



Refusing Membership – consultation with clubs and counties

The Board is conscious of the fact that it currently has no ability to determine who is allowed to join the organisation. It must at present accept all applications that come through affiliated clubs or by application for direct or student membership, perhaps later invoking disciplinary processes to remove membership.

Although it would be a rare occurrence indeed for membership of the EBU to be refused to an individual, it should be a basic principle that a membership organisation like the EBU is able to decide who may join, while always complying with anti-discrimination legislation.

The views of the clubs and counties are now being invited on the proposed policy laid out below. The EBU's current bye-laws with regard to individual membership say (some content removed for brevity and ease of understanding):

2.3 Individual Player Members

Any person becomes a Player Member upon payment of the Subscription (if any) appropriate to his kind of membership as set out below. The different categories of membership for Player Members are:

- (a) 'Ordinary Player Members', who are persons who are members of an Affiliated Club;*
- (b) 'Honorary Life Player Members', who are persons who become Player Members by being so elected by the Company at one of its general meetings upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors;*
- (c) 'Direct Player Members', who are persons who may become Player Members by being admitted to direct membership of the Company upon payment directly to the Company of whatever Subscription is determined;*
- (d) "Bridge for All" student members; and*
- (e) such other categories of membership for Player Members as may be decided by the Board of Directors from time to time.*

2.4 Player Members shall

- a) Comply with such conditions and regulations as the Board of Directors shall from time to time impose, vary, add to or revoke; and*
- b) be entitled to receive all publications and services provided by the Company upon payment of the charge if any. However, the Board may, in certain cases, set minimum contribution requirements to receive these publications and services; and*
- c) be entitled to the benefits of membership set out on paragraph 3.7, and to enjoy the other rights of player membership as may be decided by the Board of Directors from time to time.*

Section 2.3(a) means that currently the EBU has no ability to refuse membership to anyone who has been admitted to membership of an affiliated club, and 2.4 gives them access to all services and benefits of membership.

The proposed change to the bye-laws, is the inclusion of the following:

The EBU may refuse membership, or remove it, only for good cause such as conduct or character likely to bring the organisation into disrepute. Appeal against refusal or removal may be made to a committee constituted from the members of the EBU Disciplinary Panel.

Any such refusal or removal would apply only to membership of the EBU and not to their membership of any affiliated clubs, which have the right to determine their own membership.

It is important to note that refusal to accept membership would only be acceptable for good cause based on the reasons given above, and the EBU would of course need to ensure such refusals complied with all anti-discrimination laws.

Please respond to Chief Executive, Gordon Rainsford – gordon@ebu.co.uk – before 21st December