

September & October
2026



This update looks back at a busy start to the 2026/27 season, with several key events and development programmes bringing colleagues, student leaders and partners together across the higher education football network. From our Football Development Network Day and Club Committee Leaders roadshow to the launch of Cohort 8 of the Women's Leadership Programme, it has been great to see the network engaging and sharing ideas.

We also have some important updates and opportunities to share, including the release of the new Football Accreditation Guidance, upcoming regional HE x County FA meetings, consultation on the future of BUCS IMS Football and preparations for our Rainbow Laces campaign in February. Please take a look through the updates below and share relevant opportunities with colleagues and students within your institution.

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Wrap Up: Network Day

Thank you to all who attended our Network Day in Coventry on Friday 11th September. 79 guests were in attendance, and for the first time, we welcomed club presidents from universities to the day. We hope your students found this beneficial, with initial feedback suggesting it was beneficial to showcase what institution staff need to coordinate within Football & Futsal, and how they can contribute to this.

Wrap Up: Emerging Club Leaders

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In September, students on the 2026/27 BUCS Emerging Club Leaders programme came together at Hotel Football and Wembley Stadium to get ready for their club placements. Across two Development Days built around the theme of Taking Ownership, they met their mentors for the first time, worked with Benson Miyoba from Two Seven Seven, and left with a clear plan for their first month at their clubs.

Read more here: <https://www.bucs.org.uk/resources-page/bucs-emerging-club-leaders-development-days-2026.html>

If you have any questions, please contact Kelvin Newell at Kelvin.Newell@bucs.org.uk.

Wrap Up: Club Committee Leaders

This October, the team have been out delivering the Club Committee Leaders roadshow at St Mary's Stadium in Southampton, The City Ground in Nottingham and, for the first time, St James' Park in Newcastle. Across the three events, 139 students attended, representing 29 different institutions. Sessions focused on creating inclusive clubs, connecting committee members with others from across the network, and developing students' leadership and teamwork skills.

It was great to hear how clubs are already planning to put what they've learnt into practice this season. We'll be building on the regional events with additional online sessions in the new year, giving students further opportunities to develop their skills and support their football and futsal clubs.

Click here to read more: <https://www.bucs.org.uk/resources-page/bucs-football-and-futsal-club-committee-leaders-regional-events-2026.html>

Please reach out to Beth Edwards at beth.edwards@bucs.org.uk if you have any questions.

Women's Leadership Programme: First Residential

Last weekend, we kicked off Cohort 8 of the BUCS and FA Women's Leadership Programme with our first residential, bringing together 23 students from 16 different universities. For many, this is the first time their institution has been represented on the programme. Delivered by Women in Football, the residential covered numerous elements such as radical candour, individual storytelling tasks and exploring the range of career opportunities across the football industry. With students encouraged to step outside of their comfort zones and challenge themselves.

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We also celebrated the graduation of Cohort 7, with an inspiring keynote from Lola Ogunbote, Head of Football Operations and Player Services at Chelsea Women FC. It was an empowering three days and great to see Cohort 8 come together as a group for the first time. We're looking forward to seeing how they get on over the year and catching up with them at our next touchpoint in February!

Please reach out to Beth Edwards at beth.edwards@bucs.org.uk if you have any questions.

Football Accreditation Guidance Document

We are delighted to share our accreditation guidance document for the 2026/27 season. Please see the attached link below to see our event timeline, programme information and how your institution can achieve different levels of accreditation.

Accreditation Guidance: <https://www.bucs.org.uk/resources-page/accreditation-guidance-document-2026-27-pdf.html>

If you have any questions regarding the changes to accreditation, or accreditation in general, please contact Kelvin.Newell@bucs.org.uk.

UEFA Innovation Programme

The UEFA EURO 2028 Innovation Programme is a joint initiative between UEFA and UK & Ireland 2028 Limited (UK&I 2028) – the company responsible for the local delivery of UEFA EURO 2028 – to identify and support solutions that can contribute to this ambition. Together UEFA call on innovators to design, test and validate solutions that enhance the tournament experience while delivering sustainable and lasting benefits for volunteers, communities and tournament stakeholders.

If you are interested in applying, please read through the [application guidance](#) and contact Sean.Lofting@bucs.org.uk.

Higher Education x County FA Working Groups – Save the Date for Meeting 2

We're continuing to run our six Higher Education x County FA Working Groups this season, bringing together universities and County FAs across the regions to share updates, collaborate locally and build stronger relationships between the sectors. The second meeting of the season for each group is confirmed for the following dates:

- Manchester – Tuesday 15 December, 11:00
- London – Thursday 14 January, 10:30

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- North-East – Monday 25 January, 11:00
- Birmingham – Tuesday 26 January, 11:00
- Yorkshire – Wednesday 27 January, 11:00
- Liverpool – Thursday 28 January, 11:00

Please make sure relevant university colleagues & CFA colleagues in your region have these dates in their diaries.

If you want joining information and the link, please email kelvin.newell@bucs.org.uk

BUCS IMS Football Tournament - Consultation on Future Plans

At the Football Development Network Day, we outlined some proposed ideas for the evolution of our IMS offer. This is in the early stages of planning and will continue to evolve as we understand the wants and needs of the university sector regarding this. We want to work with institutions to develop the existing IMS offer to cater for more players, particularly Female players and players from historically underrepresented groups, and to provide unique, memorable experiences to Intramural players.

We will host a consultation session in late November, but in the meantime, please share any feedback directly to Alai.Ayyakannu@bucs.org.uk.

If you are interested in participating in this opportunity, either as a staff lead or student, please fill in the [expression of interest form](#).

Rainbow Laces – Call to Action

BUCS will be leading a Rainbow Laces campaign in February 2027, with activations taking place to celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month, as well as Football v Homophobia month of action. Ahead of the campaign, BUCS are looking for case studies and stories that celebrate LGBTQ+ inclusion in higher education sport. This does not have to be football specific, and could include one of the following:

- A team that has advocated for LGBTQ+ inclusion
- An LGBTQ+ individual playing in BUCS competition
- Showcase of targeted initiatives in higher education sport that promote LGBTQ+ inclusion

If your university can support with this and wishes to feature in the campaign, please email Sean.Lofting@bucs.org.uk by Friday 6th November.

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