



**EXCELSIA  
COLLEGE**  
— Sydney —

### **Objects of Excelsia College**

Motivated by the Christian faith, as expressed by the Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed, with fidelity to the Scriptures as the Word of God, the Objects of the College are the advancement of the Christian faith and higher education.

### **Document Number**

**PPR-STU-30**

### **Document Name**

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND ARRANGEMENTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **Document Status**

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ABN: 50 360 319 774 CRICOS Provider Code: 002664K

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## 1 Policy Statement

This policy and procedure establish the principles that support students seeking to notify the College when they experience short-term, unexpected, serious and unavoidable circumstances, which affect their performance in assessment. The special consideration process is designed to support students in these situations:

- if an illness, injury or misadventure beyond the student's control prevents or affects the student's preparation or performance in an exam or assessment, in which case special consideration may be granted
- during essential community commitments, in which case special arrangements may be granted.

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## 2 Scope

This policy and procedure apply to:

- all coursework students, including those on, undergraduate, postgraduate taught, and non-award provision (HDR students should refer to the Research Framework)
- all types of assessment, including examinations and coursework
- staff involved in the administration, teaching, assessing or managing units of study at the College
- Student Support Centre staff.

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## 3 Responsibility

The following members of staff are responsible in this policy and procedure.

- Lecturers: to remind students that special consideration is available
- Heads of School: to process special consideration applications in a timely manner with relevant staff members and report back to the student the outcome of their application.

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## 4 Definitions

- **Serious and unavoidable circumstances:** The College classifies circumstances as serious and unavoidable if they:
  - could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student; and were beyond the student's control
  - caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for undertaking assessment for the unit(s)

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- occurred during an Event Critical Study Period and were at least three consecutive days duration or a total of five days within the teaching period
    - prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date (e.g. final examination, in-class test/quiz, in-class presentation).
  - **Special consideration:** The provision of one additional opportunity for a student to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of a unit or units.
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## 5 Principles

### 5.1 General principles

- i. The purpose of special consideration is to enable the College to support students who have been impacted by circumstances that are unexpected, unavoidable, significantly disruptive and beyond the student's control, and which may affect their performance in assessment.
- ii. Special consideration is intended to provide support to a student whose assessable work has been affected by serious and unavoidable circumstances. It is not a mechanism to appeal against an assessment outcome. Serious and unavoidable circumstances may result from events that are personal, social or domestic in nature and may include illness (either physical or psychological), accident, injury, societal demands (such as jury service), bereavement, family breakdown or unexpected changes in employment situations.
- iii. Special consideration will not be granted when students are unable to complete an assessment task due to planned or foreseeable absence (e.g., holidays, recreational activities or normal work commitments or changes).
- iv. All applications for special consideration must be substantiated by original, independent documentary evidence in the format and by the deadline prescribed in the Special Consideration Procedures.
- v. In order to support students who have experienced serious and unavoidable circumstances, the College will attempt to provide affected students with one additional opportunity to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of a unit or units. An additional opportunity provided under such circumstances is referred to as special consideration and may be granted after careful evaluation of the supporting evidence.
- vi. Students with a pre-existing disability or health condition, or prolonged adverse circumstances are advised to seek support from Student Support Centre.

### 5.2 Eligibility

Special consideration is specifically intended to support students who experience circumstances that are:

- serious

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- short-term or immediate impact
- adverse
- unforeseen.

Circumstance must significantly affect a student's ability to complete an assessment task to the best of their potential.

If a student makes repeated requests for special consideration, the student may be referred to their school for an academic progression review and additional support.

Some circumstances are not handled via special consideration.

### 5.3 Circumstances where a student will not be eligible for special consideration

Special consideration should not be granted for circumstances that are considered reasonable in the student's control, such as:

- public transport delays
- personal events such as birthdays
- minor ailments or illness where the student is still capable of completing assessments
- travel plans
- balancing workloads from other units of study, disciplines or Schools
- information and communications technology problems – except where they could not have been prevented, avoided or the effects minimised by reasonable diligence on the part of the student.

In some cases, the student can talk to their lecturer and discuss the option of a simple extension.

### 5.4 Simple extensions

If a student encounters a problem submitting their work on time, they may be able to arrange an extension of up to five working days with their lecturer or course coordinator.

Such permission is an informal arrangement between the lecturer or course coordinator and the student. The arrangement should not:

- affect the student's entitlement to apply for special consideration under this policy
- alter any time limits or other requirements relating to applications for special consideration
- constitute an academic decision for the purposes of the Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions Policy

### 5.5 Special arrangements: essential commitments

Special arrangements can be made available to the student if an essential commitment affects

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their ability to complete an assessment. Examples may include:

- essential religious commitments or beliefs (including cultural and ceremonial commitments)
- a compulsory legal requirement (jury duty, court summons)
- a sporting commitment representing the College, state or nation
- military service
- birth or adoption.

### 5.6 Outcomes

The outcome of a student’s special consideration application should be sent to the student’s College email account. If the student’s application is approved, the details of the consideration will be provided. This might, for example, be an extension of time, a replacement exam, or a new or varied evaluation.

Below are some examples of the kind of outcomes the student may receive.

**Table 1. Outcomes of special consideration by assessment type, action and consideration**

<b>Assessment type</b>	<b>Student action</b>	<b>Consideration that may be granted</b>
1. Final or in-semester exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attended an exam and was affected by illness, injury or misadventure</li> <li>• did not attend on the day of the exam due to illness, injury or misadventure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• replacement exam</li> </ul> <p><i>The replacement exam may not cover the same topics as the exam that was impacted but will test the same learning outcomes. Other factors (such as the length, duration or structure of the exam) may also be different.</i></p> <p><i>If the student is unable to attempt the replacement exam due to illness, injury or misadventure, the student should apply for special consideration in respect of the replacement exam.</i></p>
2. Replacement exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attended a replacement exam and was affected by illness, injury or misadventure</li> <li>• did not attend on the day of a replacement exam due to illness,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alternative means of assessment (if possible)</li> <li>• Graded as Withdrawn (W) without academic or financial penalty</li> </ul> <p><i>If student is granted a replacement exam which the student does not attend, and the</i></p>

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Assessment type	Student action	Consideration that may be granted
	injury or misadventure	<i>student does not apply for further consideration, the student will be given a result of zero for the final exam. Any previous results that the student receives for the exam will no longer apply once the student has been granted a replacement.</i>
3. Placement (professional experience placement, internship, site visits).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attended placement and was affected by illness, injury or misadventure</li> <li>did not attend on the day of the placement due to illness, injury or misadventure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a new or varied placement</li> </ul> <p><i>The timing of the new or varied placement may impact the student's ability to progress within their course.</i></p> <p><i>In a small number of circumstances, a new or varied placement may not be available due to factors beyond the College's control.</i></p>
4. Creative assessments or demonstrations (performance, public recital, exhibition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attended the creative assessment or demonstration and was affected by illness, injury or misadventure</li> <li>did not attend on the day of the creative assessment or demonstration due to illness, injury or misadventure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>new or varied evaluation</li> <li>alternative assessment</li> </ul> <p><i>The new or varied evaluation or alternative assessment may not cover exactly the same items as the original assessment but will measure the same learning outcomes.</i></p>
5. Assignment, dissertation or honours thesis (non-higher degree by research thesis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>late submission of assignment, dissertation or honours thesis due to illness, injury or misadventure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>extension of time</li> <li>to be determined by the School, where the student is affected by circumstances of a longer-term nature</li> </ul>
6. In-class assessment: tutorial quiz, or small test or small continuous assessment (worth less than 30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attended the tutorial quiz, small test or small continuous assessment and was</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mark adjustment</li> <li>a new or varied assessment</li> </ul> <p><i>The new or varied assessment will</i></p>

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Assessment type	Student action	Consideration that may be granted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>affected by illness, injury or misadventure</li> <li>did not attend on the day of the tutorial quiz, small test or small continuous assessment due to illness, injury or misadventure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>measure the same learning outcomes.</i></li> </ul>
7. In-class assessment: presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attended the presentation and was affected by illness, injury or misadventure</li> <li>did not attend on the day of the presentation due to illness, injury or misadventure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a new or varied presentation</li> </ul> <p>The new or varied assessment will measure the same learning outcomes.</p>
8. Written group assignment or group presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>one participant was affected by illness, injury or misadventure during preparation and/or presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>alternative assessment for the impacted student. Other group members may submit individual applications for special consideration if their ability to complete the written group assignment or presentation is affected</li> </ul>
9. Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance has not met the requirements for the course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No penalties</li> </ul>

## 6 Procedure to apply for special consideration

The Special Consideration Form is lodged on the college website via the area, Student Administration Forms. The form can also be accessed through ExO via the dropdown menu Useful Links and selecting Student Administration Forms. This will connect the student to the website to lodge their application for special consideration.

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## 6.1 What is needed to apply

- **Supporting documents in English.** If all the necessary supporting documents are not provided, the College will not approve the application. The library on campus can be used to scan and upload documents. To translate non-English language documents, an accredited translation agency, such as [NAATI](#), should be used.
- **A short statement** giving specific dates and describing the impact of the illness, injury, misadventure or special commitment on the student's ability to complete their studies.
- **Details of the assessment item(s)** that are included in the application. The details can be found in the course unit outline.

A student can include more than one course unit or assessments for consideration on their application as long as the course unit or assessments were affected by the same illness, injury or misadventure.

## 6.2 Supporting documents

Special consideration applications should include the below specific supporting documents. The originals of these documents may be requested at any time during a student's enrolment at the College. These documents should include the period of time in which the student has been impacted, for example the start and end date of the illness, injury or misadventure.

### 6.2.1 Conditions of a sensitive or confidential nature

If the circumstances are of a sensitive nature, the student should indicate when they expect they will be able to complete their assessment or return to their studies. If the student needs more time at the end of this period, they may submit another application.

The student is not required to disclose the nature of their illness, injury or misadventure. In these circumstances:

- the student's professional practitioner can indicate that 'the student is suffering from an illness of a confidential nature'
- the student can state the basis of their request and that their condition or circumstances are of a confidential nature.

### 6.2.3 Documents for special consideration

#### *Illness or injury*

One of the following documents should be provided:

- a current professional practitioner certificate
- relevant supporting documents.

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### *Personal misadventure or misadventure of a relative or close friend*

The following documents should be provided:

- appropriate supporting documents (for example, eviction notice, police report).

### *Unexpected primary carer responsibility*

The student should provide either of the following documents accompanied by relevant supporting documents:

- a professional practitioner certificate indicating primary carer responsibilities
- a statutory declaration indicating how primary carer responsibilities have impacted the ability to study accompanied by relevant supporting documents.

### *Attendance at funeral of a family member or close friend*

The following documents should be provided:

- obituary, funeral notice or funeral program.

Only dates on the above documents will be applied, so if the student is experiencing ongoing effects limiting their ability to study or complete assessments, they should also provide:

- a professional practitioner certificate and any travel-related evidence indicating the extended dates of impact.

### *Death of a family member or close friend*

Provide the following documents:

- written evidence of the situation such as an obituary, funeral notice, or hospital or medical certificate
- a professional practitioner certificate listing dates that the student is experiencing ongoing effects limiting their ability to study or complete assessments.

### *Natural disaster*

Provide the following documents:

- statutory declaration
- a copy of a public record such as a weather report or online media coverage.

## 6.2.4 Documents for special arrangements

### *Defence force or emergency service*

- Official letter

### *Employer statement*

- Official letter

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### *Legal commitment*

- A copy of the summons, subpoena, court order or notice of selection for jury duty stating:
  - The student's full name
  - the reason for the student's commitment
  - date/s of attendance required.

### *Parental or adoption commitments*

- A signed certificate on an official letterhead from a medical practitioner or midwife, or relevant adoption agency stating:
  - expected date of birth or adoption
  - either the period of time when the ability to study or complete assessments will be limited, or when the student expects to be able to complete assessments or return to study.

### *Religious beliefs*

- A signed and dated statement, which includes the student's name, from the student's imam, pastor, rabbi or equivalent spiritual or community leader.

### *Sporting commitment representing the College, state or nation*

- Official letter

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### 6.3 Deadline to submit an application

Applications should be submitted via the website as soon as possible and no later than the deadlines listed in the table below.

Reason	Deadline
Illness, injury or misadventure	By the third working day (11:59pm AEST) after the original assessment due date or sitting date of the exam.
If the application relates to attendance or missed placement days	By the third working day (11:59pm AEST) after the date of the missed classes or missed placement.
Special arrangement for an assessment or examination held during semester	At the date of commencement of semester in the case of religious commitments that might have an impact on assessments or examinations. For other unavoidable commitments the student must apply as soon as they become aware of the clash.
Special arrangement for an assessment or examination held in the formal College examination periods	14 days after publication of the examination timetable.  Note: if the commitment is not known at this time, by the third working day (11:59pm AEST) after the special commitment date is known.

### 6.4 Submitting a late application

Late applications will be considered only if a reasonable explanation for the delay is provided. The student may be asked to provide evidence to support their lateness.

### 6.5 Application outcome and post-submission

- If able to do so, the student should continue to work on and submit their assessments or prepare to sit for their exams as not all applications are approved.
- The College will notify the student of a decision about their application to the student's College email address within four working days of their application.
- If the application is approved, the College will provide information on the consideration granted. If it is declined, the College will provide the student with information about the reason and the student's options.
- If the student fails to attend a final exam or placement and their application is declined, the result may likely be a mark of zero for the assessment and, if the assessment is compulsory, an Fail (N) grade for the unit of study.

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## 6.6 Appealing a decision

If a student feels they have genuine grounds to contest a decision or the form of consideration granted, they may apply to have the decision reviewed. The student will need to follow the College's academic appeals process (see Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions Policy).

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## 7 Related Documents and References

- *Higher Education Support Act 2003*
- PO-STU-28 Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions Policy
- GOV-GS-STU-01 Student Code of Conduct
- Student Handbook
- The Student Support Centre Policy
- The Disability Policy
- The Disability Procedure

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## 8 Mapped to HESF

The content of this policy is mapped to the HESF 8.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment and 2.2 Diversity and Equity.

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## 9 Document History

This policy and procedure has been amended as follows:

Version	Amendments / Date / Notes
2	Combined PO-STU-30 Special Consideration and Arrangement Policy and WP-STU-32 Special Consideration and Arrangement Procedure.

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