
The University's Academic Regulations: 2026-27

Dual Career Athlete and Coach Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University encourages its students to excel in academic and non-academic pursuits, is committed to supporting its student athlete and coach population and recognises the contribution made by this group to the University and to the students' own personal development and success.
- 1.2. With reference to the Strategy for Sport, the University will endeavour to provide an environment to support developing and established athletes and coaches following a Dual Career in response to the diverse needs of this student population.
- 1.3. The University recognises that, in order for high performing students to achieve their academic and sporting goals, to prepare for, compete in, or coach at major events and to contribute to the University's Strategy for Sport, flexibility around an individual student's pattern of study or assessment may be needed from time to time.
- 1.4. This policy and the procedures contained within it should be used to make an application for membership to the Centre for Developing Athletes, renewed by application annually.
- 1.5. This policy therefore extends the flexibility of study outlined in Section 4 below to student athletes and coaches in support of their Dual Career who meet the eligibility criteria for the Centre for Developing Athletes as set out in Section 3.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 Edinburgh Napier University wishes to support and attract applications onto all academic programmes from talented athletes and coaches.
- 2.2 All eligible student athletes and coaches are entitled to request flexibility within their studies which will be met, where possible and where not in conflict with the University Academic Regulations or programmes with external accreditation.
- 2.3 The policy is designed to meet both the needs of the student athletes and coaches and the regulations of the University, and to facilitate discussion regarding ways of finding solutions that suit both the student and the University.
- 2.4 Applications should be made for Membership of the Centre for Developing Athletes in advance of the start of each academic year which the University will consider on a case by case basis. Evidence requirements to confirm eligibility are detailed in Section 3 below.

3. Procedures

Eligibility For Membership to the Centre for Developing Athletes

- 3.1 Applications are welcome from all students, regardless of level, mode of study or fee status. Where an offer for academic study to the University is pending, membership will be subject to an unconditional offer being made and accepted by the student. Applications will be considered throughout the academic year, but students may miss Scholarship funding application deadlines if they delay accepting an offer of admission.
- 3.2 Membership of the Centre for Developing Athletes will be considered from athletes or coaches who can evidence current alignment to one of more of the following:
- National Institute of Sport Performance Pathway or Programme
 - National Governing Body Performance Pathway or Programme
 - National Age-grade Player Development Pathway or Programme

- National Sport Academy
- National or Governing Body Talent Identification Pathway or Programme
- Professional sporting status
- Competing or coaching at National or International level as a Junior or Senior
- Winning Students (Scotland), TASS (RUK) supported or equivalent

3.3 Existing students who progress within their sport during their studies to the level defined above (3.2) are encouraged to apply for membership as soon as evidence becomes available.

3.4 To request membership applicants should submit the applicant form with supporting documentation in the form of a letter (including official letterheads and signatures) from one of the organisations above verifying status and commitment to sporting excellence. Once accepted, students will require to verify their continued status annually.

4 Scope of Membership

4.1 Eligible members of the Centre for Developing Athletes will be able to request academic support as follows (in line with existing Edinburgh Napier University Academic Regulations):

- A Dual Career Academic Tutor in addition to their programme Personal Development Tutor who will support the student in a number of ways:
 - To liaise with the student and School Support Staff for timetabling to avoid clashes with training/competition schedules where possible.
 - Supporting the student to access information from classes missed due to training or competition schedules. This may be in the form of audio recordings made in line with guidance on mainstreaming reasonable adjustments to ensure that recordings do not cover sensitive or confidential content, open student discussions or third-party material without the relevant permissions. and may be via a 'Dual Career Buddy' who is

identified as a suitable fellow student who can take responsibility for recording missed sessions.

- To support the student in planning each trimester so that, where necessary and possible, alternative arrangements for academic studies and assessment can be made in advance.
- To support the student where training or competition selection requires the student to be away from University at short notice.
- To be considered for flexibility for assessment, the period of absence must relate to a National or International level of competition, or a National or International selection focused training camp. BUCS National competitions will normally be considered appropriate for eligibility. Advice on eligibility should be sought from the School administrator and the Dual Career Academic Tutor in the first instance. It may be required to ask for confirmation from the appropriate National governing body or equivalent.
- An induction workshop and subsequent planning workshop at the beginning of each academic trimester where all members of the Centre for Developing Athletes and representatives from each School (as required) will be invited. The purpose of these sessions is predominantly to pre-plan flexibility needs where information around training and competition is available but is also an opportunity for all members to meet and network. These sessions will be led and supported by relevant academic and student support staff across the University. National Governing Body or other Athlete Welfare coordinators will also be invited where appropriate.
- Up to 20 working days' extension for coursework submissions to be agreed by Module Leaders in consultation with the Programme Leader and Dual Career Academic Tutor. This would be deemed appropriate for students who are competing or coaching in global or Commonwealth events such as the Olympic or Commonwealth Games, European or World Championships or similar where the student may be away from the University for longer than the maximum 10 day coursework extension period. Please also refer to the [Fit to Sit Regulations](#). Where the extension period exceeds the time anticipated to

return feedback to students on the assessment in question, it is recommended that an alternative assessment be provided.

- School Administrator support: Where the Extenuating Circumstances process is required (for example, exam re-scheduling), a decision on appropriate evidence requirements will be made by the relevant School Administrator.
- Assessment flexibility: Where a student is not available to sit an exam or other fixed date assessment (online tests for example) because of a National Level or significant training camp or competition, an alternative assessment will be made available and arrangements made for the student to attempt this at the earliest opportunity on return, or before departure as appropriate. Should the original assessment be a group assessment, arrangements will be made to provide an appropriate alternative assessment to enable the student to meet the related learning outcomes. This attempt will be treated in the same way as the original with respect to assessment diet regulations so that the student is not negatively impacted and should be considered in the same diet if it is up to 20 working days beyond the assessment date. In these cases, students should follow the process outlined in the [Fit to Sit Regulations](#) as appropriate.
- Progression flexibility: Where a student has an extension and has not failed a module assessment, the Programme Assessment Board will consider allowing the student to progress to the next stage of study. Students can apply for a Deferral of Assessment which allows for progression as long as there are no failed modules. This may be necessary where a student has an agreed assessment date which falls into the next academic year because of competition or training as detailed above. In these circumstances, students should follow the process for applying for deferral of assessment following the process in EC6 of the [Fit to Sit Regulations](#) as advised by the School Administrator or Dual Career Academic Tutor.
- Access to a dedicated Centre for Developing Athletes Online Portal to support signposting, forms, funding opportunities, regulations, contacts, networks, and other useful information.

- 4.2 Members will also have access to other non-academic related benefits, details of which can be found on the University webpages.
- 4.3 This covers all academic programmes within the University where there are no conflicts with external accreditation requirements. In some instances, external accreditation may supersede the ability for the University to be flexible, and in these cases, students should speak to their Programme Leader for guidance. Examples of assessment flexibility options can be found in [Appendix A](#).

5 Admissions Process and Flexibility for Current or Retired Athletes and Coaches

- 5.1 The University also recognises that as a consequence of prioritising a sporting or coaching career during or after their high school years, new applicants to the University may require flexible consideration of entry requirements to a programme of study.
- 5.2 Where an offer of admission can be made to undergraduate applicants, these offers may be set at an 'adjusted' level (for all programmes except Nursing where the current entry requirements are already lower than our other programmes). Please refer to the Edinburgh Napier University Admissions Policy, Section 11.
- 5.3 The applicant should highlight via their personal statement, relevant information which can be used to determine suitability for entry particularly where their academic qualifications do not meet those identified for that programme.
- 5.4 Applicants who would like the University to take account of their previous sporting achievements must still submit their application via UCAS by the deadline of 15th January. Applications from International students will be considered as long as the programme remains open for entry, but early applications are advised. Applicants are also encouraged to email the admissions team (admissions@napier.ac.uk) to 'flag' their application at the earliest opportunity.

6. ENSA Sports Athletes

- 6.1 The University recognises that students who make a significant impact to ENSA Sports in BUCS or similar competitions and leagues, should also be recognised and supported.
- 6.2 While the same flexibility cannot be offered to our ENSA Sports athlete students unless they also meet the eligibility criteria for membership of the Centre for Developing Athletes, the University will endeavour to support these students by encouraging flexibility around instances where there is a clash in academic and sporting events, particularly those on a Wednesday to allow for travel and competition in regular fixtures.
- 6.3 Typical scenarios where additional support would be encouraged for student athletes are around competing for ENSA Sports Athletes in a semi-final or final of a BUCS competition, or representation for ENSA Sports Athletes in sports that only offer one or two events per year (for example BUCS National competition and Scottish Student Sport events) as opposed to regular fixtures. In these circumstances, support from Edinburgh Napier Students Association is required to confirm eligibility.

7. Expectations of Supported Athletes and Coaches

- 7.1 Students, either ENSA Sports athletes or members of the Centre for Developing Athletes are expected to be positive ambassadors for the University.
- 7.2 Members of the Centre for Developing Athletes are also expected to:
- Attend personal development events and workshops as appropriate and highlighted via the athlete/coach portal
 - Demonstrate excellent attendance (except for periods of authorised absence) for scheduled academic activity throughout the programme of study.

- Support the University's marketing and recruitment teams by communicating success and achievements as quickly as possible
- Attend meetings with the Dual Career Academic Tutor at least once every trimester
- Endeavour to regularly promote Edinburgh Napier University in social media posts ensuring a professional manner and level of appropriateness and referring to the [University's Student Community Code](#).
- Fulfil a positive and active role as Alumni of the University and where possible respond to requests to return for the purpose of giving talks, visits, publicity or other relevant activity.
- To compete on behalf of ENSA Sports in BUCS competitions where it is possible and is to the benefit of the student athlete and the University.

Approved by: Quality & Standards Committee

Date: May 2026

This document has been reformatted to make it more accessible. Should you have any feedback, please email quality@napier.ac.uk

Appendix A

Examples of scenarios where flexibility will be offered.

These apply to members of the Centre for Developing Athletes.

SCENARIO	DESCRIPTION	FLEXIBILITY
A student cannot attend a lecture, practical or tutorial	In order to fulfil their sporting obligations, a student needs to miss a scheduled class	The student asks their Dual Career Buddy to ask permission at the earliest opportunity from the lecturer or tutor to audio record the class for the sole use of the student athlete or coach.
A student is likely to regularly miss scheduled classes	Due to regular training commitments, a student finds a clash in their timetable which cannot be resolved by changes to training	The School Support team will endeavour to place the student into another group or class where attendance is possible. Where this cannot occur regularly, the Module Leader will make all relevant learning material available via Moodle.
A student requires an extension for a coursework submission	The student is unable to submit a piece of coursework by the deadline and cannot readily submit early	The Module Leader will provide an extension of up to 20 working days in negotiation with the Dual Career Academic Tutor and/or Programme Leader. Where this does not solve the problem, the student will follow the process outlined in the Fit to Sit Regulations.
A student cannot sit a centrally	Due to competition or a significant training camp, the	An alternative exam paper or online test will be provided, and

<p>timetabled exam or fixed date online test</p>	<p>student will miss the opportunity to sit an exam or online test, either at first or second diet</p>	<p>the student offered the opportunity to sit this either before or after the scheduled date in negotiation with the Dual Career Academic Tutor or Programme Leader. Normal diet regulations remain the same. Where more appropriate, the student will use the re-assessment exam as a first attempt.</p>
<p>A student is going to be away from University for a large proportion of a trimester</p>	<p>A student has been selected to compete or coach for their country in a major sporting event and will not be able to attend classes or complete assessments for a large part of the trimester</p>	<p>The Dual Career Academic Tutor and Programme Leader will meet with the student and discuss options. Where some work can be completed that should be prioritised, and other work delayed until return, utilising the process outlined in the Fit to Sit Regulations and re-assessment opportunities as appropriate. Where alternative modules can be used such as a work-based learning, online or independent study modules, these should be considered. Programme Leaders will ensure that Programme Learning outcomes can still be met in this way.</p>
<p>A student would like to suspend their studies</p>	<p>Due to a major commitment to their sport, a student feels that they would be best to suspend</p>	<p>The normal University procedures will be followed for suspension of studies, with</p>

	<p>studies rather than attempting to complete modules without being able to commit fully to their studies</p>	<p>advice from academic staff. There is no longer a time limit on completion of a degree programme, and up to 2 years of suspension of studies will be considered if this is in the best interest of the student and can be accommodated by the University.</p>
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