Special Consideration Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) To set out the procedure for 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, 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

Applying for Special Consideration

(4) A student who has experienced short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, which affect their performance in assessment, may lodge an application for Special Consideration.

(5) 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;
b. the circumstances or events are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive and beyond the student's control;
c. the application for Special Consideration is lodged either before or no later than five (5) working days after the assessment task due date, examination, or test date; and
d. the assessment task has not been already undertaken or submitted prior to application.

(6) All Special Consideration applications must be lodged online via the Service Connect portal and must include

supporting documentary Evidence.

(7) Applications for Special Consideration may be refused under any of the following circumstances:

a. they are 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;
c. they are not supported by appropriate documentary Evidence;
d. the student has already undertaken or submitted the assessment task.

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

(9) In the event of illness or significant disruptions during an examination or timed assessment, students must promptly cease their work. If the incident occurs in a classroom setting, they must inform the supervisor or invigilator immediately. If the disruption takes place outside the classroom, it should be reported immediately to the appropriate course authority. Subsequently, students are required to submit an application for special consideration.

(10) Students who have already submitted an assessment or participated in an examination or timed assessment without reporting any issues during the assessment process will only be considered for a second opportunity to undertake that assessment only under exceptional circumstances. The decision to grant a second opportunity will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with careful consideration given to the nature and validity of the exceptional circumstances that significantly affected their performance in the initial assessment. A statement of fact cannot suffice as evidence in such cases.

Evidence

(11) 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;
b. a medical certificate;
c. a completed Professional Authority Form (PAF);
d. appropriate documentary Evidence for non-medical circumstances; or
e. a statement of fact.

(12) 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.

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

(14) 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.

(15) All documentation (in hardcopy or electronic form) relating to a Special Consideration applications will be treated

in accordance with the University's Privacy Policy.

Assessment Process

(16) The assessment of whether a student's circumstances were serious and unavoidable is made at the administrative level 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 when assessing an application, if necessary.

Outcomes

(17) If an application for Special Consideration is accepted, the University will attempt to provide the student 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.

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

a. no action (including where an application fails to meet the requirements of this Procedure or the Special Consideration Policy;
b. an alternative assessment, which 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 alternative work. The time and date, deadline or format of any required alternative 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 alternative work as required.
c. a supplementary examination;

   Other than in exceptional circumstances only one (1) opportunity for a supplementary examination will be provided.
d. the extension of the assessment deadline;

   The length of a deadline extension will normally be equivalent to the duration of the circumstances affecting the student. If a deadline for assessment is extended, in some circumstance this may result in the release of the final grade being delayed.
e. marks derived from other completed assessment tasks being aggregated or averaged to achieve an overall mark;
f. second opportunity;

   If a student is given a second opportunity to undertake an assessment as per clause 11, the mark obtained in the subsequent attempt will replace the original results for that assessment, regardless of whether it is higher or lower.
g. in exceptional circumstances, the final mark for the unit being excluded from calculations for Honours, WAM, or Academic Standing; or
h. in certain circumstances where the student has demonstrated circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive but the University determines that Special Consideration is not possible for the assessment affected, a recommendation that the student apply to Withdraw without Penalty. The student must determine whether to apply to Withdraw without Penalty or accept the outcome where no alternative assessment can be provided.

Withdrawal of Special Consideration Application

(19) Once the student has submitted a Special Consideration application, the student may not withdraw the application and must accept the outcome as determined.

Notification of Special Consideration Application Outcome

(20) 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

(21) In certain circumstances, the outcome of a Special Consideration application may be to recommend the student apply to Withdraw Without Penalty in accordance with the Withdrawal Procedure. The student must determine whether to apply to Withdraw without Academic Penalty, or accept the outcome where no alternative assessment can be provided.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(22) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(23) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Procedure:

a. Evidence means documentation specified in the Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule that demonstrates the severity and impact of a disruption to study.
b. Professional Authority Form (PAF) is a form to document Evidence of medical related disruptions (physical or psychological).

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Responsible Officer	Leanne Piggott Pro Vice-Chancellor (Dean of Students)
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