

ATHLETES FRIENDLY EDUCATION



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Certificate for Educational Institutions supporting
the Dual Careers of Athletes

ADDRESSEE
Candidates for the members of the National
Expert Group of Portugal

CRITERIA FOR MEMBERS OF THE EXPERT GROUP OF THE ATHLETES FRIENDLY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE

To Whom It May Concern,

1. About the Athletes Friendly Education certificate

The **Athletes Friendly Education certificate (AFE)** is supposed to provide instruments and mechanisms for a Europe-wide label to award educational institutions with special dual career services.

1.1. Importance of a Europe-wide framework on support mechanisms for dual careers

In accordance with the European Commission guidelines on the Minimum quality requirements for specific stakeholders in the field of the Dual careers of athletes, a dual career is recognised as a complex political issue that brings together several interrelated fields of policy, such as education, youth, health and the labour market, with the intention to steer athletes towards suitable professional development. With regards to the dual careers of athletes, the stakeholders include individuals, groups, organisations or interested stakeholders who are active either at the systemic or organisational level in the fields of sport, education and the labour market, whose tasks are to establish conditions that promote the Dual careers of athletes. The career of an athlete differs from the common pattern. Demands of elite sports together with decline in physical performance put an athlete on a career crossroad early in their career path. Side-lined academic activity often makes athletes not well prepared for the labour market. At the moment there is a potential loss of 120.000 athletic talents every Olympic circle due to excessive demands with the combination of education or employment and training. Dual career services try to provide flexible solutions considering each athlete's personal development and situation and to reduce challenges for the athletes.

1.2. The aim of the certificate AFE

European guidelines of the dual career of athletes in the field of **education** stipulate the need for public bodies and stakeholders to develop frameworks for Dual careers in sport and education: this demands special arrangements, such as adapted curricula, e-learning, additional tutoring, provision of sports facilities and services, and other support activities. The project "Athletes friendly education" will upgrade the objectives of promoting the Dual Career Guidelines and spread the awareness and good practice



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among the institutions, which are already supporting athletes in these terms. It will set the minimum quality standards of Educational and Training institutions at the EU level. And also reach and connect various stakeholders, policy makers and experts in the field of supporting athletes' education and employability. Further opportunity is to establish a certification system as a framework at the level of certification of such institutions. Partners' efforts will create new instruments of cooperation and securing sustainable partnership between higher education and business and establish a list of educational programs, at the EU level, with already developed mechanisms. It will also raise awareness on importance of education of the athletes at the National levels and offer tools for athletes, managers, coaches and parents to take responsible decisions about athletes' education.

The certificate is intended as an incentive in the field of education in order to:

1. Support athletes with the information regarding their choice of educational organisations and programs with optimal educational opportunities, with the intent to support athletes in completing at least secondary level education.
2. Provide educational institutions with an added value, by validating their comparative advantage (sports programs, other programs) and giving the educational institutions a basis for obtaining systemic resources aimed at supporting athletes and their dual careers.

The legacy of the project is to find the most effective way to improve athlete's education through innovative educational approach, which can be implemented in the Dual Career programs in the EU framework and at the national levels of the EU Member states.

2. Work of national Expert groups

Due to country-specific conditions there are different departments responsible for the submission of the certificate.

Representatives of all partners, experts in different fields regarding the dual career support of athletes, are involved in each process of developing the certificate and its regulations and provide their respective national experiences.

In the two-phase evaluation process, members of the Expert group are included as the evaluators and as the consultants to the educational institutions.

2.1. Tasks and responsibilities of the members of the Expert group within the certification process

Based on the public call educational institutions may apply for the tender by filling in the application form. The application procedure for the certificate is described in the public call and the Regulations.

The Expert group will examine the received applications and relevant documentation, and evaluate the adequacy of self-assessment (calling for further clarification or additional proof if needed). Institutions meeting the stipulated criteria will be issued an award for active support of Dual careers. The members of the Expert group will follow the protocol of visit and evaluation of the educational institution and conduct the evaluation report after completion of the evaluation and duly substantiate it.

Within one year of granting the award for active support of Dual careers, the Expert group will visit the educational institution in order to assess the meeting of requirements and the implementation of plans. Institutions that meet the stipulated criteria will be issued an award for active support of Dual careers.

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Within the final year of granting the basic certificate, based on reports submitted by the institution and an additional visit, the Expert group re-assesses activities supporting dual careers and grants the Certificate Athletes Friendly Education to institutions which meet the criteria.

Educational institutions in the process of applying for the certificate have to provide all the relevant information needed by the Expert group as part of the above described process of issuing the Certificate Athletes Friendly Education.

2.2. Minimum quality requirements for the selection of the members of the Expert group

The members of the Expert group are included in all evaluation steps of the certification in accordance to the Regulations of the European Certificate.

Based on the scope of the system of the evaluation process, the minimum quality requirements (priorities) for the selection of the members of the Expert group are as follows:

- Representative of sports organisations;
- Representative of the educational institution;
- Familiar with the sport system at national level;
- Familiar with the education system at secondary school and university level;
- Personal integrity: take into account potential conflicts of interest (see point 4 on impartiality);
- Ability to use ITK equipment;
- Working background or experience in the field of sport and education:
 - on the coordination of sport and education,
 - in relation to athletes – education,
 - in relation to athletes – work,
 - in relation to the adaptation of education,
 - in relation to the dual career support and the EU Guidelines on dual career of athletes,
 - In relation to the national and EU legislation and guidelines.
- Possible experience as a former elite athlete.
- Possible experience as a coach of prospective and top athletes.
- Willingness of contributing to the development of sport and education.
- Involvement in the network of educational institutions.
- Involvement in the network of sports organisations.
- The ability to work in a group.

3. The selection and nomination of the Expert group of Athletes Friendly Education certificate at the national level

Candidates for members of the Expert group of the Athletes Friendly Education certificate are selected based on a public call.

When applying for a call, it is necessary to provide all necessary documentation in accordance to the selection and nomination process, based on the rules applied in the document Selection and nomination of the Expert group of Athletes Friendly Education certificate at the national level.

4. Impartiality

Impartiality is a core principle of the work of the Expert Group. Each individual expert must perform his/her work impartially and take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective

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implementation of the evaluation is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').

Every candidate will be asked to complete and sign a **conflict of interest declaration** to confirm that the expert is aware of the rules related to impartiality. Any possible conflicts of interest (e.g. positions held in organisations or institutes in the last ten years) will need to be included in the declaration. If a conflict of interest arises at any part of the evaluation and certification process, the expert needs to declare this interest directly to the organisation.

The following situations are automatically considered as conflict of interest:

- (i) The expert was involved in the preparation of the application for the certificate;
- (ii) The expert is a director, trustee or partner or is in any way involved in the management of an applicant institution;
- (iii) is currently employed or has recently (last 12 months) been contracted by the applicant institution.

In this case, the expert must be excluded from the evaluation of the application concerned and may not take part in the meetings of the Expert Group when the application is being discussed. In case this conflict of interest is discovered after the application process, the decision should be declared void and the expert will be excluded from the Expert Group.

The conflict of interest declarations should be accessible to all other members of the Expert Group. The declaration will need to be renewed on an annual basis by each expert.

The project Athletes Friendly Education is a project of international partners and is run under the Erasmus + sport programme. The outcomes of the project are a result of common work and contribution towards implementation of the EU Guidelines for development of Athletes Dual career programs.

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