

# Students ready to unleash the power of PUC!

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Five teams of students are going head to head to claim the bragging rights as the first ever National Pongathon University Challenge champions.

Teams from Gloucestershire, Oxford Brookes, Herts Student Union, Sussex and UCLAN (Preston) will be slugging it out at the Richmix venue in Shoreditch, London, on Tuesday September 23rd to claim the glory and the prizes of some superb equipment supplied by BribarTT.co.uk, PUC's official equipment supplier.

The teams earned the right to compete by topping league tables at their respective universities in the Pongathon University Challenge initiative, and the finals co-incide with the launch of this year's competition, which promises to be even bigger and better.

Pongathon University Challenge was designed by the Pongathon team on behalf of Sport England to increase participation in social ping pong and enrich student life on campus in an active, fun environment.

It is funded by Sport England in partnership with Table Tennis England and was launched at the five pilot universities in March, generating huge popularity with participation rates of over 50 students per week, many of whom had not previously taken up any other sports curriculum or played for many years.



Pongathon provides training to students in all aspects of event management including marketing and social media, integrating new skills which can be incorporated as part of coursework or used as a case study.

Other universities are now joining the PUC network for this autumn, including City University, London, Queen Mary University of London and Exeter – with many more to follow in 2015! The social ping pong revolution on campus has begun!

Alice Walton of Oxford Brookes University's Student Union, said: "Pongathon has helped improve the enrichment activities at Oxford Brookes, because it provided the students with an opportunity to socialise with other students they would not usually interact with.

"PUC has helped introduce ping pong to some 'non-sporty' students and encouraged them into the sports centre. It has definitely enabled some of the activators to develop their skill sets, but going forward we need to define the tasks that each activator will be responsible for. This will allow activators to focus on specific skill sets which will hopefully be transferable into their coursework.

"We would definitely recommend PUC to other universities because the set-up of the programme is really well organised, and the resources required from the university are minimal because PUC provide everything necessary to have a successful programme."

## How it works:

Pongathon University Challenge is a regional and national social ping pong league run by volunteer student activators passionate about developing social ping pong communities on campus.

Set against a backdrop of music and bar culture, the free weekly PUC events are inclusive, fun and social, encouraging students regardless of skill or gender to drop-in and participate in some friendly rivalry!

Add to that the 'Pongbot Challenge', a table tennis robot which takes on all-comers with the aim of returning as many balls as possible in 60 seconds and it makes for a real ping pong party!

The PUC league matches are played over the course of the term, with points for wins and draws, resulting in a

final league table.

Students buddy up and register their teams online at [www.pongathonunichallenge.com](http://www.pongathonunichallenge.com) in a slightly tongue in cheek fashion with 'selfies' and profiles. Fixtures are then published and the hype begins!

Scores and results automatically adjust the league positions each week including a National Ranking League table with the leading PUC team averages.

The excitement and energy of PUC nights are captured in images and text and published across the uni's social media platforms, blog sites, newsletters and local Rag committees.

Find out more here:

[www.pongathonunichallenge.com](http://www.pongathonunichallenge.com) / [www.facebook.com/pongathonuc](http://www.facebook.com/pongathonuc) / [www.pongathon.com](http://www.pongathon.com)

Twitter: @pongathonuc

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