

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

Approving authority	Academic Board
Purpose	This policy outlines the basis on which special consideration may be granted to students.
Responsible Officer	Academic Leadership team (Academic Dean and/or Head of Academic Programs)
Next scheduled review	April 2031
Document Location	http://www.ozford.edu.au/higher-education/policies-and-procedures/
Associated documents	Assessment Policy and Procedure Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure Academic Progress Policy and Procedure Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure Student Support and Services Policy and Procedure Special Consideration Procedure

1 PRINCIPLES

The Institute recognises that there are occasions where a student has been disadvantaged in their assessment tasks in comparison to other students due to circumstances beyond their control. The Institute will offer special consideration to these students if they meet the requirements of this Policy.

This policy and the associated procedure outline the basis for student requests for special consideration in dealing with their assessments where the student's performance may have been adversely affected by unexpected personal or other events that were beyond their control.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff and students who are currently enrolled at the Institute.

3. DEFINITIONS

Compassionate and compelling

Compassionate or compelling circumstances are generally those beyond the control of the student and which have an impact upon the student's course progress or wellbeing. These could include, but are not limited to:

- serious illness or injury where a medical certificate states that the student is unable to attend class;
- bereavement for the death of close family members such as parents or grandparents (documented evidence must be provided);

- serious illness, accident or family incident that requires immediate travel, which has impacted the student to studies;
- the inability to begin study on the course commencement date stated on the CoE due to a delay in receiving a student visa if relevant;
- major political upheaval or natural disaster in the home country requiring their immediate travel and this has impacted on the student's studies;
- a traumatic experience supported by police or a psychologist's reports, which could include, but is not limited to:
 - involvement in or witnessing of an accident; or
 - a crime committed against the student; or
 - the student being a witness to a crime and this has impacted on the student.

Notes:

- *misreading the examination timetable, examination anxiety or returning home will not be accepted as Compassionate and Compelling circumstances;*
- *religious or faith-based issues are not in themselves grounds for special consideration. However, they may be used in support of an application that meets the Compassionate and Compelling circumstances set out above.*

Medical conditions

Medical conditions of a serious nature, e.g. hospitalisation, serious injury or chronic illness

Note: Temporary minor ailments such as headaches, colds and minor gastric upsets are not serious medical conditions and are unlikely to be accepted as grounds for Special Consideration. However, serious cases of these may be considered.

Hardship/Trauma circumstances

Hardship and trauma refer to sudden loss or gain of employment, severe disruption to domestic arrangements or a victim of crime.

4. POLICY

- 4.1. Special consideration is an equity measure to ensure that the assessment of students takes into account circumstances that adversely impact a student's ability to undertake, prepare for, and/or complete an assessment task.
- 4.2. Granting special consideration enables students who have been impacted an alternative/additional opportunity to demonstrate their level of attainment of intended learning outcomes.
- 4.3. Students should not attempt assessment tasks, including attendance at examinations if in doing so, they would compromise their own health or the health of other people.

Student's right to special consideration

- 4.4. If a student believes that his/her preparation for any item of assessment has been disrupted in a way that will materially affect the likely outcome of the assessment, then the student may apply in writing to the Academic Leadership team for special consideration.

- 4.5. The application should normally be submitted prior to but no later than 3 working days after the due date of the affected assessment item or the date of the scheduled examination.
- 4.6. The Academic Leadership team may accept a late application in exceptional circumstances. However, under no circumstances will an application be accepted after marks are released.
- 4.7. Special consideration may be applied for in respect of the following events:
 - A student attends an examination or submits an assessment item, but believes their performance has been hampered.
 - A student was prevented from attending an examination or submitting an item of assessment as a result of a severe illness or other cause and was unaware that they could not attend or submit prior to the relevant date.
 - A student is aware they will be unable to attend an examination at least 3 days prior to the date of the examination as a result of severe illness or other cause.

Eligibility

- 4.8. Special Consideration is only given in serious and exceptional circumstances, which are beyond the student's control, and where these circumstances prevent the student from performing at their best for a particular piece of assessment. For example:
 - Acute illness or serious injury on the day of an examination or during the period immediately leading up to an examination or assessment due date
 - bereavement or other serious emotional disturbance, e.g. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, sudden loss of accommodation or family violence
 - hardship or trauma such as a car accident, sudden loss of income, or severe disruption to domestic arrangements, and/or
 - significant religious or cultural reasons which impact a student's ability to undertake or complete assessment on a particular day(s) or at a particular time(s).
- 4.9. Students who have obtained reasonable adjustments on the basis of one event or situation or ongoing circumstances, (e.g. a long-term medical condition) may apply for special consideration on the basis of
 - a different event or situation that is outside the scope of the reasonable adjustments, or
- 4.10. an acute flare-up of the known condition that prevents a student from undertaking/completing an assessment task. Students are not eligible for special consideration for an assessment task where there is an outstanding allegation, or a finding of, academic misconduct in that task whether or not the assessment task was completed. If an allegation of academic misconduct is subsequently dismissed, a student may be eligible for special consideration in the relevant assessment task.
- 4.11. Special consideration applications relating to a particular assessment task for which special consideration has already been granted are only considered in exceptional circumstances and, in those cases, only once.
- 4.12. The reasons for application must be classified under one of the following categories:
 - Compassionate and compelling circumstances

- Medical conditions
- Hardship/Trauma circumstances

4.13. The student must provide evidence to support the application for Special Consideration.

Providing alternative assessment arrangements for ongoing conditions

4.14. Alternative assessment arrangements are decided by the Academic Leadership team, taking into account the Head of Student Services recommendations.

4.15. The Head of Student Services must provide sufficient detail of the disability/medical condition to allow the dean to understand what may be the most reasonable and appropriate alternative assessment arrangements that meet the circumstances of the student and the requirements of the course and/or subject.

4.16. The Academic Leadership team may refuse a particular recommended alternative assessment if:

- the alternative assessment arrangements requested are not reasonable
- the alternative assessment arrangements mean the student will not meet the inherent requirements, or core participation requirements, of the subject or related course
- the request is not made within a reasonable time to allow adjustments to be made, and/or
- the request is not supported by documentary evidence appropriate to the alternative assessment arrangements, in that subject or course of study.

4.17. In providing alternative assessment arrangements, factors that are considered include:

- the nature of the student's educational disadvantage or particular needs
- the inherent requirements and any constraints of particular assessment items or tasks, and
- the inherent requirements and any constraints of particular subject or course.

4.18. Examples of alternative assessment arrangements may include, at the discretion of the dean:

- flexible arrangements for field placements with extra consultation with the field supervisor
- for exams, provide extra writing time or the use of a computer to type answers
- special exam conditions for exams and in-class tests (written, practical and laboratory). For example, a separate room for the exam
- extra reading time with access to clarification of exam content
- extra writing time
- one exam per day
- extensions, as negotiated with academic staff and relevant support staff, when the condition is impacting
- in group work, assigning roles and responsibilities to students within the group
- individual assignment as an alternative to group assignments, where the academic integrity of the subject/course is not impacted.

Assessment of Applications

- 4.19. The Academic Leadership team will assess applications for special consideration and evidence against the eligibility criteria.

Appeals

- 4.20. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the special consideration application, the student may access the *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Reporting and Monitoring

- 4.21. A report will be prepared for the Academic Board outlining the special consideration applications and learnings from the outcomes.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

To ensure that this policy is fit for purpose and meets the requirements of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks the policy will be;

- 5.1 internally endorsed by the Executive Management Team on development or review, prior to approval by the Academic Board or other delegated authority;
- 5.2 externally reviewed as part of any independent review of the TEQSA Compliance Frameworks approved by the Governing Board;
- 5.3 internally reviewed by the Responsible Officer every five years from the date of approval (if not earlier);
- 5.4 referenced to the applicable TEQSA Compliance Frameworks requirement(s) and/or other legislation/regulation.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback and comments on this policy are welcomed by the listed Responsible officers of the Institute.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This policy was developed with reference to the following:

- Deakin University, Special Consideration website information ([Special consideration | Students \(deakin.edu.au\)](#))
- Federation University, Special Consideration website information ([Higher education - Federation University Australia](#))
- Monash University, Special Consideration Procedure, 2025 ([Special Consideration Procedure \(monash.edu\)](#))

- Melbourne University, Assessment and Results Policy, 2025, and Special consideration website information ([Assessment and Results Policy \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/assessment-and-results-policy)) and [Special consideration : Current students : The University of Melbourne \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://www.unimelb.edu.au/special-consideration))

8. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date approved	Description	Approved by
1.0	December 2013	Initial issue	AB
2.0	June 2018	Reflecting the requirements of the HESF standards and changes in academic leadership structure	AB
3.0	June 2023	Internal Review	AB
3.1	September 2023	Internal review – minor formatting changes and add external referencing	EMT
3.2	April 2026	Internal Review	AB
Related legislation/ regulation/standard	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Act 2011 Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS) 2000 Education Services for Overseas Students Regulations 2019 The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018		

Notes:

AB = Academic Board

EMT = Executive Management Team