



Northern
Territory
Government

DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT, THE ARTS AND SPORT

NTIS Athlete Selection Guidelines

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SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Northern Territory Institute of Sport (NTIS) supports talented athletes through a number of programs.

- 1) Individual Athlete Scholarships (IAS), which includes the following categories:
 - Elite
 - Development
- 2) Squad Scholarships - Tier 1, Tier 2
- 3) Injured Athlete Agreements
- 4) Visiting Athlete Training Agreements.

The Northern Territory (NT) Government considers NTIS scholarships as an investment in Territory sport, with the aim of achieving NTIS Key Performance Indicators. Therefore, the NT Government, through the NTIS, assume primary program development and management authority for all supported programs. This includes an emphasis on an in-house multi-disciplinary specialist team approach to servicing of athletes.

1.2. Purpose

This policy provides the principles, framework and guidelines for athlete selection to all NTIS scholarships.

1.3. Terminology

Four-Year Sport Agreement	This is also referred to as the 'Sport Agreement'. It outlines the program partners, goals and performance indicators, program description, operational framework, program reporting and minimum financial commitment of the program partners for the 4 year NTIS Sport Programs.
IAS	Individual Athlete Scholarship.
IAS Program	An IAS is based on specific performance-based criteria. Athletes who are current open-age Australian representatives competing at the highest level within their sport are eligible for an Elite IAS. Athletes who are late-age (e.g. U 21-23 years) Australian representatives progressing to the elite level are also eligible for an Elite IAS. Athletes with outstanding ability and potential to progress to the highest level in their chosen sport, demonstrated through selection for Australia at under-age (e.g. under 17-19 years) level, or in consultation with the NSO, are eligible for a Development IAS. Athletes can be within a sport program of the NTIS or an individual in a non NTIS sport program.
JMC	Joint Management Committee consisting of representatives from the NTSO, NSO and NTIS outlined in the sport agreement
NSO	National Sporting Organisation.
NT	Northern Territory.
NTIS	Northern Territory Institute of Sport.
NTSO	Northern Territory Sporting Organisation.
Sport Program	This means the NTSO, NSO and NTIS partnered sport programs included as per the NTIS Sport Framework. Athletes within these sport programs will be either Squad Tier 1, Tier 2 or IAS holders.
Squad Tier 1 Scholarship	Squad Tier 1 scholarships are for athletes selected in a specific NTIS sport program and generally provided to athletes with significant potential to progress to higher levels within the sport.
Squad Tier 2 Scholarship	Squad Tier 2 scholarships are for athletes selected in a specific NTIS sport program and generally provided to athletes with significant potential to progress to Tier 1 scholarship within the sport.

Scholarship Framework

Elite
Development } IAS

IAS
Squad Tier 1
Squad Tier 2 } Sport Program

The overall scholarship framework of the NTIS is a combination of scholarships provided within the sport program or the IAS program. **It should be noted that IAS holders can exist within or outside of the Sport Program.**

SECTION 2 NTIS SPORT PROGRAMS

2.1 General Information

Underlying these guidelines, each sport must develop specific athlete selection documentation detailing sport-specific information including: target age group, structure, maximum number of scholarships, selection guidelines and criteria, and the selection process. The sport program selection document must be consistent with these guidelines and set-out in the four-year NTIS Sport Agreement.

2.2 Selection of Athletes into NTIS Squad Scholarships

All athletes offered a NTIS Squad Scholarship Tier 1 or Tier 2 must:

- Be current financial members of their respective NTSO;
- Reside in the NT. Residency is defined as going to school/University or working and living in the Northern Territory. NTIS Squad Tier 1 Scholarship holders who relocate interstate temporarily (less than 6 months) may continue to receive a NTIS scholarship (this would be determined on a case-by-case basis).
- Have medical and musculoskeletal clearance;
- Have signed the NTIS scholarship agreement and returned the agreement to the NTIS.
- Agree to have, as their head coach, the sport program Head Coach

Athletes can not be on more than one sport program scholarship at any one time.

2.3 Objectives and Principles of Athlete Selection into a NTIS Sport Program

- The principle aim of selection into a sport program is to provide opportunity to those athletes with the greatest potential of achieving at the highest levels within the sport. Scholarships should, in general, be awarded to those athletes who have achieved national selection, have potential to represent Australia, or compete in national leagues or professional competitions.
- The level/type of servicing for individual athletes on Squad Tier 1 scholarship will be determined **on a case-by-case basis by NTIS management in consultation with the Head Coach.**
- The level/type of servicing for individual athletes on Squad Tier 2 scholarship will be determined in accordance with the annual planning process for each sport within the NTIS service framework.
- Selection into NT representative teams is independent of NTIS scholarship selection. Athletes are under no obligation to accept a NTIS scholarship offer.

2.4 NTIS Squad Scholarship Tier 1 and Tier 2 Selection Processes

Sports must provide timeframes for Squad Tier 1 and Tier 2 scholarships annually, with start and finish dates identified within the sport agreement. This should include regional athletes and any periods of extension that may be required for some athletes (eg National draft camp preparation).

The specific NTIS sport program will select and review athletes, as a minimum, on an annual basis consistent with policy and guidelines outlined within the sport agreement.

A selection panel will be established for all sports and shall consider the performance of all eligible athletes as set out by this policy and the sport-specific athlete selection documentation.

The selection panel will forward nominations to the NTSO (eg Board/Executive/Chief Executive Officer) for endorsement. It is the responsibility of the NTSO to ensure all listed athletes are current financial members of their organisation and meet selection criteria.

The NTSO endorsement is then provided to the NTIS Head Coach, the selection panel, the NSO and NTIS management. The NTIS Manager of Sport Programs will provide final approval of the athletes selected based on the sport agreement and contingent on medical clearance of the selected athletes.

Once the NTIS Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator has medically cleared all selected athletes, the NTIS offers each athlete an NTIS scholarship and requests the athlete to sign and abide by a NTIS scholarship agreement and the policies within it or referred to for the term of their scholarship.

It should be noted that selection of athletes by the NTSO does not necessarily guarantee a NTIS scholarship offer. This is contingent on a number of factors including the number of scholarships available, NTIS satisfaction with the quality of the program, athlete compliance with processes (eg gaining medical clearance), or if an athlete fails to take up a scholarship offer.

2.5 Selection Criteria

On an annual basis, the JMC will review the sport's selection criteria within the four-year sport agreement to reflect performance standards consistent with individual program requirements and national/NT sport program direction.

2.6 Maximum Scholarship Numbers

Sports must recommend athletes for selection to NTIS sport programs in line with JMC agreed maximum scholarship numbers established within the four-year sport agreement.

The maximum scholarship numbers referred to in the sport agreement is the total number of scholarships to be offered to athletes in the NTIS Squad Scholarship Tier 1 and Tier 2 categories within a 12-month period. IAS holders based locally, interstate or overseas are not included within the scholarship numbers although they remain attached to the sport program and may access support services.

2.7 Squad Scholarship Athletes' Terms and Conditions

The athlete's term on Squad Tier 1 Scholarship can be extended up to the maximum term as long as it is a continuous extension in time. The possibility of an extension must be identified in the sport agreement and factored into planning with NTIS support staff prior to the beginning of the training year.

The level of service provided by the NTIS to each scholarship holder is negotiated and included within the Sport Agreement. **This is reviewed annually at the end of year review and annual planning day.**

2.8 Amendments to NTIS Sport Program Composition

Amendments to the NTIS Sport Program composition can occur due to a number of situations:

- An athlete's scholarship is terminated;
- An athlete withdraws;
- An athlete meets selection criteria during the course of a scholarship year;
- An Individual Athlete Scholarship holder relocates interstate for an extended period of time; or
- An athlete is cleared by the Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator from an Injured Athlete Agreement.

A recommendation to terminate an athlete's scholarship due to non-compliance or not meeting performance expectations must be taken to the selection panel for the particular squad. The processes followed are then exactly the same as the sport program selection process outlined above.

The downgrading or upgrading of scholarship, or selection of a new athlete outside the initial selection process, can only occur after consideration by the JMC. Factors taken into account will include: the respective athlete meeting previously agreed selection criteria, sport program scholarship numbers and resources available.

2.9 Withdrawal or Termination of the NTIS Athlete Scholarship

An athlete wishing to withdraw their NTIS scholarship may do so at any time by informing (preferably in writing) the NTIS Head Coach or NTIS Manager Sport Programs.

An athlete's scholarship can be terminated due to a breach by the athlete of his/her agreement with the NTIS or by the athlete not meeting agreed training or performance goals set by the coach within a required period.

The termination due to a breach of the scholarship agreement is detailed in the NTIS Disciplinary and Termination Guidelines.

SECTION 3 INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (IAS)

3.1 IAS Selection Process

Applications for NTIS IAS will be called for once per year (most likely in February). Current NTIS scholarship holders can be upgraded at any time providing relevant selection criteria are met. Athletes who apply throughout the year may be given a NTIS scholarship, with access to support services, but funding can not be guaranteed for the current financial year.

The IAS period is from July 1 to June 30 the following year.

The NTIS will determine the level of IAS offered to successful applicants; either “Elite” or “Development” level.

All IAS recipients will be required to nominate a coach, to be approved by the NTIS, who will be responsible for planning and managing their training and competition program including provision of NTIS services.

All IAS applications from a sport where the NTIS has a NTIS sport program; ie. AFL, Athletics, Cricket, Cycling, Football, Hockey, Netball, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Swimming, Tenpin Bowling, and Yachting must be endorsed as a scholarship holder from within the sport program. No athletes outside of the NTIS sport program in these sports will be accepted as an IAS athlete.

Eligibility

The applicant must be:

- Endorsed by a representative of the NTSO or NSO;
- An Australian Citizen and/or be eligible for Australian representation;
- Representing the NT in competitions where possible;
- Engaged in a comprehensive program of training and competition; and,
- A resident of the NT. Residency is defined as going to school/university or working and living in the NT. Athletes who relocate interstate, while on NTIS scholarship, for an extended period of time, will have their scholarship status assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Scholarships are not available for athletes in veterans, or master’s age groups. Junior age groups are still considered. In general, athletes must be at least 15 years of age to be considered for an NTIS Individual Athlete Scholarship although exceptions will be considered where athletes are selected in a national team, or achieve significant national ranking or performance, at a younger age.

These scholarships are not available for athletes who are existing scholarship holders with another state or territory institute/academy of sport. However visiting athletes from a reciprocal state/territory institute/academy may apply for a visiting athlete training agreement. More information is available by calling (08) 89226811.

The services and funding provided to each scholarship holder will be determined on a case-by-case basis by NTIS management in consultation with the athlete’s coach. The level of financial allocation and services provided are subject to the athlete’s adherence to their Athlete Agreement, and development plan, and NTIS policies and resources available at the time.

If a current scholarship holder does not have a current ranking sufficient to satisfy the selection criteria below, he or she must demonstrate progression of performance over time and be judged by the NTIS and NSO as having the potential to achieve such a ranking, and the attitude to do so, within a 12 month period. For example, an athlete who was injured during the last national season and could not obtain or maintain a national ranking would need to demonstrate they have fully used the services of the NTIS and can document this use to rehabilitate the injury.

Other Assessment

Each athlete scholarship application is assessed on its merits. Other important criteria upon which an application may be assessed include:

- The athlete's performance and results in previous years; and,
- An untroubled history of meeting the responsibilities and expectations of the NTIS.

The assessment by the NSO as to their performance level, national ranking and international ranking of the athlete and/or the prospect of selection to a national squad.

3.2 IAS Scholarship Framework

Elite Athlete Scholarships

Elite scholarships are offered to the NT's most outstanding athletes to enable them to realise their talent and to support continued achievement at the highest levels within the sport.

Selection criteria

To be eligible for an Elite Scholarship athlete's must be:

- Current open-age Australian representatives competing at the highest level within their sport; or,
- In an Australian Open Development Squad; or,
- In a Paralympic Preparation Development Squad; or,
- Competing in professional competitions; or,
- Late age junior Australian team/squad representatives (e.g. U21/U23), progressing to the highest level.

Development Athlete Scholarships

The Development Scholarships are offered to athletes with outstanding ability and potential to progress to the highest level in their chosen sport, demonstrated through selection for Australia at under-age (e.g. under 15-19 years) level and/or in consultation with the NSO.

Selection Criteria

To be eligible for a Development Scholarship athlete's must:

- Be a current Australian representative competing at an under-age level (e.g. U15-19); or,
- Have achieved outstanding national competition achievement or ranking (e.g. national champion; ranked number 1 in Australia; nationally identified); or,
- Have identified potential to make Paralympic level competition.

Other Assessment

Each application is assessed on its merits. Other important criteria upon which an application may be assessed include:

- The athlete's performance and results in previous years.
- An untroubled history of meeting the responsibilities and expectations of the NTIS (as a previous NTIS scholarship holder).
- NSO assessment as to the performance level, national ranking, international ranking of the athlete, and/or part of the sports' high performance program and/or the prospect of selection to a national team within the next 12 month period.

Note, the performance criteria outlined above should not be viewed in isolation as all selection guidelines will be taken into account.

3.3 IAS Application Process

Athletes must have their application endorsed by their:

- Parent or guardian if the athlete is under the age of 18 years;
- Coach; and,
- NTSO representative.

Applications must be forwarded to the NTIS by the closing date.

The NTIS will then seek NSO clarification (if required) in relation to details provided in the application.

The NTIS selection panel will meet after the closing date to discuss applications and make recommendations to the Director for the offer of NTIS scholarships.

Athlete (parents if applicable) and coach interviews will take place with the NTIS to inform them of the responsibilities of a high performance training program.

3.4 Appeal Process relating to the Non-selection of an IAS

An athlete, coach or parent may appeal non-selection to an IAS by contacting the NTIS Director in writing within fourteen (14) days of receipt of non-selection notification.

The NTIS Director will review the appeal, based on the IAS eligibility criteria in consultation with the relevant NSO high performance coach. Following consideration of the relevant available information, the NTIS Director shall notify the athlete on the outcome.

SECTION 4 NTIS INJURED ATHLETE AGREEMENT

4.1 Background

The NTIS is committed to ensuring that all scholarship athletes utilise the best possible injury management process available and are supported during their recovery program.

The NTIS offers an Injured Athlete Agreement to athletes injured while on NTIS scholarship. This covers management of the injury, if necessary, past the original scholarship expiry date.

4.2 NTIS Injured Athlete Scholarship Process

IAS and Squad Tier 1 scholarship holders who are injured during their scholarship term will be, in accordance with their scholarship agreement, be individually case managed by the coach, athlete and NTIS Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator as per the injury management process outlined in the Sports Medicine Policy, until the injury has resolved.

At least 2 weeks prior to the expiry of scholarship, the coach must notify the NTIS Sport Programs Manager of any athlete that has a pre existing injury condition resulting from NTIS activities.

The NTIS Sport Programs Manager will convene a meeting with the coach, Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator and Performance Enhancement Services Manager to assess the prospect of an extension of scholarship under an Injured Athlete Agreement and the level and type of servicing required post the original scholarship period.

A meeting between the coach, athlete, the athlete's parents, NTIS Sport Programs Manager, Performance Enhancement Services Manager and Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator may be conducted to outline the proposed management process and negotiate the level and type of services the NTIS will provide. Services agreed upon will be detailed in the schedule attached to the Injured Athlete Agreement.

All athletes requiring post NTIS scholarship management will be required to sign the Injured Athlete Agreement.

Should the athlete's Injured Athlete Agreement require an extension to the original term determined by the Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator, then this will be forwarded to the athlete in writing by the NTIS.

Once the Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator has medically cleared the athlete, the athlete will be provided with an exit letter.

The NTSO and the Head Coach may subsequently select the athlete for inclusion into the respective sport program by following the appropriate selection process outlined earlier in this document, including the need to pass the required medical screening process prior to commencement.

Should the athlete not adhere to the management plan or choose to ignore the advice of the Sports Medicine and Physiotherapy Coordinator it is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action under the NTIS Athlete and Discipline Guidelines.

SECTION 5 VISITING ATHLETE TRAINING AGREEMENT (VATA)

5.1 Background

On occasions, the Head Coach or NTIS Sport Programs Manager may recommend an athlete obtain the services of the NTIS under the VATA.

5.2 VATA Eligibility

Any current Australian or state/territory institute/academy of sport (AIS/SIS/SAS), interstate/overseas national league (eg. from an AFL or NRL club), Australian open team, overseas national representative, or other athletes on a case by case basis, are potentially eligible for a VATA.

If a SIS/SAS athlete is intending to visit or relocate to the NT temporarily, copies of their strength and conditioning program and latest musculoskeletal screening must be sent electronically to the NTIS Strength and Conditioning Coordinator at least one week before arrival.

Note: These athletes are not NTIS scholarship holders, and will not necessarily receive any servicing from NTIS staff other than the general safety/information services. Extended VATA arrangements and extra servicing may be subject to charges and are subject to approval by the NTIS Director.

5.3 VATA Process

- The NTIS Sport Programs Manager needs to approve the athlete's eligibility and provides a signed copy of the VATA to the athlete/management staff including the length of term required.
- If gym access is required, the athlete/squad will be directed to the Strength and Conditioning Coordinator, for an appraisal of their ability to work in the gym unsupervised.
- Once cleared by the Strength and Conditioning Coordinator, he/or she will counter sign the VATA Agreement.
- The athlete/squad management will sign the VATA agreement and return to Strength and Conditioning staff or NTIS Sport Programs Manager.
- The VATA will then be delivered to the NTIS Director for approval.
- Athletes within a team/group will not be required to complete a VATA individually, but the manager of that team will be required to list all athletes on one VATA for signature by team management.
- Gym training is between the hours of 10am and 2pm Monday to Friday. Athletes should contact the Strength and Conditioning Coordinator prior to any visit to determine availability outside of these times.

5.4 Other Services

If services other than gym access are required, then the Performance Enhancement Services Manager will be contacted to document the services, rate of charges (if applicable), and facility access requested and stated in a VATA attachment.