

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Policy set outs the framework for students seeking special consideration for the impact of unforeseen or exceptional circumstances which may affect their performance in assessments outside of final examination period or any additional unit requirements or affect their capacity to otherwise comply with College academic policies.

Scope

- (2) This Policy applies to all students in relation to academic matters, subject to the following exceptions:
- A request to defer the final examination in a subject must be made in accordance with the Examinations Policy and Procedure.
- (3) For international students studying on a student visa, this Policy encompasses the framework for responding to compassionate or compelling circumstances for deferring or suspending enrolment as set out in The National Code.
- (4) Students whose ongoing circumstances may adversely affect their performance should seek advice from the Student Connect and Engagement Manager and/or the relevant Head of Department.

Section 2 - Definitions

- (5) In this Policy:
- Assessment** means any evaluation of a student's performance by written or oral examination, assignments, presentation, performance, thesis or practical.

For the purposes of clause 12 (c):

- An alternative assessment task is one that provides the student with an opportunity to demonstrate learning outcomes similar to those required in the original assessment task; for example, an oral examination may take the place of a written examination.
 - A replacement assessment task is one that resembles as closely as possible the original assessment task and carries the same percentage of total weighting for the student.
- Assessment task** means an illustrative task or performance opportunity that closely targets defined learning outcomes, allowing students to demonstrate their learning and capabilities.
 - College policies** means the policies and procedures available on the ACPE official website.

- d. **Course** means the entire program of study that spans several years and is made up of multiple units.
- e. **Special consideration** means the process described in this Policy and associated Procedure that provides students with the opportunity to seek alternative arrangements approved by the College in order to deal with the impact of unforeseen or exceptional circumstances.
- f. **Student** means a person who has an active enrolment status in a course at the College.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

- (6) For the purposes of this Policy, an unforeseen or exceptional circumstance is one that is beyond the control or prior knowledge of the student and which unfairly disadvantages them or is likely to negatively impact their attendance or performance in assessment or other activities.
- (7) The College reserves the right to determine if a special consideration application should be considered and any subsequent actions to be taken. The College may not approve a request for special consideration where:
 - a. It is not satisfied that the circumstances justify approval;
 - b. It is not satisfied that the student took reasonable measures to avoid the circumstance giving rise to the special consideration application; or
 - c. It does not consider that the student is making satisfactory progress or is sufficiently engaging with classes / the Learning Management System, particularly if the student has been placed on conditional enrolment due to unsatisfactory academic progress.
- (8) The College may audit the number of applications made by a student and refer a student who has submitted a concerning number of applications to the Head of Department in the first instance.

Supporting documentation

- (9) The supporting information for unforeseen or exceptional circumstances must be verifiable. Students submitting applications are responsible for:
 - a. ensuring the authenticity of the supporting documentation they provide to the College; and
 - b. retaining any supporting documentation for a period of six months after the relevant decision. This documentation must be produced by the student when requested to do so by the College.

Note: Examples of the types of supporting documentation that may be submitted to support an application for special consideration are set out at clause 12 of the Special Consideration Procedure.

- (10) The College may take steps to verify the authenticity of any documentation provided by a student with an application. This may include:
- seeking further information from any persons named in an application or in supporting documentation such as that provided by a Medical Practitioner; or
 - requesting the student to provide the original supporting documentation (such as where a submission has been made via email).
- (11) Supply of false information or falsified documentation by a student to the College will result in the rejection of an application and/or cancellation of special consideration approval. In addition, the student may be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

Possible Outcomes

- (12) The possible outcome for an application for special consideration may be one or more of the following:
- the request is granted in full or in part;
 - the request is denied;
 - another assessment task is provided (an alternative assessment task or a replacement assessment task);
 - a final grade is recommended on the basis of the student's performance across the unit to the approval of the Dean or the CEO;
 - that a recommendation is made to the CEO that the student be granted approval to withdraw from their course without failure on compassionate grounds; or
 - an alternative solution is provided following negotiation with the student and relevant staff.

Note: Mid-semester examination or assessment are normally only able to be deferred once in a study period. Specific approval is required from the Dean for additional deferrals.

Storage of information

- (13) All information provided as part of a special consideration application will be managed and retained in accordance with the Privacy Policy.

Relaxation Provision

- (14) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the CEO or the Dean, may relax any provisions of this Policy.
- (15) Where students have been impacted by a government (State or Federal) declared natural disaster, unforeseen campus closure or other national or international emergency reasons, the CEO may waive the requirement for students to submit special consideration applications and direct relevant work units to put in place alternative arrangements to support the affected students.

Section 4 - Procedures

(16) Special Consideration Procedures.

Section 5 – Guideline

(17) Nil.

Related documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with but not limited to:

- a. Special Consideration Procedures
- b. Special Consideration Application form
- c. Grievances, Complaints, and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- d. Assessment Policy and Procedure
- e. Examination Policy and Procedure
- f. Remission of Financial Liability due to Special Circumstances Policy and Procedure

Legislation:

- a. Higher Education Standards Framework 2021
- b. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011
- c. National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

Document Administration

Policy Name	Special Consideration Policy v2
Policy Owner	Dean
Approval Authority	Academic Board
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Next Review #	Three years from the Approval Date
Amendment history	
Version 1: 24 June 2021	Document revised and reformatted into new template. Other changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated workflows for currency. - Inclusion of Elite Athlete, Performer and Coach Program - Additional requirements for the provision of supporting documentation, verifying authenticity and obligation to retain records. - Removal of reference to the Remission of Financial Liability due to special Circumstances Policy, as it is not applicable to this policy.
Version 2: 4 November 2024	Editorial changes – added Heads of Department to clause 4. Replaced Director of Student Engagement and Wellbeing with Student Connect and Engagement Manager to reflect recent changes. Corrected legacy designation of CEO and Dean to Dean in Clause 12. Approved by the Board of Directors on 2 December 2024

Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the Review date