Rules Regarding Varsity Match Eligibility

Drafted and approved by the Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge on 28 February 1983.

- Alteration approved on 13 November 1997 which came into force from 1 October 1998
- Reviewed 12 March 2001 to come into force 1 October 2001
- Additional review in May 2013 to come into force 1 October 2013
- A review in June 2014 took place to come into force 1 October 2014
- A review in June 2019 and June 2020 took place, which were approved in June 2021 to come into force 1 October 2021
- An update in March 2026 was proposed, which was approved in July 2026 to come into force 1 October 2026

A resident bona fide student member of the University is eligible to compete in a Blues Status Oxford versus Cambridge sporting contest, subject to the stipulations that he or she is:

a) A fully registered member of both a College and of the University for the current year according to both College and University academic registers (see Note 1 below); and
b) Registered for, and actively studying for, a recognised degree, diploma or certificate of the University where matriculation for all members of said course is compulsory (see Note 2 below); and
c) In residence for the duration of the term outlined in the relevant statutes as appropriate for the degree being undertaken (see Note 3 below); and
d) Not already the holder of 8 Blues, having previously competed in 8 Blues status Varsity Matches in any one sport (including all Blues won in either Cambridge or Oxford); and
e) Has not already participated in a male or female Varsity Match for the same sport in the same academic year.

And **either**

f) Is an undergraduate, in which case his or her eligibility continues until 30 September in the year in which she or he completes her or his undergraduate course;

Or

g) Is already the holder of a degree from a recognised University and is therefore reading for a further degree or for a diploma, certificate or higher degree of the University, in which case her or his eligibility is limited to five (5) postgraduate appearances. These five years need not be consecutive (see Note 4 below).

Notes

1. The academic register or equivalent must have the student status shown as ‘active’ for at the very minimum the full term in which the Varsity Match falls, notwithstanding all other eligibility requirements. On occasion it may be necessary for a student to intermit her or his studies. For the avoidance of doubt, students will be deemed ‘inactive’ (and so ineligible) from the point at which they leave College and/or formally cease to study. They will be ‘active’ (and so eligible) from the point at which they return to College and/or formally resume study.

2. For all other non-Blue status Oxford vs. Cambridge matches i.e. second team competitions, the current British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) eligibility criteria shall apply. This allows any current student on a

recognised course of study within the University, irrespective of matriculation or number of years of previous participation, the right to participate. *

3. Responsibility for maintaining the spirit of Varsity sport lies with selecting Captains, who are reminded that athletes are expected to participate actively in the sport for which they may be selected prior to the Varsity Match. This is particularly important for part-time students, for whom full-time undergraduate and postgraduate residency requirements do not apply. However, it is acknowledged that the definition of active participation will vary from sport to sport and the Joint Blues Committee will not assess such participation as part of an eligibility discussion.

4. The eligibility of a graduate student is limited until his or her results are published in the Reporter (Cambridge) or the Examination Schools (Oxford). However, should extra work be required after a viva to complete academic requirements, then Varsity eligibility is extended until these requirements have been met but shall not extend beyond the academic year in which the original viva takes place. As per Note 1, the academic register or equivalent must have the student status shown as 'active' for at the very minimum the full term in which the Varsity Match falls, notwithstanding all other eligibility requirements

5. Selecting Captains should exchange a list of all individuals in contention for Varsity Match selection no later than six weeks in advance of the Varsity Match. If Captains are not in agreement regarding the eligibility of an individual, the Joint Blues Committee will make a ruling in advance of the relevant Varsity Match in accordance with the agreed procedures.

* Currently, and uniquely, the Isis /Goldie and Orisis/Blondie crews (second teams) are eligible for Half Blues.

If you have any further queries please contact any of these staff, who are all members of the 'Joint Blues Committee of Oxford and Cambridge Universities':

- Cambridge University Blues Committee President
- Oxford University Blues Committee President
- Senior Member of OU Blues Committees
- Senior Members of CU Blues Committee