

BENEFITS OF LIFE LONG LEARNING AS AN ELITE ATHLETE

Improves Performance

Research has shown that athletes who have career planning in place for post-retirement from sport (planned or otherwise) perform better on the field as well as in their off-field interests. This has been linked to the peace of mind and assurance that comes with having a clear path for the future, and includes plans supported by ongoing learning through industry certifications, vocational training or undergraduate studies.

Retains Relevance

A key struggle faced by athletes when retiring from sport is the limited workplace experience and career-relevant training they hold in comparison to their non-athlete peers. While athletes have been putting in the hard-yards on the field, the remainder of their age-group have often been busy studying and/or already gaining hours in the workforce. This typically gives these peers the competitive edge when it comes to the world of job applications. As an athlete, TAFE provides the ideal opportunity to counter this through vocational training and industry-relevant work placement programs. By taking these measures whilst competing in your sporting career, you have the ability to reduce this industry training and experience gap, and transition into the workplace alongside your regular peers.

Builds Confidence

Learning new things gives us a feeling of accomplishment, which in turn boosts our self-confidence. Self-confidence allows us to take on challenges and explore even further. For an athlete, this translates on and off the field. By continuing your learning while you train and compete, you are better placed to tackle the challenges that come your way, in all areas of your life.

Allows a New Perspective

Building skills and knowledge in other areas of life allows us to uncover new information, different ways of thinking, and alternate paths to solving problems. In doing so, we are then better equipped to find solutions and recognise new opportunities when faced with life's problems. This may come into play during our sporting career, or when we are faced with life after retirement. Whatever stage of life you are in, the ability to take a different perspective and understand other ways of thinking can be invaluable in deciding the next step.

Expands Your Network

Learning undertaken through TAFE and other institutions exposes you to a whole new network of teachers, students, and industry professionals. In a rapidly changing and increasingly global world, the value of personal and professional networks continues to gain importance. Building these networks in the sporting world and beyond can open doors to great opportunities, as an athlete and in life after.

Fosters Leadership

The benefits of continuous learning don't just stop with you. Lifelong learning helps to develop skills in leadership and mentoring, enabling you to transfer your existing and new-found skills to those around you. As an elite athlete, you have a great platform through which to be a role model to others in your generation and beyond. Undertaking training and/or study outside of your sport further enhances this platform, enabling you to better lead, mentor and encourage others to pursue their own goals and aspirations regardless of their background or life-path.



ELITE ATHLETE TAFE NETWORK

WHAT SOME OF OUR ATHLETES THINK ABOUT STUDYING AT TAFE



Jesse Noronha

Elite Bowler, Bowls Australia
Cert. III in Carpentry

"The TAFE environment was extremely supportive and understanding of my elite bowls commitments. My teachers worked closely with me on a personalised study plan so that I could balance my sporting commitments with my studies and prac placements."



Braydon King

U21 Representative,
Hockey Australia

"I don't want to be one of those guys that goes on to have a career (in hockey) and that then I'd have nothing to fall back on at the end of it."



Bolvia Millerick

Elite Bowler, Bowls Australia
Cert II in Tourism, Cert III in Hospitality,
Cert II in IT and RSA/RCG.

"TAFE provided a very supportive and friendly environment where I was able to continue playing elite level bowls as well as work and study."



Lachlan 'Loccy' Tame

Elite Kayak (Sprint)
Diploma of Building/Carpentry

"TAFE for me was where hard work began after school, and realizing that there is no shortcuts to a place worth going."

LEARNING IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR EXISTENCE.
Just like our sport and good nutrition nourishes our bodies, information and continued learning nourishes our minds.

ais.gov.au



FIND SOMETHING THAT INSPIRES YOU AND THEN GO DO IT!

Lifelong learning is an indispensable tool for every athlete as they pursue and balance a career, to achieve equally high levels of athlete performance in both their sport and chosen interest area of study.

Today, continuous learning forms a necessary part in acquiring critical thinking, problem solving and adaptability skills, and discovering new ways of relating to people from all walks of life. To live a life without continuous learning in today's global world is unthinkable.

It is very important as an elite athlete to prepare early and manage your journey outside of being an elite athlete, should your plans change unexpectedly. One of the most effective ways of dealing with change as an elite athlete is to embrace life-long learning.

TAFE courses conform to predetermined national standards to ensure consistency in both the quality of education and the materials provided. This means many of TAFE accredited courses receive credit towards future higher education study, becoming a pathway for athletes that seek further education in their chosen field.

TAFE institutions across Australia are recognised as the leading providers of vocational education and training, nationwide. TAFE provides high quality, personalised vocational education and training, in a flexible and affordable environment. This makes it an ideal pathway for elite athletes balancing demanding sporting schedules.

Under the EAEN, the Elite Athlete TAFE Network (EATN) incorporates TAFE institutions across Australia to provide specialised support to athletes looking to pursue a vocational pathway. With providers in every state and territory, study options available face-to-face and online, and hundreds of courses varying in format, qualification, and duration, the EATN caters to athletes from many walks of life, existing education levels, and sports. The network offers personalised and flexible approaches to cater to the needs of the individual, and is ideal for those where a static class has less appeal.

TAFE qualifications can prepare you for a range of careers in industries such as building and construction, sport and fitness, as well as many creative industries. TAFE can also offer you opportunities to 'earn while you learn' via apprenticeships in a structured training program where you learn the basics of your chosen profession.

TAFE's courses conform to predetermined national standards to ensure consistency in both the quality of education and the materials provided. This means many of TAFE's accredited courses receive credit towards future university study, becoming a pathway for athletes that seek further education in their chosen field.

ELITE
ATHLETE
EDUCATION
NETWORK



The Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) established an athlete education network with leading institutions across Australia back in 2004. The aim was to ensure the nation's top athletes are supported in balancing and pursuing their choice of study with competing on the sporting stage. The Elite Athlete Education Network (EAEN), as it is now known, seeks to implement and maintain the necessary support measures across partner providers to allow academic flexibility around the demanding competition and training schedules of elite athletes.

The AIS, through its Athlete Wellbeing and Engagement (AW&E) program, recognises the benefits career planning and forward thinking brings to an athlete both on and off the field, and encourages all athletes to be looking forward and planning ahead to achieve and secure a bright future. Whatever long-term passions and career choices an athlete aspires to have, the AIS seeks to support its athletes in achieving these goals. The Elite Athlete Education Network is one measure in place to accomplish this.

Being a continual learner takes self-motivation and persistence, but it can be extremely rewarding in order to acquire and expand your current skills and develop future job opportunities.

Learning forms part of your personal and professional development as an elite athlete, in an effort to broaden your horizons and reach your full potential.



WHERE TO NEXT?

The EAEN provides Elite Student-Athlete Coordinators within each participating TAFE institution, as well as an Education Network Partnership Advisor at the AIS. Each of these points of contact can provide further information and assistance in pursuing vocational studies. To get in touch with one of these representatives, speak to your Athlete Wellbeing and Engagement Manager, or visit ais.gov.au.

**BE CREATIVE
BE DARING
BE INTERESTED
BE CURIOUS**

Where will your learning take you? Visit the AIS website for many career success stories of athletes studying whilst performing their absolute best in their chosen sport.