

# 2026 BUCS NETBALL SAG - MEETING 30/04/2026 - MINUTES

**Date** Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026  
**Time** 09:00 – 11:00  
**Location** Microsoft Teams

## ATTENDEES

Sarah Gandon  
 Hannah Underhill  
 Sophie Ewin  
 Sally Sandison  
 Jo Noel  
 Nick Burley  
 Em Harvey  
 Alice Cuell  
 Katie Sykes  
 Adrain Evans

## APOLOGIES

Mel Mansfield  
 Katy Ryan  
 Katelyn Williamson  
 James Firminger  
 Eva Dorianio  
 Trish Wilcox

Item	Action
<p><b>1. Apologies / Welcome</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Mel Mansfield, Katy Ryan, Katelyn Williamson, James Firminger, Eva Dorianio and Trish Wilcox.</p>	
<p><b>2. Minutes and Matters Arising Previous Meeting (30.01.2026)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The group shared updates on the actions from previous meetings. The below are ongoing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of 50% normality rule (background priority compared to other rule regs)</li> <li>- If we get enough data from the BUCS student survey, we can get netball specific feedback. All in HE to share this link for students who took part in a BUCS league in the 2025-26 academic year. It will close on 20 May. Link to the survey: <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NGZXFJB">https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NGZXFJB</a></li> <li>- Create infographic of completion statistics (BUCS netball). Waiting on completion stats.</li> </ul>	<p>Nick</p> <p>All in HE</p> <p>Hannah</p>
<p><b>3. NGB Updates</b></p> <p><b>Wales Netball Updates – Ardian (last meeting)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wales Netball have implemented two new Development Officers and are moving towards a regional approach to development.</li> <li>- Currently reviewing and changing the pathway, removing younger age groups to focus on U17 upwards.</li> <li>- Wales Netball have a strong relationship with a number of Welsh unis specifically Cardiff.</li> </ul>	

- 29<sup>th</sup> June Keria comes back into the role and will then rejoin the group. Thanks to Adrian for your time in the group and good luck with what's next.

#### Netball Scotland Update – sent from Katelyn Williamson

- We are continuing to work with all Scottish universities to achieve Thistle Mark accreditation, meeting the minimum governance standards in line with sport Scotland guidance.
- We successfully delivered our first S1 Mixed Schools Competition, with the finals hosted in March. This marked a significant milestone for Netball Scotland, and we are keen to build on this success in the upcoming season.
- Alongside the S1 mixed competition, we have also delivered a Senior Mixed Competition, with finals taking place in May. We look forward to reviewing and developing this further, particularly with the introduction of the new Men's World Cup next year.
- In preparation for the Commonwealth Games and increased engagement, we have developed: Engagement resources for schools, club development resources for new and existing clubs and new coaching resources to support coaches and clubs.
- Additionally, more funding opportunities are becoming available to support sporting communities, and we are actively exploring how Netball Scotland and our clubs can access this support ahead of the anticipated increase in participation linked to the CWG.
- Scottish Student Sport have successfully delivered their finals events for the season, with planning now underway for the new season beginning after the summer.
- Our partnership this season with University of Strathclyde and University of Edinburgh as High Performance Centres has been very successful. Supporting universities also supports our current and future Scottish athletes as they enter and progress through the sport. With the Commonwealth Games this summer and the Netball World Cup later this year, we anticipate a positive impact on our national athletes.
- Finally, I will be starting maternity leave at the beginning of June. As my role has not yet been filled, the main point of contact during my absence will be **Carol Harvey** (Head of Development) at [carol.harvey@netballscotland.com](mailto:carol.harvey@netballscotland.com). Carol will either be able to support directly or signpost to the appropriate team member.

**England Netball Update** – No update due to absence of Katy Ryan.

#### Action:

- None, updates to continue as a standing agenda point.

#### 4. Updates from SAG Group

##### Performance – Update from Sarah (in Mel and Trish's absence)

- Grade A Umpire proposal for Prem 1 update: Team met with Gary Burgess; Mel is writing a proposal to put forward to BUCS for reg change.
- England Netball will not centrally appoint umpires for Prem 1 due to financial and organisational limitations (e.g. if an umpire drops out/fixture changes who would coordinate this).

- England Netball are supportive that A grades are needed at Prem 1 and could offer support through Regional Umpire Coordinators helping institutions to find relevant umpires.
- Gary Burgess will create a list of affiliated active A award umpires who are prepared to umpire BUCS along with where they are located (county/region) to ensure a sufficient spread of umpires.
- If the list is insufficient in some areas we could include a caveat that B award umpires who are working towards their A award could umpire Prem 1 if no A award can be found. This could reduce the potential of cancellations or teams playing under protest.

#### Competitions – Update from Katie

- There is potential to build a facility survey to send to institutions to assess their playing facilities. Needs to be in depth asking specific questions we want answers to e.g. run off measurements for side lines and back lines, court length, indoor/outdoor. Once we have the questions formulated Hannah could support on making the survey and sending to IAs. Emphasis needed on assessing what unis have, not trying to catch them out but to ensure we don't create future regulations which wipe out courts.
- The World Netball Rules which are used in BUCS are open to interpretation - Sarah, Katie and Em happy to be consulted in appeals concerning rules to provide netball specific knowledge to support BUCS.

#### Scotland Universities – Update from Sally

- There are some difficulties in finding umpires and the standard of umpires along with a lack of mentoring and support for umpires across all levels.
- SSS are going through some changes. This presents some difficulties with talented players (who are not Scottish) lacking performance level opportunities in Scotland.

#### Workforce – Update from Alice

- A Grade umpire update as above.
- England Netball have been very proactive in reaching out to unis to arrange umpire courses which is great.

#### Student Voice

- No update as no representatives present.

#### Action:

- Mel to share A grade umpire proposal with group. Group to include feedback about A grade umpire regional spread (once Gary sends across). Finalised papers need to be sent (to Nick) by 17<sup>th</sup> of May for him to take to July Comps group meeting. Mel
- Contact Gary Burgess for the list of affiliated active A awards along with their locations. Mel
- Katie and Nick to meet to: A, review wording on court rules (and how this applies to Prem 1 to ensure this is in line with standard England Netball requirements). B, formulate questions for facilities survey to feedback to the group. Katie,  
Nick
- Nick to speak with team about the potential to contact this group for clarity over appeals concerning the world netball rules. Nick

#### 5. Events

- Tournament directors overview report from BBW attached as appendix A.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BUCS Big Wednesday ran very well. A few issues but all were fixable on the day.</li> <li>- Communication from BUCS to Tournament Directors could be improved, Alice being from Herts was a huge help with access to team sheets, kit colours etc. If this hadn't been the case it would have been more difficult. Some teething issues changing from paper to paperless event.</li> <li>- Some tension and pushback received by volunteers from BUCS staff external to the SAG at wider BUCS events.</li> <li>- More support needed from BUCS and England Netball around live stream to help reach a bigger audience.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6. Rules and Regs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A award introduction into Prem, previously discussed in section 4.</li> <li>- Scoring improvement within Prem with introduction of running score sheet</li> <li>- Hannah shared fixtures dates for 26/27 academic year (attached in appendix B).</li> <li>- Discussion around the knockout rounds for the Championship competition which is scheduled to clash with NXT Gen.</li> <li>- To change the timings of the National Championships (to avoid NXT Gen clashes) we could raise this at the comps group. BUCS are conducting a sport review over the next year where this issue may be raised. The dates for next season cannot be changed at this point.</li> <li>- Discussion around moving the finals earlier in the year to avoid external clashes (with player loading etc). May be helpful to look at other sports e.g. Women's BUCS Super Rugby. Must be mindful to consider wider student experience not just NXT Gen players. Consultation with Prem, tier 1 members and NGBs needed to pass comps group for any changes on fixture dates.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The timings of championships will be brought as an agenda point to the next meeting for input from Mel / Trish.</li> <li>- Implement scoring as a requirement for Prem in season 2026/27</li> </ul>	<p>Sophie</p> <p>Nick</p>
<p><b>7. Men's Netball</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Successful BBW showcase game, great opportunity for the men's game. Would like to repeat moving forwards.</li> <li>- Focus is on a men's universities netball tournament in December (barbarian style which could also include Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland). From here the English Universities Team will be selected. If English Universities are not going to take up a men's team EMMNA will take up a men's universities side.</li> <li>- Not enough capacity for mixed at the moment, so focus remaining on men's.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jo to loop in with NGBs to promote men's tournament.</li> </ul>	<p>Jo</p>

**8. A.O.B.**

- None, thanks to everyone for attending.

**Action:**

**Some of the actions throughout that are not critical to the SAG activities, but want to keep track**

- Ensure HE representation on EN Leaner Management System advisory groups
- Include Player welfare and overloading education for HE players and coaches LMS
- Explore Uni Championships as curtain-raiser for main event
- Sally to raise the lack of mentoring and supporting umpires in Scotland with Carole.
- Sally to speak to Netball Scotland about performance opportunities for non Scottish players in Scotland and concerns over competition level at Netball Scotland University Championships event.
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Katy R

Katy R

Katy R

Sally

Sally

**Next Meeting**

- May – July 2026 doodle to be shared to confirm date

**Appendix A – Tournament Director Report**

[BBW 2026 - TD Report.pdf](#)

**Appendix B – BUCS Leagues and Knockouts – Dates and Deadlines (2026/2027)**

[Appendix 2a BUCS Leagues and Knockouts - Dates and Deadlines \(2026-27\) - Draft 1 Apr 2026.xlsx](#)

