SPORT MEMBERSHIP DISCUSSION PAPER
August 2015

Purpose
The purpose of this paper is to outline a proposal for the introduction of a Sport Membership model for the collection of club member participation data and to ensure a fee differentiation between University of Melbourne Students and non-Students.

Background
MU Sport reports on participation rates and percentage of students engaged in activities and accessing facilities on an annual basis to help demonstrate the importance of overall club participation to the University for the purpose of seeking additional University resources. Fitness Centre individual membership data and casual venue hire users are currently captured accurately through the point of sale system.

Sport is partially funded from the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) that University of Melbourne (UoM) Students are required to pay each year. Approximately $2.5M is provided to MU Sport to support programs and sports clubs. MU Sport is required to demonstrate the fee differentiation between UoM Students and non-Students. Previously access to sporting facilities, programs and clubs at the University was limited to students and staff only and Directors Discretion, permission from the Director was required for non-students to join clubs. This restriction has relaxed over time but the impact on this change has not been accurately measured.

The Club Funding Review is examining the data and participation of each club and large gaps in club data have identified the need to ensure a more accurate collection of club membership data.

Proposal
MU Sport proposes that all non-UoM Students pay an annual fee of $99 to their Club to contribute a similar fee that UoM Students have paid through the collection of the SSAF and University support of student participation. Clubs that currently have a fee differentiation of at least $99 between UoM Students and others and accurately collect member data do not need to make any changes.

A payment of a fee for non-UoM Students would be required each year to access the facilities or programs through a valid membership card with relevant details recorded centrally. UoM Students would be required to activate a Membership at no charge.

A membership process will ensure that:

- All participants agree to the terms of access
- They can be identified individually for insurance coverage and other risk management strategies
- The data on participation is collected more consistently across the University
- Data can be provided to the University to request for further resourcing support for sport
- Communication with users can be done directly to measure and improve services
- Non-students will contribute equally to programs and clubs
- A proposed annual fee of $99 would be introduced for non-UoM Students
- This fee would be returned directly to the relevant Club
- The fee is required to be paid for each sports club joined
- Clubs that already charge non-UoM Students a fee of $99 or more than the equivalent Student fee would not need to change their fee structure
Fee Rationale
The $99 fee proposed for non-UoM students is based on the following assumptions:

- MU Sport receives approximately $53 per student from the SSAF funding.
- The University provides capital support of $500,000 per year for major projects to support student participation. With 11,234 (2014 actuals) student fitness and club members this equates to $44 per student.
- The University covers the $400,000 depreciation charges on all sport buildings to service student participation. With 11,234 (2014 actuals) student fitness and club members this equates to $35 per student.
- A total of $132 per student is therefore contributed by the University and UoM students to sport.
- This figure has been reduced to $99 in recognition that this may be a significant cost increase to some club’s non-UoM Student membership price.

Club Benefits
The introduction of a Sport Membership would aid clubs by:

- Streamlining the collection of their member details and relevant data
- Enabling compliance with University insurance requirements to ensure that all club members are covered while conducting club activities
- Provide better reporting data for internal club use and for MU Sport to accurately report to the University on club participation
- Club volunteers and coaches would not be required to pay the Membership fee unless they also played/participated in the sport/activity
- Club volunteers and coaches who didn’t play would be still be required to sign up for a Membership at a $0 fee to ensure insurance coverage for personal injury as well as corporate governance
- All Club members would have access to the Member rates for MU Sport casual Venue Hire

Implementation and Process
MU Sport aims to implement the Sport Membership model for Clubs from January 2016. Sport Development staff will be available to work with clubs to analyse their membership fee structure and to assist with setting membership fees to fit this model where required.

Data and fee collection would be done through either an existing online system operated by the club or using the University eCart system which has no transaction fees. Information and fees collected by MU Sport would be passed back to each club. Data collected by each club would be required to be sent to MU Sport in a timely manner.

The following data would be collected when signing up for a Sport Membership:

- Name
- Address
- Email
- Mobile phone
- Eligibility:
  - Student (undergrad/postgrad/student number)
  - Staff/community/alumni/international student/non-UoM student
- Member Type:
  - Active/Coach or Instructor/Club Official/Non-Active

The annual fee would cover the period from January to December and new membership purchases after 1 August would be charged at $49 for the remainder of the calendar year (for those that have not participated in prior club activities).

A Sport Membership was introduced in January 2015 for casual users of the fitness services, tennis courts, the pool and other facilities and has improved the data on those users.

A review at the end of 2016 would be conducted to examine the success of the membership.

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