

# PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

## BUCS POINTS

NOVEMBER 2021

### FEEDBACK TO BUCS VIA SURVEY



Written by BUCS Sport Review Implementation Group

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#### SUBJECT

A proposed change to the way in which we calculate the overall BUCS Points Table as part of the Reward and Recognition work of the Sport Review Implementation Group.

#### AUTHORS

BUCS Sport Review Implementation Group

#### PURPOSE

The Sport Review Implementation Group (SRIG) have been tasked by the BUCS Board to review the Reward and Recognition structure within the BUCS Competition Programme. Two groups have been formed – one to look at the reward element which focuses on the awarding of BUCS Points and creating the overall national sporting ranking for HE institutions. A second group has been tasked with looking at recognition and how best to serve the competition programme in that respect. This paper focuses purely on the reward element and the options proposed to the membership for consideration.

The outcome for this task was to produce options for the membership to consider, with all feedback being reviewed by SRIG and a final recommendation then made to the BUCS Executive. This is now the final stage of this consultation/feedback process, and there are two models being proposed for consideration. Following this final consultation the SRIG will propose either a change is made, or the status quo of the current structures and points scoring systems are maintained.

#### BACKGROUND

The current BUCS Points system has been in place for over 10 years and was preceded by other ranking systems when university sport rankings were provided under the BUSA and UAU banners. The BUCS Points system has, in the main helped to add purpose to the BUCS competition programme by rewarding achievements to HE sports teams and their respective athletes as well as creating a national sporting ranking that institutions can use to enhance their profile and reputation in whatever way they see fit to do so.

Between 2011 and 2013 there was a review around the current model to look at any anomalies and subsequently amend these but the outcome in general terms was that the points system in place did not warrant any significant overhaul.

The BUCS Executive, on the behalf of the SRIG, have administered three surveys to the membership requesting feedback on the reward and recognition offering. These surveys were available to the membership on the following dates and received the following number of responses:

Survey One: Closed on 3 June 2019 with 436 responses

Survey Two: Closed on 2 September 2019 with 197 responses

Survey Three: Closed on 4 February 2020 with 401 responses

There was a clear consensus from these surveys that the membership value a national ranking and the BUCS Points system to determine this. 315 (80%) of the respondents in Survey One confirmed their institution see BUCS Points and the national ranking table as being recognised as a reward and recognition measure of which

263 (66%) confirmed the overall national ranking is used by their institution. It was also clear many institutions use BUCS Points and the national ranking as a KPI (106 respondents out of 161 from the survey). This is significant and demonstrates the importance of the system within institutions and for the profile of HE sport.

Survey Two, which was completed by representative from 77 institutions, illustrates the importance of BUCS Points being used as a KPI with 53% of respondents (57) stating that these are used as KPIs (with a further 40% saying they didn't know). Within the qualitative comments within the survey, there were 60 comments which also referred to BUCS Points or the BUCS Rankings being a KPI measure.

Within the same survey, respondents were asked to make any comments with regards to areas they would have liked this review to consider, with the top comments (27) being a review as to how points are allocated. These papers seek to ensure the BUCS Table/Points system continues to be a key part of the BUCS Reward & Recognition programme whilst seeking to address the concerns about how points are allocated in a variety of different options for the membership to consider.

## **PRINCIPLES**

From the survey responses and discussion within the SRIG, a set of principles were agreed to guide any recommendations. The principles were that:

- BUCS should reward achievement of any form.
- the SRIG will propose what they believe to be the best/most appropriate way to award achievement.
- any reward and recognition should link to the BUCS Strategy.
- any recommendations should help to maintain or increase investment into higher education sport.
- the recommendations create a more meaningful and beneficial system for the membership regarding reward and recognition.
- more relevant measure of success for members to use both within and beyond the higher education sector were needed.
- BUCS should increase the number of recognition opportunities.
- an open, transparent, and accessible framework to help understanding of reward & recognition is necessary.

## **PROPOSAL 1 - ENSURING THERE IS A CONSISTENT MODEL ACROSS SPORTS**

This proposal is to work within the current BUCS Points system and ensure we have a consistent, transparent and fair system of awarding points across all sports. This proposal is not suggesting a change to the overall structure of league/knockout/event points as they are currently structured in a consistent manner.

The group identified several inconsistencies and anomalies that required consideration and made recommendations on how these should be addressed. These were grouped as per the three strands that the BUCS programme and Points offering currently has in place:

- Strand 1: Team Championships (Leagues/Knockouts)
- Strand 2: Team Championships (Events)
- Strand 3: Individual Championships (Events)

Strands two and three have been considered through National Competitions Group and implemented as per the minutes from the meeting of 27 September<sup>1</sup>.

Members are therefore at this point to asked to consider strand 1, and the proposal outlined.

### **Strand 1: Team Championships (Leagues/Knockouts)**

<b>Team Championships (Leagues/Knockouts) – Proposal 1</b>	
<b>Aims</b>	<p>Align the allocations of BUCS Points available for each position in each tier, and in the case of Premier tiers, each level of league, across all Team Championships (Leagues).</p> <p>Remove cases where, based on standard league sizes (6), a position in a structure receives a lower allocation of BUCS Points than a position further down the structure and therefore ensure that BUCS Points for league finishing positions increase as you move up through each structure.</p>
<b>Sports/Championships</b>	All leagues
<b>Current Model</b>	<p>Where structures go below Tier 3, then in each subsequent tier there will be teams who are allocated more BUCS points than those in positions above them. For example, 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Tier 3 is allocated six points, but 1<sup>st</sup> place in Tier 4 (or any further tier below) is allocated 10 points.</p> <p>Where a sport has both North/South 1 and North/South 2 levels in the Premier Tier (regardless of if also a National league above), the Tier 1 and Tier 2 allocations have been changed from the standard, putting them out of line with other sports and extending the above anomaly up to Tier 2. To accommodate the North/South 2 level between North/South 1 and Tier 1, the allocations to positions in North/South 1 are also different to those of all other sports. This is currently the case for Women's Lacrosse and Men's Rugby Union.</p> <p>Within all the above, there is no standardisation for the change in points between positions. For example, some are separated by one BUCS Point, others by eight.</p>
<b>Analysis</b>	<p>Sports may still choose to combine and redistribute the allocated points for the league finishing positions and knockout rounds relating to the teams involved. For example, as is currently the case with the Men's Rugby Union National League and Championship.</p> <p>Tier 1 and below: Six team leagues are the standard size. Where there are more than six teams in a league (for example because of Premier Tier promotion/relegation outcomes), points for each additional position will be taken as per from the top of a league in the tier below.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1: Competition Group Minutes 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021

	Tier 6 and below: Tiered BUCS Points will cut-off at 6 <sup>th</sup> place in Tier 5 leagues and any lower positions, or tiers, will no points. (There are currently only three programmes which go below Tier 5).
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Please see appendices documents outlining current allocations of points<sup>2</sup>, the proposed structure as to how BUCS points allocation would look under this proposal<sup>3</sup> and some examples as to league points allocations may alter, having taken a selection of universities league points from the 2018/19 season<sup>4</sup> (the last one to be completed in full).

### **RATIONALE FOR CHANGE**

- In Survey One, of 408 responses, almost one-third (128) of respondents chose not to comment when asked 'In your opinion, are there any specific issues/concerns/pitfalls associated to the current BUCS Points system?'. A further 42 respondents proactively stated that there were no specific issues, concerns, or pitfalls. This was in the top three of areas of response across the survey.
- This demonstrates the split nature of feeling about the points system and the inherent risk in wholesale changes as opposed to amending identified anomalies.
- Out of twelve possible response areas in Survey One, correcting the inconsistencies or anomalies was the fifth most common response. This identification of inconsistencies was the basis for these recommendations.
- The highest response area for Survey One (44 responses) was the observation that the institutions that invested the most resource into sport finished higher on the league table. This speaks to the need for an education programme around the BUCS Points Table and its purpose. As a calculation of performance and scale of programmes it is to be expected that higher resource would lead to improved performance.

### **PROPOSED DATE OF CHANGES**

Effective for the start of the 2022-23 season, although this is flexible should there be a desire for it to be implemented at a later date.

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<sup>2</sup> [Appendix 2: BUCS Points Allocations 2021/22](#)

<sup>3</sup> Appendix 3: Proposed New League Points Allocations

<sup>4</sup> Appendix 4: Example Of New Points Totals

## **PROPOSAL 2 - HIGHEST PLACED TEAM MODEL**

The 'highest placed team' model seeks to deliver a points table for **team performance** across league, knockout and individual championship competitions.

- Only a certain number of teams from each institution gain points within any single competition (please see the survey to express an opinion on how many teams this could be).
- This is a performance-focussed model; institutions do not accumulate more points for entering more teams/individuals.
- Individual points would no longer be scored, but be replaced with a team points based system, in line with the league points system being used.
- This model could be complimented by a BUCS individual medal table.
- It is recommended that if this model were to be implemented, it is combined with the consistency model above to ensure first teams always the highest points scorers for any institution.

### **Allocation of Points Examples**

#### **League**

- This example below is demonstrated using the current league scoring structure used by the majority of sports. Appendix 5 shows examples of how these change could impact the points of individual universities league points, if using the adapted consistency model and awarding points to first teams only.<sup>5</sup>

<b>STANDARD CHAMPIONSHIP (LEAGUES/KNOCKOUT) SPORT</b>					
<b>PREMIER</b>	Points	<b>TIER 1</b>	Points	<b>TIER 2</b>	Points
Team A	50	Team G	30	Team K	20
Team B	42	Team A 2		Team L	16
Team C	38	Team C 2		Team M	14
Team D	36	Team H	23	Team A 3	
Team E	34	Team I	22	Team B 2	
Team F	32	Team J	21	Team N	11

#### **Knockouts**

- Points are awarded to the best performing team from each institution only and allocate points based on their final progression.
- This would need every level of cup competition to be point scoring for this to be implemented fairly and require an adjustment of all cup points.

<b>STANDARD CHAMPIONSHIP (LEAGUES/KNOCKOUT) SPORT</b>								
<b>ROUND</b>	<b>CHAMPIONSHIP</b>	Points	<b>VASE</b>	Points	<b>TROPHY</b>	Points	<b>CONFERENCE CUP</b>	Points
WINNER	Team A	50	Team Q	32	Team S	27	...	10
RUNNER UP	Team B	42	Team A 2		Team A 3		...	8
LOSING SF	Team C	37	Team C 2		Team T	21	...	6
LOSING SF	Team D	37	Team B 2		Team E 2		...	6
LOSING QF	Team E	34	Team G 2		Team F 2		...	5
LOSING QF	Team F	34	Team R	28	Team M 2		...	5
LOSING QF	Team G	34	Team H 2		Team U	18	...	5
LOSING QF	Team H	34	Team C 3		....	18	...	5
LOSING L16	Team I-P	33	N/A	-	...	16	...	4
LOSING L32	N/A	-	N/A	-	...	15	...	2
LOSING L64	N/A	-	N/A	-	...	14	...	1
LOSING Play-In	N/A	-	N/A	-	...	13	...	

<sup>5</sup> Appendix 5: Proposed Highest Placed Team Points Allocations

### Individual Championships

- Only individual championship events without a league programme will accrue team points *e.g Badminton Individuals would not be awarded points but Rifles would*
- The points allocation would be inline with the league points scoring model, with adjustments made for lower placings depending on whether or not the consistency model were to be applied alongside it.

STANDARD CHAMPIONSHIP (EVENT) SPORT							
PLACING	Points	PLACING	Points	PLACING	Points	PLACING	Points
1st	50	11th	30	21st	20	31st	10
2nd	42	12th	29	22nd	19	32nd	9
3rd	38	13th	28	23rd	18	33rd	8
4th	37	14th	27	24th	17	34th	7
5th	36	15th	26	25th	16	35th	6
6th	35	16th	25	26th	15	36th	5
7th	34	17th	24	27th	14	37th	4
8th	33	18th	23	28th	13	38th	3
9th	32	19th	22	29th	12	39th	2
10th	31	20th	21	30th	11	40th	1

### RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

- Within Survey One, feedback from 12 responses expressly highlighted the challenges in trying to reward performance and participation in the same system by expressing failures in one or the other. There was further feedback acknowledging this was a challenge of the current model without offering a positive or negative view on that. This proposal accepts it is not possible to reward both in one system and focuses on performance.
- That the current system benefits the larger (or higher resourced) institutions more was the most common piece of feedback received in Survey One (over 15% of those who completed that field). The most common feedback on this was that a higher level of resource allows more entries which guarantees more points. This proposal removes that opportunity through only rewarding 1<sup>st</sup> team performance in any sport.
- 43 individuals noted in Survey One the unequal distribution of points as an area that needed to be reviewed. The most common specificity for this was between team and individual sports. This proposal recommends removing individually won points and instead award a consistent level of team points. This proposal additionally provides more parity for individual sports with the best team winning the same number of points as the best Team Championships (Leagues/Knockouts) team.
- A number of responses in that survey noted that it was possible for a team to score more points in a season than a team in the league above. This proposal removes that possibility by rewarding 1<sup>st</sup> team only in a progressive manner.

### PROPOSED DATE OF CHANGE

Effective for the start of the 2023-24 season, although this is flexible should there be a desire for it to be implemented at a later date.

### NEXT STEPS

Voting members are invited to give their feedback on these two models in the survey accompanying this paper by **5pm on Thursday 25 November**.

If the voting member wishes to delegate the responsibility of this to another colleague that is acceptable however please note only one response will be accepted.

The SRIG will then review all final feedback and make a final recommendation to the BUCS Executive.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **DISCOUNTED PROPOSAL – PARTICIPATION MODEL**

The Group evaluated multiple models that would have focussed on rewarding participation in the competition programme. However, any model that tries to go beyond a simple record of participation – which could be tracked through BUCS Play registration/entries - involves recognising performance. At that stage, the integration of a team and individual competition programme such as the 52 sport BUCS programme becomes incredibly challenging.

The major reasons for this are the range of scale across competition venues coupled with the lack of consistent competition entries across each sport. All models considered had those core challenges to mitigate and would require a complicated, arbitrary system to generate a viable solution. Understanding that results in the Group not recommending a participation model is implemented as the reward mechanism for the BUCS competition programme.