

Student Service, Student Services Division

STUDENT ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION POLICY

Date approved	12 October 2007	Date Policy will take effect	24 July 2017	Date of Next Review	December 2021
Approved by	University Council				
Custodian title & e-mail address	Senior Manager Student Service, Student Services Division askuow@uow.edu.au				
Responsible Faculty/Division & Unit	Student Service, Student Services Division				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy	Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration Student Academic Consideration Online Application Flowchart of Process for Applying for Academic Consideration Flowchart of Process for Responding to Academic Consideration Application Coursework Student Academic Complaints Policy Records Management Policy				
References & Legislation	Disability Policy – Students Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment Standards for the Finalisation of Student Results				
Audience	Public – accessible to anyone				
Expiry date of Policy	Not Applicable				

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Purpose of Policy

The purpose of the Student Academic Consideration Policy is to enable student requests for academic consideration for assessable components of a subject to be evaluated in a fair, reasonable, timely and consistent manner throughout the University.

1 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Academic Complaint	A complaint about a decision, act or omission by a member of the University staff that affects a student's academic experience. Students can refer to the Coursework Student Academic Complaints Policy for further details.
Academic Consideration	Academic Consideration is intended to help minimise the impact of serious or extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control, which significantly impair a student's ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the Subject Outline; or which affects Academic Progress in a subject relevant to their course of study. Academic consideration may be granted on the basis of medical grounds, compassionate grounds and/or extenuating circumstances.
Academic Progress	Successful completion of subjects towards a degree within established time limits.
Academic Staff	Staff of the University who carry out teaching responsibilities under the authority of the Head of an Academic Unit.
Academic Unit	Faculty, School, Unit, Program or Discipline.
Assessment	work which a student is required to complete to provide a basis for an official record of achievement or certification of competence in a <i>subject</i> . This may include summative and/or formative forms of assessment. Examples of assessments include, but are not limited to: examination, test, take-home examination, quiz, assignment, essay, laboratory report, thesis, demonstration, performance, tutorial presentation, class participation, practicum, clinical placement, and work experience
Associate	A UOW student who provides support to a person with a disability who may or may not be a student at UOW. An associate may include but is not limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. spouse of the person;2. another person who is living with the person on a genuine domestic basis;3. a relative of the person4. a carer of the person5. other groups listed within the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (C'wlth).
Course	A program of study consisting of a combination of subjects and other requirements, whether leading to a specific higher education award or not.
Deferred	Deferred refers to postponing the due date of an assessable item, and may refer to an in-session test or a final exam.
Disability	Disability in relation to a person includes one or more of the following

Word/Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. total or partial loss of a person's bodily or mental functions b. total or partial loss of a part of the body c. the presence of a body of organisms causing disease or illness d. the presence of a body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness e. the malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of a person's body f. a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction g. a disorder or illness that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions, or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour. <p>And one which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> h. presently exists i. previously existed but no longer exists j. may exist in the future <p>is imputed to a person.</p>
Head of Students	An academic staff member with nominated responsibility for providing academic advice and decisions for a particular faculty.
In-Session Test	A test, examination, quiz or in-class review conducted by an academic unit during session.
Non-Award Student	A student enrolled in subject/s that do not lead to a higher education award at the University.
Partner Institution	Another institution or organisation (typically another higher education provider) with which the university has a partnership arrangement. This includes affiliated entities under the management of UOW Enterprises (UOWE): UOW Dubai (UOWD), UOW College (UOWC) and Community College of City University in Hong Kong (CCCU).
Reasonable Adjustments	Alternative arrangements that are made to ensure that students with a disability and students who are associates of persons with a disability are able to undertake their study and complete their course requirements without disadvantage.
Registered Medical Practitioner	A medically qualified person registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (AHPRA) as a medical practitioner to practice in Australia.
Registered Psychologist	A qualified person registered with Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency (AHPRA) as a psychologist to practice in Australia.
Session	A period in which subjects may be offered. Standard sessions are defined as Autumn and Spring. Non-standard sessions may be created in accordance with the Session Policy.
Student Support Adviser (SSA)	Members of the DVCA portfolio who work within faculties to provide support to students with complex issues.
Student Management Package	Student Management Package (SMP) consists of SOLS, SMP-Central and the

Word/Term	Definition
(SMP)	Student administration software and web based systems.
Student Online Services (SOLS)	SOLS is a web based system that enables a student to self-manage their enrolment at UOW. The system allows the student to update their personal details, apply for academic consideration, check assignment and final results, receive important messages from university staff, manage fees, and enrol in tutorials.
Student	A person registered for a course or enrolled in subject/s with UOW.
Student Central	The service centre responsible for the provision of guidance, enrolment management support and services for all UOW students and external clients.
Student Services Division	The Unit responsible for policy, governance and the management of core student functions.
Subject Coordinator	An academic staff member with nominated responsibility for a particular subject.
Subject Outline	The document governing content, delivery and assessment of material for a subject.
Unit Assessment Committee	The Unit Assessment Committee is as described in the Faculty Assessment Committee Terms of Reference, Schedule 2 of the Standards for the Finalisation of Academic Results .

2 Application & Scope

1. This Policy applies to:
 - a. undergraduate students, including Honours students
 - b. postgraduate coursework students, including distance education students
 - c. higher Degree Research students enrolled in coursework subjects
 - d. students undertaking non-award study
 - e. students enrolled at all domestic and international UOW campuses except UOW Dubai
 - f. Students enrolled at UOW Dubai will follow the procedures as set out in the [UOWD Student Handbook and Calendar](#).

3 Policy Principles

1. The principles guiding this policy are:
 - a. students are responsible for making reasonable efforts to minimise the impacts of medical, compassionate, and/or extenuating circumstances on their academic performance
 - b. students are expected to liaise with their subject coordinator when they become aware of a medical, compassionate, and/or extenuating circumstance which may affect their academic performance
 - c. it is not possible for academic consideration to compensate for every consequence of illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance affecting a student's academic progress. However, academic consideration, where appropriate, may help to minimise the impact of such circumstances without compromising the learning outcomes of the subject. To pass subjects, students must demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes specified in the Subject Outline, regardless of whether academic consideration has been granted; and
 - d. appropriate learning and other support should be offered to students identified as at risk of not achieving satisfactory academic performance.

2. Guidelines for using and applying this policy correctly are available for students [online](#), and for academic and professional staff via the [UOW intranet](#).
3. Underlying the requirements, definitions, and procedures of this policy are the principles of equity, consistency, transparency and natural justice.
4. Academic consideration is a process intended to help minimise the impact of serious or extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control which significantly impair a student's ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the Subject Outline or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study. Academic consideration may be granted on the basis of medical grounds, compassionate grounds and/or extenuating circumstances.

4 Circumstances Where Students May be Eligible to Apply for Academic Consideration

1. Academic consideration will only be considered for illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstances which,
 - a. significantly impact a student's ability to meet the requirements of a subject's teaching/learning and/or assessment tasks as defined in the Subject Outline
 - b. are beyond the student's control, not due to their action or inaction, and which could not have been reasonably foreseen nor avoided; and
 - c. are supported by documentary evidence as outlined in Section 9 of this Policy.
2. Illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstances may include;
 - a. medical conditions or events including illness or injury, hospitalisation, treatment programs, exacerbation of existing medical condition or disability
 - b. compassionate grounds such as loss or bereavement, family relationship breakdown, sudden loss of income, significant disruption to domestic arrangements, or victim of crime; and
 - c. extenuating circumstances such as substantial unplanned carer's responsibilities, legal commitments, simultaneous in-session tests, military service, one-off unusual work commitments, accidents, participation in sporting events at state, national or international level with an official sporting body, religious or cultural obligations and events.
3. Students who have arranged Reasonable Adjustments with the Disability Services Unit should use Academic Consideration when applying for circumstance/s which are not outlined in their approved reasonable adjustment documentation. Applications for these circumstances are treated as a normal Academic Consideration and are bound by all conditions outlined in this policy.

5 Non Eligible Circumstances

1. Academic consideration will not be granted for common occurrences which interfere with daily life. These non-eligible, common occurrences include, but are not limited to:
 - a. usual or routine work commitments
 - b. issues with transport to campus
 - c. computer failures, where a student has failed to back up their work
 - d. multiple exams within a time period which do not clash with each other
 - e. multiple assessment tasks due in a period
 - f. usual or routine family commitments such as birthdays
 - g. clashes with recreational activities or holiday arrangements
 - h. lack of knowledge of requirements of academic work or due dates; and
 - i. anticipated changes of address.

6 Types of Consideration Which May be Requested

1. **Extension of time to submit an assessment task** beyond the due date specified in the subject outline.

2. **Permission to undertake a deferred assessment task or in-session test** beyond the date specified in the subject outline. The Subject Coordinator will determine the nature, date, time and venue of an approved deferred in-session assessment task or in-session test.
3. **Permission to undertake a deferred end-of-session exam** during the supplementary exam period as outlined in the [UOW Key Dates](#). Students intending to graduate should be aware that an approved deferred end-of-session exam will impact their eligibility to graduate in that session, as results may not be released in time for graduation cut off dates. Students approved to undertake a deferred end-of-session exam will be advised of the details via SOLS at least three working days prior to the commencement of the supplementary exam period.
4. **Consideration in marking an assessable item** may be requested where a student's circumstances affected their preparation for, or performance in an assessable item.
5. **Exemption of compulsory attendance or participation**, where the subject outline clearly states that attendance or participation has an effect on a subject's final grade.

7 Timeframes for Applying and Providing Documentary Evidence

1. Students cannot apply for academic consideration for an exam or assessment task after completing and submitting that exam or assessment task. Where a student has commenced an exam and had to leave before completion due to illness, they may still apply for academic consideration in line with all conditions outlined in this policy.
2. Students requesting extensions of time to submit an assessment task, deferred exam, alternative form of assessment, or exemption of a compulsory attendance requirement, must apply online via SOLS and provide documentary evidence within three working days of the assessable item's due date for their request to be considered.
3. The Subject Coordinator may approve an exemption of the timeframes specified in Clause 7.2, provided a student's documentary evidence shows that exceptional circumstances prevented the student from adhering to the timeframe/s. Examples of exceptional circumstances justifying an exemption may include, but are not limited to, an accidental injury or sudden illness requiring the student's immediate hospitalisation without access to a computer.

8 Documentary Evidence

1. All applications for Academic Consideration must be supported by documentary evidence as set out in Section 8 of this Policy. Applications without documentary evidence which complies with the criteria set out in this Policy will not be forwarded to the Subject Coordinator for consideration, even if the circumstances stated by the student comply with the eligibility criteria set out in Section 5 of this policy.
2. Documentary evidence must be submitted via the online submission form, or at the campus at which students are studying via mail or in person.
3. Documentary evidence must be written in English or be a certified translation.
4. Partner Institutions are responsible for establishing appropriate criteria regarding documentary evidence in accordance with this Policy, appropriate to the local regulations, and approved by the relevant Academic Unit.

Documentary Evidence for Medical Grounds

5. To be considered for academic consideration for medical grounds, including physical and/or psychological illness, a student must provide a medical certificate or official letter from a registered medical practitioner or registered psychologist as documentary evidence which includes the following information:
 - a. the name of the student which matches the name on their UOW record
 - b. the date the certificate was written and signed
 - c. the start and end date for which the student's medical circumstances are covered by the document, and which match the student's request for academic consideration and
 - d. any additional information which may assist the student in obtaining academic consideration
6. Statutory declarations will not be accepted as documentary evidence for medical grounds.

Documentary Evidence for Non-Medical Grounds

7. To be considered for academic consideration for non-medical grounds, a student must provide at least one of the following documents:
 - a. death certificate or death notice, where the circumstances are related to bereavement
 - b. police report or event number, where the student has been a victim of crime
 - c. letter from an employer on an official company letterhead, where the circumstances are employment related
 - d. jury notice letter from a relevant authority, where the circumstances are related to jury duty;
 - e. letter from the armed forces on official letterhead, where the circumstances are related to military duty
 - f. UOW subject outline or exam timetable, where assessable tasks are scheduled at the same time
 - g. selection confirmation on the letterhead of the state, national or international sporting body, where the circumstances relate to sporting commitments
 - h. letter from a minister of religion (or the like) on an official letterhead, where the circumstances relate to religious obligations
 - i. letter from an official cultural authority on an official letterhead, where the circumstances relate to cultural obligations
 - j. where the nature of the circumstances and how they have affected the student are not obvious in the document, a Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration may be included to establish further details.
8. Documentary evidence for non-medical grounds must indicate:
 - a. the name of the student which matches the name on their UOW record
 - b. the date the document was written and signed
 - c. the start and end date for which the student's circumstances are covered by the document, and which match the student's request for academic consideration in SOLS
 - d. how the circumstances have affected the student's ability to study
 - e. the relationship of the student where the document refers to family member/s.

Statutory Declarations and Secondary Evidence

9. Where it is not reasonable for a student to provide documentary evidence (for non-Medical Grounds) as outlined in Clauses 9.7 to 9.8 of this Policy, a student may be permitted to provide a statutory declaration to accompany secondary forms of evidence.
10. Secondary forms of evidence refers to any evidence not outlined in Clauses 9.5 to 9.8, and may include flight tickets, photographs, receipts or any other form of document which supports a student's eligibility for academic consideration.
11. A statutory declaration will not be accepted as documentary evidence without some form of secondary evidence.
12. A statutory declaration will not be accepted as documentary evidence for medical grounds, regardless of whether it is accompanied by secondary evidence.

Verification of Documentary Evidence

13. Once submitted, documentary evidence will be verified by professional staff.
14. In submitting documentary evidence for verification, students consent to UOW contacting the issuer of the document/s to confirm their legitimacy. Students consent to the release of information to relevant third parties for the purpose of verifying document legitimacy.
15. From the date of verification of the documentary evidence, students are required to retain the document/s for twelve months and may be requested to provide them for further inspection. A Subject Coordinator, Head of Students, and/or Faculty Assessment Committee is entitled to inspect the original documentary evidence prior to making a decision and may request to sight it before a decision

is made in regards to the academic consideration application. Failure to provide the original documentary evidence on request may result in an application being denied.

16. The submission of fraudulent documentation will be regarded as serious misconduct and will be managed in accordance with the Student Conduct Rules and associated procedures. The matter may also be referred to the State or Federal Police.

9 Response Times to Applications

1. The Subject Coordinator should respond through SMP within five working days of receiving the email notification of the application. Students will receive this outcome via SOLS.
2. If the Subject Coordinator has not responded within this timeframe, they will be sent an email, copied to the student, requesting an urgent response within two working days.
3. If after that period no response has been given, the application will be forwarded automatically to the Head of the Academic Unit who is responsible for investigating the delay, taking advice from the Subject Coordinator or Head of Students as appropriate, and may, failing advice from these staff, determine the outcome of the application within three working days.

10 Outcomes of Academic Consideration

1. The outcome of an application for academic consideration is determined by one of the following: the Subject Coordinator, Head of Students, Associate Dean, Faculty Assessment Committee or Faculty Assessment Committee.
2. Students will be notified of the outcome of their academic consideration via SOLS.
3. In deciding whether or not to grant a request for academic consideration, and in deciding what form of academic consideration, if any, may be appropriate, regard is given to:
 - a. whether the academic consideration sought would compromise the learning outcomes of the subject;
 - b. whether the circumstance significantly impacts the student's ability to meet the requirements of a subject's teaching/learning and/or assessment tasks as defined in the Subject Outline;
 - c. whether the circumstances were beyond the student's control, not due to their action or inaction, and could not have been reasonably foreseen or avoided;
 - d. whether the student complied with timeframes for submission of their application and documentary evidence, or had extenuating circumstances for not doing so;
 - e. the student's academic progress so far in the session;
 - f. whether the student's circumstances are sufficiently supported by documentary evidence.
4. Students who make three or more applications for academic consideration within six calendar months will be requested to contact the Head of Students of the Faculty for academic advice.

Applications Denied

5. Denied applications shall include the reason/s why the application has been denied, and the name of the academic staff member who has made the decision. A denied application is not an indication that UOW staff do not believe their circumstances are genuine, but that their application and/or documentary evidence do not meet the criteria outlined in this Policy.

Request for Additional Evidence and/or Information

6. A student may be asked to provide additional evidence and/or information if the assessor of the application believes the application to be incomplete as determined by the criteria of this Policy. In these instances, the assessor will provide the student with a deadline for providing this information. If the additional evidence and/or information is not received by the deadline, application/s will be declined. Where additional evidence and/or information is provided by the deadline, the application will be assessed in line with the criteria outlined in this Policy.

Referral to Unit Assessment Committee

7. In certain cases, a Subject Coordinator or Head of Academic Unit may, at their discretion, choose to refer an application for academic consideration to the Unit Assessment Committee for decision.

Approved Applications

8. Approved applications shall include details of the approval, what type of consideration has been granted, any dates of deferrals or extensions, and the name of the academic staff member who has made the decision.
9. While students may request a particular type of consideration during their application, assessors may determine that an alternative form of consideration is more appropriate to meet the criteria outlined in Clause 11.3.

11 Requests for Further Consideration

1. Where a student has been approved to sit a deferred or supplementary end-of-session exam and is subsequently unable to attend on the scheduled day, a second deferred or supplementary exam may be approved by the relevant Faculty Head of Academic Unit on rare occasions, provided the request meets all other eligibility criteria outlined in this policy. A third deferred end-of-session exam will not be considered.
2. For further requests for consideration types other than a deferred end-of-session exam, if a request still meets all other eligibility criteria outlined in this policy, an academic assessor may in rare circumstances approve further consideration in the form of one of the following:
 - a. additional time to submit an assessment task beyond the date of the original approval
 - b. permission to undertake a deferred in-session exam on a later date to the original approval; or
 - c. an alternative form of assessment task, other than what is specified in the subject outline or original approval.
3. Requests for further consideration are bound by all other conditions outlined in this policy.
4. Where requests for further consideration are not considered or approved, the student may be offered the opportunity to discuss alternative appropriate options with the Head of Students, or may be awarded a zero grade for the assessment item in question.

12 Appeal against a Decision on Academic Consideration

If the student believes that the outcome of their application is not in line with the rules of this policy, they may request a review of the decision via the [Coursework Students Academic Complaints Policy](#).

13 Responsibilities

1. The University has a responsibility to:
 - a. ensure that this Policy and its guidelines are accessible to all staff and students
 - b. ensure that this Policy and its guidelines are implemented and applied consistently across all faculties and academic units
 - c. promote good practice in considering applications for academic consideration, and
 - d. provide guidelines for considering applications for academic consideration which allow for:
 - i. timeliness of response
 - ii. fairness and equitable consideration
 - iii. respect for privacy; and
 - iv. keeping all parties informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the application of academic consideration.
2. Students have a responsibility to meet deadlines as set out in the Subject Outline. Students who cannot meet such deadlines because of circumstances outlined in Section 5 of this Policy, and who are seeking academic consideration must:
 - a. lodge an application for academic consideration via SOLS, and provide documentary evidence within the timeframes outlined in Section 8 of this Policy
 - b. ensure that documentary evidence meets the criteria outlined in Section 9 of this Policy
 - c. retain the documentary evidence for twelve months from the date of verification and provide such documentation when requested

- d. contact the relevant Head of Students via the Faculty if they have not received a response from their subject coordinator within ten working days of their documentary evidence being verified
 - e. seek academic or administrative advice as appropriate, and;
 - f. behave ethically and honestly in all respects when applying for academic consideration.
3. Designated Professional staff with access and authority to process documentary evidence have a responsibility to:
 - a. ensure that documentary evidence meets the criteria outlined in Section 9 of this Policy prior to processing against applications and;
 - b. assess and be satisfied with the authenticity of the documentary evidence prior to processing, and;
 - c. escalate any documentary evidence identified as fraudulent to the Student Case Management Coordinator and;
 - d. refer students to the 'Coursework Students Academic Complaints Policy' in the circumstances outlined in Clause 13.1 of this Policy
 4. It is the responsibility of Professional staff at partner institutions to establish appropriate procedures approved by the relevant Academic Unit in accordance with this Policy.
 5. Subject Coordinators have a responsibility to:
 - a. ensure consistent application of this Policy and its guidelines so that all students are treated fairly and equitably as far as practicable and;
 - b. review documentary evidence as deemed necessary and;
 - c. approve or deny the verified academic consideration application within five working days and;
 - d. escalate applications to the Head of Students or Faculty Assessment Committee where deemed appropriate and;
 - e. adhere to the [University Code of Conduct – Staff](#) when responding to academic consideration applications.
 6. The Head of Academic Unit (or academic nominee) has a responsibility to:
 - a. ensure every subject has an assigned Subject Coordinator specified in the subject database and;
 - b. ensure that all applications for academic consideration are dealt with according to the provisions of this Policy
 7. The Head of Students has responsibility to:
 - a. provide advice to students in matters relating to their application for academic consideration, including the determination of an outcome where advice from the Subject Coordinator or Head of Academic Unit is not available and;
 - b. follow up with subject coordinator/s who have not responded to applications within the seven working day timeframe to ensure applications are assessed and;
 - c. act as assessor for escalated applications, following the same assessment guidelines relevant to a subject coordinator as outlined in this Policy.

14 Privacy and Confidentiality

1. All staff designated to access information contained in applications for academic consideration are obliged to preserve confidentiality in accordance with the University's [Privacy Policy](#), the [Code of Conduct – Staff](#) and other relevant privacy legislation.
2. Records relating to academic consideration applications will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the [State Records Act 1998](#), [General Retention and Disposal Authority GDA23](#), and the [Records Management Policy](#).

15 Review and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Change Details
1	Autumn Session 2009	Council	Student Academic Consideration Policy Replaces Special Consideration Policy
2	Autumn Session 2009	Vice Principal (Administration)	Amendment to clause 10.7(e) in response to request from the Australian Defence Force
3	Autumn Session 2009	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Migrated to UOW Policy Template as per Policy Directory Refresh
4	13 August 2009	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)	Minor amendment to update reference to SEDLOs to refer to Student Support Advisers
5	15 October 2010	University Council	Amendments following review by Education Policy Review Subcommittee to better integrate policy with Disability Policy – Students and Disability Standards in Education 2005.
6	28 February 2011	University Council	References updated to reflect the rescission of the Code of Practice – Students.
7	23 November 2011	Vice-Principal (Administration)	Definition for “Associate” and “Disability” updated, in line with the Disability Action Plan 2011-2015.
8	2 December 2013	Vice-Chancellor	Minor amendment to clarify references to Deferred Assessment/Examination and Supplementary Assessment/Examination
9	11 April 2014	University Council	Amendments to reflect the implementation of the new Standards for the Finalisation of Student Results, which replace the previous Assessment Committee Standards.
10		Vice-Chancellor	Minor amendment to remove requirement for supporting documents to be originals or certified copies, to allow for online submission
11		University Council	

16 Schedule 1 – Application of Policy at Partner Institutions

1. Students enrolled at UOW Dubai will follow the procedures as set out in the [UOWD Student Handbook and Calendar](#).
2. Partner Institutions are responsible for establishing appropriate criteria regarding documentary evidence in accordance with this Policy, appropriate to the local regulations, and approved by the relevant academic unit.
3. Where they do not exist, partner institutions will designate staff who hold positions equivalent to those specified in this policy:
 - a. Subject Coordinator
 - b. Head of Academic Unit (or academic nominee)
 - c. Head of Students