

Special Consideration Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes the principles that support students seeking to notify the University when they have been impacted by short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, which may affect their performance in assessment.

Background

(2) The University is committed to equity and fairness in all aspects of its learning and teaching. It recognises that students may experience events beyond their control that adversely affect their academic performance in assessment activities.

Scope

(3) This Policy applies to short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable, and significantly disruptive, which may affect a student's performance in assessment.

(4) This Policy applies to:

- a. all coursework students;
- b. all types of assessment, including examinations and coursework;
- c. staff involved in the administration, teaching, assessing, or managing units of study at the University; and
- d. Student Wellbeing staff.

(5) This Policy does not apply to students with a pre-existing disability / health condition or prolonged adverse circumstances who may be eligible for ongoing assistance and support. Such support is governed by the [Student Disability Support Policy](#) and may be sought and coordinated through Student Wellbeing. It is recognised that students with chronic / long-term conditions may experience an acute episode of their condition, and that it may not always be possible for the University to put sufficient arrangements in place to provide a reasonable adjustment at the time of assessment, and this Policy covers such eventualities.

Section 2 - Policy

General Principles

(6) To support students who have experienced short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive and that affect their capacity to undertake or perform in an assessment, the University will attempt to provide affected students with an opportunity to undertake the affected assessment or an alternative assessment in order to demonstrate that they have met the relevant learning outcome(s) of a unit or units. The opportunity provided under such circumstances is referred to as Special Consideration and may be granted after careful evaluation of an application.

(7) Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive may be unexpected

in nature, including personal, social or domestic issues such as illness (either physical or psychological), accident, injury, societal demands (e.g. jury service), bereavement, family breakdown, or may be anticipated, but significantly affect the student's capacity for undertaking assessment for the unit(s), such as religious commitments, legal commitments, unexpected work commitments that cannot be changed, caring commitments.

(8) Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive are those that:

- a. could not have reasonably been avoided or guarded against by the student;
- b. were beyond the student's control;
- c. caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for undertaking assessment for the unit(s);
- d. occurred during an Event Critical Study Period and were at least three (3) consecutive days duration or a total of five (5) days within the teaching period; or
- e. prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date (e.g. final examination, in class test/quiz, in class presentation).

(9) All applications for Special Consideration must be supported by evidence as described in the [Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule](#) and be submitted by the deadline prescribed in the [Special Consideration Procedure](#).

(10) Students with a pre-existing disability / health condition or prolonged adverse circumstances are advised to seek support from Student Wellbeing and should also refer to the [Student Disability Support Policy](#).

(11) Students are expected to manage their time so that they can meet assessment deadlines at the same time as other obligations which they may have, both inside and outside the University.

(12) Special Consideration is not a mechanism to appeal against an assessment outcome.

Fit to Sit Model

(13) The University operates under a 'Fit to Sit' model. This means that, in sitting an examination and / or in-class test or otherwise submitting an assessment, a student is declaring that they are fit to do so. It is the responsibility of the student to determine whether they are Fit to Sit an examination or test, or otherwise submit an assessment. If a student is feeling unfit to sit the examination or test, or otherwise submit the assessment, they should not do so.

(14) A student may submit an application for Special Consideration if they can demonstrate that:

- a. they were unfit to make reasonable judgement on their fitness to undertake the assessment, due to mental illness or other exceptional circumstances; or
- b. they were taken ill during the assessment (in the case of an examination or test), and this can be independently corroborated.

(15) In cases where a student is taken ill during an examination or test, the student must advise the examination supervisor, who will record the case on the Examination Room Report Form.

Appeals

(16) A student may appeal an adverse outcome of a Special Consideration application in accordance with the [Academic Appeals Policy](#) and the [Assessment Procedure](#).

Section 3 - Procedures

(17) Refer to the [Special Consideration Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(18) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(19) Commonly defined terms are located in the University [Glossary](#). The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Event Critical Study Period means an intense academic phase during the study session characterised by the lead-up to or culmination of key academic work.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
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