STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR SHARING OF UNIVERSITY SPORTS FACILITIES WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish a systematic, transparent, and safe mechanism for sharing the University's sports facilities with local schools and members of the general public.

The SOP aims to promote community engagement, encourage sports participation, improve physical fitness, nurture sporting talent, and optimise the utilisation of University sports infrastructure while ensuring that the academic, recreational, training, and competitive sports requirements of the University are not adversely affected.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this SOP are to:

1. Facilitate access to designated University sports facilities for local schools and the general public.
2. Promote physical fitness, sportsmanship, teamwork, discipline, and healthy lifestyles.
3. Encourage school-level sports participation and the development of sporting talent among children and young people.
4. Strengthen collaboration between the University, educational institutions, sports organisations, and the local community.
5. Establish transparent procedures for requesting, approving, scheduling, and monitoring the use of sports facilities.
6. Ensure the safety, security, cleanliness, and proper maintenance of sports infrastructure and equipment.
7. Ensure equitable and responsible utilisation of facilities in accordance with University priorities and available resources.
8. Maintain appropriate records to assess community participation, institutional impact, and opportunities for improvement.

3. SCOPE and Applicability

This SOP shall apply to the sharing of University-owned or University-managed sports facilities with:

- Government and private schools in the surrounding locality.
- Recognised educational institutions and community organisations.

- Local sports clubs and youth groups, where approved.
- Members of the general public.
- Other authorised community groups approved by the competent University authority.

Facilities covered under this SOP may include, subject to availability:

- Outdoor playgrounds and sports grounds.
- Cricket and football grounds.
- Athletics tracks and multipurpose playfields.
- Basketball, volleyball, and badminton courts.
- Indoor sports halls and table-tennis facilities.
- Gymnasiums and fitness centres, where authorised.
- Walking tracks and designated recreational areas.
- Sports equipment and supporting amenities approved for external use.

Access to specialised facilities, high-risk sports areas, laboratories, swimming pools, or other restricted facilities shall be governed by additional safety requirements wherever applicable.

4. DEFINITIONS

University Sports Facilities: Sports grounds, courts, indoor sports halls, fitness areas, equipment, and associated amenities owned or managed by the University.

External Users: Local schools, members of the general public, sports clubs, community organisations, and other authorised groups that are not using the facilities solely as part of regular University activities.

Nodal Officer: The officer designated by the University to coordinate requests and oversee the sharing of sports facilities.

Competent Authority: The University authority authorised to approve access, prescribe conditions, and resolve matters relating to the use of sports infrastructure.

Facility In-charge: The person responsible for the day-to-day operation, safety checks, supervision, and maintenance of a particular sports facility.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 University Administration

The University Administration shall:

- Approve the SOP and the overall framework for sharing sports facilities.
- Designate the nodal officer and competent authority.

- Approve applicable charges, concessions, exemptions, and other conditions, where relevant.
- Provide administrative support for safety, security, and maintenance.
- Review the annual report on community use of sports facilities.

5.2 Department of Physical Education and Sports / Sports Council

The Department or Sports Council shall:

- Coordinate requests from external users.
- Maintain an inventory of facilities available for community use.
- Publish approved usage timings and applicable conditions.
- Assess the feasibility of requests in consultation with facility in-charges.
- Prepare and maintain the facility booking schedule.
- Coordinate sports programmes with local schools and community groups.
- Monitor utilisation, collect feedback, and recommend improvements.

5.3 Nodal Officer

The nodal officer shall:

- Receive and scrutinise applications.
- Verify the proposed purpose, number of participants, date, duration, and facility requirements.
- Coordinate safety and logistical arrangements.
- Communicate approval, rejection, or modifications to applicants.
- Maintain the register of approved external users.
- Escalate incidents, disputes, and exceptional requests to the competent authority.

5.4 Facility In-charge

The facility in-charge shall:

- Inspect the facility before and after use.
- Ensure that equipment is fit for use and that obvious hazards are addressed.
- Brief users on facility-specific rules.
- Monitor compliance with approved timings and conditions.
- Report damage, accidents, unsafe conditions, and unauthorised use.
- Ensure that the facility is handed back in an appropriate condition.

5.5 Security and Medical Support Personnel

Where applicable, security personnel shall verify authorised access and maintain appropriate entry records.

The designated first-aid or medical support personnel shall assist in responding to injuries and medical emergencies in accordance with the University's emergency arrangements.

5.6 External Users

External users shall:

- Submit accurate information in the prescribed application format.
- Use the facility only for the approved purpose and during the authorised period.
- Comply with safety, security, cleanliness, and conduct requirements.
- Provide appropriate supervision for schoolchildren and other participants requiring additional protection.
- Report injuries, incidents, hazards, or damage immediately.
- Ensure that participants follow the instructions of the facility in-charge.
- Avoid unauthorised commercial activity, subletting, or transfer of permission.

6. PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING AND APPROVING ACCESS

Step 1: Publication of Available Facilities

The Department of Physical Education and Sports shall prepare an updated list of facilities available for external use.

The list should specify:

- Name and type of facility.
- Permitted activities.
- Available days and timings.
- Maximum permitted capacity, where applicable.
- Facilities and equipment included in the permission.
- Restrictions and safety requirements.
- Applicable charges or concessions.
- Contact details of the nodal officer.

The information may be published on the University website or made available through the Sports Department.

Step 2: Submission of Application

Interested schools, community organisations, sports clubs, or individuals shall submit an application to the nodal officer.

Applications should ordinarily be submitted at least **15 working days before the proposed date** for group activities or organised events. The application shall include:

1. Name and address of the applicant or institution.
2. Name and contact details of the authorised representative.
3. Purpose of using the facility.
4. Preferred facility, date, time, and duration.
5. Expected number and age range of participants.
6. Nature of the proposed sports activity.
7. Equipment and support required.
8. Details of coaches, instructors, or supervising adults, where applicable.
9. Safety and emergency arrangements for organised events.
10. Acceptance of the University's terms and conditions.

Step 3: Scrutiny of the Application

The nodal officer shall examine the application in consultation with the facility in-charge.

The scrutiny shall consider:

- Availability of the facility.
- Compatibility with academic and University sports schedules.
- Suitability of the facility for the proposed activity.
- Number and age of participants.
- Availability of supervision and safety arrangements.
- Maintenance requirements and potential wear and tear.
- Resource requirements and applicable charges.
- Any additional permissions required for the activity.

Incomplete applications may be returned for clarification or additional information.

Step 4: Approval by the Competent Authority

The nodal officer shall recommend approval, modification, or rejection based on the scrutiny.

Approval shall be granted by the authority designated by the University. The authority may approve the request with conditions, including revised timings, participant limits, restricted areas, supervision requirements, or additional safety measures.

Requests may be declined if the facility is unavailable, the proposed activity is unsafe or unsuitable, the application is incomplete, or the use would interfere with University priorities.

The decision shall be communicated to the applicant in writing or through an authorised electronic channel.

Step 5: Confirmation of Booking

Where applicable, the applicant shall:

- Accept the terms and conditions.
- Pay approved charges or deposits within the stipulated period.
- Submit any required undertaking or supporting documents.
- Confirm participant numbers and supervising personnel.
- Provide additional information requested for safety or event management.

Permission shall become effective only after completion of the applicable approval and confirmation requirements.

7. PRIORITY AND SCHEDULING OF FACILITIES

The University shall prepare a schedule for external use that protects institutional activities and promotes fair access.

The following priority order may be adopted:

1. University academic activities and compulsory student physical education.
2. University sports teams, coaching, competitions, and official events.
3. Previously approved University programmes and essential maintenance.
4. Approved activities involving local schools and community organisations.
5. Other authorised requests from members of the general public.

The University may reserve specific time slots for community use, subject to demand and resource availability.

The nodal officer shall maintain an updated booking calendar to minimise scheduling conflicts. Where two or more requests compete for the same facility, preference may be given based on the published criteria, prior commitments, educational or community benefit, and equitable access.

8. FACILITY-SPECIFIC OPERATING PROCEDURES

8.1 Outdoor Grounds and Playfields

Users shall follow the approved rules for the particular sport and shall not alter the playing surface, install equipment, or use vehicles on the grounds without permission.

The facility in-charge shall check the condition of the playing surface, goalposts, nets, boundary areas, and other relevant equipment before use.

Use may be suspended during unsafe weather, waterlogging, poor visibility, or other hazardous conditions.

8.2 Indoor Courts and Sports Halls

Users shall comply with footwear, equipment, capacity, and cleanliness requirements.

Only approved equipment shall be used. Equipment shall be returned to the designated storage area after use.

Food, drinks, or activities that may damage flooring or equipment may be restricted.

8.3 Gymnasiums and Fitness Facilities

Access shall be permitted only where specifically authorised.

Users shall comply with age restrictions, fitness equipment instructions, supervision requirements, and any medical or safety precautions prescribed for the facility.

Equipment shall not be operated by persons who have not received the necessary instructions or supervision.

8.4 Sports Equipment

Equipment may be issued to external users only with the approval of the facility in-charge. An issue-and-return register shall be maintained where equipment is loaned. Any loss or damage shall be reported immediately and addressed in accordance with the University's approved rules.

9. SAFETY, SUPERVISION, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Before granting permission, the University shall determine the safety arrangements appropriate to the proposed activity.

The following safeguards shall apply:

1. A designated person shall be responsible for supervision during organised group activities.
2. School groups shall be accompanied by authorised school staff or designated adult supervisors.
3. Participants shall receive relevant safety instructions before the activity begins.
4. The facility in-charge shall identify visible hazards and restrict access to unsafe areas.
5. First-aid facilities and emergency contact arrangements shall be made available in accordance with the nature and scale of the activity.
6. An ambulance or appropriate emergency medical support shall be contacted when required.
7. The University shall identify a process for reporting and recording accidents, injuries, and other incidents.
8. Activities shall be suspended if conditions become unsafe.

9. Additional safety, safeguarding, consent, and supervision requirements shall apply to children and other vulnerable participants.
10. Swimming pools, gymnasiums, adventure sports areas, and other specialised facilities shall have separate activity-specific safety protocols wherever applicable.

The University may require insurance, medical fitness declarations, parental consent, or other documents where justified by the nature of the activity and applicable requirements.

10. ACCESS CONTROL AND SECURITY

External users shall enter the campus through designated access points and comply with the University's security procedures.

The University may require:

- Prior submission of participant details for organised events, limited to information necessary for security and safeguarding.
- Identity verification of the authorised representative.
- Entry passes or temporary access cards.
- Use of designated routes, parking areas, and washroom facilities.
- Restrictions on access to academic buildings, laboratories, hostels, and other areas not included in the permission.

Personal information collected for access management shall be handled securely and shall not be used for unrelated purposes.

11. FEES, CONCESSIONS, AND MAINTENANCE COSTS

The University shall provide all the facilities listed for use by Local schools and General public free of cost.

It may prescribe reasonable usage charges, maintenance fees, refundable deposits, or other approved charges, where applicable for other institutions /organizations/associations etc. which are financially sound and can afford to meet the same.

Any damage to University property shall be assessed and dealt with in accordance with the University's approved rules and the terms communicated to the user.

12. RULES OF CONDUCT

All external users shall:

- Follow the instructions of University personnel.
- Use the facilities only for the approved activity.
- Maintain cleanliness and dispose of waste appropriately.

- Avoid smoking, alcohol, prohibited substances, gambling, and other activities prohibited by University rules or applicable law.
- Refrain from harassment, discrimination, abusive behaviour, and violence.
- Avoid unauthorised commercial activity, advertising, filming, or public events.
- Protect University property and equipment.
- Vacate the facility at the end of the approved period.
- Report unsafe conditions and incidents promptly.

The University may suspend or withdraw permission for violations, unsafe conduct, misrepresentation, damage, or misuse of the facility, following the applicable procedure.

13. CANCELLATION, RESCHEDULING, AND WITHDRAWAL OF PERMISSION

The University may cancel or reschedule an approved booking due to:

- Academic requirements or University events.
- Maintenance or repair work.
- Adverse weather or unsafe conditions.
- Emergency situations.
- Security or public safety concerns.
- Breach of approved conditions.

Where reasonably practicable, the nodal officer shall notify the applicant in advance and offer an alternative date or time.

Refunds, adjustments, or retention of charges shall be governed by the University's approved financial and cancellation policy.

External users seeking cancellation or rescheduling shall notify the nodal officer within the stipulated period.

14. INSPECTION, HANDOVER, AND MAINTENANCE

The facility in-charge shall inspect the facility before and after external use, particularly for organised events and activities involving equipment.

The inspection shall cover:

- General cleanliness.
- Playing surface and equipment condition.
- Damage to infrastructure.
- Waste disposal.

- Return of borrowed equipment.
- Compliance with authorised timings.
- Any incident or safety concern.

Any damage, defect, or unsafe condition shall be recorded and reported to the responsible department. Necessary corrective or maintenance action shall be initiated before the facility is used again, where required for safety.

15. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD MANAGEMENT

The Department of Physical Education and Sports shall maintain the following records, as applicable:

1. List of sports facilities available for community use.
2. Applications received from schools and other external users.
3. Approval and rejection records.
4. Facility booking and utilisation register.
5. Fee, deposit, and concession records.
6. Equipment issue-and-return register.
7. Inspection and maintenance records.
8. Accident, injury, and incident reports.
9. Feedback from participating schools and community users.
10. Annual utilisation report and action-taken report.

Records shall be maintained in physical or electronic form in accordance with the University's record-management procedures and applicable data-protection requirements.

16. FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

The University shall provide a mechanism for external users to submit feedback or raise concerns relating to facility availability, scheduling, safety, cleanliness, staff conduct, or charges.

The nodal officer shall review feedback and refer matters requiring administrative intervention to the competent authority.

Complaints shall be addressed within the University's prescribed timelines. Recurrent issues shall be reviewed to identify improvements in facility management and community access.

17. ANNUAL REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Department of Physical Education and Sports shall review the implementation of this SOP at the end of each academic year.

The review shall consider utilisation data, requests received, participation levels, user feedback, safety incidents, maintenance requirements, and opportunities for expanding community engagement.

A report containing key findings, corrective measures, and recommendations shall be submitted to the competent authority. Approved improvements shall be incorporated into the following year's implementation plan.

18. COMPLIANCE AND INTERPRETATION

All users shall comply with this SOP, the University's applicable policies, and relevant legal and safety requirements.

Any matter not covered under this SOP shall be referred to the competent University authority for a decision. The University may issue facility-specific guidelines or amend this SOP as required, subject to approval.

19. APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE

This SOP shall come into effect from the date of approval by the competent authority of the University.

ANNEXURE I: APPLICATION FORM FOR SHARING UNIVERSITY SPORTS FACILITIES

A. Applicant Details

1. Name of school / organisation / applicant:
2. Address:
3. Name of authorised representative:
4. Designation:
5. Contact number and email:
6. Type of applicant: School / Community organisation / Sports club / Individual / Other

B. Facility Requirements

1. Name of facility requested:
2. Sport or activity proposed:
3. Preferred date(s):
4. Preferred timings:
5. Duration of use:

6. Expected number of participants:
7. Age range of participants:
8. Equipment or support required:
9. Details of coaches or supervising personnel:
10. Special safety or accessibility requirements:

C. Declaration

I/We agree to comply with the University's rules and conditions governing the use of sports facilities, ensure appropriate supervision of participants, report any accident or damage, and use the facility only for the approved purpose and period.

Name and signature of applicant: _____

Date: _____

For University Use

- Facility availability verified: Yes / No
- Safety requirements reviewed: Yes / No
- Charges or deposit, if applicable: _____
- Recommendation of nodal officer: _____
- Approval of competent authority: _____
- Approved date and time: _____
- Special conditions: _____

***