

Special Consideration Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To set out the Procedure for students seeking to notify the University when they experience short-term, unexpected, Serious and Unavoidable Circumstances, which affect their performance in assessment, and the basis and mechanisms through which the University will provide support in accordance with the [Special Consideration Policy](#).

Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to:

- a. all coursework students, including those on sub-degree, undergraduate, postgraduate taught, and non-award provision;
- b. all types of assessment, including examinations and coursework;
- c. staff involved in administration, teaching, assessing or managing units of study at the University; and
- d. Student Wellbeing staff.

Section 2 - Policy

(3) Refer to the [Special Consideration Policy](#).

Section 3 - Procedures

Responsibilities and Required Actions

(4) There is a [Special Consideration Procedure Flowchart](#) available for this Procedure.

Applying for Special Consideration

(5) A student who has experienced unexpected, unavoidable, and serious circumstances affecting their assessable work may lodge an application for Special Consideration.

(6) Applications will only be accepted in the following circumstances:

- a. where academic work has been hampered to a substantial degree by illness or other cause; and
- b. the circumstances are serious and unavoidable and beyond the student's control; and
- c. the application for Special Consideration is lodged no later than five (5) working days after the assessment task due date, examination or test date; or
- d. During the COVID-19 pandemic and until a date determined by the Academic Senate, where students in standard teaching periods have been impacted by COVID-19, the application for Special Consideration must be

lodged no later than seven (7) working days after the assessment task due date, examination or test date.

(7) The University operates under a 'Fit to Sit' model, where, in sitting an examination or in-class test, a student is declaring that they are fit to do so. Nonetheless, a student may submit an application for Special Consideration, in accordance with the prescribed method and deadline, 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.

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

(9) All Special Consideration applications must be lodged online via the University's [AskMQ](#) system and must include supporting documentary Evidence.

(10) Lodging an application for Special Consideration does not guarantee that a student will be granted an additional / alternative assessment. Students are advised to continue to work on their assessments and complete them as soon as possible.

(11) Applications for Special Consideration may be refused if:

- a. not submitted in the manner and timeframe required;
- b. the student has not complied with all other mandatory requirements for successful completion of the unit; or
- c. they are not supported by appropriate documentary Evidence.

(12) Applications made on behalf of a student by an external representative will only be accepted in cases where the student is incapacitated.

Evidence

(13) A Special Consideration application must be supported by documentary Evidence at the time of submission. Evidence requirements are specified within the [Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule](#) and may include:

- a. original supporting documentation; or
- b. a medical certificate; or
- c. a completed [Professional Authority Form \(PAF\)](#); or
- d. appropriate documentary Evidence for non-medical circumstances.

(14) During the COVID-19 Pandemic and until a date determined by the Academic Senate, where students in standard teaching periods have been impacted by COVID-19, students may submit a statement of fact as evidence.

(15) The Evidence must:

- a. identify the circumstances;
- b. include dates and / or the length of the circumstances;
- c. explain the severity and impact of the circumstances;
- d. clearly describe how the circumstances have adversely affected the student's capacity for effective study to which an assessment relates; and
- e. include the date(s) on which the student was seen by the professional providing the Evidence.

(16) The University reserves the right to request and retain the originals of supporting documentation, and will conduct regular audits of supporting documentation submitted electronically.

(17) Students must retain all original documentation for a six (6) month period and must supply original documents to the University within ten (10) working days of such a request being made.

(18) All documentation (in hardcopy or electronic form) relating to a Special Consideration applications will be treated in accordance with the University's [Privacy](#) Framework.

Assessment Process

(19) The assessment of whether a student's circumstances were serious and unavoidable is made at the administrative level by Professional staff according to a pre-approved set of criteria described in the [Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule](#). Professional staff processing an application may seek input from the relevant Academic staff, Unit Convenor / Program Manager when assessing an application, if necessary.

(20) Note - In accordance with the [Curriculum Architecture Policy](#), from 1 January 2020 'programs' are known as 'courses'.

Outcomes

(21) If a claim for Special Consideration is accepted, the University will attempt to provide students with one (1) additional opportunity to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of a unit or units.

(22) Outcomes of an application for Special Consideration may include:

- a. no action (where an application fails to meet requirements of the [Special Consideration Policy](#) / this Procedure / [Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule](#));
- b. additional assessment to fairly assess performance;

The additional assessment should take the form of the original assessment as closely as possible and will ensure the same learning outcomes are assessed.

In submitting a Special Consideration application, the student is acknowledging that they may be required to undertake additional work. The time and date, deadline or format of any required extra assessable work as a result of a Special Consideration application is not negotiable. In submitting a Special Consideration application, the student is agreeing to make themselves available so that they can complete any extra work as required.

No more than one (1) alternate assessment will be offered to a student in each affected unit, so it is essential that the student makes themselves available for the alternative assessment activity.

Where a student is offered and undertakes assessment as above, the mark from the alternate assessment will supersede the mark from any initial assessment, regardless of whichever is the higher.

- c. a supplementary examination;

Where Special Consideration is granted in the form of a supplementary examination, any initial examination affected by the circumstances will not be marked; rather the mark from the supplementary examination will be used.

Other than in exceptional circumstances only one (1) opportunity for a supplementary examination will be provided.

- d. a deadline for assessment may be extended;

The length of a deadline extension will normally be equivalent to the duration of the circumstances affecting the student.

- e. marks derived from other, completed assessment tasks may be aggregated or averaged to achieve an overall mark;
- f. in exceptional circumstances, the final mark for the unit may be excluded from calculations for Honours, WAM / GPA, or Academic Standing; or
- g. in certain circumstances, where the student has demonstrated Serious and Unavoidable Circumstances, but the University determines that Special Consideration is not possible for the assessment affected, the outcome may be to recommend the student apply to [Withdraw without Academic Penalty](#). The student must determine whether to apply to [Withdraw without Academic Penalty](#), or accept the outcome where no alternative assessment can be provided.
- h. COVID-19 Exception: In the period that face-to-face teaching is unavailable to students due to the COVID-19 pandemic or until such time as advised by the University, the application for Special Consideration due to circumstances directly related to the pandemic will be considered additional to any other opportunity provided.

Withdrawal of Special Consideration Application

(23) Once the student has submitted a Special Consideration application the student may not withdraw the application, and must either submit themselves to partake in the alternate assessment activity(ies), or accept the mark received for the relevant assessment item.

Notification of Special Consideration Application Outcome

(24) The University will aim to communicate the outcome of a Special Consideration application to the student's email address within five (5) working days of receipt of the application and all necessary supporting Evidence.

Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty Recommended

(25) In certain circumstances, the outcome of a Special Consideration application may be to recommend the student apply to [Withdraw without Academic Penalty](#). The student must determine whether to apply to [Withdraw without Academic Penalty](#), or accept the outcome where no alternate assessment can be provided.

(26) Where a student accepts the offer to [Withdraw without Academic Penalty](#), the University's Commonwealth Supported Students team will separately assess whether the student is also eligible for [Withdrawal without Financial Penalty](#).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(27) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

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

- a. standard teaching period means Sessions 1 and 2, and 'non-standard teaching period' means Session 3, a term, a block, or an external delivery mode, and includes the Global MBA.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	8th September 2021
Review Date	1st December 2021
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Approval Date	31st August 2021
Expiry Date	24th July 2022
Responsible Executive	Rorden Wilkinson Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Officer	David Indge Associate Director, Student Connect +61 2 9850 4554
Enquiries Contact	Leanne Piggott Dean of Students