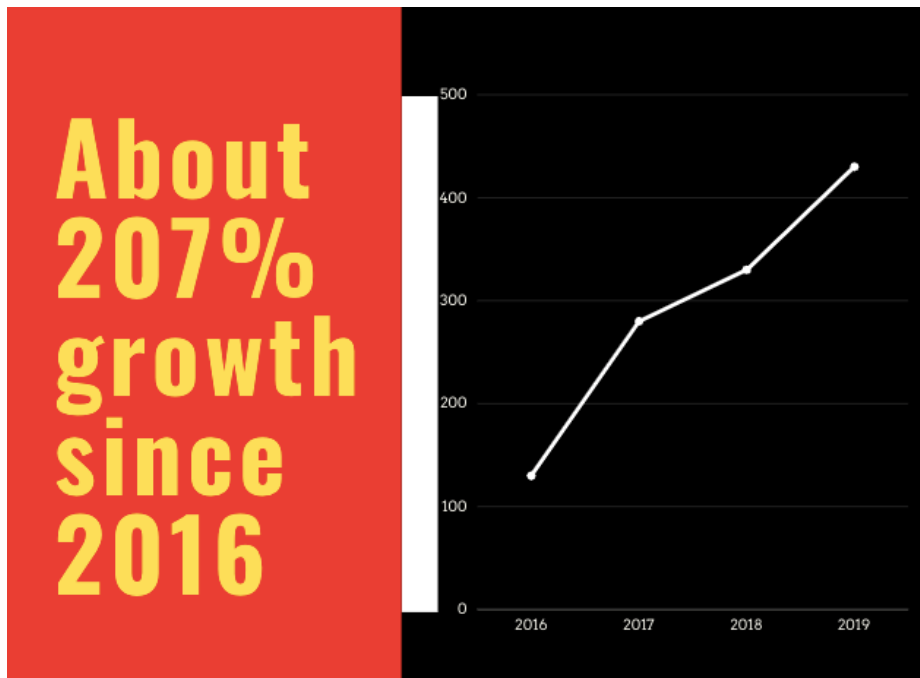


Figure 3.

The junior records are constantly being broken as the lifting population becomes larger and more people get involved in the sport. It is becoming increasingly competitive, and more people are training for powerlifting specifically. Of 3000+ BP members in 2016, juniors (University age) made up 38%. This is very impressive considering that the age class only starts at 18 and ends at 23, with powerlifters continuing to compete in their thirties and later. More importantly, this data does not include the juniors that are not competing and only take part in the sport recreationally.

Are there any barriers to the proposal?

With the current setup that British Powerlifting has regarding the University Championships, we do not perceive that there will really be any real obstacles when it comes to bringing the competition into the BUCS Programme. Rather than help to bring a dream of the event to life, we envision BUCS helping the growth of the sport, in turn, allowing students to benefit in various ways. Our main concern is how best to drive the development of University clubs and teams in order to allow our athletes to thrive at this perceived entry-point to the sport for many. It is clear to us that for this to be achieved, we will need to work together with both the institutions and clubs in order to ensure coaching/programming standards are kept high, and clubs are run as effectively as possible to retain and develop a strong base of athletes. This cooperation is already taking shape with BP seeking out partnership with institutions with the promise of top of the range equipment for athletes to train with (something which some clubs such as Exeter and Newcastle have already pushed for themselves). It can also be seen with British Powerlifting sponsors taking an interest in University clubs – e.g. A7 UK developing a partnership with the University of Nottingham Powerlifting Club to aid their development and help cut costs for them.

Although this will be built upon in section 4, it is also clear that many elected heads of University powerlifting clubs believe that if Powerlifting is to be considered a 'BUCS sport', this will give their clubs a level of prestige and recognition within their University Sport Programmes, increasing visibility, membership, and success in turn.

Those athletes who do not currently take part in competitions such as those Type 1 and 2 athletes less likely to compete at University Championships would benefit from the proposal regardless. With certain clubs being better supported and others being recognised as suggested by our consultation, there will indirectly be a great surge of opportunities to increase participation in ways that may not include competing. Instead, clubs may be more supported and able to hold things such as group training sessions, developing a community feel and allowing the inclusive aspect of the sport to thrive further, maybe even encouraging more individuals to try their hand at competing.

#### What will the sport look like within the BUCS structure?

##### Entry:

Today, British Powerlifting runs competitions under the standards set by the IPF. The entry criteria are streamlined with the Reg 4 BUCS individual eligibility criteria. If Powerlifting is accepted into the BUCS Sport Programme, we would use the BUCS entry process in conjunction with BP's own entry system.

Upon entry through the BUCS system and meeting the BUCS criteria, successful individuals would then be required to formally register for the meet through the British Powerlifting website. This is so their qualifying totals can be checked, as well as to confirm they have British Powerlifting Federation memberships which are required by the IPF (international governing body) for all competitions. This conjunctive use of both systems coinciding with clubs taking responsibility for the entry of their members should result in expansion of entry eligibility.

The evidence of our digitised results management system can be provided on request. It lists all competing athletes based on their total achieved at the competition and their weight class. We are also able to employ the online IPF database which can be found at <https://www.openipf.org/>. The results for day 1 of the University Championship (mainly men) can be found at <https://www.openipf.org/m/bp/1905> and day 2 results (mainly women) can be found at <https://www.openipf.org/m/bp/1906>.

If successful at becoming a BUCS sport, we anticipate that entry fees would be £40, lower than the entry fee of our other National Events which is to be set at £50 from 2022.

##### The Competitions:

BUCS Regional competitions would be held around the country in November/December every year. These will allow athletes from various parts of the country to achieve the qualifying total needed to compete at the main BUCS Championships in the coming year (However, qualifying totals could also be achieved at non-BUCS regional competitions. These will allow students definite entry without worry of spaces going to the wider public). These Regional competitions could act as opportunity to introduce new lifters to the sport. In the past, these competitions have had about 60 lifters at them, with the upcoming North Midlands competition being held in a building at Loughborough University.

The main BUCS Championships would take place in April as the University Championships currently do. Entry to this would be dependent on achieving a qualifying total but the entries would also be capped. This would be capped to 8 men (4 reserves) and 8 women (4 reserves) per institution, mirroring country selection at international competitions as well as the FISU World University Powerlifting Games. Although the cap does not have to be filled by clubs, the event is held over multiple days (in 2019, 2 days with around 400 competitors), as capacity of the venue used in the past is around 130 people comfortably. This allowed both

days to be split into morning and afternoon sessions to fit everyone in. The possible route to take would be guaranteed and non-guaranteed entry into the competition, however, this would be something to confirm at the implementation stage. The 8 possible weight classes for men are 59, 66, 74, 83, 93, 105, 120, 120+, and the 8 possible weight classes for women are 47, 52, 57, 63, 69, 76, 84, 84+. In the past, this competition has been held at Moulton College in Northampton.

#### Awards and rankings:

At the main BUCS competition, medals would be awarded to those who place in the top 3 of their weight class. Individual lifter ranking would be decided by those who get the highest Totals (highest weight lifted in the squat, bench, and deadlift added together).

Team rankings (separate for men and women) would be decided by taking the top five lifter's coefficient scores of each team (Good Lift points - a score calculated using bodyweight and total) and adding them together. This would show a combined placing of the team, revealing which men's team and which women's team is the strongest. Several teams from these rankings (5 in the past) will then be put forward by British Powerlifting to compete at the FISU University World Powerlifting Cup.

### **3. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT**

This proposal clearly aligns with all seven of BUCS strategy strands:

#### Inter University Sport

A BUCS event would provide institutions with a primary event to strive towards that aligns with their KRAs and success at this event would be one of their KPIs. Additionally, it also creates an opportunity to bring competitive student-athletes together to take part in a team event, in what is usually an individual performance.

The inclusion of powerlifting into the BUCS ecosystem was supported by 30 institutions with active clubs although there were many individuals/groups from other universities without clubs who support the idea (Figure 4, Page 7). This proposal would help spearhead the creation of more clubs at these universities. Finally, with even more clubs created, there is the potential to create unique varsity competitions within BP's competition programme where qualifying totals could be achieved for the main BUCS event, and various student-athlete types could also gain more experience within a competition setting. A prime example of this is the annual varsity competition between Cambridge and Oxford powerlifting societies.

#### Performance Sport

Inclusion of powerlifting into the BUCS programme would foster an environment for high-performing, motivated Type 4 & 5 student athletes, who may intend to compete internationally and allow for resources to make that possible. The current BP University Championships already serves as an entry point for student-athletes to qualify for national and home events and creates opportunities for student-athletes to perform at a national level. Such events are the National age-group competitions (All England Powerlifting Championships and British Class Championships for Sub-Junior, Junior or Open Divisions).

BP also selects a team for the University World Championships from the results of the University Championships. One of their goals is to create a team able to achieve medals at the University World Championships. We believe the partnership with BUCS would attract more student athletes to compete and thereby increase the pool of talent. This would result in increased success and improved performance at the international level.

### Social and Recreational Sport

Although powerlifting is an individual sport there is a strong social aspect as a result of time spent in the gym training, meeting other members of your club, helping others with their training (such as spotting, technique or programming advice) also, meeting other lifters across the country/world when you compete.

Not all lifters that take part in the sport are highly competitive, they just enjoy the style of training and prefer to compete more recreationally with other club members. Approximately 16% of participants from the research poll identify as Type 1 and 2 student-athletes and a further 30% identify as Type 3 student-athletes.

### Physical Activity and Health

Due to a mix of different student-athlete types we do align with the Physical Activity and Health strand. Approximately 46% of participants from the research poll identify as Type 1 to 3 student-athletes. And the remaining 52% are Type 4 and 5 student-athletes. 150 student athletes were surveyed for this poll, we believe the sample size is large enough to give an accurate representation of the student-athlete types in powerlifting.

Most powerlifting programs follow a training split of 3 to 5 days which will consist of resistance training. In lieu of the UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, resistance training two or more times per week is recommended, to gain a range of physical and mental health benefits, and to reduce the risk of many non-communicable diseases.

Those taking part in powerlifting would as result meet these guidelines, this creates a unique opportunity for powerlifting to contribute to the student population. A partnership with BUCS would encourage more student-athletes to take part in the sport further contributing to the physical activity and health objectives.

### Professional & Workforce Development

British Powerlifting's competition schedule offers many opportunities for volunteering (such as bar loading, meet day handling, officiating), coaching, judging. Through the partnership with BUCS, new student clubs will hopefully be set up. British Powerlifting has run level 1 and Level 2 Powerlifting Coaching courses. The courses will help new clubs and students to gain the necessary qualification to train/coach/instruct members and help lifters improve every competition. We encourage students to take part in these with things such as discounts in bulk and will push these to more clubs to further ensure growth of the athletes who will benefit from raised standards.

Through the creation of the proposal, a new position has opened for students within the BP board (BUCS Executive), who will essentially act as a bridge between student-athletes and the BP board. Helping to manage the student powerlifting community at a regional/national level, propose ideas to improve competition structure, develop leadership within clubs, and encourage the drive towards development of club structures such as coaching systems (inclusive of programming, coaching, powerlifting specific rehab/psychology work), seminars, and other such drivers.



British Powerlifting carries out independent anti-doping tests which are in full compliance with the WADA code, as well as educating the younger generation on both the dangers of using PEDs, teaching them the correct way to train, proper nutrition, and competition rules. Which are done through hosting seminars with speakers who have expertise in their relevant fields.

### Profile & Influence

Powerlifting is a strength sport that is growing in popularity, as the main movements performed are already a staple in most gym goer's routines, more talented athletes are entering the sport this can be seen by previous records broken and the phenomenal feats of strength being displayed.

The powerlifting space is full of innovation and entrepreneurial activity with development of new training methodology, training equipment, competition events, clothing brands etc.

This proposal aligns with the objective of BP to increase the profile and influence of the sport by seeking recognition from key external partners. Which should also heighten the perception of the sport, this is apparent in the recent addition to the International World Games Association (IWGA) . Ultimately the BUCS brand would also benefit from adoption of a sport that is constantly improving and wants to give its competitors the best sporting experience possible.

### Inclusion

Powerlifting is progressively becoming a more diverse sport in terms of BAME as there is an increasing number of participants in the BAME community. Which can be seen by the current record holders at any level. It is also a gender-balanced sport; 43% female lifters and 57% male lifters from data extracted from <https://www.openipf.org/> (consisting of 1023 lifters, 588 men and 435 women). Powerlifting offers 9 different weight categories, not only does this create fair and healthy competition but allows for student-athletes from a range of body-types to participate. Participants who may be disadvantaged or may not meet the requirements due to either height or weight limitations for other sports but have athletic ability will nonetheless be able to find a weight class that suits them. There are also various campaigns run by current athletes in the sport that promote a positive body image and mental health. This clearly aligns with BUCS and BP strategic objectives around Inclusion.

## **4. CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT**

As British Powerlifting is the overarching national governing body of the UK, all communication flows from and through BP. In the decision to push through with this proposal, all relevant board members were consulted as were federation members. Due to the structure of BP, there is no separate body within the home nations that would have had to be consulted. From our last official count in 2018, there were 48 institutions with clubs taking part in powerlifting, be that a club that is running with the full support of their institution or an independently run club under the name of an institution, all clubs were equally dedicated to goal of progression within the sport. The number of members of each club ranges widely with some clubs having only 10 members and others having over 60. Through our consultation, we learned that the disparity is often seen due to higher levels of support or recognition for some institutions while much lower levels are found at others, often seemingly due to a lack of inclusion in the BUCS Sports Programme in many cases (as shown in Figure 4).

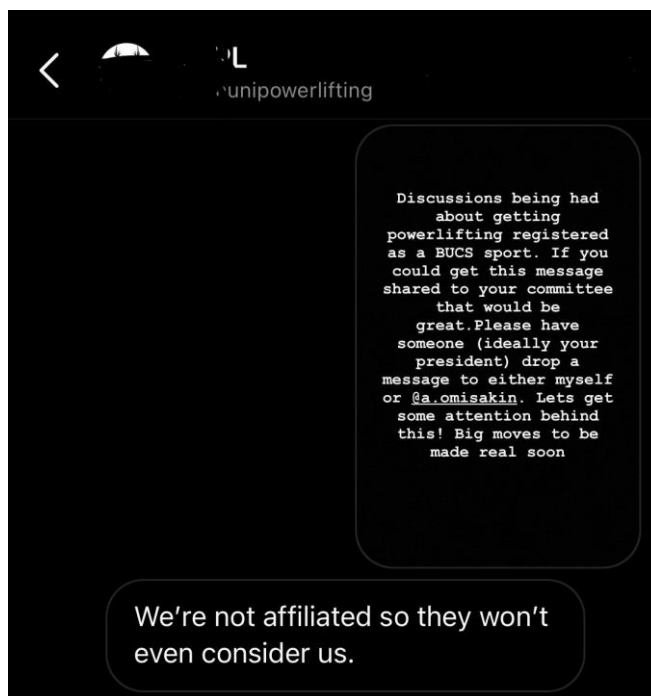


Figure 4.

Regardless, we endeavoured to undertake discussions with as many clubs as possible and in the end, even the clubs themselves approached BP with a request to undertake the Sports Review process. This is shown in the letter below (Figure 5), signed by the presidents of 30 different clubs who all believe that the inclusion in the BUCS Sports program would benefit them and the sport immensely.

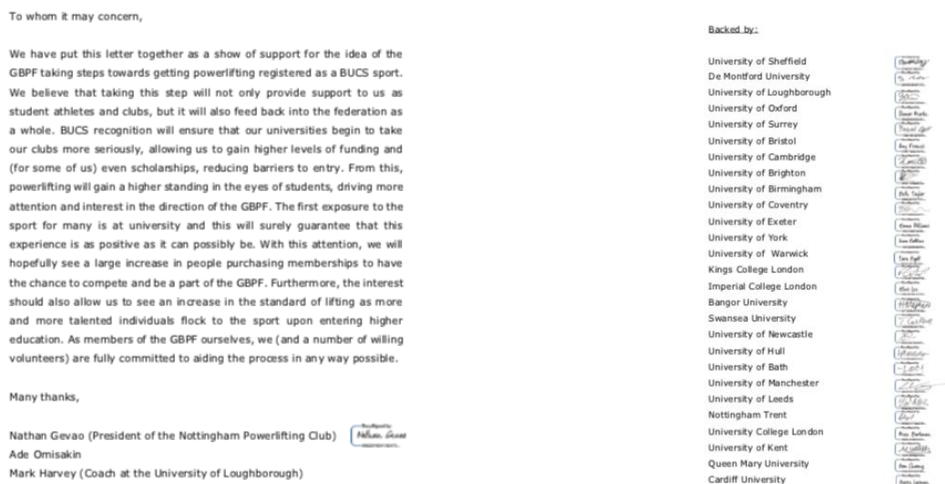


Figure 5.

With this strong support clearly shown, we proceeded to undertake student-led consultation in order to determine what exactly the reasons behind this desire for BUCS inclusion was. Firstly, we put out a poll to 150 members in order to try and understand the athlete-types most represented among our members and how our proposal could best cater for them. The results of this survey are shown below in Figure 6 and evidence that it is likely over 85% of University Powerlifters within clubs

consider themselves to be athlete-types 3, 4, and 5. This is likely due to the demanding nature of training with it not being unusual to find athletes in the gym for 3 hours in many training sessions. As a result, we knew the aim of our proposal had to be to create a more competitive opportunity for the students through the proposal.

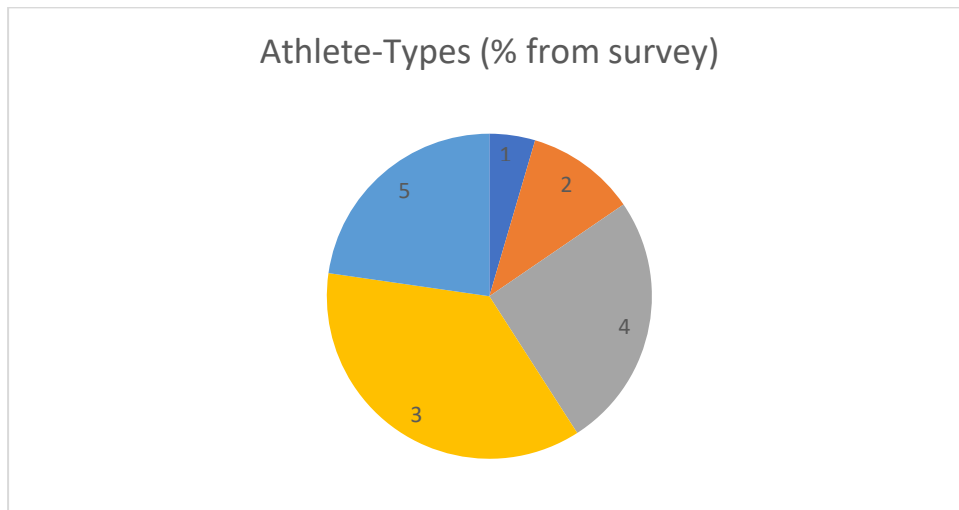




Figure 6.

Regarding student's reason for supporting the proposal, we also undertook mass consultation. A request was put out to about 400 members and a significant number of responses were received. Many of the responses suggested that the desire for BP to undertake the Sports Review process is motivated by club's and individual's desire to be recognised for achievements, to have more participants, and to add standing to their achievements within the university sphere by their sporting peers and their institutions, and to receive more support from their institutions. Some of the responses from a number of University Powerlifting club Presidents are displayed below.


 **Nick Green**  
one.pack.shortcuts

Here at Surrey BUCS recognition in Powerlifting would benefit our club immensely. University sport is so BUCS focused because of the "prestige" of their points system across sports. This inherently leads to preferential treatment of BUCS clubs, from budgets to space hire.

As a joint Weightlifting and Powerlifting club, the introduction of Weightlifting as a BUCS sport this year has definitely increased interaction and interest in our club from Team Surrey. This is the daughter organisation of the uni that runs and funds sports clubs at Surrey University. If Powerlifting became a BUCS sport I have no doubt our needs and requests in both funding and space hire would be taken more seriously in an effort to progress our club to win more BUCS points.

 **IC Barbell Club**  
icbarbell

IC barbell as well as other strength based societies in other London universities will no doubt be affected by BUCS. Not only is it a team powerlifting competition, but it also serves as one of the early opportunities for our members to try their hand at powerlifting, with relatively low entry costs. BUCS also gives the club the opportunity to compete for a position at worlds, something we have achieved once and will continually work for every year. All in all, BUCS provides barbell club with an event that allows our members to see what powerlifting is really about.

 **Brad**  
brad\_and\_butter\_pud...

Gaining BUCS recognition really is the next natural step for university powerlifting, the increased recognition, exposure and funding would really validate the endless hours of training, dieting and recovery work put in by our athletes. Although an individual sport, powerlifting is very much about community, teamwork, inclusivity and supporting others. Even at National competitions, you'll see other competitors cheering on their adversaries as we're all chasing the same goal of getting stronger, creating a unique and mutual respect between athletes.

Brad Burrows  
President- Nottingham Trent University Powerlifting

 **Tom Knapp**  
Active 1h ago

This is another small step towards powerlifting becoming a legitimate sport in the eyes of young athletes. Our powerlifting club provides an excellent place for students to get started in strength training and/or to further their skills. Becoming a competitive University sport will boost involvement in our club and encourage more students to invest in getting better 💪

Greater incentive for members to dedicate themselves to the sport so they can perform competitively against other Universities. I imagine a higher standard will be held at the sessions and more members will stay committed!

In addition to these testimonies from those running our University clubs, we also looked to the membership for deeper consultation. When asked if they believed if Powerlifting’s recognition as a BUCS Sport would be a good step for the progression of the sport, 98% of respondents chose ‘yes’. In addition to this, when asked for reasons, Figure 7 shows only a few of the responses we received.

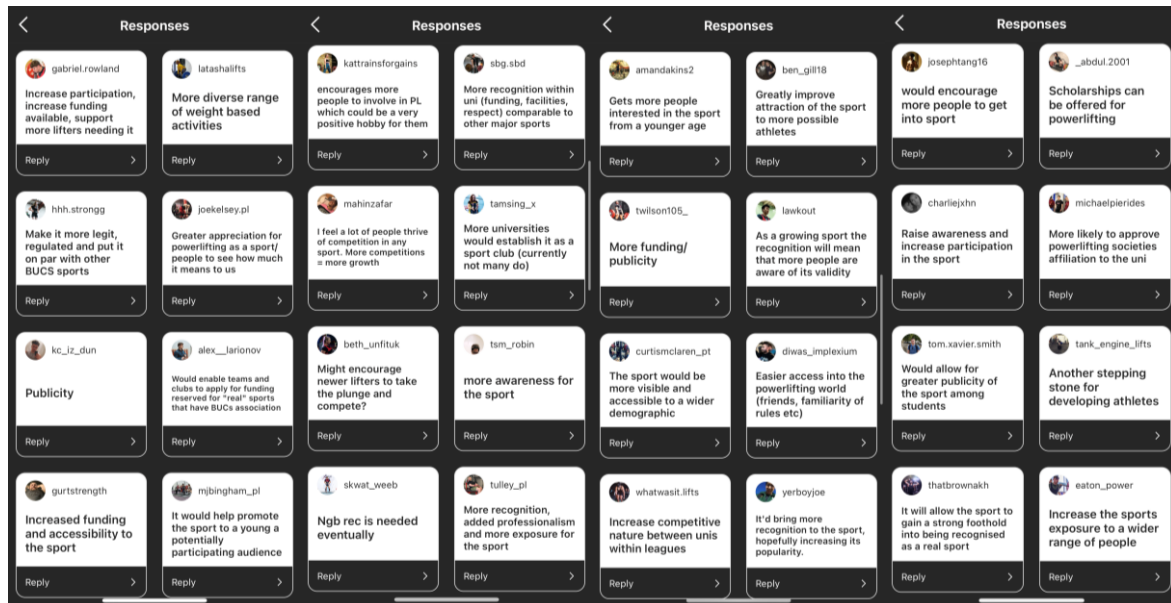


Figure 7.

Overall, it is clear that the wish for BUCS inclusion is strongly supported by students and staff for a number of reasons which have been displayed. This has been the case since BP first ran a University exclusive competition back in 2016, and this desire has not only remained, but has grown along with the size of the membership!

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

### BUCS resource implications

As the proposal is adopted by BUCS a further discussion with regards to the level of support required for the University Championships event and the level of involvement in the event BUCS would like to undertake.

The existing event is already financially sustainable and demand for the previous event ran in 2019 was so high that qualifying totals had to be installed thereafter.

BP would seek to maintain operational delivery of the event, event tickets prices will be adjusted to allow for any cash flow implications related to the implementation of this proposal. We do not anticipate any major changes in our ability to continue to deliver an amazing sporting experience in a sustainable manner forging ahead.

We hope this proposal is able to foster a long-term relationship between BP and BUCS.

### For institutions and student-athletes

As BP already runs a University Championships, we believe the impact on institutions and student-athletes to be minimal if any.

A frontline resource package will be needed to be delivered to institutions that would identify the presence of a powerlifting club, the number of club members and gather data on the presence of facilities suitable for the sport.

There currently are no sports that would be in competition for facilities. Strength sports such as powerlifting and weightlifting have movements that in most strength and conditioning programs followed by American Football, Rugby, Boxing etc. This means that most institutions would already have most of the resources required for powerlifting athletes.

Almost 50 university clubs already enter in the annual University Championships, this is excluding student-athletes that compete independent of a university club. This demonstrates a willingness by and importance to student-athletes to compete in the event.

We anticipate the entry fee for upcoming competitions for individuals to be £40 and £25 for an annual BP membership. Allowing BP to maintain the standard of delivery of events and mitigate the costs of said event to keep its financial sustainability as we do not look to make profit from these events. This event has run for the last 10 years since 2009, excluding 2020 and consistent growth has been possible.

The entry fees will contribute towards venue hire, officials' expenses, trophies, live streaming, and drug testing. We are currently reviewing entry fees to ensure we don't make losses.

BP has a core events team and volunteers that oversee the running of University Championships. We do not think the core team will not need supplementing as a result of this proposal, however we are open to any recommendations/support that could improve the delivery and growth of the event.

## **6. WIDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### Impact on external competitions

As the University Championship is a competition that is already well established, being one of the largest meets on the British Powerlifting competition calendar, this proposal is unlikely to have any true impact on external pathways or competitions. The only thing that may need to be accommodated for is the inclusion of a few more regional meets however this is a barrier that is something that is easy to adapt to as already shown with the proof of a few regional University meets already having taken place.

### Compliance and Governance

There is also very little predicted impact on Compliance and Governance. The British Powerlifting and IPF competition rules are already almost perfectly in line with rules on BUCS eligibility, meaning that the process should not cause much change at all.

### Impact on Dual Career offer

Regarding the impact on the Dual Career offer within the sport, it is highly unlikely that there would be any real impact to academic commitments. As powerlifting is an individual sport which you can

train on your own time if necessary, students tend to find that it is able to be very flexible around their timetables and academic commitments with little to no impact.

### Long-term sustainability

As a competition that has already run successfully since 2016 with continued growth, we expect that the proposal will ensure maximum sustainability. The proposed caps to team size will only increase the prestige of the competition (as teams would need to put forward their strongest athletes) and make it more attractive to those athlete-types that this proposal is targeting. There is also nothing that we can envisage which would limit access for institutions or student athletes other than the cap on numbers through a qualifying total which is a necessary addition and will enhance the offer rather than take away from it.

Lastly, as Powerlifting is a sport with an extremely active and supportive community, there is always a wide pool of volunteers that can be drawn upon for competition days. However, we also propose that a requirement be added to the competition that teams that have maxed out the cap of lifters must provide a specific number of volunteers or risk losing ranking points. This would encourage more active participation in the sport beyond simple competing and provide an ever-standing pool of volunteers that could be drawn upon for a number of things when it comes to competition days.

To ensure the continued progression of the sport within higher education as well as the successful continuation of this proposal after BUCS integration, we are creating the 'BUCS Powerlifting Exec' role within the structure of BP. This role will ensure smooth communication between BP and BUCS, as well as making sure clubs are well structured with set goals and markers for development and progression. We will fill this position with passionate individuals who have an ear to the ground and understand the University structure and the needs of the clubs and students this proposal will affect. BP is currently working with a number of institutions to hold competitions on campus and provide other types of support to clubs such as training equipment, further aiding their visibility and development. Structures are already well in place which would ensure a successful integration into the BUCS system.

## **7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

From this proposal, we wish to achieve the following goals;

- Increased membership and development at existing clubs
- A higher number of official clubs established
- An increase in the results at competition (better totals)
- An increase in awareness of powerlifting among the student body
- Increased satisfaction of students with the offer of the sport in higher education (currently, many students feel as though the competition structure is not competitive enough. Only 60% of students polled believed that it was good enough as revealed by our consultation)
- Increased number of Sub-Junior lifters continuing to compete into the Juniors and beyond

These goals will be strongly fed into through our offer as clubs will push development in order to meet the increase in competitive standards set by the revamped University Championships. With these prestigious events, more clubs will seek to establish themselves officially with added push from BP, as they will wish to take part. Altered entry provisions at the main competition will ensure that more clubs look to bring in coaches. This is also something that is currently being pushed by BP with the offer of modernised coaching courses to members and students (at discounted rates when booked in bulk). Lastly, the introduction of regional competitions earlier in the year will ensure that those Sub-Junior lifters entering the sport for the first time in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of University will not be deterred from the sport by the large totals achieved at the main competition, but driven by seeing varying levels of inclusion and competitiveness at the regional meets which will also provide further competition offers to far more clubs all around the country within a clear University structure.

In 3 years, we intend for the competition to have a solid structure and base, with students having a clear calendar of events to target progression towards and structure their clubs around. We hope that many more student lifters will develop better through the university system as clubs will be better able to provide support from this grass root level.

These goals can be monitored with regular updates and surveys taken from clubs and by seeing the differences in performance and entries at University competitions from athletes. As Powerlifting is a sport that can see extreme reward with dedication, even the smallest amount more will surely be reflected by an increase in overall performance. Powerlifting in Britain will surely have a bright future with this thriving system of clubs, giving it a better chance on the international stage as more lifters climb the ranks of juniors and remain into the senior age group and beyond. BUCS goals will also surely be met, with a mass community of supportive individuals driving on university competition in an inclusive manner.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Powerlifting is a sport that is growing rapidly at all levels. Although it is trained for as an individual, it comes with one of the most inclusive and supportive communities of any sport out there. Throughout this proposal, we have laid out several key factors as to why Powerlifting is a sport that should be strongly considered for inclusion within the BUCS Sports Programme.



The ease of entry into the sport as well as its beneficial pairing with other sports will ensure that as a BUCS sport, Powerlifting would see even further exponential growth. The gap in provision of Powerlifting is one that can easily be filled with already existing maintainable structures and minimal further requirements from BUCS.

The push for inclusion from the highest levels of the organisation is as clear and strong as the push from the lowest levels which we hope we have successfully demonstrated. The inclusion of Powerlifting as a BUCS sport would help us to provide the best opportunities and experience for our lifters rising through the ranks of higher education, a place that is often the first point of exposure to the sport for many. Our committal to a high standard, inclusive, drug free environment will surely allow students to thrive within such a structure.

The proposal will align strongly with our wish to be more of a force on the international Powerlifting stage, and it also aligns strongly with the BUCS vision of being the greatest higher education sporting experience globally. Although the suggestions made in this proposal will require a strong hand to implement and monitor, we are committed to our goals and are determined to meet them regardless of the work it may take.