

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY POLICY			
Effective Date	August 22, 2025	Policy Type	Academic Policy
Responsibility	President and CEO	Related Policies	ACAC Operating Code Alberta Fairness and Safety in Sport Act Alberta Fairness and Safety in Sport Regulation Replaces the previous NWP Athletic Eligibility Standards Policy
Approval Authority	Board of Governors	Review Schedule	5 years

1. Policy Statement:

This policy establishes the eligibility requirements for student-athletes participating in varsity athletics at Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP), ensuring compliance with the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference (ACAC) Operating Code, the Alberta *Fairness and Safety in Sport Act and Regulation*, and institutional standards. The policy aims to promote fairness, safety, academic integrity, and inclusivity in sport.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all student-athletes representing NWP in ACAC and CCAA-sanctioned varsity sports, as well as all staff involved in the administration, coaching, and support of varsity athletics. It covers all campuses, NWP-owned properties, and any related team activities.

3. Purpose:

This policy is required to:

1. Ensure compliance with ACAC and CCAA eligibility standards.
2. Meet legislative requirements under the Alberta *Fairness and Safety in Sport Act and Regulation*.
3. Promote academic achievement, fairness, and safety in sport.
4. Provide clear, consistent eligibility standards for all student-athletes.

4. Definitions:

- 4.1. "Birth Registration Document" – a birth registration document as defined in the *Vital Statistics Act* or a similar document issued outside of Alberta that contains the following information respecting an athlete:
 - (i) full name of the athlete;
 - (ii) date and place where the birth of the athlete occurred; and
 - (iii) the sex of the athlete.
- 4.2. "Confidential Challenge" – an approved submitted application challenging an athlete's eligibility.
- 4.3. "Eligibility Year" – One academic year in which a student-athlete participates in varsity competition.

- 4.4. "Full-Time Status" - as defined by the Registrar, typically a minimum of 9 credits per semester or equivalent.
- 4.5. "GPA" or "Grade Point Average" as defined by the institution.
- 4.6. "Ineligible to Compete" – A student-athlete who does not meet the minimum eligibility standards.
- 4.7. "Relevant Sport" – An amateur competitive sport governed by the institution and ACAC.
- 4.8. "Sex at Birth" – The sex assigned at birth as indicated on the athlete's birth registration document.
- 4.9. "Student-Athlete" – A full-time student enrolled at NWP who represents the institution in ACAC/CCAA-sanctioned varsity sports.

5. Guiding Principles:

- 5.1. Academic Eligibility
 - 5.1.1. Student-athletes must be enrolled as full-time students in post-secondary courses at NWP during the semester of participation.
 - 5.1.2. Student-athletes must pass a minimum of 18 credits per academic year and at least 6 credits in the fall semester to be eligible for the winter semester.
 - 5.1.3. Students with accommodations may be deemed full-time with less than 9 credits per semester, as determined by the Registrar.
 - 5.1.4. Academic eligibility is confirmed by the Athletic Department and the Registrar's Office, and verified by the ACAC.
- 5.2. Years of Eligibility
 - 5.2.1. Student-athletes may not exceed five (5) years of eligibility in ACAC/CCAA competition.
 - 5.2.2. Participation in any recognized intercollegiate league counts toward the five-year limit.
- 5.3. Amateur Status
 - 5.3.1. Student-athletes must comply with CCAA amateur/professional status rules.
 - 5.3.2. Participation on professional teams may affect eligibility as per ACAC/CCAA rules.
- 5.4. Transfer and Reinstatement
 - 5.4.1. Transfer students must meet all eligibility requirements and provide necessary documentation.
 - 5.4.2. Reinstatement after academic ineligibility requires completion of one academic semester with a minimum of 9 credits passed.
- 5.5. Fairness and Safety in Sport
 - 5.5.1. To participate in a female-only league, class, or division, an athlete must be of the female sex at birth, as per the *Alberta Fairness and Safety in Sport Act*.
 - 5.5.2. Written confirmation of eligibility is required during registration as per the Student Athlete Handbook.
 - 5.5.3. Confidential challenges to athlete eligibility may be submitted in writing and will be handled in accordance with Appendix A.
 - 5.5.4. All personal information will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws.
- 5.6. Confirmation and Verification
 - 5.6.1. Eligibility is confirmed through institutional processes and ACAC verification.

5.6.2. Failure to provide required documentation or confirmation will result in ineligibility.

5.7. Reporting and Non-Compliance

5.7.1. Any suspected violations of eligibility must be reported to the Athletic Director.

5.7.2. Non-compliance may result in sanctions, including loss of eligibility, forfeiture of games, and other disciplinary actions as per ACAC policies and provincial regulations.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Board of Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve and formally support this policy
Academic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend and formally support this policy
President and CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and support this policy Maintain currency and review schedule of this policy Notify the Minister of confidential challenges as per the <i>Fairness and Safety in Sport Regulation</i>
Vice President Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and support this policy Oversee implementation of policy Work with Athletic Director on policy exemption requests
Athletic Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of this policy Ensure procedures are followed Oversee confidential challenges Work with Vice President Academic on policy exception requests Maintain currency on ACAC Eligibility requirements
Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead academic eligibility implementation Confirm academic eligibility with Athletic Director

7. Exceptions

7.1. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Athletic Director and Vice-President Academic.

8. Inquiries

8.1. All inquiries to this policy can be directed to the Athletic Director

9. Revision history

Approved by the Board of Governors August 22, 2025; replaces previous NWP Athletic Eligibility Standards Policy.

Appendix – Confidential Challenge to Athlete Eligibility

1. Confidential Challenge to Athlete Eligibility
 - 1.1. A confidential challenge to an athlete's eligibility may be submitted by an applicant if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an athlete is ineligible.
 - 1.2. A confidential challenge must be made in writing and sent to the Athletic Director at [email].
 - 1.3. A confidential challenge to an athlete's eligibility must include:
 - 1.3.1. The name of the applicant;
 - 1.3.2. The name of the athlete, their team and sport; and
 - 1.3.3. Information that supports the grounds for the challenge.
2. Verification of Athlete Eligibility
 - 2.1. Upon receipt of a confidential challenge to an athlete's eligibility, NWP will confirm receipt and notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport, without personal identifying information, within three (3) business days.
 - 2.2. NWP may dismiss the challenge if, in the opinion of NWP reasonable grounds do not exist for the challenge. Upon dismissal of the challenge, the applicant will be notified by the NWP Athletic Director and may be subject to sanctions. The NWP President and CEO will notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport of the dismissal, without personal identifying information, within 30 business days of the challenge.
 - 2.3. If NWP does not dismiss the challenge:
 - 2.3.1. the applicant and the athlete whose eligibility is the subject of the challenge will be notified that the challenge is moving forward; and
 - 2.3.2. the athlete's whose eligibility is the subject of the challenge will be required to provide NWP with a copy of the athlete's birth registration document.
 - 2.4. Failure to provide the birth registration document as defined in the *Vital Statistics Act* or similar document issued outside of Alberta to NWP will render the athlete ineligible to participate in a relevant sport.
3. Resolution
 - 3.1. Once the birth registration document is received, NWP will verify the athlete's eligibility under section 2 above.
 - 3.2. If the challenge is upheld and the athlete is determined to be ineligible, NWP will notify the applicant and athlete whose eligibility has been challenged. The athlete will be permanently ineligible for participation in a female-only league, class or division of a relevant sport.
 - 3.3. If the challenge is dismissed and the athlete is determined to be eligible, NWP will notify the applicant and the athlete whose eligibility has been challenged. The athlete will be permanently eligible for participation in a female-only league, class or division of a relevant sport.
 - 3.4. Upon a determination under section 3.2 or 3.3 above, NWP will notify the Minister of Tourism and Sport of the decision, without personal identifying information, within 30 business days of the challenge.
4. Invalid Challenge
 - 4.1. Pursuant to section 2.2 above, NWP may determine that reasonable grounds do not exist for a challenge, including but not limited to where:
 - 4.1.1. NWP has previously resolved a challenge for the same athlete;
 - 4.1.2. Not enough information has been provided to proceed as a valid challenge; or
 - 4.1.3. The challenge is deemed to have been made in bad faith.
 - 4.2. Factors relevant to determining whether a challenge, dismissed under section 2.2 above, was made in bad faith and merits appropriate sanctions for the applicant include, without limitation:
 - 4.2.1. The applicant's prior history;

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY POLICY

- 4.2.2. A pattern of inappropriate behavior or numerous unfounded challenges under this policy; and
 - 4.2.3. The ages of the athletes involved.
- 4.3. Sanctions for an applicant may include, without limitation:
 - 4.3.1. A written warning; and
 - 4.3.2. A determination that the applicant has violated NWP's Code of Conduct, where applicable.
- 5. Appeals
 - 5.1. The applicant may appeal to the President and CEO of NWP a dismissal of a challenge under section 2.2 above.