

Universal Membership Guidance Notes for Clubs



1. Introduction

These guidance notes have been produced to help clubs understand the mechanisms and processes of Universal Membership. A set of Questions and Answers are also available on the EBU website. If there are still issues and questions that have not been answered, please do not hesitate to contact the EBU via email on bev@ebu.co.uk (preferred) or via telephone on 01296 317200.

A short glossary is included at Appendix 1 to help with any unfamiliar terms.

The main elements of the scheme are:

- All members of clubs affiliated to the EBU become player members of the EBU
- Clubs pay an annual affiliation fee (see [Terms of Affiliation](#) for current rate)
- On behalf of its members, clubs also remit a Universal Membership subscription for each player session at the club (apart from any exemptions defined later) – see [Terms of Affiliation](#) for current rates
- Any club can apply for membership provided it holds regular duplicate bridge sessions throughout the year
- Clubs send their session results to the EBU for the award of master points and inclusion in the National Grading Scheme (NGS) and to enable the Universal Membership Subscription amounts to be calculated. All sessions except properly constituted [Novice Sessions](#) must be submitted whether or not master points are issued for them (see 5 below).
- Player members are eligible for all the benefits defined in the document "[Benefits for Individual EBU Members](#)"
- Affiliated clubs are eligible for all the benefits defined in the document "[Benefits for EBU Clubs](#)"
- Individuals may choose to be anonymous to the EBU but in such cases will not be eligible for any services that require contact details

2. Membership Information

For a Club player member to access EBU services, the EBU needs to know as a minimum.

- a) First name
- b) Surname
- c) House No/House Name/Flat No
- d) Post Code
- e) Gender
- f) Date of birth (only *required* if under 26)

It would be particularly helpful if people added the following additional information through their personal area of the EBU website:

- g) title
- h) initials
- i) known as
- j) contact telephone number
- k) e-mail address
- l) primary club

The EBU may share this information with the member's county membership secretary and event organisers but other than this undertakes never to pass on the personal details to any other person, or 3rd party organisation, without the member's permission. Appendix 2 provides further information about the EBU's policy on Data Protection.

Individuals may remain totally anonymous to the EBU but they will then be unable to access any of the services that require contact details. The only information required for an anonymous member is a pseudonym chosen by the person that is unique within that club.

3. Transmission of initial membership data

On affiliation the club needs to provide the EBU with an initial set of membership details. Information on how and when to do this will be provided as soon as possible after we receive your signed club affiliation application form. This and other similar communications will take place through the contact e-mail you identify on the application form.

Any club that experiences particular difficulty with this process should contact the EBU for individual assistance.

4. Keeping clubs and the EBU membership details aligned

The online club administration area allows clubs to access and maintain their membership details, adding and removing members and viewing membership details. It is therefore, in most cases, unnecessary for clubs to duplicate this effort with their own database. Nevertheless, some clubs will want to keep their membership records separately and we will provide them with the ability to update their records with any changes made online.

Going in the other direction, clubs, with permission from the member, will be able to effect changes to member's personal details on the master database. It is, however, better for the member to make such changes themselves.

5. Uploading results to the EBU

Clubs must transmit to the EBU the results of every duplicate session held at the club (pairs, teams, individual). This includes sessions for which master points have not been issued, either because the club has chosen not to or because they fail to satisfy any of the requirements for issuing them (eg 70% rule). There are 2 options for doing this:

- a) Send a file produced by EBUScore – the EBU preferred club scoring system

For instructions on how to submit a file via EBUScore please see [here](#).

- b) Send a file produced by another scoring program that produces results to the required format

The typical sequence of events for uploading results from Scorebridge will be:

- Score the session on Scorebridge which will produce a suitable output file
- Log onto the website (with the club's ID number and password)
- Press "upload file" button and select the file
- Wait for the system to give any feedback (usually just "success" but it will prompt you to identify any unknown members etc.)

To ensure a smooth flow of results into the EBU, results should be uploaded to the EBU as quickly as possible after a session – preferably within 3 days of the session. If you are uploading your results to your own website it is recommended you upload results to the EBU at the same time.

6. EBU Score and other software

EBUScore is the EBU preferred program for scoring club bridge sessions. EBUScore – formerly the Jeff Smith suite of scoring software – is managed by the EBU and is available free to every club which is affiliated to the EBU. Support is also currently offered to EBU clubs at no additional cost.

Clubs may, of course, continue to use any scoring program they wish but that program must be capable of producing a file to the required format. Clubs who are unable to adopt either of these approaches should contact the EBU, who may be able to offer an individual solution to their particular problems.

7. Primary Club

Players may belong to more than one club. The EBU will designate one of these as a primary club. Members can themselves specify their primary club for communication and allegiance purposes through the member's personal area of the EBU website.

8. Club Affiliation Fee

The EBU annual club affiliation fee will be added to the first invoice of the financial year, which runs from 1 April to 31 March.

If the club's County levies an annual club affiliation fee and wishes the EBU to collect this, then it will also be added on to this invoice and passed to the County.

9. Individual's County subscriptions

Counties have the choice of asking the EBU to add an additional sum to the national Universal Membership subscription and to have this money forwarded to them or to arrange collection of their subscriptions by any other means agreed by their members.

10. Individual's County of Allegiance

For existing EBU members this will be their current county of prime allegiance. For new members this will be the county of affiliation of the club which first returns details to the EBU. Individuals may change their county of allegiance by contacting the EBU.

Any player who is not a member of a county and wants to play in that county's events shall pay a county subscription (if any), direct to the county as they do now, within the dual membership process.

11. Direct members

People who are not able to, or do not wish to join an EBU affiliated club may join the EBU directly by paying an annual subscription – see [Terms of Affiliation](#) for the current rates.

12. Potential members

From time-to-time results will be received involving players not currently EBU members (e.g. students, visitors, etc.). If the club collects this non-member's name, house number & post code, then any MP awards and NGS data will be held against that name and they will be designated "Potential members". If this person subsequently joins the EBU, these MPs will be credited to their account and an NGS entry started.

13. Leagues and Associations

Currently there are a small number of Leagues and District Associations established solely to organise duplicate bridge competitions amongst clubs and bridge players in a particular geographical area or district. For administrative convenience some of them currently affiliate to the EBU as if they were clubs. Under Universal Membership they are no longer be able to do this, however by application they will be licensed to issue Master Points for their events through payment of the league Universal Membership subscription.

Types of league

The EBU recognises the following types of league:

- a) Club leagues – organised under the auspices of a club
- b) District leagues – usually organised by an Association set up for that purpose.
- c) County leagues – organised under the auspices of a County Association
- d) Inter-County leagues – usually organised by an independent body set up for that purpose by the Counties that play in the league

League rules

The following rules apply to leagues that wish to issue Master Points:

Club leagues

- The club must be affiliated to the EBU
- The club itself can decide its own rules regarding non-EBU members participating in the league
- The club will pay the league Universal Membership subscription if this event takes place outside of the club.
- The club will pay the club duplicate session Universal Membership subscription (see [Terms of Affiliation](#) for current rates) if this event is part of the club's playing sessions

District leagues

- Cannot affiliate as a club
- Can be licensed to issue Master Points through payment of the league Universal Membership subscription
- Can themselves decide their own rules regarding individual non-EBU members participating in the league

County leagues

- All players in the league must be EBU members apart from the bottom division of a league
- The league will pay the league Universal Membership subscription

Inter-county leagues

- All players must be EBU members
- Can be licensed to issue “Black” Master Points through payment of the league Universal Membership subscription
- May be licensed to issue “Green” Master Points by agreement with the Tournament Committee

Other competitions organised by District Leagues and Associations

District Leagues and Associations often organise other competitions as well as leagues. They may issue Master Points for these competitions through payment of the appropriate licence amount. This will require the electronic submission of an appropriate results file (see Section 16). Again it is their own decision whether to allow non-EBU members to play in these competitions.

14. Exempt players

No Universal Membership subscription will be levied for any player under 25 on the day of the event (from 1/1/17 this will change to ‘under 26 on the 1st January of that year’). This, of course, requires the EBU to have been advised of the date of birth of the member. Clubs will be charged a Universal Membership subscription for all other players and they may of course choose how, and whether to, recoup that amount from individuals such as TDs, life members, etc.

15. Exempt sessions

All duplicate sessions held at the club (pairs, teams, individual) will be subject to the Universal Membership subscription with the exception of the following:

- Properly constituted [Novice Sessions](#)
- 1 session a year designated as a party/social event
- Any other event for which the club has applied for and received prior authorisation from the EBU to be exempt from the Universal Membership subscription
- The Children in Need Charity Simultaneous Pairs
- A club may hold one or two additional charity sessions treated as exempt if they exceed 10000 player session in the year. 10000 – 20000 allows one additional exempt session, and 20000 +, allows two additional exempt sessions; both of which must be for charity.

Clubs will still be required to upload the results from these sessions in the normal manner.

For more information please consult the [Master Point and Licensing Handbook](#).

16. Master Point accreditation

Master Points will be credited automatically from all uploaded Universal Membership sessions. For competitions such as county and EBU events and leagues, a standard format file will have to be uploaded to the EBU. Scorebridge can produce such a file for an event not itself scored by that system.

Non-standard format information will only be accepted from external bodies such as the Welsh and Scottish Bridge Unions.

17. Master Point Records and Promotions

Individuals can view their MP record online through their own personal area on the EBU website. Details of MP promotions will be sent to the individual (if an e-mail address has been provided) and to their primary club. Promotions will be published on the EBU website and English Bridge.

18. National Grading Scheme (NGS)

Technical details regarding the [structure of the NGS](#) are available on the EBU website. Individuals are able to view their NGS standing online through their personal area on the EBU website.

19. Payment of the Universal Membership Subscriptions

Collection Advice notices will be provided to clubs every 2 months (or every month for clubs which indicate a preference for monthly invoicing); these will be visible and printable from the Member's Area on the EBU website when logged in as the club and will be issued on or about the 10th of the month. If clubs request copies by post then an administrative charge will be added. Clubs have the choice of paying either by direct debit or by cheque, credit/debit card or direct transfer within 10 days. Paying by direct debit will result in a rebate. See [Terms of Affiliation](#) for details of the current rates for subscriptions and rebates.

The club's annual EBU affiliation fee and any club affiliation fee charged by the County, will be added to the first Collection Advice issued in the financial year.

20. Member rebates

Once a member has played more than 150 club Universal Membership sessions in a financial year, then any subsequent sessions are exempt and EBU Universal Membership subscriptions for those sessions, will be rebated. Rebates will be held in the member's account and rebates of over £5 will be refunded direct to

individuals' bank accounts at the beginning of June provided that members request this and inform us of their bank details. Alternatively the rebate may be used in part payment for EBU competition entry fees or purchase from the EBU shop (rebates of less than £5 can only be used in this way). If rebates for more than one year total more than £5 then members may ask for this to be refunded to their bank account.

Universal Membership sessions in all clubs count towards the 150 limit but not league, county or EBU sessions.

21. EBU Membership Number

Existing player members of the EBU will retain their existing EBU number. New player members will be allocated a new number.

22. EBU Membership Card

All members will receive a membership card.

23. Modifying personal details

There are three ways for members to modify personal details

- i. by changing them personally online – PREFERRED
- ii. by advising the EBU
- iii. by advising their club (see Section 4)

Whatever the method chosen the other parties will be advised the next time the club uploads results from a session in which that individual plays.

24. English Bridge and Annual Diary

To receive free copies of English Bridge and an annual diary, members must meet the qualifying requirements for this service. All Direct members automatically qualify. Those members joining through a club will need to have paid 12 Universal Membership subscriptions during the year. Other than club Universal Membership sessions the only events that contribute towards this qualifying level are EBU tournaments, which count as one Universal Membership subscription per session. Members who are unable to meet the 12 session qualifying level (e.g. through illness) may apply to have this set aside. All qualifying player members will receive, through the post, a copy of English Bridge and also have access to the magazine online via their members area. They will also receive a diary posted with August's magazine. An online calendar, which can be download to personal devices, is also available.

25. Members' personal area

Each member will have their own password protected, personal area within which they will be able to view:

- and modify their personal details
- their MP awards and status
- their NGS standing
- which EBU events they have entered and their individual account

26. Data Protection issues

Once an individual is a member of an organisation and supplies them with their contact details, the Data Protection Act allows that organisation to send the member information about their activities. Details of this and other Data Protection issues are covered in 2.

27. Services and benefits

The services and benefits available to individuals and clubs are detailed on the EBU website and are included in the joining pack.

To enter an EBU event any competitor who is resident in England must be an EBU member.

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Appendix 1 - Glossary

Affiliated club	A club that has joined the EBU through paying an affiliation fee and which undertakes to remit to the EBU the appropriate Universal Membership subscriptions.
Anonymous member	A player member who does not wish the EBU to have their personal details.
Club	A group of people who arrange regular duplicate bridge sessions at one location.
Congress	A series of events played over a continuous period, usually lasting between 2 and 10 days.
County of allegiance	The county association that a member belongs to. Members may belong to one or more counties. If this is the case the individual member must nominate one county as their county of primary allegiance.
EBUScore	EBUScore is a suite of Duplicate Bridge Scoring programs. It is a rebranded version of the popular Jeff Smith suite of scoring software - Pairs Scorer, Teams Scorer and so on.
Event	A series of playing sessions forming a single competition.
Financial Year	The EBU Financial Year is 1 April to 31 March.
League	A group of teams, usually split into divisions, that organises head-to-head matches between the teams.
Master Point Year	1 January to 31 December.
Membership Year	1 April to 31 March.
NGS	National Grading Scheme, a method of player member ratings.
Player member	A person who is a member of the EBU, either through membership of an affiliated club or through direct membership.

Playing session	A series of boards played without a significant break. A club evening would be a typical playing session.
Playing Year/Season	1 September to 31 August.
Potential member	A non EBU member for whom results data is held.
Primary club	The club through which the EBU communicates with a player member.
Scorebridge	A computer program for scoring duplicate bridge sessions, widely used in EBU clubs It will fully support normal club Universal Membership requirements. Details are available at www.scorebridge.com .
Shareholders	People who are appointed by their counties, to represent them at EBU general meetings and vote on their behalf.

Appendix 2 - Data Protection issues

For the EBU Data Protection is governed by the Privacy Policy which is available on the website:

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/official-documents/ebu-privacy-policy.pdf>

If an individual member does not wish to receive this information then they have to positively opt out. In Universal Membership this facility has been built in through the provision of anonymity for any individuals who do not wish to supply their name or address.

The EBU is registered with the ICO for data protection purposes.

Data Protection and Clubs

Every club currently holds information about its members which is likely to include their name address and other contact details.

If a club is required to comply with the Act, they have a number of legal responsibilities:

- to notify the Information Commissioner they are processing information, unless they are an organisation who has personal information only for:
 - staff administration (including payroll)
 - advertising, marketing and public relations for your own business
 - accounts and records (some not-for-profit organisations)

- to process the personal information in accordance with the eight principles of the Act

- to answer subject access requests received from individuals

The eight principles of the Act are:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate and up to date
- Not kept for longer than is necessary
- Processed in line with your rights
- Secure
- Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection

Further clarification of the collection and exchange of data on individuals can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's website under FAQs or by telephoning their helpline on 08456 30 60 60 or 01625 54 57 45.