

# **2026**

**FISU World University Championships  
Cheerleading  
Gothenburg, Sweden  
(05-07 June 2026)**



**FISU World University Championships  
Cheerleading  
DIVISIONS, RULES & REGULATIONS**

# 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading

## General Information

### I. ICU National Cheer Federation Steps to Take

- A. For the 2026 and all future FISU World University Championships Cheerleading: Contact your local FISU National University Sports Federation (NUSF) about working together to provide this opportunity to eligible University Cheer Teams (Cheerleading & Performance Cheer) for your country. NUSF contact details are available at: <http://www.fisu.net/fisu/member-associations-nusf>.

*Note: Should you require any assistance in contacting your respective FISU National University Sports Federation (NUSF), please contact ICU Secretary General Karl Olson (karl@cheerunion.org) at your earliest convenience.*

- B. Read the information enclosed in this document - to assist preparations for the 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading (National University Teams).

*Note: FISU & ICU request that the ICU National Cheer Federations, as the Cheer technical experts, provide great assistance and direction to your respective FISU NUSF for your nation's 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading (Performance Cheer & Cheerleading) University Team recruitment, selection, and coordination.*

### II. 2026 FISU WORLD UNIVERSITY CHAMPIONSHIPS CHEERLEADING LOCATIONS & DATES

Location: Gothenburg, Sweden  
Hosting Location: Kviberg Arena  
Competition Days: Friday - Sunday 05-07 June 2026

### III. Athlete Eligibility

FISU World University Championships 2026, athletes must be aged 18-25 as of December 31, 2026 (born between January 1, 2001, and December 31, 2008), be citizens of the country they represent, and be current students or recent graduates (within one year). They must be nominated by their National University Sports Federation (NUSF). Additional eligibility requirements may apply. Please confirm with the respective FISU NUSF.

### IV. Schedule of Events (Subject to change)

*Note: The arrival and departure dates for the 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading is officially scheduled for Tuesday to Monday 02-08 June 2026. However, packages for earlier arrivals and departures of teams are per the discretion of the FISU World University Championships Cheerleading- Cheerleading Organizing Committee or of individuals teams and athletes making their own arrangements. Options for longer lengths of stay packages are currently being reviewed and will be provided if and once available.*

#### Tuesday 02 June 2026

- Team arrivals begin
- Team open rehearsals (Wednesday & Thursday only)

#### Wednesday 03 June 2026

- Team arrivals continue
- Team open rehearsals (Wednesday & Thursday only)

#### Thursday 04 June 2026

- Team arrivals continue
- Team open rehearsals (Wednesday & Thursday only)
- General Technical Meeting
- Opening Ceremonies

### **FRIDAY 05 JUNE 2026 (Competition Day 1)**

- Competition Day 1 (Determines Order of Competition – Day 2)
- Day 1 Results Announced
- Head of Delegations Reception

### **SATURDAY 06 JUNE 2026 (Competition Day 2)**

- Competition Day 2 (40% of Final Total Score)
- Day 1 & Day 2 Results / Finalists Announced (Top 6 Teams per Division Advance)

### **SUNDAY 07 JUNE 2026 (Competition Day 3- FINALS)**

- Competition Day 3. Finals (60% of Final Total Score)
- Medal Ceremony
- Closing Ceremonies and Evening Activities

### **Monday 08 June 2026**

- Free Day & Departures

## **V. Safety Rules, Guidelines and Score Sheets**

Safety Rules, Guidelines and Score Sheets (“Rules”) for the 2026 FISU University Championships Cheerleading (University National Teams) will reflect the 2026 ICU World Cheerleading Championships Divisions Rules (e.g., University Elite = Elite, University Premier = Premier, University Pom = Team Pom, etc.). More details enclosed.

## **VI. Divisions (9 divisions total)**

*Note: Athlete crossovers between divisions are allowed within a respective National Delegation only. All FISU University World Championships Cheerleading athlete eligibility requirements apply.*

### **A. Cheerleading (4 divisions)**

The 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading will offer 2 levels of Cheerleading (Elite & Premier) for the All Female, and Coed University Divisions:

1. All Female Elite
2. All Female Premier
3. Coed Elite
4. Coed Premier

### **B. Performance Cheer (3 divisions)**

The 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading will offer the following Performance Cheer University Divisions:

1. Team Pom
2. Team Hip Hop
3. Team Jazz

### **C. Team Performance Cheer Doubles (2 divisions)**

The 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading will offer the following Performance Cheer University Doubles Divisions:

1. Pom Doubles (2 athletes)
2. Hip Hop Doubles (2 athletes)

## **VII. Time of Routine**

### **A. Team Cheer –All Female & Coed Divisions:**

1. Cheer Portion: Can be placed in the beginning or middle of routine. Cheer portion minimum time requirement is thirty (30) seconds. Maximum time between Cheer and Music portion: Twenty (20) seconds.
2. Music portion: Two minutes (2:00)
3. Total maximum time for the routine: Three (3:00) minutes, including the Cheer.

**B. Team Performance Cheer – Hip Hop, Pom and Jazz Divisions:**

1. Music portion: Two minutes (2:00)

**C. Team Performance Cheer – Pom Doubles and Hip Hop Doubles Divisions:**

1. Music portion: One minute, thirty seconds (1:30)

**VIII. Cheer Portion of Routine**

For the Team Cheer University All Female and Coed Divisions: A Cheer will be included in the beginning or middle of routine. Use of native language in the cheer and also using a more national pride style cheer is encouraged. The Cheer portion of the routine is worth 10 points (of 100 points) and is based on the ability to lead the crowd for the team's nation, use of signs, poms, flags, megaphones, and practical use of stunt/pyramids to lead the crowd.

**IX. Team Size/Number of athletes per team**

**A. Team Cheer –All Female Elite, All Female Premier, Coed Elite & Coed Premier Divisions**

Minimum 16 athletes, maximum 20 athletes (2 alternates allowed)

**B. Team Performance Cheer –Hip Hop, Pom & Jazz Divisions**

Minimum 16 athletes, maximum 20 athletes (2 alternates allowed)

**C. Team Performance Cheer –Pom Doubles and Hip Hop Doubles Divisions**

Two (2) athletes (No alternates allowed)

**X. Performance Surface**

**A. Cheerleading- All Female Elite, All Female Premier, Coed Elite & Coed Premier Divisions:** No spring floor, standard foam mat surface. (9 strips/42 feet x 54 feet or 12.8 meters x 16.5 meters)

**B. Performance Cheer - Team Pom, Hip Hop, Jazz, Pom Doubles and Hip Hop Doubles Divisions:**

Marley performance floor or a wooden parquet floor surface. (minimum surface area of 42 feet x 42 feet or 12.8 meters x 12.8 meters)

**XI. Crossovers (athletes participating in multiple divisions)**

Athlete crossovers between divisions are allowed within a respective National Delegation only. All FISU University World Championships Cheerleading athlete eligibility requirements apply.

**XII. Residence of Athletes**

All athletes are required to comply with FISU World University Championships eligibility requirements.

**XIII. Music Guidelines**

- A. For the 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading, all National Teams must follow the ICU (<http://cheerunion.org/education/musicinfo/>) Music Copyrights Educational Initiative.
- B. By signing this agreement, each team agrees with the following: "I have read and understand the ICU Music Copyrights Educational Initiative and all sound recordings used in our team's music shall only be used with the written license from the owner(s) of the sound recordings."
- C. Teams must check Music Provider list for updates and changes periodically. For any questions on music and the music guidelines, teams should email [portal@cheerunion.org](mailto:portal@cheerunion.org).
- D. Teams must be able to provide proof of licensing, in the form of a printed copy, during the registration at the Championships.
- E. If a team does not have proof of music licensing available, they will be allowed to perform to an optional approved track of music or a track with counts (provided by the ICU) or can count verbally.
- F. If a team cannot provide proof of licensing, and do not perform to an optional approved track of music or to counts, the team will be disqualified from the competition and not allowed to perform or compete.
- G. If there are concerns regarding a certain team's use of music, a Challenge Form must be completed immediately following the team's performance.

- H. A challenge can only be made by the official coach or an official National Federation representative of a team competing at the event at where the challenge is being made.
- I. Challenge Process:
- All music challenges must be submitted in writing to the International Cheer Union head official.
  - There will be a \$100 USD fee to request a music challenge and must be in the form of USA currency.
  - Fees collected will be returned if the challenge is correct.
  - If the team challenged can provide documentation during the event or can be verified, the fees will be donated to a local children's charity, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
  - If the team challenged can provide documentation that requires further review, a decision will be finalized within 48 hours of the event.
- J. Each team is required to have a responsible adult remain at the music station that knows the routine and music. This representative is responsible for start the music and stopping the music in case of technical malfunction or injury. Should this responsible adult choose not to stay at the music table for the duration of the routine, and a malfunction occurs, teams may or may not be permitted to perform the routine again.
- K. If available and if applicable, it is recommended that teams who prepare their routine music on a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) should assure the volume of the music is at "0". Should a DAW be available, a few additional reminders:
- Most DAWs have a default that sets a track at -6 when a track is added
  - Check to see if there is a normalization process after the work is rendered/saved
- L. All teams must provide their own device for use on the event provided sound system. Music should be on a digital music player/iPod/iPhone. CD's will no longer be allowed, and CD players will not be provided at competition.
- M. Use of a Smart Phone for playing routine music is not recommended due to the probably of music interference during the routine.
- N. MP3 devices must be free of any cover (protective, decorative, or otherwise) to assure an unobstructed connection with the event sound system.
- O. It is important that all devices have a headphone connection component/jack to connect to the sound system and that all devices are fully charged, volume turned up and placed in airplane mode.
- P. All device connection components/jacks must be clean and free of any debris to prevent a music malfunction. Should a team's device not have a headphone connection component/jack, then the team must have an adapter to accommodate this device requirement on site for the competition.
- Q. For purposes of family viewing and in promotion of international sport, routine music must not include content that is suggestive/sexual in nature, offensive, vulgar or inferences violence of any kind. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).
- R. Excessive use of sound effects and/or the addition of generic and/or custom voiceovers to the music are not appropriate and should be avoided. Exceptions can include the name of the team, team mascot, team colors, the team's country, etc. which is recommended to be used a maximum of 2 times throughout the routine. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).

#### **XIV. LOGO USAGE / BRANDING GUIDELINES**

Teams must follow the FISU branding guidelines.

#### **XV. MEDIA POLICY**

Teams must follow the FISU media policies.

#### **XVI. APPEARANCES, ENDORSEMENTS, AND PUBLICITY**

All teams winning titles or awards agree to have all appearances, endorsements and publicity approved through FISU.

#### **XIII. ICU ANTI-DOPING RULES AND REGULATIONS – GUIDELINES & OPERATIONS PROCEDURES**

FISU & ICU are committed to doping free sport and strictly follows the enclosed guidelines and procedures of the ICU WADA approved Anti-Doping guidelines and procedures for the safety of our athletes and fairness of play for our sport. [https://cheerunion.org.ismmedia.com/ISM3/std-content/repos/Top/WADA/docs/ICU\\_Anti-Doping-Rules\\_21.pdf](https://cheerunion.org.ismmedia.com/ISM3/std-content/repos/Top/WADA/docs/ICU_Anti-Doping-Rules_21.pdf)

# 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading

## CHEERLEADING DIVISIONS RULES & REGULATIONS

### All Female Elite, All Female Premier, Coed Elite and Coed Premier Divisions

#### I. GENERAL RULES

- A. All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/advisor/coach.
- B. Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.
- C. All directors, advisors and coaches should have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury.

#### II. TOURNAMENT

- A. The event will take place on Friday 5 June 2026 to Sunday 7 June 2026 in Gothenburg, Sweden.  
FRIDAY 5 JUNE 2026  
Day 1: Competition Round 1 (Determines Day 2 order of competition)  
*Note: The General Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony to be held on Thursday 4 June 2026.*  
SATURDAY 6 JUNE 2026  
Day 2: Competition Round 2 (40% of final score)  
SUNDAY 7 JUNE 2026  
Day 3: Finals (60% final score), Awards & Closing Ceremony
- B. The competition is scheduled to be held at the Kviberg Arena.
- C. The tournament officials shall have the right to alter the time and location of the competition in the event changes become necessary due to inclement weather, facility problems, television production requirements, or any other situation deemed by the tournament officials to be essential to the successful execution of the championship.

#### III. HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

- A. **RULES & PROCEDURES:** Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the director/coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance. For any questions concerning the legality of a move or trick, it is recommended to send a video copy of any skill of question to [cheer.rules@cheerunion.org](mailto:cheer.rules@cheerunion.org).
- B. **PERFORMANCE:** Any questions concerning the team's performance should be made to the Competition Director immediately after the team's performance and/or following the outcome of the competition and should be made exclusively by the advisor/coach.

#### IV. SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.
- B. The advisor and coach of each team is responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
- C. In the promotion of international sport and the global athletic image of the Sport of Cheer, facial expressions and mannerisms on stage should be genuine, natural and authentic. Forced, choreographed, aggressive, vulgar and offensive facial expressions and gestures are not appropriate and should be avoided. Singing and/or pantomiming the lyrics is also not appropriate to the sport and should be avoided.
- D. Actions that exhibit excessive boasting, a delay in competition, poor sportsmanship, unprofessional behavior, etc. may be penalized. These actions include but are not limited to
  - An athlete calling unnecessary attention to themselves (e.g. high fives, chest bumps, etc.)

- Excessive pre- or post-competition team rituals (team bonding traditions must take place behind the stage area)
  - Excessive celebration (e.g. athletes wrapping their legs around coaches and/or each other, victory dances, etc.)
- E. For more information regarding ICU's sportsmanship policies, please see the following ICU sportsmanship guidelines video: <https://cheerunion.org/coaches-sportsmanship/>

## **V. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE**

### **A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
2. The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.

### **B. FAULT OF TEAM**

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.

### **C. INJURY**

1. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are:
  - a. competition officials
  - b. the advisor / coach from the team performing
  - c. an injured individual.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.
4. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
  - a. The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) **AND THEN** the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
  - b. If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
  - c. In the event of a suspected concussion, the participant cannot return to perform without clearance from a physician (MD/DO) that has training related to head injuries, and waiting 24 hours, even with a waiver from a parent or legal guardian.
  - d. In addition to the head injury policy, we encourage you to be familiar with the specific law where the competition is being held.



## **VI. INTERPRETATIONS AND/OR RULINGS**

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Competition Officials. The Competition Officials will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Competition Officials will consist of the Competition Director, Head Judge, and the FISU Technical Delegate.

## **VII. DISQUALIFICATION**

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these “Rules and Regulations” will be subject to disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition, and may also forfeit the opportunity to participate the following FISU World University Championships Cheerleading.

## **VIII. SPOTTER POLICY**

In an effort to promote a higher level of safety for competing athletes, the FISU World University Championships Cheerleading will provide spotters for all rehearsal and competition floors. To provide the safest competitive environment, teams should not attempt skills beyond their ability level.

## **XII. GENERAL SAFETY RULES**

All Cheerleading Teams must follow the ICU General Safety Rules (see Page 3):

[https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU\\_2026\\_Rules\\_CH-PC.pdf](https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU_2026_Rules_CH-PC.pdf)

## **XIV. CHEERLEADING DIVISIONS (BY LEVEL) - SAFETY RULES**

For Safety Rules by Level/Division, please reference the ICU Safety Rules Document link enclosed here [https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU\\_2026\\_Rules\\_CH-PC.pdf](https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU_2026_Rules_CH-PC.pdf) and reference the respective Level/Division Page Number(s) as noted below:

A. ICU Elite Division Rules (All Female & Coed Elite Divisions): See Pages 22-25

B. ICU Premier Division Rules (All Female & Coed Premier Divisions): See Pages 25-29

## **XV. GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

For a full listing of the ICU Cheerleading Glossary of Terms (with video and visual examples as well), please see <https://cheerunion.org/cheerleadingglossary/>. For any questions or requests for further clarification, please email [cheer.rules@cheerunion.org](mailto:cheer.rules@cheerunion.org)

## **XVI. TIME LIMITATIONS, MUSIC, AND ENTRANCES/EXITS**

- A. Each team will have a maximum of 2 minutes for music (2:00) and a recommended 30 seconds (:30) Cheer that must be performed in the beginning or middle of the routine.
- B. The Total maximum time for the routine will be three (3:00) minutes, including the Cheer.
- C. Every effort should be made to ensure that the lyrics of the music are appropriate for all audience members.
- D. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement, voice or note of the music whichever comes first.
- E. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice or note of the music whichever comes last.
- F. If a team exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. One point deduction for 5-10 seconds and three (3) point deduction for 11 seconds and over per judge.
- G. BECAUSE PENALTIES ARE SEVERE, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT ALL TEAMS TIME THEIR PERFORMANCE SEVERAL TIMES PRIOR TO COMPETITION AND LEAVE A SEVERAL SECOND CUSHION TO ALLOW FOR VARIATIONS IN SOUND EQUIPMENT.
- H. Each team must have a coach/representative to play their music. This person is responsible for bringing the music to the music table and pushing “play” and “stop” for the team.
- I. In order to keep the competition on time, teams must enter and exit the performance floor as quickly as possible. Teams will have limited time to enter the floor and start their routine. Elaborate choreographed entrances will not be allowed. Additional conditions are as follows:



- Entrances: When teams are introduced, teams must take the floor and assume their starting positions within 20 seconds.
  - Exits: At the conclusion of the routine and following the completed dismount of the team (e.g. from an ending pyramid(s) or stunt(s)), teams must exit the floor immediately and must be off the performance floor within 20 seconds.
- J. For purposes of family viewing and in promotion of international sport, routine music must not include content that is suggestive/sexual in nature, offensive, vulgar or inferences violence of any kind. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).
- K. Excessive use of sound effects and/or the addition of generic and/or custom voiceovers to the music are not appropriate and should be avoided. Exceptions can include the name of the team, team mascot, team colors, the team's country, etc. which is recommended to be used a maximum of 2 times throughout the routine. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).

## **XVII. COMPETITION AREA**

- A. The performance floor will be approximately 42 feet x 54 feet/12.8 meters x 16.5 meters. The surface will be a standard ICU Olympic-style foam Cheerleading mat.
- B. Teams may line up anywhere inside the competition area.
- C. No penalty for stepping outside the area.

## **XVIII. JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORESHEETS**

The judges will score the teams according to the judging criteria on a 100-point system. ICU World Championships scoresheets can be accessed <https://cheerunion.org/championships/cheerleading/>. For any questions and/or for further clarification as needed, please email [portal@cheerunion.org](mailto:portal@cheerunion.org)

## **XIX. JUDGING PROCEDURES**

The judges for the event will be appointed at the sole discretion of the International Cheer Union. As the teams make their presentations, the judges will score the teams using a 100-point system. The highest score and the lowest score given for each team will be dropped and the remaining judges' scores will be totaled to determine the overall team score. In the event of a first-place tie, the high and low score will be added back into the total score. If a tie remains, the ranking points from each judge will be used to break the tie.

## **XX. SCORES AND RANKINGS**

Individual score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available only to coaches or captains at the conclusion of the competition. No scores or rankings will be given over the telephone. After each round of competition, teams will receive the judges' score sheets as well as their score and the top score in the group. In addition, teams will receive a ranking sheet with the names and scores of their respective team's final placement.

## **XXI. FINALITY OF DECISIONS**

By participating in this championship, each team agrees that decision by the judges will be final and will not be subject for review. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition, and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.

## **XXII. SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS**

The 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading will follow a 3-day event format. ICU reserves the right to determine if a semi-final or final round will be necessary. Should a semi-final round and final round be deemed necessary, in the event of a tie for the final team advancing, both teams that are tied will advance. Tournament officials will have the full authority to make the final determination of the number of teams selected to advance to the next round and/or adjustments to this format based on registration and fairness to all teams. If a semi-final round and final round structure of competition are deemed not necessary, ICU will structure the event to provide the best opportunities for the athletes and the integrity of the FISU World University Cheerleading Championships.

### XXIII. PENALTIES

A five (5) point per judge penalty will be assessed to any team violating any of the specific rules as stated above. This deduction does not apply to violations mentioned above that are designated a lesser point value. For any questions concerning the legality of a move or trick, it is recommended to send a video copy of any skill of question to [cheer.rules@cheerunion.org](mailto:cheer.rules@cheerunion.org).

***We have reviewed the Rules and Regulations with our entire team and we hereby accept the Rules and Regulations as a fair and integral part of the competition and agree to adhere to the rules, policies and procedures contained herein. Rule clarifications and changes may occur throughout the season.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Country

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coach/Director's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Division

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Captain's Signature

# 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading

## PERFORMANCE CHEER DIVISIONS RULES & REGULATIONS

### Team Pom, Team Hip Hop, Team Jazz, Pom Doubles & Hip Hop Doubles

#### I. GENERAL RULES

- A. All teams must be supervised during all official functions by a qualified director/advisor/coach.
- B. Coaches must require proficiency before skill progression. Coaches must consider the athlete, group, and team skill levels with regard to proper performance level placement.
- C. All directors, advisors and coaches should have an emergency response plan in the event of an injury.

#### II. TOURNAMENT

- A. The event will take place on Friday 5 June 2026 to Sunday 7 June 2026 in Gothenburg, Sweden.

##### FRIDAY 5 JUNE 2026

Day 1: Competition Round 1 (Determines Day 2 order of competition)

*Note: The General Technical Meeting & Opening Ceremony to be held on Thursday 4 June 2026.*

##### SATURDAY 6 JUNE 2026

Day 2: Competition Round 2 (40% of final score)

##### SUNDAY 7 JUNE 2026

Day 3: Finals (60% final score), Awards & Closing Ceremony

- B. The competition is scheduled to be held at the Kviberg Arena.
- C. The tournament officials shall have the right to alter the time and location of the competition in the event changes become necessary due to inclement weather, facility problems, television production requirements, or any other situation deemed by the tournament officials to be essential to the successful execution of the championship.

#### III. HOW TO HANDLE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

- A. **RULES & PROCEDURES:** Any questions concerning the rules or procedures of the competition will be handled exclusively by the director / coach of the team and will be directed to the Competition Director. Such questions should be made prior to the team's competition performance. For any questions concerning the legality of a move or trick, it is recommended to send a video copy of any skill of question to [pc.rules@cheerunion.org](mailto:pc.rules@cheerunion.org).
- B. **PERFORMANCE:** Any questions concerning the team's performance should be made to the Competition Director immediately after the team's performance and/or following the outcome of the competition and should be made exclusively by the advisor/coach.

#### IV. SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. All participants agree to conduct themselves in a manner displaying good sportsmanship throughout the competition with positive presentation upon entry and exit from the performance area as well as throughout the routine.
- B. The advisor and coach of each team are responsible for seeing that team members, coaches, parents, and other persons affiliated with the team conduct themselves accordingly. Severe cases of unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for disqualification.
- C. In the promotion of international sport and the global athletic image of the Sport of Cheer, facial expressions and mannerisms on stage should be genuine, natural and authentic. Forced, choreographed, aggressive, vulgar and offensive facial expressions and gestures are not appropriate and should be avoided. Singing and/or pantomiming the lyrics is also not appropriate to the sport and should be avoided.
- D. Actions that exhibit excessive boasting, a delay in competition, poor sportsmanship, unprofessional behavior, etc. may be penalized. These actions include but are not limited to:

- An athlete calling unnecessary attention to themselves or a team using long and excessive entrances (e.g. aggressive motioning/taunting to the crowd, moving to multiple formations and patterns to begin the routine, etc.)
  - Excessive pre- or post-competition team rituals (team bonding traditions must take place behind the stage area)
  - Excessive celebration (e.g. athletes wrapping their legs around coaches and/or each other, victory dances, etc.)
- E. For more information regarding ICU's sportsmanship policies, please see the following ICU sportsmanship guidelines video: <https://cheerunion.org/coaches-sportsmanship/>

## **V. INTERRUPTION OF PERFORMANCE**

### **A. UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

1. If, in the opinion of the competition officials, a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the competition equipment, facilities, or other factors attributable to the competition rather than the team, the team affected should **STOP** the routine.
2. The team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred. The degree and effect of the interruption will be determined by the competition officials.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.

### **B. FAULT OF TEAM**

1. In the event a team's routine is interrupted because of failure of the team's own equipment, the team must either continue the routine or withdraw from the competition.
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If decided by officials, the team will perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.

### **C. INJURY**

1. The only persons that may stop a routine for injury are:
  - a. competition officials
  - b. the advisor / coach from the team performing
  - c. an injured individual
2. The competition officials will determine if the team will be allowed to perform at a later time. If the competition officials allow a routine to be performed at a later time, the spot in the schedule where the re-performance is to take place is at the sole discretion of competition officials. The team may perform the routine again in its entirety but will be evaluated **ONLY** from the point where the interruption occurred.
3. If a team needs to re-perform a routine but fails to do the routine in its entirety, then this team will receive a score based on the lower-level performance.
4. The injured participant that wishes to perform may not return to the competition floor unless:
  - a. The competition officials receive clearance from, first, the medical personnel attending to that participant, the parent (if present) **AND THEN** the head coach/advisor of the competing team.
  - b. If the medical personnel do not clear the participant, the participant can only return to the competition if a parent or legal guardian in attendance signs a return to participation waiver.
  - c. In the event of a suspected concussion, the participant cannot return to perform without clearance from a physician (MD/DO) that has training related to head injuries, and waiting 24 hours, even with a waiver from a parent or legal guardian.
  - d. In addition to the head injury policy, we encourage you to be familiar with the specific law where the competition is being held.

## **VI. INTERPRETATIONS AND/OR RULINGS**

Any interpretation of any aspect of these Rules and Regulations or any decision involving any other aspect of the competition will be rendered by the Competition Officials. The Competition Officials will render a judgment in an effort to ensure that the competition proceeds in a manner consistent with the general spirit and goals of the competition. The Competition Officials will consist of the Competition Director, Head Judge, and the FISU Technical Delegate.

## **VII. DISQUALIFICATION**

Any team that does not adhere to the terms and procedures of these “Rules and Regulations” will be subject to disqualification from the competition, will automatically forfeit any right to any prizes or awards presented by the competition, and may also forfeit the opportunity to participate the following FISU World University Championships – Cheerleading.

## **VIII. SPECIFIC ROUTINE GUIDELINES**

### **A. CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING**

See Page 31: “A. CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUMING”

[https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU\\_2026\\_Rules\\_CH-PC.pdf](https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU_2026_Rules_CH-PC.pdf)

### **B. TIME LIMITATIONS, MUSIC, AND ENTRANCES/EXITS**

1. Each **Team** will have a maximum of two (2) minutes to perform their routine & demonstrate their expertise.
2. Each **Doubles** will have a maximum of 1 minute and 30 seconds (1:30) to perform their routine & demonstrate their expertise.
3. Every effort should be made to ensure that the lyrics of the music are appropriate for all audience members.
4. Timing will begin with the first choreographed movement, voice or note of the music.
5. Timing will end with the last choreographed movement, voice or note of the music.
6. If a performance (Team or Doubles) exceeds the time limit, a penalty will be assessed for each violation. There will be a one (1) point deduction per judge for 5-10 seconds over the time limit and a three (3) point deduction per judge for 11 seconds or more over the time limit.
7. All teams must have a coach/representative to play their music. This person is responsible for bringing the music to the music table and pushing “play” and “stop” for the Team or Doubles performance.
8. In order to keep the competition on time, teams must enter and exit the performance floor as quickly as possible. Choreographed entrances/exits will not be allowed. Teams will have limited time to enter the floor and start their routine. Additional conditions are as follows:
  - Entrances: When teams are introduced, teams must take the floor and assume their starting positions within 20 seconds.
  - Exits: At the conclusion of the routine, teams must exit the floor immediately and must be off the performance floor within 20 seconds.
9. For purposes of family viewing and in promotion of international sport, routine music must not include content that is suggestive/sexual in nature, offensive, vulgar or inferences violence of any kind. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).
10. Excessive use of sound effects and/or the addition of generic and/or custom voiceovers to the music are not appropriate and should be avoided. Exceptions can include the name of the team, team mascot, team colors, the team’s country, etc. which is recommended to be used a maximum of 2 times throughout the routine. Violations of this rule will be impacted in the Overall category on the respective score sheet(s).

### **C. PROPS**

See Page 31: “C. PROPS”

[https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU\\_2026\\_Rules\\_CH-PC.pdf](https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU_2026_Rules_CH-PC.pdf)

#### **D. TEAM PARTICIPATION**

1. There will be 5 separate divisions:  
Team Divisions (3): Pom, Hip Hop & Jazz  
Doubles Divisions (2): Pom & Hip Hop
2. Each division will have a separate title winner.
3. Each university team may be comprised of as many individual team members as desired; however, the team may only participate in a division with a minimum of 16 performers (Team Pom, Hip Hop and Jazz) and a maximum of 20 on the floor at one time. It is permissible, but not compulsory, that the same individual team members compete in each division.
4. Each Doubles will be comprised of 2 team members.
5. Participants will be allowed to crossover per the FISU World University Championships Cheerleading crossover rules.
6. Each athlete must be compliant with FISU eligibility requirements
7. Females and males are allowed to participate on the team.

#### **E. COMPETITION AREA**

1. The performance floor will be approximately 42 x 42 feet/12.8 x 12.8 meters.
2. The surface will be professional grade material (e.g., Marley floor or a wooden parquet floor)
3. There is no penalty for stepping outside the performance floor area.

#### **F. CATEGORY DEFINITIONS**

**POM**: Incorporates the use of proper Pom motion technique that is sharp, clean, and precise while allowing for the use of concepts from Jazz, Hip Hop and High Kick. An emphasis is placed on group execution including synchronization, uniformity and spacing. The choreography of a dynamic and effective routine focuses on musicality, staging of visual effects through fluid and creative transitions, levels, and groups, along with complexity of movement and skills. Poms are required to be used throughout the routine. The uniform/costuming should reflect the category style. See score sheet for more information.

**HIP HOP**: Incorporates authentic street style influenced movement that has evolved from Hip Hop culture. Routines should exhibit originality, creativity and movement techniques with engagement, high energy and genuine connection to the music. An emphasis is placed on group execution, including synchronization, uniformity, and spacing. Choreography should highlight genuine groove, authentic rhythm, vibe and style, intricate musicality, visual staging, complexity of movement and athleticism. Costuming should reflect Hip Hop culture in a way that supports both authenticity and performance. See score sheet for more information.

**IAZZ**: Incorporates traditional or stylized dynamic movements with strength, continuity, presence, and proper technical execution. An emphasis is placed on group execution including synchronization, uniformity, and spacing. The choreography of a dynamic and effective routine utilizes musicality, staging, complexity of movement and skills. The overall impression of the routine should be lively, energetic, and motivating, with the understanding that the dynamics of movement may change to utilize musicality. The uniform/costuming should reflect the category style. See score sheet for more information.

#### **IX. SPECIFIC RULES**

A five (5) point per judge penalty will be assessed to any team violating any of the specific rules as stated herein. This deduction does not apply to violations mentioned elsewhere that are designated a lesser point value.

## **X. PERFORMANCE CHEER DIVISIONS - RULES BY LEVEL/GENRE**

For Safety Rules by Level/Division, please reference the ICU Safety Rules Document link enclosed here [https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU\\_2026\\_Rules\\_CH-PC.pdf](https://cheerunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/ICU_2026_Rules_CH-PC.pdf) and reference the respective Level/Division Page Number(s) as noted below:

- A. ICU Pom Rules – Premier (Team Pom and Pom Doubles Divisions): See Pages 35-36
- B. ICU Hip Hop Rules – Premier (Team Hip Hop and Hip Hop Doubles Divisions): See Pages 39-40
- C. ICU Jazz Rules – Premier (Team Jazzr Division): See Pages 42-43

## **XI. GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

For a full listing of the ICU Cheerleading Glossary of Terms (with video and visual examples as well), please see <https://cheerunion.org/performancecheerglossary/>. For any questions or requests for further clarification. Please email [pc.rules@cheerunion.org](mailto:pc.rules@cheerunion.org)

## **XII. JUDGING CRITERIA & SCORESHEETS**

The judges will score the teams according to the judging criteria on a 100-point system. ICU World Championships scoresheets can be accessed <https://cheerunion.org/championships/cheerleading/>. For any questions and/or further clarification, please email [portal@cheerunion.org](mailto:portal@cheerunion.org)

## **XIII. JUDGING PROCEDURES**

The judges for the event will be appointed at the sole discretion of the International Cheer Union. As teams make their presentations, the judges will score the teams according to the judging criteria on a 100-point system. The highest score and lowest score given for each team will be dropped and the remaining judges' scores will be totaled to determine the overall team score. In the event of a first-place tie, the high and low score will be added back into the total score. If a tie remains, the ranking points from each judge will be used to break the tie.

## **XIV. SCORES AND RANKINGS**

Individual score sheets are for the exclusive use of each particular judge. Each judge has the responsibility and authority to review and submit his or her final scores and rankings prior to the final tally of the scores for all teams. Scores and rankings will be available **only** to coaches or captains at the conclusion of the competition. No scores or rankings will be given over the telephone. After each round of competition, teams will receive the judges' score sheets as well as their score and the top score in the group. In addition, teams will receive a ranking sheet with the names and scores of the teams' final placement.

## **XV. FINALITY OF DECISIONS**

By participating in this championship, each team agrees that decisions by the judges will be final and will not be subject for review. Each team acknowledges the necessity for the judges to make prompt and fair decisions in this competition, and each team therefore expressly waives any legal, equitable, administrative, or procedural review of such decisions.

## **XVI. SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS**

The 2026 FISU World University Championships Cheerleading will follow a 3-day event format. ICU reserves the right to determine if a semi-final or final round will be necessary. Should a semi-final round and final round be deemed necessary, in the event of a tie for the final team advancing, both teams that are tied will advance. Tournament officials will have the full authority to make the final determination of the number of teams selected to advance to the next round and/or adjustments to this format based on registration and fairness to all teams. If a semi-final round and final round structure of competition are deemed not necessary, ICU will structure the event to provide the best opportunities for the athletes and the integrity of the FISU World University Cheerleading Championships.



## **XVII. PENALTIES**

A five (5) point per judge penalty will be assessed to any team violating any of the specific rules as stated above. This deduction does not apply to violations mentioned above that are designated a lesser point value. For any questions concerning the legality of a move or trick, it is recommended to send a video copy of any skill of question to [pc.rules@cheerunion.org](mailto:pc.rules@cheerunion.org)

### **ON BEHALF OF MY TEAM, I HEREBY ACCEPT THE PERFORMANCE CHEER COMPETITION AND ROUTINES RULES AND GUIDELINES AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE RULES**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Team Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*City/State/Country*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Coach/Director's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Division*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Captain's Signature*

\*Retain a copy of these rules for your files\*