

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 jonathan@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:

Subject to the EBU Board's right of refusal or expulsion pursuant to its Bye Laws, 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 have at least one method of contact, so the minimum data required is:

- a) First name
- b) Surname
- c) Home address including post code, or
- d) Email address

It is preferred that members provide both their home address and email address, and in addition, the following optional information can be maintained on their My EBU area of the EBU website:

- e) Date of birth (only *required* if taking advantage of junior membership or intending to play in age-restricted events)
- f) title
- g) initials
- h) known as
- i) contact telephone number
- j) primary and other clubs; note that giving your primary club permission to change your record means that you only have to inform that club of any changes to your details, rather than contacting the EBU as well.

The EBU shares this information with the member's county/ies of affiliation, and with the charity English Bridge Education & Development (EBED), with whom we share offices and data systems. Some of your data will be available for use by organisations that act as Data Processors on our behalf, such as Pianola and Bridgewebs. They are not free to pass this on to other organisations that are not connected with the EBU.

Your personal data is not provided by the EBU for use by any organisations other than those indicated above, even if connected with bridge.

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, are able to effect changes to member's personal details on the master database.

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

e.g. 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. EBUScore 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.

EBUScore is also available free to counties, and to members of the English Bridge Teachers Association (EBTA).

EBUScore can be downloaded through [My EBU](#).

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 My EBU 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 primary 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.

11. Direct members

People who are not able to, or do not wish to, join an EBU affiliated club may subject to the EBU Board's right of refusal or expulsion pursuant to its Bye Laws, 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 who are not currently EBU members (e.g. students, visitors, etc.). If the club collects this non-member's

name, house number & post code, then any Master Point 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 Master Points 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 used to 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 "Local " 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 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:

Sessions that comply with the regulations to be considered [Novice Sessions](#) and for which magazine points have been chosen not to be awarded

1-session a year designated as a party/social/charity event

The Children in Need Charity Simultaneous Pairs event

Additional charity events based on the number of player sessions a year as follows:

From 10,001 to 20,000 player sessions a year, one exempt club session

Above 20,000 player sessions a year, two exempt club sessions

Any other special 'one-off' session/event for which specific exemption has been granted by the EBU.

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

For more information please consult the [EBU Licensing and Master Points 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. EBUScore and Scorebridge can produce such files 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 Master Point (MP) record online through their My EBU area on the EBU website. Promotions are published on the EBU website and landmark promotions are published in English Bridge magazine.

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 My EBU 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. Clubs are expected to pay by direct debit, except in instances where it is not possible or practical for the club to do so (clubs in this position should contact 01296 317200). For details of the [current rates for subscriptions](#) or contact postmaster@ebu.co.uk.

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. EBU Membership Number

Re-joining player members of the EBU will retain their existing EBU number. New player members are allocated a new EBU number.

21. EBU Membership Card

All new members will receive a membership card as part of their Welcome Pack.

22. 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, having given it permission to make changes (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.

23. English Bridge and Annual Diary

To receive free printed copies of English Bridge and an annual diary, members must meet the qualifying requirements for this service. All Direct members automatically qualify.

All new members receive the first magazine which is published after they join.

Thereafter the printed copies are only distributed to those members with sufficient Magazine Points. To receive a printed copy you must have two Magazine Points. A Magazine Point is credited to your account for every session you play at an affiliated club or in an EBU competition, up to a maximum of 8. Two points are then deducted every time a magazine is published.

Therefore, in order to receive every issue of the magazine in the year you must play on average once every six weeks. This could be once each month, or could be eight times in the first month and not at all for the rest of the year. This policy ensures printed magazines are only distributed to those who make an ongoing financial contribution through paying a Universal Membership Subscription.

Those members who would like to receive a copy of the diary they will need to opt in to receive it. The best and easiest way to opt-in is by changing the setting on their account on My EBU. Click on 'Account' in the top right corner, select 'My Details', and then in the 'Account Settings' section of the page, under the 'Magazine/Diary Preference' option use the drop down list to choose your preferred setting.

Unless they have opted not to receive printed copies, or have accepted to have a single copy for a household with more than one EBU member, all qualifying player members will receive, through the post, a copy of English Bridge and also have access to the magazine online via My EBU. They will also receive a diary posted with September's magazine, if they have opted in to receive it. An online calendar, which can be download to personal devices, is also available.

24. My EBU – the members' area of the website

Each member will have their own password protected, My EBU account within which they will be able to view:

- and modify their personal details

 - their recent sessions in club, county and EBU
 - competitions their Master Point awards and status

- their NGS standing

- which EBU events they have entered and their individual account

- the online version of the members' magazine, English Bridge

25. Data Protection issues

The EBU and its constituent counties and member clubs comply with current data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation. Details of this and other Data Protection issues are covered in appendix 2.

26. Services and benefits

The services and benefits available to individuals and clubs are detailed on the EBU website and are included in the Welcome 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 Points	The Master Point Scheme is run by the English Union and is a method by which you can track your lifetime achievement in bridge. Master Points are awarded for finishing in the top places (usually the top third) in competitions run by the EBU, counties and affiliated clubs, or in external competitions which have been licensed by the EBU. The points are awarded on a scale which varies according to the size and status of the competition.
Master Point Year	1 January to 31 December.
Membership Year	1 April to 31 March.

My EBU	The members area of the EBU website – www.ebu.co.uk/members
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

The EBU's Privacy Policy is available on the website and gives full information about our policies and practices:

<http://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/official-documents/GDPR/2-ebu-privacy-policy.pdf>

This includes:

- The legal basis for collecting members' data;
- What data is collected;
- How it is stored;
- To whom it may be passed on and for what purpose;
- For how long we keep the data;
- What members can do to limit how we use your data.

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.

All clubs are required to comply with current data protection legislation. Detailed information is available at www.ebu.co.uk/gdpr, which should help clubs in complying with their obligations and inform members of those obligations as well as telling them of their rights in these respects.