

BUCS WATER POLO REGULATIONS

PUBLISHED | 26 SEPTEMBER 2025

WAT i The BUCS Water Polo Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the following BUCS sport specific regulations, the BUCS general regulations, and the Water Polo Rules of the World Aquatics (WA) Competition Regulations (In force as from 1 January 2025).

WAT ii In the event that these regulations contradict the BUCS general regulations, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

WAT iii In the event that these regulations contradict the Water Polo Rules of the World Aquatics (WA) Competition Regulations (In force as from 25 June 2025), these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

WAT iv The gender eligibility criteria for the BUCS Water Polo Championships will be determined as per [REG 4.3](#).

*Please note that the following elements of the World Aquatics (WA) Water Polo Rules are not currently being adopted by BUCS and will be reviewed for 2026-27:

- 'Flying substitutions' and therefore the requirement for there to be lateral/'flying substitution' areas.
- Video Assistant Referees and the VAR protocol.

WAT 1 There shall be separate Open and Female Team Championships. The programme for each Championships shall include leagues and knockout competitions as per BUCS general regulations, Appendix 1 ('BUCS Competition Offer and Associated BUCS Points') and Appendix 10 ('BUCS Promotion, Relegation and Knockout Information').

WAT 2 Match format and timings

WAT 2.1 The duration of matches shall be as per the WA Water Polo Rules. In the event of a tie after four periods in a league match, the result shall be a draw. In the event of a tie after four periods in a knockout competition match, the outcome of the match shall be determined by following the penalty shoot out process of the WA Water Polo Rules.

WAT 2.2 Pools must be booked for an appropriate length of time to allow for the full conclusion of the match including a warm up. A minimum of 75 minutes of pool time must be booked for all matches. Institutions/Playing Entities failing to book at least this minimum amount of pool time will be considered to have defaulted on the match if for any reason there is insufficient time to bring the fixture to a conclusion.

WAT 3 Field of play and equipment

WAT 3.1 Field of play dimensions

WAT 3.1.1 Where "floating goals" are used, the distance between the goal lines shall not be less than 20 metres and not more than 25 metres. Where "floating goals" are used, the boundary of the field of play at each end shall be not less than 0.30 metres behind the goal line. Where "wall-mounted goals" are used, the length of the pool from

wall to wall must not exceed 25 metres nor be less than 22 metres. Where "wall-mounted goals" are used, the boundary line of the field of play at each end shall be the pool wall behind the goal line.

WAT 3.1.2 The width of the field of play shall be not less than 10 metres and not more than 20 metres.

WAT 3.1.3 The depth of the water within the field of play shall be consistently not less than 1.50 metres.

WAT 3.1.3.1 An exception to WAT 3.1.3 is that for South Eastern Conference Tier 1 and below league fixtures only, the depth of the water within the field of play shall be consistently not less than 0.90 metres.

WAT 3.2 Markers Distinctive marks shall be provided on both sides of the field of play to denote the following: white marks – goal line and half distance line; red marks – 2 metres from goal lines; yellow marks – 6 metres from goal lines; red marks shall be placed 5 metres from goal lines to indicate the point from which a penalty shot must be taken. It should be noted that the sides of the field of play do not have to be lane ropes and can be the side pool walls, however if the pool is more than 20 metres wide, properly marked/coloured sidelines (lane ropes) are required. Distinctive marks shall be provided on both ends of the field of play to denote the following: red marks - 2 metres out from each goal post.

WAT 3.3 Exclusion re-entry areas

WAT 3.3.1 A red mark shall be placed at each end of the field of play, 2 metres from the corner of the field of play on the side opposite to the officials table, to denote the exclusion re-entry area.

WAT 3.3.2 The exact dimensions of the re-entry area will be determined by the dimensions of the pool, the dimensions of the field of play and whether "floating goals" or "wall-mounted goals" are being used. If not clearly marked by lane ropes and/or the pool walls, prior to the start of the match the referees should inform the team captains of the specific boundaries of the re-entry area.

WAT 3.4 Sufficient space shall be provided to enable the referees to have free movement from end to end of the field of play.

WAT 3.5 The table officials shall be provided with separate white, blue, red and yellow flags, each measuring 0.35 metres x 0.20 metres.

WAT 3.6 Goals

WAT 3.6.1 Two goal posts and a crossbar, rigidly constructed, rectangular with a dimension of 0.075 metres facing the field of play and painted white shall be located on the goal lines at each end, equal distances from the sides.

WAT 3.6.2 The inner sides of the goal posts shall be 3 metres apart and the underside of the crossbar shall be 0.90 metres from the water surface.

WAT 3.6.3 For "floating goals", limp nets shall be securely fastened to the goal posts and crossbar to enclose the entire goal area and shall be attached to the goal fixtures in such a manner as to allow not less than 0.30 metres clear space behind the goal line everywhere within the goal area. For "wall-mounted" goals, the goal space shall be a minimum of 0.4572 metres deep without any obstructions and they must have a

backing that is loosely attached to the goal fittings to enclose the goal space in front of all supports.

WAT 3.7 Possession/Shot clocks For Premier Tier and National Championship fixtures possession/shot clocks are compulsory. For all other fixtures, possession/shot clocks are not compulsory, but where not provided it is a requirement to have an audible whistle to signal the end of possession.

WAT 3.7.1 Failure to provide possession/shot clocks for Premier Tier and National Championship fixtures will result in a £100 fine per instance of this breach for the home team. Away teams cannot claim a walkover, play under protest or appeal, as the match can still go ahead timed by the officials and with use of an audible whistle to signal the end of possession.

WAT 3.8 WA rule 18.1.4 with regard to water temperature shall not apply.

WAT 3.9 WA rule 18.1.5 with regard to light intensity shall not apply.

WAT 4 Match officials Match officials should be appointed as per Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

WAT 4.1 The use of audio equipment by the referees is not required but is permitted.

WAT 5 Balls The home team is responsible for providing three regulation match balls. Should balls not be deemed suitable the away team may provide match balls. The referee will have the final decision.

WAT 6 Teams and substitutions

WAT 6.1 Team composition WA rules 2.1–2.5 shall apply.

WAT 6.2 Substitution procedure WA rules 2.6–2.10 shall be followed with the following exceptions:

WAT 6.2.1 An alternate goalkeeper must wear a red cap, but this does not have to have the same number on as they were wearing as a field player.

WAT 6.2.2 BUCS has not adopted 'flying substitutions' and so there shall be no substitutions from the 'flying substitution' area.

WAT 6.2.3 A goalkeeper who has been replaced by a substitute may play in any position.

WAT 7 League points

WAT 7.1 Two points will be awarded for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss.

WAT 7.2 Where a walkover has been awarded/conceded (REG 13), two points shall be given to the non-offending team and two points deducted from the offending team.

WAT 7.3 No points will be awarded to either team in the case of a void fixture.