

Elite Athlete Support Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic - Academic Board
Accountable Executive - Policy	Director, La Trobe Sport
Responsible Manager - Policy	Senior Manager, Sports Infrastructure & Ops
Review Date	28 March 2027

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) La Trobe University is a member of the Elite Athlete Friendly University Network established by the Australian Sports Commission and is committed to providing support and assistance to elite athlete students in their pursuit of academic and sporting aspirations. We acknowledge and recognise that pursuing academic and sporting success simultaneously can be demanding and challenging.

(2) The purpose of this Policy is to provide assistance and support to students classified as elite athletes to combine their studies and sporting commitments in pursuit of academic and sporting success.

(3) This Procedure outlines the framework and mechanisms through which assistance and support for elite athlete students can be facilitated and implemented, and aims to provide these students the opportunity to continue their studies while participating in sport at an elite level.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This Policy applies to:

- a. All domestic students classified as elite athletes
- b. International students classified as elite athletes under an appropriate Australian sporting organisation
- c. All campuses
- d. All courses
- e. All academic and professional staff who deal with students who are considered elite athletes

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Appointment a Coordinator for the Elite Athlete Program	Director, La Trobe Sport
Awarding Elite Athlete status	Elite Athlete Program Coordinator

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(5) The Policy encapsulates the Guiding Principles stipulated in the Elite Athlete Friendly University Agreement between La Trobe University and the Australian Sports Commission. This includes the following:

- a. appointment of a specific nominated staff contact to assist, guide and support elite athlete students;
- b. provision of flexible study options and arrangements for elite athlete students to meet academic requirements and assessments;
- c. advocacy for elite athlete students within the University environment;
- d. access for elite athletes to submit accompanying documentation for course entry consideration;

(6) Elite athlete students who are eligible for admission to the La Trobe Elite Athlete Program will be supported under this Policy.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Role of Coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program

(7) The Director, La Trobe Sport or nominee will appoint a staff member to act as the Coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program.

(8) The role of the Coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program is to provide elite athlete students with the following:

- a. advice and guidance on academic matters and planning;
- b. support in negotiating flexible arrangements to meet academic requirements and assessments;
- c. advocacy within the University environment;
- d. support in negotiating and/or implementing student cross- institutional study or credit transfer arrangements;
- e. provision of advice and support to local Athlete Career and Education Advisors or other relevant external staff/organisations.

Part B - Application and Registration

(9) To be considered for admission into the Elite Athlete Program, the applicant must have their status as an elite athlete endorsed by their sport governing body and submit an application for assessment to the coordinator of the La Trobe Elite Athlete Program.

(10) An applicant must apply in a timely manner, usually at the beginning of their first semester at La Trobe University, or the first semester in which they meet the criteria for recognition as an elite athlete.

(11) Registration into the Elite Athlete Program is only valid for the current year of study. Students must re-apply for each subsequent year of study.

(12) The Coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program and La Trobe Sport, will be responsible for maintaining a register for current elite athlete students within the University. This register will be distributed to the relevant staff and status recorded in the student information system.

(13) The Coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program will be responsible for granting students elite athlete status and verifying their registration to the program within the University.

Part C - Admissions Process for Elite Athletes

(14) Elite athletes must apply for admission to the University as per the University's normal admissions procedures. They will also be given the opportunity within the admissions process to submit supporting documentation and/or evidence regarding their sporting commitments and the impact this may have had on their studies.

Part D - Flexible Study Options and Arrangements

(15) The University will endeavour to accommodate and meet the academic needs of elite athlete students in the following manner:

- a. provide flexible and/or minimum attendance at lectures, tutorials or practicals as a result of major sporting competitions and/or compulsory training;
- b. negotiate lecture, tutorial and practical timetables, where possible, to accommodate sporting commitments;
- c. extend time to complete course due to periods of decreased study load;
- d. allow periods of leave of absence at times of significant sporting commitments (e.g. Olympic Games year);
- e. allow cross-institutional study options with other universities;
- f. provide access to non-standard study periods, online and distance education where possible, to achieve more flexible study options;
- g. recognise appropriate credit achieved at other universities or tertiary institutions consistent with University policy;
- h. offer flexibility with placement schedules to accommodate training and competition commitments.

Part E - Alternative Assessment and Exam Arrangements

(16) Students recognised under the Elite Athlete Program are eligible for consideration for alternative assessment and examination arrangements when they are prevented from sitting an examination because of sporting commitments at an elite level. Such considerations include:

- a. provide flexible assessment deadlines and extensions based on sporting commitments;
- b. consider alternative assessment arrangements if a clash exists with a significant sporting commitment;
- c. deferring and re-scheduling examinations;
- d. sitting examinations off-campus under examination conditions;
- e. where appropriate, waiving any minimum attendance requirements at lectures, tutorials or practicals to sit examinations.

Part F - Timing of Requests for Support

(17) Although the nature and extent of an elite athlete's sporting commitments can be unpredictable and outside their control, a student is expected to plan for known commitments well in advance. Students should seek assistance as soon as possible to ensure the best outcome, as the timing of requests may have an impact on the University's capacity to provide assistance.

Part G - Accessing Provisions

(18) Students seeking access to any provisions outlined in this procedure should in the first instance approach the coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program or their Course Coordinator.

Part H - Other Elite Athlete Support

(19) Other forms of support for student elite athletes can include the following:

- a. financial assistance through the Elite Athlete Support Fund and targeted scholarships;
- b. La Trobe Sports Centre membership at the students preferred campus;
- c. a specialised orientation session for new student elite athletes at the commencement of Semester 1;
- d. official Elite Athlete Program apparel;
- e. professional development opportunities and access to exclusive benefits through industry networks.

Section 7 - Definitions

(20) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. ASC: Australian Sports Commission.
- b. Elite Athlete: an elite athlete or coach must be identified and recognised by one of the organisations as prescribed in [Elite Athlete Support - Schedule 1](#).
 - i. If an athlete is not recognised by one of the organisations listed in the schedule, but does participate in sport at an elite level, then they may submit an application to the coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program for consideration. The coordinator will make a judgement on eligibility based on the credentials and achievements of the student athlete in relation to their sport (i.e. State or National representation).
- c. Coordinator of the Elite Athlete Program: the nominated member of staff appointed by the Vice-Chancellor or nominee to provide assistance and support to elite athlete students.
- d. Elite Athlete Program: the mechanism designed to assist, support and facilitate flexible study options and academic support for elite athlete students.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(21) This Policy is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

(22) Associated information includes:

- a. [Elite Athlete Program](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	14th September 2017
Review Date	28th March 2027
Approval Authority	Policy Advisor
Approval Date	14th September 2017
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Nick Lambert Senior Manager, Sports Infrastructure & Ops
Author	Renee Frizzell +61 3 94791687
Enquiries Contact	Office of the Chief Operating Officer