



ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION POLICY

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References & Legislation:	Disability Standards for Education 2005 State Records Act 1998		



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1 Purpose

- 1.1 This Policy outlines the Academic Consideration framework at UOW College.
- 1.2 This Policy sets out clear and defined requirements allowing for transparency, ease of interpretation and implementation. Consistency in criteria, procedures, and outcomes in the processing of applications for academic consideration for all forms of assessment are requirements of this Policy.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled in:
- a. UOW College English Language Programs; and
 - b. All UOW College Higher Education and Pathway Programs.
- 2.1 This Policy does not apply to UOW College Vocational Programs.

3 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Academic Consideration	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.
Academic Progress	Successful completion of subjects within established time limits.
Assessment	An academic task which a student is required to complete to provide a basis for an official record of achievement or certification of competence in a subject, as stipulated in the Subject Outline.
Assessment Committee	The Committee of staff responsible for declaration of final results.
Associate	A UOW College student who provides support to a person with a disability who may or may not be a student at UOW College. An associate may include but is not limited to: <p style="text-align: center;">2.1.1 A spouse of the person;</p>



	<p>2.1.2 Another person who is living with the person on a genuine domestic basis;</p> <p>2.1.3 A relative of the person</p> <p>2.1.4 A carer of the person, and</p> <p>2.1.5 Other groups listed within the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> (Cth)</p>
Course	A program of study that includes those courses leading to higher education awards and non-award courses. A course consists of a subject or combination of subjects and other requirements as specified in the course structure.
Designated Staff	Those administrative and reception staff of UOW College or other UOW campuses that verify any documentation to be submitted to UOW College from Students.
Disability	<p>Disability, in relation to a person, includes:</p> <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 different from a person without the disorder or malfunction; org. a disorder or illness that affects a person's thought process, 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; ork. is imputed to a person.
Disability Services	Provide reasonable adjustment advice and support for current and prospective students with a disability or health condition.



Examiners' Committee	The committee of staff responsible for reviewing final marks and applications for academic consideration which makes recommendations to the Assessment Committee
Final Examination Period	Period during which final examinations are held.
Grievance (complaint)	A complaint by a student concerning a decision, act or omission by a member of College staff or committee which affects the student's academic experience
In-Class Test	A test, examination, quiz or review conducted during a session or cycle under classroom supervision.
Head of Program	Refers to the Academic Program Manager or English Language Centre Manager.
Reasonable Adjustments	Alternative arrangements that are made to ensure that students with a disability are able to undertake their study and complete their course requirements without disadvantage.
Registered Medical Practitioner	A person registered with a professional body to provide a specialised medical opinion.
Session	A period in which subjects may be offered in the Academic and English Language Programs.
SOLSMail	The Student Online Services email system. It is an official method for communication with students at the College.
Student	Any person who is enrolled in any course or program offered at, or in conjunction with, UOW College
Student Management Package (SMP)	Student Management Package (SMP) consists of SOLS, SMP-Central and the Student administration software and web based systems.
Student Online Services (SOLS)	SOLS is the official enrolment system of the University of Wollongong and UOW College. It is a web-based system that enables a Student to self-manage their enrolment, update their personal details, check final



	results and receive important messages from the University and the College.
Student Advisor	A member of staff who provides liaison, information, support and referral to ensure students meet their educational goals as effectively and efficiently as possible and are aware of available options in relation to their study pathways.
Subject	A self-contained unit of study in any course or program offered at, or in conjunction with, UOW College.
Subject Coordinator	A staff member with nominated responsibility for the coordination of a subject/s.
Subject Outline	The document governing content, delivery and assessment of material for a subject.
Supplementary Assessment	An assessment task, including an examination, available in place of, or in addition to, assessments as scheduled in the subject outline.
Verified Application	An application for academic consideration is considered verified when the required supporting documentation has been validated.

4 Policy Principles

4.1 This Policy should be interpreted in line with UOW College's commitment to:

- a. Equity and fairness;
- b. Equal benefits and opportunities;
- c. Transparency; and
- d. Natural Justice.

5 Academic Consideration

5.1 Academic consideration is only available in serious or exceptional circumstances which are beyond a student's control and 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.

5.2 Academic consideration is not intended to, and will not be granted to:



- a. Excuse students from meeting their assessment task responsibilities, as stated in the subject outline; or
 - b. Accommodate those common occurrences which interfere with daily life. This includes grounds such as usual work or family commitments, clashes with recreational activities or holiday arrangements.
- 5.3 Students are encouraged to access College and UOW support services and seek assistance from staff to develop good academic study patterns, time management skills, note taking and essay writing skills, and examination preparation skills.
- 5.4 The University provides a free and confidential counselling service to students who are having difficulty coping with disruptive, though relatively common, life events. Students who are experiencing any difficulties are encouraged to seek counselling support by first contacting a Student Advisor.

6 Eligibility

- 6.1 Students are eligible to apply for academic consideration if:
- a. Their ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the subject outline; or
 - b. Progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study has been significantly affected by illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance.
- 6.2 Applications for academic consideration will be considered on the basis of medical grounds, compassionate grounds and/or extenuating circumstances.
- 6.3 Students who require ongoing reasonable adjustments remain eligible to apply for academic consideration under the terms as defined in section 7.

Medical Grounds

- 6.4 Applications made on medical grounds may include, but are not limited to:
- a. Illness;
 - b. Injury;
 - c. Hospitalisation;
 - d. Treatment Programs;



- e. Exacerbation of existing medical condition; or
 - f. Disability.
- 6.5 Students with a disability and students who are associates of persons with a disability who may require reasonable adjustment are advised to disclose the nature and extent of their disability to UOW Disability Services and if recommended, register with UOW Disability Services, to allow the College to better manage their needs.
- 6.6 Students who are registered with UOW Disability Services and have reasonable adjustments in place, will only be required to apply for Academic Consideration if their ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study is significantly affected on medical grounds unrelated to their or their associate's disability.

Compassionate Grounds

- 6.7 Applications made on compassionate grounds, that is, where a student is affected by suffering or misfortune, may include, but are not limited to:
- a. Loss or bereavement – such as death of a family member, immediate relative or close friend, family relationship breakdown; or
 - b. Hardship or trauma – such as sudden loss of income or employment, significant disruption to domestic arrangements, victim of crime.

Extenuating Circumstances

- 6.8 Applications for Academic Consideration may be made on the grounds that the student's academic performance was significantly impacted upon by an extenuating circumstance. This includes:
- a. Carer's responsibilities – where a student has *substantial unplanned* responsibilities to either members of their immediate family or members of their household who need their care and support;
 - b. Legal commitments – where a student is called for jury duty or is required to attend a court or tribunal;
 - c. Timetable clash for simultaneous in-class tests;
 - d. Military service;
 - e. Accidents or natural disasters;
 - f. Participation in sporting events at state, national or international level;
 - g. Religious reasons where a student is required to observe religious obligations;



- h. One-off unusual work commitments; or
- i. Participation in major cultural event.

7 Applications

- 7.1 Students must apply for academic consideration for all forms of assessment through SOLS.
- 7.2 Students enrolled in a UOW College course who make five or more applications for academic consideration within six calendar months must contact the relevant Head of Program for academic advice.

Timing of Applications

- 7.3 Applications for Academic Consideration will be made:
 - a. In advance of the due date of an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-class test or final examination; or
 - b. On the due date of an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-class test or final examination.

on rare occasions, where advice is sought from, and approval provided by, the relevant Head of Program

- c. no later than three working days after the scheduled date or due date for an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-class test or final examination, in the event of an illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance coinciding with the scheduled assessment date.
- 7.4 In exceptional circumstances, the timing requirements may be exempted by the Head of Program. This exemption must be sought via email and supported by appropriate documentation. Examples of exceptional circumstances which may warrant an exemption include:
 - a. Accidental injury;
 - b. Sudden illness requiring hospitalisation; or
 - c. Student being homebound without access to a computer.
- 7.5 Students cannot apply for academic consideration once grades have been declared for that subject. In these circumstances, students can consult with the relevant Head of Program or lodge a formal grievance in accordance with the Student Grievance Policy.



8 Supporting Documentation

- 8.1 All applications for Academic Consideration must be supported by appropriate documentation.
- 8.2 Supporting documentation must be an original or certified copy in written in English or be a certified and signed translation.
- 8.3 Students are required to retain the supporting documentation for twelve months and may be requested to provide it for further inspection.
- 8.4 Where it is not possible to obtain supporting documentation, students must seek advice from the Subject Coordinator prior to lodging an application and
 - a. The Subject Coordinator may refer the student to the Head of Program for further consultation;
 - b. Following consultation with the Subject Coordinator or Head of Program, the student must complete a UOW Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration to support the application;
 - c. The declaration should state in detail the facts upon which academic consideration is based, attaching any relevant information or documentation to support statements made in the declaration.

Submission of Supporting Documentation

- 8.5 Supporting documentation must be submitted in person to the College reception or administration staff at other campuses.
- 8.6 For applications for academic consideration made in advance or on the due date of an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-session test or end of session examination, supporting documentation must be submitted within three working days of the SOLS application.
- 8.7 For applications for academic consideration made after the due date of an assessment task or the scheduled date for an in-session tests or end of session examination, supporting documentation must be submitted on the same or next working day of the SOLS application.
- 8.8 Failure to supply appropriate supporting documentation will result in an application not being considered.

Medical Grounds



- 8.9 A medical certificate must support applications for Academic Consideration on Medical Grounds.
- 8.10 A medical certificate will include the following:
- a. The student's name;
 - b. The dates where the student's performance was affected or the date on which the medical practitioner considers the student likely to return to studies;
 - c. The degree of incapacity of the student;
 - d. The name and provider number of the medical practitioner; and
 - e. The medical practitioner's signature and the date.
- 8.11 Medical certificates must be written by the medical practitioner during the period of illness and, in normal circumstances, on the first day of illness.
- 8.12 Except in exceptional circumstances, backdated or late certificates will not be accepted.

Compassionate Grounds

- 8.13 Supporting documentation for academic consideration applications on compassionate grounds may include:
- a. Notification or letter from a registered psychologist (for example, a University Counsellor);
 - a. Death certificate or death notice, plus a UOW Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration if the relationship between the student and the deceased is not obvious from the death notice or death certificate;
 - b. Police report, or event number plus a UOW Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration;
 - c. Letter from a minister of religion (or the like) on relevant letterhead; or
 - d. Letter from an employer on company letterhead.

Extenuating Circumstances

- 8.14 Supporting documentation for academic consideration applications on extenuating circumstances may include:
- a. Notification or letter from a registered psychologist (for example, a University Counsellor);
 - a. Letter from a minister of religion (or the like) on relevant letterhead;
 - b. Jury notice or letter from relevant authority on relevant letterhead;
 - c. Police report, or event number plus a statutory declaration for academic consideration;



- d. Satisfactory written evidence from the armed forces on relevant letterhead,
- e. Statutory declaration;
- f. Letter from an employer on company letterhead;
- g. Selection confirmation on the letterhead of the state, national or international sporting body; or
- h. Letter from a relevant cultural authority on relevant letterhead.

Verification of Supporting Documentation

- 8.15 The Subject Coordinator is entitled to inspect and sight the supporting documentation prior to making a decision concerning the academic consideration application.
- 8.16 Any documents submitted as part of the application may be verified by UOW College. This includes providing the documentation to a third party for verification.
- 8.17 The submission of fraudulent documentation will be regarded as serious misconduct and will be managed in accordance with the Student Conduct Policy and associated procedures. The matter may also be referred to the State or Federal Police as appropriate.

9 Criteria for Granting Academic Consideration

- 9.1 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 may be had to:
 - a. The seriousness of the circumstances and the extent to which these impact on the student's academic progress in a subject;
 - b. The extent to which the circumstances and their impact were beyond the student's control;
 - c. The extent to which the student may have contributed to producing the circumstances;
 - d. whether the academic consideration sought would unfairly advantage the student in relation to other students enrolled in the subject;
 - e. The relevance of the supporting documentation;
 - f. The student's academic progress in the session;
 - g. The student's attendance in the session, cycle or course;
 - h. Previous applications by the student for academic consideration; and
 - i. Any other relevant consideration.



10 Response Times

- 10.1 The Subject Coordinator should respond through the Student Management System (SMP) within five working days of receiving the email notification of the application.
- 10.2 If the Subject Coordinator has not responded within five working days, the Subject Coordinator will be sent an email, copied to the student, requesting an urgent response within two working days.
- 10.3 Students who have not received a response within ten working days of submitting verified documentation should discuss the matter with the Head of Program.
- 10.4 If after that period no response has been provided, the application will be forwarded automatically to the Head of Program who is responsible for investigating the delay, taking advice from the Subject Coordinator as appropriate, and determining the outcome of the application within three working days. Students should contact the Head of Program as soon as possible if no response has been given after this period.

11 Outcomes of Academic Consideration

- 11.1 Students will be notified of the outcome and relevant details of their academic consideration request via SOLSmail.
- 11.2 It is the student's responsibility to check their SOLSmail regularly. The College will not be held responsible if the student fails to read their SOLSmail and follow the instructions contained therein.

Approved Applications

Assessment Tasks (excluding in-class tests and final examinations)

- 11.3 The following outcomes are available in cases where academic consideration for an assessment task is approved:
 - a. Revised submission date (i.e., extension), or
 - b. Supplementary assessment task.
- 11.4 A revised submission date will not be granted beyond the date upon which the assessment task is marked and returned to other students in the class.
- 11.5 Supplementary assessment task details will be included in the SOLSmail notification.



In-class tests

- 11.6 In cases where academic consideration for an in-class test is approved, a supplementary test will be provided.
- 11.7 The Subject Coordinator will determine, in a reasonable manner, the nature, date, time and venue of any supplementary test. The student will be informed through SOLSmail, at least three working days prior to this date.
- 11.8 If a student is not able to attend the scheduled supplementary in-class test, in extenuating circumstances, the Subject Coordinator has the discretion to allow the student to undertake the supplementary in-class test at an alternative time. Alternatively, the student may be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the subject without academic penalty or may be awarded a zero fail for the in-class test.

Examinations held during the final examination period

- 11.9 In cases where academic consideration for an examination held during the final examination period is approved, a supplementary examination will be provided.
- 11.10 The SOLSmail notification will include supplementary examination details including the date, time and venue of the supplementary examination.
- 11.11 A student who is not able to attend the scheduled supplementary examination may apply for academic consideration again in accordance with this policy. However, on this occasion, they must apply in writing to the Head of Program following the timing of application procedures outlined in clause 9.2. The Head of Program has the discretion to allow the student to undertake a second supplementary examination, or to complete a substitute assessment where this option is offered in the Subject Outline.
- 11.12 Alternatively, the student may be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the subject without academic penalty or may be awarded a zero fail for the examination.

Application Denied

- 11.13 Students will be notified through SOLSmail if their academic consideration application has been denied.
- 11.14 Notification will include the reason/s why the application has been denied and the name of the staff member who has made this decision and will inform the student of their right to appeal the decision pursuant to the UOW College Student Grievance Policy.



12 Appealing Against a Decision

- 12.1 The outcome of an application for academic consideration is determined by one of the following: the Subject Coordinator, Head of Program or Assessment Committee.
- 12.2 If a student does not agree with a decision made regarding their application, a grievance may exist. Students are advised to refer to the Student Grievance Policy at www.uowcollege.edu.au/policies for further details. Students may file a grievance in writing in accordance with the Student Grievance Policy.

13 Privacy and Confidentiality

- 13.1 All staff designated to access information contained in applications for academic consideration are obliged to preserve confidentiality in accordance with the UOW Enterprises Privacy Policy, the UOW Enterprises Code of Conduct and other relevant privacy legislation.
- 13.2 Records relating to academic consideration applications will be managed in accordance with UOW Enterprises Records Management Policy.

14 Responsibilities

UOW College

- 14.1 The College has a responsibility to:
- a. Ensure that this Policy is accessible to all staff and students;
 - b. Ensure that this Policy is implemented and applied consistently across all programs;
 - 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. All parties to be kept informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the application of academic consideration.

College Staff

- 14.2 Designated staff have a responsibility to:



- a. Receive the supporting documentation;
- b. Verify the authenticity of the supporting documentation ensuring compliance with procedural requirements of this policy; and
- c. Return the supporting documentation to the student.

14.3 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;
- b. Review supporting documentation as deemed necessary;
- c. Approve or deny the verified academic consideration application within five working days; and
- d. Ensure that all applications for academic consideration are dealt with according to the provisions of this policy;
- e. Notify the Head of Program if unable to respond; and
- f. Adhere to UOW Enterprises Code of Conduct when responding to academic consideration applications.

14.4 The Head of Program 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.

14.5 The Examiners' Committee is responsible for reviewing all applications for academic consideration in determining the recommendation to the Assessment Committee of final marks for subjects in which the student is enrolled.

Students

14.6 Students have a responsibility to meet deadlines for work to be submitted as set out in the Subject Outline and in accordance with the Assessment Policy.

14.7 Students who cannot meet such deadlines because of illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance as outlined in section 8 of this policy, and who are seeking academic consideration must then:

- a. Lodge an Academic Consideration application via SOLS within the affixed timeframe;
- b. Provide supporting documentation for verification within the relevant timeframe;
- c. Retain the supporting documentation for twelve months from the date of verification and provide such documentation when requested;



- d. Ensure that the date/s specified in the supporting documentation is/are relevant to the date of the assessment task;
- e. Seek academic or administrative advice as appropriate; and
- f. Behave ethically and honestly in all respects when applying for academic consideration.

14.8 Students who require advice about the Student Academic Consideration Policy or assistance with its procedures may contact a Student Advisor, Subject Coordinator or the Head of Program.

15 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	18/10/10	WCA Academic Board	New Policy
2	20/6/11	Ian Tobin	Updated for name change. Correction to numbering Clauses 5.4 and 10.2
3	19/03/2015	UOWC Academic Board	Updated branding, changes from hard copy process to online process. Alignment with UOW policy.
4	21/07/2016	Compliance Officer	Minor change only - College branding and document format updated
5	19/06/2017	Academic Board	Substantive review of Policy. Editorial changes to simplify Policy.
6	22/03/2018	Academic Board	Remove Vocational Programs from scope to align with industry practice.