



CUKC for karateka: The Ultimate Guide

By Callum Reid

[Last updated 21/04/24 by Rose Zhang]

Firstly, welcome!

Congrats on your great taste in being interested in Cambridge's best sports club! This is a little guide to hopefully answer all your questions about joining us, who we are and what we do.

What is CUKC?

The Cambridge University Karate Club is the most successful sports team in Cambridge with 18 consecutive varsity wins and a national (and international) reputation for our achievements.

However, we don't just focus on the kind of success marked by our extensive trophy and medal haul, we also pride ourselves on the progression and development of our members. We are honoured to have taken many people on the journey all the way from white belt to black belt during their time at university. We have a mix of belts in the club and there's space for karateka at a wide range of levels up to and including international competitions. And, it all starts with training.....

Where do I go and when for training?

Your first two training sessions are completely free of charge so you can check us out and see what you think! We typically offer 4 sessions a week, but during the busier Easter term, we run a modified schedule with 2 general training sessions a week as below:

- **Wednesday** 22:00-21:55
 - ◆ Sports Centre Studio 1 (until 15 May)
 - ◆ TBD (after 15 May)
- **Sunday** 15:30-17:25
 - ◆ Sports Centre Studio 1 (until 25 May)
 - ◆ Newnham Old Labs (after 25 May)

Easter term sessions will run until Wednesday 19th June but do keep your eye on the mailing list & website for updates as there are occasional deviations from the above! Training outside of term is more flexible and, again, you'll need to keep your eye on the website or mailing list for more updates.

There will be additional focus squad sessions which we put on offer in a college venue in the lead up to a competition for example, for further training capacity. These will be publicised on an 'as-and-when' basis.

We do train in Gi's, but if you don't have one you can rock up in sports kit and we can help out with sourcing you one. Generally, in kumite/general sessions (as kumite may be involved) you should bring gumshield, mitts etc. but if you need to borrow any just let us know.

What exists beyond training with CUKC:

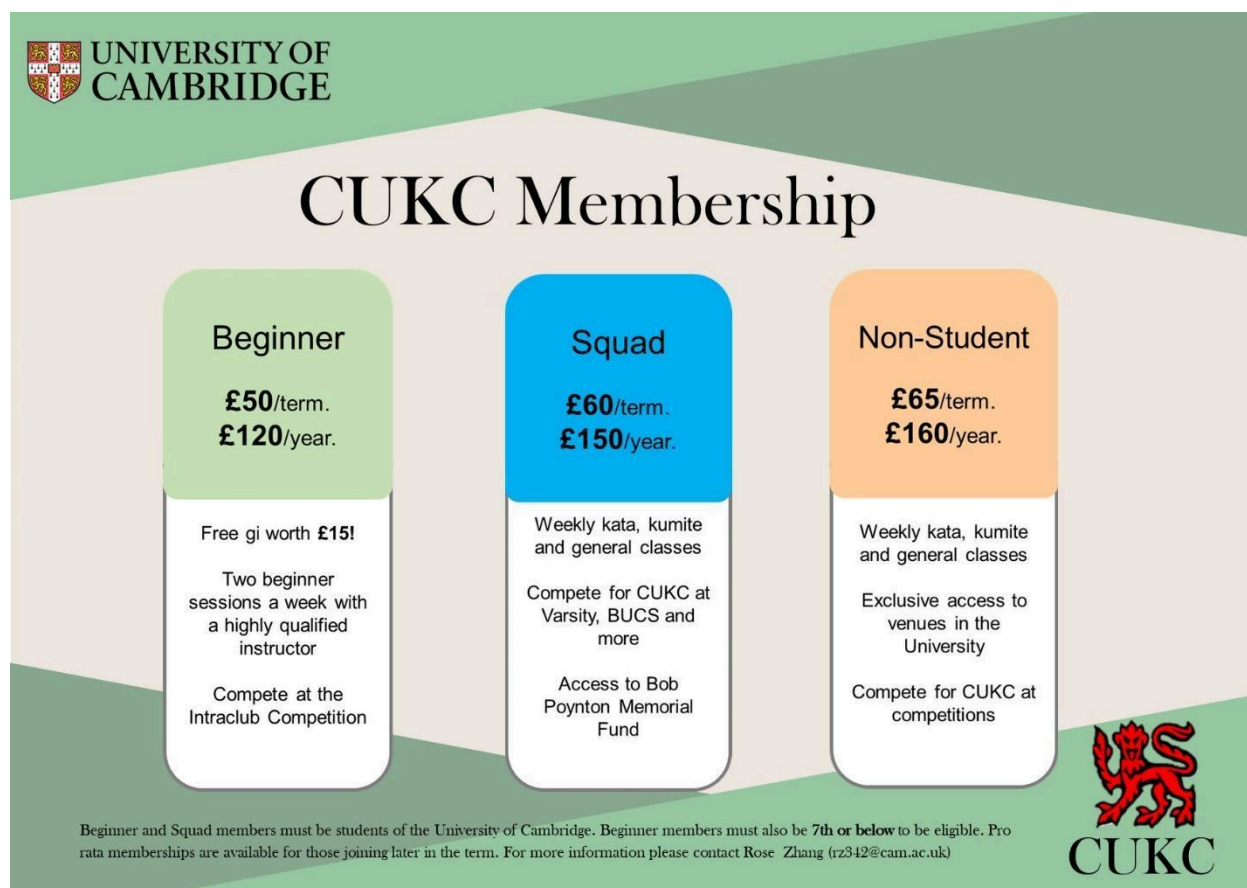
To get involved all you need to do is turn up to training really, however there's multiple ways you can get involved in the club beyond training:

- We have weekly **socials** (drinking and non-drinking) which tend to yield a large turnout from all our fab members ranging from swaps with other sports clubs in Cambridge to post-training hangouts.
- We have **competitions** and **gradings** for members to progress and achieve further in the club.
- **Committee** positions open at the end of Lent every year- do consider running, it's good fun!



How to join

CUKC runs on a membership structure, explained below:



The infographic is titled 'CUKC Membership' and features the University of Cambridge logo at the top left. It is divided into three columns representing different membership levels: Beginner (green), Squad (blue), and Non-Student (orange). Each column lists the cost per term and year, and the benefits of that membership. At the bottom left, there is a disclaimer about eligibility for students. At the bottom right, there is the CUKC logo featuring a red lion.

Membership Level	Cost	Benefits
Beginner	£50/term. £120/year.	Free gi worth £15! Two beginner sessions a week with a highly qualified instructor Compete at the Intraclub Competition
Squad	£60/term. £150/year.	Weekly kata, kumite and general classes Compete for CUKC at Varsity, BUCS and more Access to Bob Poynton Memorial Fund
Non-Student	£65/term. £160/year.	Weekly kata, kumite and general classes Exclusive access to venues in the University Compete for CUKC at competitions

Beginner and Squad members must be students of the University of Cambridge. Beginner members must also be 7th or below to be eligible. Pro rata memberships are available for those joining later in the term. For more information please contact Rose Zhang (rz342@cam.ac.uk)

You have **two free sessions to try it out** and then after that to continue with CUKC, you'll need to pick a membership that suits you. As you're interested in the club as a beginner, you'll most likely be looking at the student beginner membership. Getting it annually is a bit cheaper generally, so we recommend it.

The form with further information can be found here:

<https://forms.gle/P5g5u2rcEjwo6dBf9>

This form mentions a JSKA license. The JSKA is the organisation we are associated with (which is a part of the JKA WF England) and so having a license with them helps our insurance stuff and means you are registered as a karateka and are therefore able to grade and compete!

How to find out more

There are lots of different platforms we use to communicate with our members, you do not have to be involved in all of them and the **mailing list is the most important** one as this is central to the circulation of all important information.

- We have a **Facebook page** where we advertise public events (CUKC Events)
- We have an **Instagram page** (@camunikarate) where we advertise the club and its achievements.
- We have a **Facebook group** where committee and other members of the club circulate useful and important information (Cambridge University Karate Club)
- We have a **WhatsApp group** with a large number of our members, the invite link is frequently circulated on the weekly bulletin.
- We have a **website** www.cukc.org
- All important information is distributed through our **mailing list** so do sign up.
 - https://lists.cam.ac.uk/sympa/subscribe/soc-cukc?previous_action=info

I have done karate before but I'm coming back from a long break:

Welcome back! Don't worry, actually a large percentage of CUKC consists of people who left karate having achieved a certain grade and restarted at Cambridge with CUKC.

We have kihon (basics) classes, kata classes (the level of which will vary each week) and kumite classes. If you want to ease yourself back into it, maybe consider coming along to the general class first and you can work out which additional classes you may want to attend from there. It's okay you can take your time, join at the pace you're most comfortable. If you have any Qs about training, please do contact one of our lovely captains (details can be found at the end of this document).

I want a blue.

We are a blues status club, so you can get a karate blue with us. They take dedication to get, let's be honest they're no small feat so we'll be there for you every step of the way.



I do karate but not to a very high level

Not every single one of our athletes in CUKC is gunning for BUCS gold and that is one of the things that makes karate such a fantastic sport. This is about your personal journey with the martial art and through training you will progress so we can help you shape what direction you progress in, prioritising your goals and how you can achieve them. We'll be here to support you no matter what your goals in karate are.

I do karate but not I haven't practised Shotokan style before:

Even though we are a Shotokan club we welcome all styles. Transfers (especially of kyu grades) are usually possible without great difficulty. Most people pick it back up pretty quickly, but you can dive back in at whatever pace you wish. At BUCS and Varsity specifically, you can compete with non-Shotokan katas so whilst we only really teach Shotokan, you don't have to lose your progress or ability in another style rather you build on it.

We have a lot of different style backgrounds in our club including but not limited to; Goju Ryu, Wado, Shito Ryu, so there will likely be someone else at the club who has been through a similar transfer to you that you can chat just mention it to someone at training if you'd like to reach out and people can introduce you and make contact.

We also will be running integration classes which teach about how to transition between styles this term but generally people pick it up pretty easily.



So what does CUKC even do?

CUKC competes, trains, grades, and has fun. Many of our socials are notorious, our championship titles are envied and our reputation as an open and friendly club frequently precedes us. We have people on the England Squad, with international titles, in our club and we have a number of kyu (coloured belts) grades that we're equally proud of, for their persistence and dedication. We have a huge variety in standards in our club so we're able to accommodate you- no matter your background.

Whether you want to grade occasionally and have fun at our socials or want to train four times a week and compete at every national championship; we support you and can't wait to have you on board.

We really love this club, and we hope you will too.

A note from our Pres to you:

“Hi all, and welcome to CUKC! I'm Callum, the President for 2023-24, and I want to encourage you all to try something new and give karate a go, come to our training sessions and socials, and revel in being a part of Cambridge's most successful sports club (17 consecutive Varsity wins)! We're lucky to have such a fantastic committee and set of instructors this year, and a range of sessions on offer (kihon, kata, kumite, etc.), so whether you're a complete beginner or a karate veteran, CUKC offers something for everyone! I look forward to seeing you all soon!!! :)”

- Callum Reid [President of CUKC 2023-24]

Any Qs, please don't hesitate to contact:

President (Callum Reid): cmr67@cam.ac.uk

Men's Captain (Nirmay Jadhav): nj356@cam.ac.uk

Women's Captain (Ayako Frellesvig): af853@cam.ac.uk

Want to learn more?

Follow our ig @camunikarate or check out our website <https://www.cukc.org/>

Words mentioned above that you may not have heard before:

Varsity - The annual match between Oxford and Cambridge (if you compete and do well you can be a karate blue!)

Kihon - The basic movements of karate

Kata - Combinations of moves to demonstrate technique and strength.

Kumite - Fighting

Kyu grade - coloured belts

Dan grade - black belts

Mitts - the gloves we wear to protect each other and ourselves when fighting.

Socials - When we meet up outside of training to do something fun; these range from post-training pub trips to karaoke nights to welfare events.