



MAKING GOOD EDUCATION CHOICES FOR ATHLETES



→ WHY?

The Elite Athlete Education Partnership Manager  he at the Australian Institute of Sport says, "It's not a case of one or the other when it comes to choosing elite sport or education. A balanced holistic approach to life leads to greater sporting success now, and a clear future ahead."

→ WHAT?

Achieving your academic goals while pursuing an elite sporting career will enable you to:

- gain qualifications for a professional and rewarding career
- develop and enhance your professional skills for a future career pathway
- enable you to keep better balance in your life with sport.
- foster rewarding relationships outside of sport, which will nurture your interpersonal skills – critical in the world of work!
- more effectively manage and plan for a career beyond sport
- prepare ahead for changing circumstances well in advance.
- cultivate your transferable skills – also essential in the workforce.

→ HOW?

Step 1 – Be assured

Easier said than done, but feeling anxious and unsure about education and career choices is common for athletes, and there are ways forward.

Step 2 – Keep an open mind

Have a growth mind set. Everyone's talents and skills can be developed, and the key is to be curious and explore what exists. Use the Elite Athlete Education Network to explore which Universities/TAFE's support elite athletes. Consider what courses and options exist aligned to your values and interests, and even attending Open Day's to talk to educators in different fields will give you an insight as to whether you would enjoy learning a certain field, on-line or on a particular campus.

Reach out to a AIS Professional Career Practitioner as a sounding board to consider what choices exist aligned to your interests and passions.

Step 3 – Seek help

Talk to your AW&E Manager about your ideas and fears; ask questions and get advice about studying and preparing for your future whilst realising your sporting dreams.

The AIS Career Practitioner Referral Network also provides experts who can assist you to determine your education needs and support you whilst you are studying and engaging in your sport. Contact your AW&E Manager or email a general enquiry to careerandeducation@ausport.gov.au to access the appropriate person for your age and needs.



Step 4 – Develop a career plan

Developing a career plan will help you identify areas of interest for your professional career beyond sport. Then you can take steps to find out what qualifications, training, skills and experiences are required for your desired field of work.

Step 5 – Develop a career plan

Armed with the correct advice and a career plan, embark on your career journey.

- Start with accessing services of an AIS Career Practitioner or discussing your thoughts with an AW&E Manager.
- Make contact with Elite Athlete Student Coordinators who exist within universities/TAFE's to support elite athlete education choices. You will find these on the AIS web site or ask your AW&E Manager.
- A formal qualification from a recognised institution is a rewarding achievement that will always be a cornerstone from which you can travel many pathways.
- Become a life  learner. [

- Avail yourself of online learning or podcasts, many of which are free, such as [TED](#), [EDx](#) (MOOCs) [Udemy](#), [Coursera](#), [Lynda](#), [Khan Academy](#) and [Blinkist](#). But keep in mind, whilst providing critical learning on a variety of topics check carefully those that are simply of interest and those which provide accredited qualifications required by an employers.
- Learn by doing, ask if you can observe or go watch what you want to learn about.



DO'S AND DON'TS

- ✓ **Do** invest in your future.
- ✓ **Do** maximise the opportunities and support around you now – your AW&E Manager, Coaches, Elite Athlete Education Network and athlete friendly businesses, to receive advice and guidance in shaping your dual career and in laying the foundations for a life after elite sport.
- ✓ **Do** take your mindset about sport into planning for your future.
- ✗ **Don't** wait. The time will never be just right."¹



ACTIVITY

1. Complete Steps 1 to 5 above.
2. Continue to seek guidance from your AW&E Manager.
3. Speak to other athletes in your team/sport that balance study and training, to learn more about their experience, advice and any tips or tricks they have to successfully balance both
4. Read these inspirational and informative articles from elite sportspeople  [Dual pathways](#) [Retirement after elite sport](#)



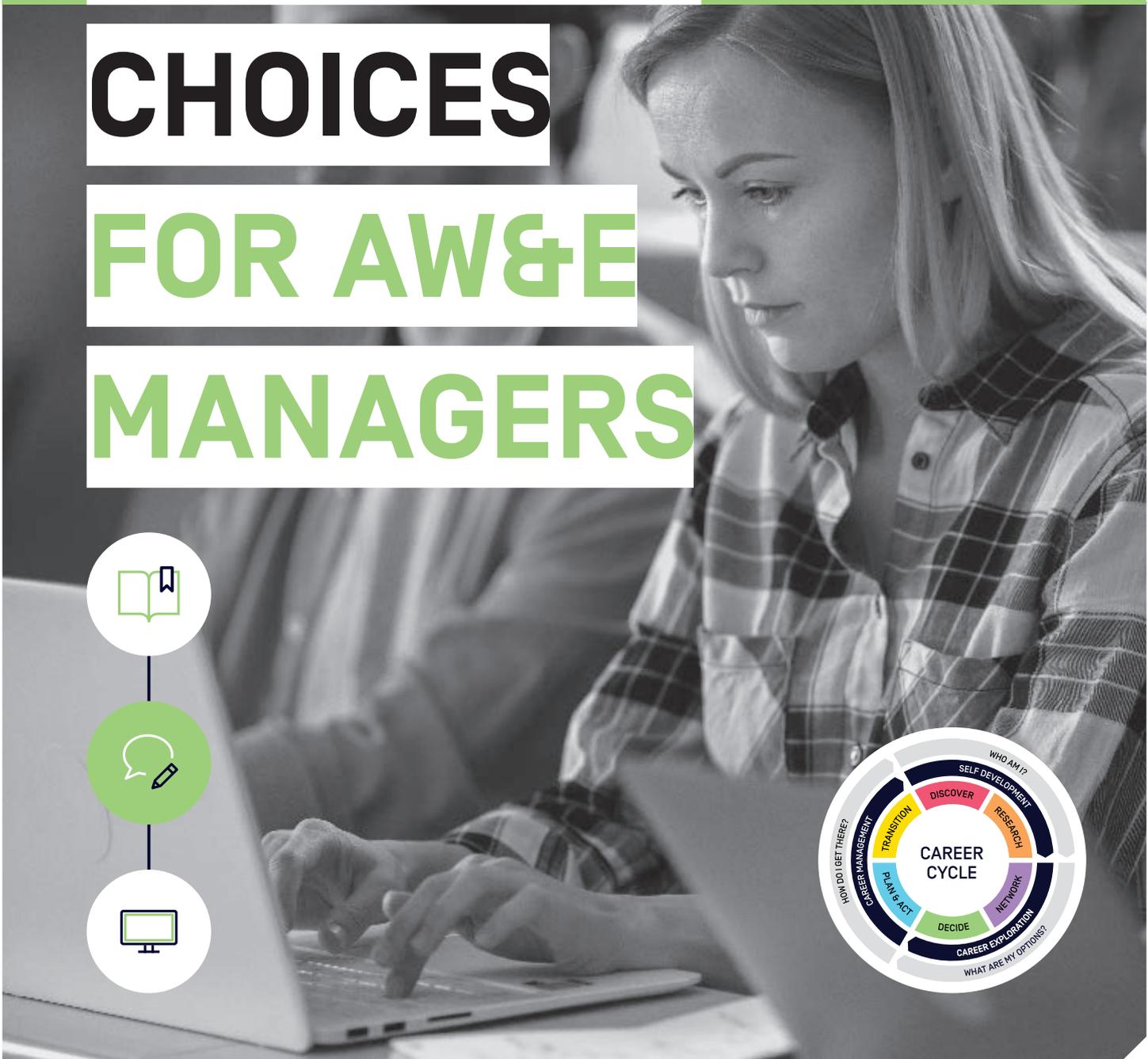
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Elite athletes will need support and guidance in learning and furthering their skills for the future. Help your elite athletes in:

- Understanding the intrinsic value of education – formal and informal
- Understanding that education and learning are integral to their success and wellbeing both during and following their sporting career. Education opportunities present, aside from learning and personal growth, the opportunity to build friendships and relationships or network with, others which could be important down the track and last a lifetime.
- Realising that studying or learning is part of most people's lives, even elite athletes. Role model how you and your team are undertaking learning whilst you work.

In [5 reasons why sport and education are a winning combination](#), the benefits of studying whilst engaging in elite sport are described. They include:

- providing the athlete with a focus other than sport and therefore giving them a different perspective of their training and performance
- enabling the development and refinement of transferable skills such as "planning and goal setting, teamwork, interpersonal skills, commitment, leadership and the ability to prioritise."
- improving their sporting performance by satisfying their desire for knowledge and providing another outlet for stress
- providing a better sport-life balance which can facilitate them having an effective work-life balance in the future
- preparing them for their post-sporting career and facilitating the transition from elite sport into the workforce and the rest of their life.



ATHLETE ACTIVITY

1. To motivate the athlete when discussing education and sport, share education success stories of athletes who successfully engaged in a dual career and went on to reap the rewards of both personal satisfaction and contribution to broader Australian community and workplaces.
2. Have athletes search for, read and share articles on others who they aspire to be – which reinforces the need to be fully equipped with insights about the benefits of combining education and sport.
3. Inform the athlete about opportunities which exist and are provided by the Australian Institute of Sport, their National Sport, National Institute partner or using the Elite Athlete Student Coordinators in external networks (such as those in the Elite Athlete Education Network). All provide valuable and accurate advice regarding their education choices and pathways.

