



## **Performance Athletes**

### **Regulations for Academic Flexibility**



## Contents

Background .....	3
Scope .....	3
The Performance Standard .....	3
Student Responsibility .....	4
Academic Flexibility .....	4
Scope of Accommodations .....	5
Formal University Examinations .....	5
Submission of Assignments.....	5
Class Tests / Presentations / Practical.....	6
Attendance .....	6
Leave of Absence.....	6
Maximum Registration Period .....	6
Protocols & Contacts .....	7
Version Control .....	7

## Background

The University is fully supportive of performance athletes who are proactive in organising their sporting and their academic responsibilities. DCU recognises that combining high level sport and higher education presents particular challenges.

The following regulations for academic flexibility are designed to allow students who are performance athletes to combine representative sporting commitments with their academic responsibilities. While the University will make reasonable accommodations to allow students to balance their sporting and academic commitments, students should be made aware **that flexibility cannot be guaranteed at all times**; this will depend on the requirements of the particular academic programme.

Preservation of the integrity of a DCU degree is paramount. However, the University recognises the dual demands placed upon student-athletes and its responsibility in helping them meet these expectations.

These regulations are **underpinned by the student's responsibility** and expects that the student has a proactive and responsible attitude, **will plan effectively, and will inform the relevant staff of sport and academic clashes as soon as they become aware of them**. DCU will endeavour to support and develop performance athletes to foster life skills such as time management and organisation skills to successfully manage their sport and studies.

## Scope

These regulations cover situations where a student is studying for a module and is fully expecting to complete the required assessments within the University timescales but an event beyond their control (for example international team selection) prevents them taking the assessment alongside the rest of the student body.

These regulations do NOT cover a situation whereby a student feels that due to sporting commitments they will not be able to adequately prepare for assessments. Similarly, a student should not be expected to make repeated requests for assessment flexibility due to several international sporting commitments

## The Performance Standard

The student-athlete must be representing their country at a major international competition, be involved in preparation immediately preceding an international competition, or be taking part in a major national championship. This is commensurate with the performance standard required for consideration for a paced degree.

The following may be classified as performance athletes:

- a) those competing at Olympic, World and European standard;



or

- b) who are involved in preparation immediately preceding an international competition;

or

- c) who are participating in a major international championship.

Regular intervarsity competition is not considered to be of the level where flexibility should be considered.

The Director of Sports & Wellbeing will, in consultation with colleagues, classify students as “performance athletes”. Students not so designated may make a request to be classified as performance athletes; these cases will be reviewed by the Director of Sport & Wellbeing whose decision will be final. Students who have been awarded a Sports Scholarship must make this separate application and will not automatically be entitled to a performance standard designation.

Those students who are not designated as Performance Athletes (and thus who do not qualify for academic flexibility) should be made aware that sporting activities are not normally acceptable as reasons for applications for postponement, extenuating or exceptional circumstances.


## **Student Responsibility**

The onus will always remain with the student-athlete to contact their School if delayed assessment may be a possibility. The personal responsibilities of the student-athlete themselves underpin this policy and the student-athlete is under obligation to discuss the possibility of missed assessment with their Programme Chair as soon as they are aware it could be a possibility. The University acknowledges that the timescale for notification of selection is completely outside the student’s control and may be on a relatively short timescale. The student should, however, contact their school as soon as they are aware that selection may be a possibility..

## **Academic Flexibility**

DCU recognises that the primary purpose of the performance athletes at the University is to pursue an academic programme to the best of their ability and that a proactive approach, wherever practicable, should be taken towards supporting performance athletes to manage these academic commitments alongside significant sporting obligations.

Academic flexibility refers to accommodations / permitted variations in normal assessment and assessment timing that allow a student to meet all the learning outcomes required for satisfactory completion of a module or programme of study. Academic flexibility will not mean that students are exempt from completing all



elements of their programme and/or from completing compulsory elements of assessed work.

DCU is committed to providing flexibility to performance athletes to enable them to excel both in their academic studies and their chosen sport.

There will be no compromise on the academic standards required for the attainment of credits in any university course.

Permitted academic flexibility may include the following:

1. Flexibility with assessment deadlines based on sporting related commitments.
2. Modifying attendance requirements at lectures, tutorials, practicals, laboratories, or placements where performance athletes are unavailable due to sporting commitments.
3. Flexibility in allowing reduced registration credits for a particular study period, subject to the planned completion of the required credits for progression over more than one academic session (Pacing).
4. Flexibility with leave of absence where required due to increased sporting commitments.

## **Scope of Accommodations**

Accommodations may involve arrangements that include formal university examinations, arrangements for continuous assessment (including placement-related assessments), and required attendance as outlined below.

## **Formal University Examinations**

Where formal examinations are to be scheduled at the same time as a national or international competitive event, and the student is confirmed to be competing, a request (as early as possible) may be submitted for consideration in preparing the timetable. If it is not possible to accommodate this request, a student may request a postponement of examination(s). No other accommodations will be considered.

## **Submission of Assignments**

Performance athletes will be able to request reasonable extensions to assessment deadlines, appropriate to their training or competition needs.

## **Class Tests / Presentations / Practical**

In general, accommodations will not be made for absences from scheduled class tests and students may be obliged to engage with continuous assessment resit arrangements to make good absences from such assessment. Note that a resit of continuous assessment is not always available. In the case of scheduled presentations, module coordinators may, where possible, make arrangements for alternative assessment of the related learning outcomes.

## **Attendance**

Minimum attendance at lectures, seminars, workshops, placements, laboratories or other specified forms of learning may be required according to the demands of the appropriate module or programme. Some teaching sessions may be designated as compulsory.

Where a module has a required level of attendance, performance athletes may request an authorised absence if competing at national or international sporting events. It should be noted that this will not be possible for some professional accredited programmes where attendance is a requirement.

Students are advised that flexibility cannot be guaranteed at all times, depending on the requirements of their academic programme.

Academic Flexibility may only be awarded in an academic session and is not guaranteed for subsequent years. Academic flexibility may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Director of Sports and Wellbeing in consultation with the Programme Chairperson.

## **Leave of Absence**

A performance athlete may request a Leave of Absence for a year in which they may be training toward a major event such as the Olympic Games, World or European Championships.

## **Maximum Registration Period**

The maximum registration period is not normally adjusted for performance athletes.


## Protocols & Contacts

At the earliest opportunity the student-athlete should discuss the possibility of missed examinations with their Programme Chair. This could be prior to selection for the team or squad but where there is the possibility of selection.

DCU Sport and Wellbeing will identify those students who meet the criteria for performance athlete designation throughout the year.

Faculties, Programme Chairpersons and Registry will be provided with names of students who have 'performance athlete standard' designation

## Version Control

<b>Document Name</b>	Performance Athletes: Regulations for Academic Flexibility	 Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University
<b>Unit Owner</b>	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs	
<b>Version</b>	V1.0	
<b>Approved by</b>	Academic Council	
<b>Effective Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> October 2019	

End.