

# Top-level Sport Scheme

## **Imprint**

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*For information purposes*

Avans University of Applied Sciences has a Student Charter that describes the rights and obligations of Students enrolled at Avans University of Applied Sciences.

This Top-level Sport Scheme forms part of the Student Charter.

## Introduction

The [action plan for Flexible Education and Top-level Sport](#) (Flexibel Onderwijs en Topsport: FLOT) was created several years ago through a collaboration of the NOC\*NSF, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and several Dutch educational institutions. The purpose of the FLOT action plan is to promote successful dual-track careers for students who play top-level sport. Avans University of Applied Sciences is a partner and signatory of the FLOT action plan.

The action plan gives direction to Higher Education Institutions in guiding students who play top-level sport in such a way that it is possible for them to develop optimally in both their sport and in their studies. The facilitation of flexibility in education ensures a viable combination of sport and study. This allows students who play top-level sport to focus on their development as top-level athletes whilst cultivating a social career. To make this possible, the FLOT action plan contains seven goals:

1. Securing in policy and organization
2. Competence-based study choice
3. Flexible education
4. Financially feasible education
5. Transparency of facilities and communication
6. Monitoring and evaluation of the dual development of top-level sports students
7. Implementation of the FLOT Action Plan by the FLOT network

The target group of the action plan is primarily the group of top-level athletes, who have been awarded a talent or Top-level Sport Status, recognised by NOC\*NSF, by their sports association. Avans University of Applied Sciences recognises the statuses referred to in the FLOT action plan for top-level athletes and also uses statuses for talents in and around sport. The statuses are detailed in this scheme.

In addition to the provisions of the [Student Support Fund Scheme](#), which set out the options for financial support, this scheme provides customised support for Students who play top-level sport during their studies.

### Article 1. Definitions

In this scheme, the following definitions apply:

#### **Academy:**

Organisational unit (business unit) within Avans University of Applied Sciences in which education is provided for one or more Study Programmes.

**Avans University of Applied Sciences:**

The institution (university of applied sciences) that emanates from and is maintained by the Avans Foundation.

**Avans Top-level Sport Status:**

The Top-level Sport Status awarded by Avans under this scheme.

**Executive Board:**

The board of Avans University of Applied Sciences, also the board of the Avans Foundation.

**FLOT:**

Flexible Education and Top-level Sport.

**Study Programme:**

A study programme as referred to in Article 7.3 WHW.

**Student Support Fund Scheme:**

The scheme that covers student support in the form of the allocation of financial assistance from the Student Support Fund.

**Student:**

A person enrolled as a full-time or dual-track student at Avans University of Applied Sciences, as referred to in Articles 7.32 to 7.34 WHW. Where a Student is referred to as 'he', 'she' or 'they' may also be inferred.

**Student Counsellor:**

The Student Counsellor is charged with representing the interests of Students, providing assistance with problems that arise and providing information and advice. The Student Counsellor is part of the Marketing, Communications and Student Relations Service Unit (DMCS).

**Academic Year:**

The period beginning on 1 September and ending on 31 August of the following year.

**Top-level Sport Contact Person:**

The Top-level Sport Contact Person is the first point of contact within an Academy or Study Programme for top-level sport. Each Academy has a Top-level Sport Contact Person who supports, in the broadest sense of the word, Students who play top-level sport.

**Top-level Sport Coordinator:**

The Top-level Sport Coordinator maintains contact with NOC\*NSF, sports associations, partner institutions and others providing education. Makes proposals related to the Top-level Sport Policy and the Top-level Sport Scheme, and ensures the implementation of the policy in the broadest sense of the word together with the Student Counsellor's office. The Top-level Sport Coordinator is the first point of contact regarding the Top-level Sport Policy and status review for (prospective) Students and staff. The Top-level Sport Coordinator is also tasked with making decisions on applications for Avans Top-level Sport Status.

**Top-level Athlete:**

The Student who qualifies for top-level sport-friendly provisions and customisation because the criteria for Avans Top-level Sport Status are met.

**Top-level Sport Status:**

A talent or top-level sport status recognised by NOC\*NSF that a Student has been awarded by the sports association. NOC\*NSF has three types of top-level sport status: the A, HP and Selection status. Eligibility criteria can be found on the website:

<https://nocnsf.nl/topsport/voor-topsporters/topsportstatussen>.

**WHW:**

The Higher Education and Academic Research Act (De Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek: WHW; Dutch Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 593, 1992 and subsequent additions and amendments).

**Article 2. Purpose and scope**

1. The purpose of the Avans Top-level sport policy is to create a climate in which Top-level Athletes and Talents can excel. This scheme elaborates this purpose in the form of customisation that a Student who plays top-level sport can request. In addition, this scheme states the conditions that must be met in order to qualify for the provisions in question.
2. The Top-level Sport Scheme facilitates the Student in the organisation of the studies, but not their content. Each Student must meet the same attainment targets in order to earn the diploma for that Study Programme. Avans University of Applied Sciences creates customisation for Students where possible in order to meet these attainment targets.
3. The Avans Top-level Sport Scheme applies to all Students of Avans University of Applied Sciences.
4. The application of the customised provisions as included in the Top-level Sport Scheme may vary from one Study Programme to another; this is at the discretion of the examination board, possibly after consultation with the Study Programme.

**Article 3. Conditions for awarding Avans Top-level Sport Status**

1. The following Students are eligible for Avans Top-level Sport Status:
  - a. Athletes with NOC\*NSF status (A, HP or selection status, IT, NT or Promise).
  - b. Athletes performing internationally at the highest junior level (European and World Championships, Youth Olympic Games) within a top-level sport discipline recognised by NOC\*NSF.
  - c. Athletes performing internationally at the highest student sport level (World University Games, Student World Championships) within a top-level sport discipline recognised by NOC\*NSF.
  - d. Athletes performing nationally at the highest junior or senior level within an NOC\*NSF-recognised top-level sport discipline.
  - e. Athletes who have been awarded RS1 status by an Olympic Network or are demonstrably performing at that level (= athletes who meet the criteria set out in the 'Handbook guidelines determining regional target group talent statuses version 1.0 2014-2015').

- f. Athletes performing internationally at the highest senior level (European and World Championships) within a top-level sport discipline not recognised by NOC\*NSF.
- g. Persons who act as trainers/coaches or officials at the highest level within a top-level sport discipline recognised by NOC\*NSF.
  - i. The following criteria apply to trainers/coaches:
    - 1. employed as a head coach or trainer for a sports association or club for at least 16 hours per week, and;
    - 2. employed as a head coach or trainer of athletes, holding NOC\*NSF or KNVB status, or equivalent.
- h. The following criteria apply to officials:
  - i. an official at competitions of athletes, holding NOC\*NSF or KNVB status, or equivalent, and;
  - ii. part of the training programme of a sports association or club as an official, or; - involved as an official in training and preparation for at least 16 hours a week.
- i. International Students studying at Avans University of Applied Sciences who play sport at a comparably high level in the Netherlands or abroad can apply for top-level sport-friendly provisions.
- j. Dutch Students studying at Avans and performing at a comparably high level of sport abroad can apply for top-level sport-friendly provisions.
- k. Students who meet the criteria of the FLOT scheme for E-sports.

#### **Article 4. Application procedure for Avans Top-level Sport Status**

1. When enrolling or re-enrolling in Studielink, Students can indicate that they play top-level sport and that they plan to combine their studies with top-level sport. If the Student has done this, the Student will subsequently receive the [inventory form](#) by email for status checking. The application is officially submitted only when the Student has fully completed and returned this form. If the Student does not receive the inventory form via email, the Student can find the form on the Avans [website](#) or on [Student Support](#).
2. The application, completing and sending the inventory form, should always be submitted as soon as possible after the start of the Academic Year. Often, NOC\*NSF statuses are not known for the next season until during or after the summer. As a result, no statuses for the following Academic Year may yet be awarded during the period from June to the end of August.
3. The award of an Avans Top-level Sport Status is done centrally at the Student Support department by the Top-level Sport Coordinator. Ultimately, the Avans Top-level Sport Status is registered in Osiris by the Top-level Sport Coordinator.
4. After being awarded Avans Top-level Sport Status, the Student contacts the Top-level contactperson of the study programme to schedule an appointment.
5. An award of the Avans Top-level Sport Status is always valid for 1 Academic Year. If an Avans Top-level Sport Status is awarded during the course of an Academic Year, it applies until the end of that Academic Year.

6. In order to be eligible for the Avans Top-level Sport Scheme for a given Academic Year, the Student must present a valid Top-level Sport Status. A Top-level Sport Status is valid for 1 Academic Year.
7. The Top-level Sport Coordinator at Avans University of Applied Sciences checks whether the Student is listed in the Athlete Statuses Education (ASE) database of NOC\*NSF or the KNVB database and, on that basis, awards or denies the Avans Top-level Sport Status.
8. If a Student is not registered in one of these databases, the Student must provide proof of his/her level. Possible examples of evidence include:
  - a. copy of Olympic Network top-level sport pass;
  - b. copy of player's licence showing team/club/level;
  - c. official letter from the sports association confirming the level;
  - d. official letter from the club confirming the level;
  - e. recent results showing that the athlete is performing at the required level.
9. For athletes who apply for a status because they perform at the highest senior level (European and World Championships) within a top-level sports discipline not recognised by NOC\*NSF, additional information may be requested if the evidence provided does not provide sufficient clarity, including:
  - a. information on how the sport is organised and what selection criteria are used to perform at the highest international level;
  - b. what form of customisation is desired from the top-level sport scheme.
10. E-sports competitors will have to fill out a survey sent to them by the Top-level Sport Coordinator. The Top-level Sport Coordinator will make a decision based on the responses and the FLOT criteria for E-sports.

## **Article 5. Customised provisions**

1. After the Avans Top-level Sport Status has been awarded, the Student should schedule an appointment with the Top-level contactperson of the study programme. Together, they will identify any potential difficulties.
2. At the Student's request, a study and sport plan may be prepared at the beginning of the Academic Year, if desired. The Student does this together with the designated Top-level Sport Contact Person of the Academy or Study Programme or the study advisor/study and career counsellor. The Student Counsellor acts as an advisor in this regard.
3. The study and sport plan includes:
  - a. an overview of the individual curriculum for the relevant Academic Year, including the requisite educational adjustments;
  - b. an indication of the time of graduation.
4. During the Academic Year, it is possible for the Student to consult the Academy or Study Programme's Top-level Sport Contact Person when difficulties arise or are foreseen. If adjustments or customised provisions are needed, a request may be made to the examination board, with the Student Counsellor necessarily being involved. A request to the examination board is submitted on the basis of the Avans Top-level Sport Status.
5. The customised provisions/adjustments as listed below are all options that the Student can discuss with the Top-level Sport Contact Person from the Academy/

Study Programme. These customised provisions/adjustments may form part of the study plan.

**Please note:** not all adjustments and customisations listed are automatically possible within each Study Programme, but everything is by mutual agreement and can be discussed.

In any case, the customisation covers the following areas:

- a. Education adjustments to suit training and competition schedule:  
Prior to each block in the programme, the Student considers where there are difficulties with respect to the timetable and the training and competition schedule. The Student comes up with their own suggestions for solutions. To the extent that this is possible, the Student who plays top-level sport may take lectures and tutorials with other groups or lecturers. The most optimal solution will be sought in consultation with the Top-level Sport Contact Person/study advisor/study and career coordinator/study and career counsellor. This is recorded in the study plan and ratified by the examination board. The Study Programme informs all affected staff.
- b. Modified compulsory attendance scheme:  
The Student makes timely arrangements for those parts of the course that they wish to take and to which compulsory attendance applies. This is recorded in the study plan. Depending on the nature of the course, the Student will take part in the course with parallel groups or receive a waiver of compulsory attendance, with or without a substitute assignment.
- c. Modified group work scheme:  
The Student, in consultation with their Top-level Sport Contact Person/study advisor/study and career coordinator/study and career counsellor, will seek alternatives to collaborating in project groups in a timely manner when they are unable to participate in projects due to training camps, competitions and championships, for example. If this is not possible due to the nature of the project, the project will be carried out at a later date. The Top-level contactperson of the study programme records the agreements made, communicates this to the student and makes a note of this in Osiris.
- d. Modified work placement scheme:  
The modified work placement scheme may mean that the Student who plays top-level sport will take longer to complete the work placement than the average student. The Top-level contactperson of the study programme records the agreements made, communicates this to the student and makes a note of this in Osiris.
- e. Modified test scheme:  
If the Student is unable to take a test at the scheduled time, options to reschedule the test will be explored in a timely manner in consultation with the Top-level Sport Contact Person/study advisor/study and career counsellor. The new test time is considered to be the first opportunity for the Student to take the test. If it is not possible to reschedule the test time, the Student may use the resit as the first opportunity and may, if necessary, request an additional chance from the examination board.  
Students may also make timely arrangements with their Top-level Sport Contact Person/study advisor/study and career counsellor for an alternative form of test, which must then be requested from and approved by the examination committee. The Top-level contactperson of the study programme records the agreements made, communicates this to the student and makes a note of this in Osiris. Without approval of the examination committee, the test form stipulated in the EER applies.

**Article 6. Student Support Fund Scheme - financial support**

1. A Student, who has been awarded an Avans Top-level Sport Status and who incurs delays to his studies due to training/competing in top-level sports, may request financial support based on the [Student Support Fund](#) Scheme.
2. The Student may claim provisions under this scheme if the following conditions are met:
  - a. the Student meets the requirements set for applying for financial support;
  - b. the Avans Top-level Sport Status has been registered in Osiris by the Student Counsellor.
3. In principle, the Student Support Fund Scheme applies to full-time and dual-track Students. As soon as there are delays to the studies due to top-level sport, a Student should contact a Student Counsellor.

**Article 7. Objection and appeal options**

If disputes arise regarding the awarding of status or the granting of one or more provisions, the following legal protection procedures may be followed.

- Avans Top-level Sport Status:

If the request relates to obtaining Avans Top-level Sport Status, the Student must first contact the Top-level Sport Coordinator. If necessary, the Student may then submit a written substantiated objection within 6 weeks of the decision being announced.

The notice of objection should be addressed to the Disputes Advisory Committee, attn. the secretary, PO Box 90.116, 4800 RA Breda, the Netherlands, or by email to [gac@avans.nl](mailto:gac@avans.nl), in accordance with the procedure as laid down in the Avans University of Applied Sciences Student Appeals Procedure which can be found on [Student Support](#).
- Customised provisions:

A Student may appeal decisions regarding the examination board's denial of requested provisions to the examination appeals board, in writing and substantiated, within 6 weeks of the decision being announced.

The notice of appeal should be addressed to the Examination Appeals Board, attn. the secretary, PO Box 90.116, 4800 RA Breda, or by email to [cobex@avans.nl](mailto:cobex@avans.nl), in accordance with the procedure laid down in the Rules of Procedure of the Examination Appeals Board, which can be found on [Student Support](#).

If a Student encounters problems relating to matters concerning the Avans Top-level Sport Status, the Student may at any time turn to the study and career counsellor, the Top-level Sport Contact Person of the Academy/Study Programme, the Avans Top-level Sport Coordinator and/or a Student Counsellor for advice.

**Article 8. Entry into force, transitional provisions and official title**

1. This scheme was updated in 2024 and came into force on 01/09/2024, thereby replacing the Student/Top-level Athlete Provisions Scheme and the previous version(s) of this scheme.
2. This scheme is reviewed annually.
3. This scheme may be cited as the Top-level Sport Scheme.