

# ELITE ACADEMY

## 2026–2027 ATHLETE & PARENT EXPECTATIONS

WELCOME TO THE 2026–2027 SEASON

Thank you for your interest in joining Elite Academy.

Before registering, we ask that athletes and families carefully review the expectations outlined in this document. These expectations are intended to provide clarity regarding the commitment, culture, and responsibilities associated with participation in our program.

Our goal is not simply to develop successful baton athletes.

***Our goal is to develop capable, confident, accountable young people who learn how to communicate effectively, work hard, lead, overcome challenges, and take ownership of their own development.***

***We believe the skills learned through sport extend far beyond the competition floor. The habits developed through training, commitment, teamwork, accountability, resilience, and personal responsibility will serve athletes throughout their lives.***

***The expectations outlined in this document exist to support that mission.***

Participation in Elite Academy is a partnership between athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers, and the Board of Directors. Each plays an important role in creating a positive, supportive, and successful environment.

We recognize that every athlete has different goals, strengths, and aspirations. Whether an athlete is pursuing provincial, national, or international opportunities, we expect all athletes to approach their training with commitment, integrity, respect, and a willingness to continually improve.

Elite Academy is an invitation-only program. Membership is earned through demonstrated commitment, coachability, work ethic, leadership, and competitive achievement.

Elite status is earned and maintained through the consistent demonstration of the values and expectations outlined in this document.

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ELITE ATHLETE

Elite Academy is not simply another class or training group.

It is a high-performance training environment for athletes who are committed to pursuing excellence within the sport of baton twirling.

Elite athletes are expected to:

- Take ownership of their development
- Demonstrate strong work ethic
- Be coachable
- Communicate effectively
- Lead by example
- Support teammates
- Commit to continual improvement
- Embrace challenges & accountability

## INVITATION AND CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP

Initial invitations and continued membership are determined annually by the coaching staff.

Membership decisions are based on:

- Skill level
- Coachability
- Work Ethic
- Commitment
- Attendance
- Competitive Results
- Leadership
- Sportsmanship
- Athlete Ownership
- Accountability
- Contribution to team culture

Membership is not based solely on results.

Athletes who no longer demonstrate the effort, attitude, commitment, or behavior expected within the program may have their membership reviewed and may not be invited to return in future seasons.

The purpose of this policy is not to exclude athletes but to protect the culture, standards, and training environment that allow all athletes within Elite Academy to thrive.

## WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Success at Elite Academy is measured by both performance and process.

While competitive results are important, they are not the sole measure of success.

Elite athletes are expected to pursue excellence while demonstrating:

- Commitment
- Accountability
- Leadership

- Resilience
- Coachability
- Competitive readiness

- Positive contribution to team
- Sportsmanship
- Respect

Athletes who consistently demonstrate these qualities are considered successful regardless of podium placements.

## ATHLETE OWNERSHIP

Athletes are expected to play an active and predominant role in their development.

As athletes mature, they are expected to take responsibility for:

- Communication with coaches
- Goal setting
- Training plans
- Practice habits
- Competition preparation
- Seeking feedback
- Implementing corrections
- Time management
- Accountability for commitment

Athletes are expected to become the primary communicator regarding their training and development whenever age and maturity allow. In general, we expect athletes to begin stepping into their role as primary communicator at age 12.

The role of the athlete is to drive their own training and work hand-in-hand with the coaching staff to achieve their goals.

## ATHLETE EXPECTATIONS

Elite athletes are expected to:

- Arrive prepared and ready to work
- Demonstrate a positive attitude
- Be coachable
- Accept feedback respectfully
- Support teammates
- Demonstrate sportsmanship
- Maintain professionalism
- Represent the club positively
- Follow club policies
- Respect coaches, officials, volunteers, and competitors

Athletes are expected to support and celebrate teammates and the club will not tolerate negative discussions regarding:

- Team placements
- Routine assignments
- Competition results
- Coaching decisions
- Other athletes

## TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

Elite athletes should expect to commit approximately 18–20 hours per week toward their development.

This may include:

- Baton classes
- Team training
- Dance training
- Acro training
- Private lessons
- Conditioning
- Independent practice
- Video review
- Goal setting and planning

## INDEPENDENT PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

As a general guideline, Elite athletes should expect to spend at least twice as much time training independently as they spend in structured classes.

Athletes are expected to take responsibility for:

- Practicing assigned corrections
- Maintaining conditioning
- Maintaining flexibility
- Reviewing routines
- Tracking progress
- Preparing for upcoming competitions

Athletes should understand that elite performance requires effort beyond scheduled class time. This is integral to their success and status as an elite athlete.

## COMPETITION EXPECTATIONS

The following competitions are considered mandatory unless otherwise approved by the Head Coaches:

Competition	Expectation
Valentines	*Optional
Wild West	Mandatory
Sweet Pea	*Optional
ABTA Provincials	Mandatory
Nations Cup/World Championship Qualifier	*Optional
CBTF Nationals	Mandatory
Movin' On Up	*Optional
Out-of-Province Competitions	*Optional

\*In addition to the mandatory competitions, Elite Academy athletes must compete in a minimum of two optional competitions

For athletes residing outside Alberta, competition expectations will be discussed individually with the Head Coaches prior to the beginning of the season.

## COHORT PLACEMENT PHILOSOPHY

Cohort placements are determined by the coaching staff through an audition process

Factors considered include:

- Skill level
- Athlete compatibility
- Commitment
- Attendance
- Work ethic
- Coachability
- Team needs
- Competitive goals

The cohort placement audition date is currently scheduled for August 30<sup>th</sup> for 2026/27 season. Cohort placement decisions will be reviewed at the mid-session mark and are subject to change based on the above factors.

## OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE EARNED, NOT GUARANTEED

The following opportunities are earned and not automatically guaranteed:

- Routine Opportunities
- Leadership opportunities
- Special performances
- Nations Cup opportunities
- International opportunities

Event	Expectation	Conditions/Exceptions
Solo	Mandatory	
2 Baton	Mandatory	
3 Baton	Mandatory	Must have achieved level BI in 2 baton. Must have achieved level BA to cease event participation.
Medley	Mandatory	Must have achieved level BI to cease event participation.
Solodance/Artistic Twirl	Mandatory	Must have achieved level BI Medley
X-Strut	Optional	Must have achieved level BI Medley
Freestyle/Rhythmic Twirl	Coach recommendation only	Must have completed Gold Pin & achieved level BI Solodance
Duet	Optional	
Artistic Pair	Optional	Must have achieved level BI Duet.
Pair	Optional	Must have achieved level BI Duet.
Team	Mandatory	May cease participation beyond Grade 11. Discussion with Head Coaches is necessary.
Additional Teams	Optional	If an athlete wishes to compete in any additional teams, an application must be submitted to the Head Coaches for consideration.

Routine opportunities may be offered or rejected based upon commitment, readiness, effort, coachability, and overall contribution to the program. All routines (including mandatory routines) are subject to the Head Coaches discretion.

## PARENT EXPECTATIONS

As athletes move into elite-level training, the role of the parent evolves.

The role of the parent is to provide support while allowing athletes to increasingly take ownership of their development.

Parents are expected to:

- Encourage athlete independence
- Support training commitments
- Support attendance expectations
- Support fundraising initiatives
- Fulfill volunteer obligations
- Respect coaching decisions
- Communicate respectfully
- Help athletes manage a healthy balance between training and life

Parents acknowledge that athlete development decisions belong to the coaching staff.

## COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Athletes are expected to communicate directly with coaches whenever possible.

Communication should be initiated by the athlete regarding:

- Training
- Goals
- Attendance
- Scheduling
- Competition preparation
- Routine feedback

Parents are encouraged to support these conversations rather than conduct them on the athlete's behalf.

## OUTSIDE COACHING & TRAINING

Athletes are encouraged to seek additional opportunities that support their development.

Examples include:

- Cross-Canada teams
- Guest coaches
- Specialty clinics
- Camps
- Additional training opportunities

Private coaching or outside training should be discussed with the Head Coach(es) to ensure training plans remain aligned and supportive of the athlete's goals.

Athletes competing in baton must maintain their primary membership with Elite Academy.

Exceptions for retired competitive athletes or special circumstances may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Attendance is reviewed annually.

Missing a practice occasionally with reasonable notice is understood.

Missing team practices affects other athletes and should be avoided whenever possible.

Repeated absences may impact:

- Team placement
- Routine participation
- Competition opportunities
- Future invitation to the program

## DANCE & ACRO EXPECTATIONS

Dance training is required.

The preferred training partner is Elements Dance Company due to the collaborative relationship between the organizations and coordinated athlete development opportunities.

Alternative dance programs must be approved by the Head Coaches.

Acro training is also required.

Acro may be completed through Elite Academy or through another approved program.

## VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

Every athlete under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian volunteer membership.

Families, and athletes as they are able, are expected to support:

- Club activities
- Central Region initiatives
- ABTA initiatives
- Competitions
- Casinos
- Bingos
- Fundraising events

Specific volunteer requirements will be communicated annually.

## FUNDRAISING EXPECTATIONS

Participation in fundraising initiatives is mandatory at all levels within the Alberta baton community.

Fundraising may support:

- Central Region – casinos, bingos, and competitions
- ABTA – casinos, competitions and events
- Elite Academy/ Elevate Academy – club or athlete fundraisers

Fundraising initiatives will clearly indicate whether proceeds support the organization as a whole or individual athlete accounts.

## REGISTRATION & FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Athletes accepted into the program are expected to commit for the full season.

Program fees, competition costs, memberships, travel expenses, and other applicable fees are the responsibility of the athlete and family.

Fee schedules and payment timelines will be communicated during registration.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We have read and understand the expectations outlined in this document and agree to support the values, culture, and expectations of Elite Academy.

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_