

Special Consideration Policy

Section 1 - Application of This Policy

(1) The Special Consideration Policy applies in all cases where the other academic policies provide for a student to seek some entitlement on the grounds of misadventure or extenuating circumstances.

Section 2 - Student Obligations

(2) Students are expected to complete all compulsory assessment tasks, tests and examinations at an acceptable standard and to meet all compulsory assessment deadlines to meet course requirements.

(3) Students who suffer misadventure as described in section 3, or are affected by extenuating circumstances as described in section 3, which prevents them from meeting acceptable standards or deadlines may apply for special consideration.

(4) Students who experience circumstances which adversely affect their studies but which are not such as to be deemed misadventure or extenuating circumstances as defined in section 3, are nevertheless advised to inform their Subject Coordinator, Course Director or Course Coordinator of those circumstances as they occur.

Section 3 - Misadventure and Extenuating Circumstances

(5) As a general guide misadventure or extenuating circumstances are circumstances which are:

- a. beyond the student's control (i.e. they could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against);
- b. sufficiently grave or of a nature or duration to have caused considerable disruption to the student's capacity to study effectively or to complete subject requirements; and
- c. have interfered with the otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the subject requirements.

Misadventure

(6) Circumstances contributing to misadventure can include:

- a. medical reasons;
- b. family/personal reasons - including death or severe medical or personal problems;
- c. employment related reasons - such as a substantial change to routine employment arrangements or status.

(7) The following circumstances would not be considered misadventure:

- a. routine demands of employment;
- b. difficulties adjusting to University life, to the self discipline needed to study effectively, and to the demands of

- academic work;
- c. stress or anxiety normally associated with examinations, required assessment tasks or any aspect of course work;
- d. routine need for financial support;
- e. lack of knowledge of requirements of academic work.

Extenuating Circumstances

(8) Circumstances which can be deemed to be extenuating include:

- a. administrative problems - such as the late receipt of teaching materials, enrolment errors or delays;
- b. sporting or cultural commitments - where a student has been selected to participate in a state, national or international sporting or cultural event;
- c. military commitments - where a student is a member of the armed forces involved in a compulsory exercise;
- d. legal commitments - where a student is called for jury duty or is subpoenaed to attend a court, tribunal, etc.; or
- e. other events that pose a major obstacle to the student proceeding satisfactorily with his or her studies.

(9) The following would not be regarded as extenuating circumstances:

- a. demands of sport, clubs, and social or extra-curricular activity (other than selection for state, national or international sporting or cultural events);
- b. difficulties with the English language during examinations.

Section 4 - Requests for Special Consideration

(10) Requests for special consideration may be lodged for the purposes given below. The type of application, the office with which it should be lodged and the deadline for lodging it are specified in each case.

An Extension of Time to Submit Assessment Tasks

(11) Applications for an extension of time to submit assessment tasks are the subject of policies specified in subject outlines. Such applications may be received and approved verbally. Where a written application is required, the following applies:

- a. Applications should be in the form of a letter to the subject coordinator and should be supported by appropriate documentation. The application should be lodged as soon as it becomes apparent that the submission deadline cannot be met.

Approved Withdrawal from a Subject (AW Grade) After the HECS Census Date

(12) Applications must be in the form of a letter to the Division of Student Administration. The application must be lodged as soon as possible and preferably before the last four weeks of session (counting the examination weeks). Refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#), section 13.

Refund of HECS-HELP Payments Following Withdrawal from a Subject/s

(13) Applications must be in the form of a letter to the HECS-HELP/FEE HELP Coordinator in the Division of Student Administration. The application must be lodged within one year of the notification of the granting of an AW grade. Refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#), clauses 67-68.

Extended Leave of Absence

(14) Applications for leave of absence which do not exceed the maximum leave permitted (four sessions of leave in any four consecutive calendar years) are normally automatically granted. All applications for leave must be in writing but applications for leave beyond the maximum permitted must be on the grounds of misadventure or extenuating circumstances.

(15) Applications for extended leave should be lodged with the Division of Student Administration by 5:00pm on the census date of the session in which leave is sought. Refer to the [Enrolment Policy](#), section 14.

An Extension of Time to Complete a Subject (Grade Pending GP)

(16) Applications must be lodged in writing with the Division of Student Administration by the Friday before the commencement of examinations for the session. Late applications may be accepted if the misadventure or extenuating circumstances prevented the student from lodging the application on time. Refer to the [Assessment Policy](#), section 7.

Permission to Sit for a Supplementary Examination

Due to Inability to Sit for the Final Examination

(17) Applications shall be made on a Request Special Consideration form, before the commencement of examinations for the session. Late applications may be accepted if the misadventure or extenuating circumstances prevented the student from lodging the application on time. Refer to the [Assessment Policy](#), section 7 .

Due to Misadventure at an Examination

(18) Applications shall be made on a Request for Special Consideration form.

(19) Refer to the [Assessment Policy](#), clauses 183 and 199.

Exemption from Attendance at a Compulsory Residential School

(20) Applications must be made in writing to Student Services and be lodged prior to the commencement of the residential school. Refer to the [Assessment Policy](#), clauses 100-105.

To Avoid Failing a Subject for Not Attending a Compulsory Residential School

(21) Students who do not attend a compulsory residential school and who were not granted an exemption from attendance will be asked by Student Services to show cause why they should not be failed in the subject. Refer to the [Assessment Policy](#), clause 106.

Section 5 - Supporting Documentary Evidence

Medical Certificates and Reports

Medical Certificates

(22) A medical certificate, in the form prescribed by the Executive Director, Division of Student Administration, will normally be submitted by a student who has suffered an acute (i.e. brief) illness when seeking special consideration. A medical certificate is a signed statement from a qualified and registered health practitioner which explains the debilitating nature of the condition from which the student is or was suffering and the period during which the condition has or will affect the student, so that the University can decide on the basis of that information and any other information provided by the student, whether to grant the special consideration sought. The certificate should

also specify the precise nature of the medical condition, unless to do so would result in a breach of patient confidentiality.

Medical Reports

(23) A medical report will normally be submitted by a student when seeking to explain poor academic performance over an extended period of time as in the case of an exclusion appeal. A medical report is a signed statement from a qualified and registered health practitioner which explains the debilitating nature of the chronic (i.e. ongoing) medical condition from which the student is or was suffering and the likely duration of the condition, so that the University can decide on the basis of that information and any other information provided by the student, whether to grant the special consideration sought. The report should also specify the precise nature of the medical condition, unless to do so would result in a breach of patient confidentiality.

Conditions Relating to the Use of Medical Reports and Certificates

(24) Medical certificates must be completed in the form prescribed by the Executive Director, Division of Student Administration.

(25) Medical certificates and medical reports will only be accepted when given by qualified and registered health practitioners.

(26) Medical certificates and medical reports must be legible; documents, signed by the practitioner and, preferably be on letterhead stationery; they must indicate the date/s on which attention was sought; and meet the other requirements specified in clauses 22 and 23 above.

(27) A student shall submit a medical certificate or medical report when seeking special consideration in relation to an illness, disability or medical condition.

(28) When assessing a request for special consideration, the University will take into account all matters relevant to the request. A medical certificate or medical report, in itself, does not guarantee that special consideration will be granted.

Registered Health Practitioners

(29) Medical reports and certificates, in the form prescribed by the Executive Director, Division of Student Administration, will be accepted from the following categories of registered health practitioners:

- a. registered medical practitioners;
- b. registered dentists.

Family/Personal

(30) For family/personal reasons - a statement from a registered health care practitioner, a recognised mental health professional, or a person who knows the student, who is not related to the student and who is independent of the University stating:

- a. the date the student's personal circumstances began or changed; and
- b. how these circumstances affected the student's ability to study.

Employment

(31) For employment related reasons - a statement from the student's employer stating:

- a. the date employment arrangements or status changed; and

- b. the nature of the changes.

Sporting/Cultural/Military/Legal

(32) For sporting, cultural, military or legal commitments - a statement from the relevant authority advising:

- a. details of the event; and
- b. the period during which the student's study will be interrupted.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	16th September 2014
Review Date	16th May 2015
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Approval Date	27th August 2014
Expiry Date	16th December 2014
Unit Head	Cassandra Webeck University Secretary +61 2 6338 4258
Author	Megan Bond Manager, Academic Senate
Enquiries Contact	Office of Academic Governance +61 2 63384831