

# LTA TENNIS AWARDS 2023

## University of the Year

University of Exeter Tennis Club



University  
*of* Exeter



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Driven and spearheaded by Club Captains Georgia Price and Gabe Kennedy, University of Exeter Tennis Club has over 1,000 active members and the most extensive university tennis club student workforce of 60 qualified student coaches. Nominated by Osian Leverton, they won LTA University of the Year in 2023.



University  
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## MAKING TENNIS RELEVANT, ENJOYABLE AND REWARDING FOR A DIVERSE STUDENT COMMUNITY

The club welcomes all, irrespective of ability and experience. Over 350 “programmed court hours” per week makes it the largest university tennis programme in Great Britain.

The student coaching team delivers 25 tailored weekly sessions for members, including accessibility, beginner, intermediate, advanced, cardio tennis, club drills, This Girl Can, free court time, match-play, development, and the performance BUCS (British Universities & Colleges Sport) training.

16 BUCS teams (nine male and seven female) compete weekly across the country, with an additional seven teams entered last academic year. Those new to competition can join termly box leagues, seasonal charity events and weekly WTN match play sessions at beginner, intermediate and advanced level. Members can develop their skills and improve their WTN (world tennis number) regardless of their competitive background.



## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES OFF-COURT AS WELL AS ON-COURT

The club is well-linked and the university’s tennis programme provides students with engaging part-time and full-time career opportunities within the sector. Students can develop their transferable skills to work internationally or in analytical positions, for example.

Members have flourished in roles such as YouTube management for both the Australian and US Open, and internship opportunities as system operators for Hawkeye. 11 students undertook the role of Data Entry Statistician for IBM at Wimbledon.

The coach development centre enables students to improve their confidence and coaching ability within a professional environment. Members gain level 1,2 and 3 qualifications and enrol on CPD (Continuous Professional Development) courses at a discounted rate, with prospects of paid work experience and ongoing mentorship after completion. Many go on to work for LTA affiliated tennis clubs and global businesses such as Neilson Holidays, Rafa Nadal Academy, La Manga Club and Nike.

In partnership with the university’s strength and conditioning team, two students fulfil a tennis specific strength and conditioning internship each year.



Our female dedicated “This Girl Can” group is amongst our most popular sessions. We’ve seen a 5% increase in female participation across our programme, shifting the overall club demographic to an absolute majority of 54% female members.”

**Osian Leverton,**  
University Tennis Coordinator





## PASSIONATE ABOUT MAKING TENNIS SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL STUDENTS

This year the club committee introduced a “Hardship Fund” membership option: full membership at a discounted rate of 50% to help make the programme accessible. There has been an incredible 1,000% increase in Hardship Fund membership sales. This is further enhanced by plans to develop accessibility sessions, delivered by newly trained accessibility aware student coaches.

The “This Girl Can” sessions continue to grow. With over 200 weekly ticket sales, more female students are discovering tennis.

A solid welfare structure and policy ensures that members can enjoy tennis in a safe, inclusive environment, with clear lines of communication between staff, coaches and committee members.



We are thrilled to win this prestigious award. As a university tennis club, we are ambitious, practical and dynamic, always welcoming new ideas and people. We will continue to grow and develop the already extensive programme to meet emerging community needs. This award is for everyone and was only made possible through the enthusiasm and passion displayed by our student coaching workforce, the dedication of the 12-person committee, and the full support of the full-time coaching staff and University Tennis Coordinator, combined with the continued backing from the Athletic Union.”

University of Exeter Tennis Club



The tennis programme for students at the University of Exeter is superb. It provides not only comprehensive opportunities for all students to play but also for students to develop as coaches and leaders, which in turn, has resulted several alumni now working in tennis across the world.”

Alistair Higham,  
LTA Universities Manager



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