

Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure

Please note Joint Medical Program (JMP) students follow a separate procedure - Bachelor of Medicine - JMP Adverse and Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Procedure

Section 1 - Context

(1) This procedure supports the implementation of the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual](#), and the [Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Policy](#) and must be read in conjunction with those documents.

(2) In the event of any inconsistency between this procedure and the Policy or the Rule, the Rule made by the Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

Section 2 - Procedure

(3) This procedure describes the steps to be followed when a student is seeking special consideration because adverse circumstances have had an impact on their performance in an assessment item

(4) Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

- a. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
- b. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the relevant Course Outline that students may lodge an application online.

(5) The supporting documentation for an application must be submitted using the online Adverse Circumstances system.

(6) Applications with the approved supporting documentation will be either:

- a. approved by a designated officer within the Student hub; or
- b. forwarded electronically to the Course Co-ordinator who will be responsible for the determination of the outcome.

(7) When an application is rejected, the penalties described Clauses 215-216 of the [Course Management and Assessment Procedure Manual](#) will apply.

Allowable Adverse Circumstances

(8) Students who submit an application for adverse circumstances affecting assessment items must be able to demonstrate that one or more of the allowable adverse circumstances below may adversely impact their performance:

- a. health grounds – either physical or psychological;
- b. non-health grounds such as:

- i. compassionate grounds for example, the death or serious injury of a close family member or friend;
- ii. hardship for example, sudden loss of employment; family breakdown; or severe disruption to domestic arrangements
- iii. or trauma – for example, impact of crime or accident; impact of natural disasters; or
- iv. unavoidable commitments.

(9) Adverse Circumstances do not include:

- a. misreading the Course Outline or the examination timetable; or
- b. usual work commitments; or
- c. travel plans; or
- d. ignorance of assumed knowledge requirements for a course.

Requests for an Extension of Time to Submit an Assessment Item (Excluding In-class and Formal Examinations)

(10) Students who experience adverse circumstances affecting their ability to submit an assessment item by the due date may request an extension of time for submission of an assessment item.

(11) Students must submit their adverse circumstances application via the online application system by 11:00pm on the due date of the assessment item.

(12) Students must supply the supporting documentation online through the Adverse Circumstances system within 3 calendar days after the submission of the online application. Appropriate supporting documentation is described in Clauses 59 to 64 of this procedure.

(13) Students may also be required to complete additional forms as part of their adverse circumstances application. When required, this information will be supplied with the Course Outline.

(14) Following submission of the application and the appropriate supporting documentation the authorised officer in the Student hub will either:

- a. approve the application where there is an Allowable Adverse Circumstance and the extension of time request is less than or equal to three (3) days; or
- b. forward the application to the Course Co-ordinator (or nominee) via email for action and determination of the outcome as soon as possible and usually within 3 working days. Possible outcomes are listed Clause 12 of the [Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Policy](#).

(15) Students will be notified of the outcome of the application via the Adverse circumstances approval authorisation email.

(16) Students who are granted an extension must attach the Adverse circumstances approval authorisation email to or with the submission of the assessment item so it is apparent to the marker that an extension has been approved.

(17) Students are required to retain all supporting documentation relating to their application for a period of six months, in accordance Clause 17 of the [Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Policy](#).

Requests for a Rescheduled In-Class Examination Following Adverse Circumstances that have Affected Either

- a. preparation for an in-class examination; or
- b. attendance at an in-class exam.

(18) Students who experience adverse circumstances that may have affected their preparation or ability to attend the examination may request the rescheduling of an in-class examination.

(19) Students must submit their application via the online application system by the scheduled time of the in-class examination.

(20) Students must supply the supporting documentation online through the Adverse Circumstances system within 3 calendar days after the submission of the online application. Appropriate supporting documentation is described in Clauses 58-64 of this procedure.

(21) Students may also be required to complete additional forms as part of their adverse circumstances application. When required, this information will be supplied with the Course Outline.

(22) Following submission of the application and supporting documentation the application will be available for the Course Co-ordinator (or nominee) to view in the Adverse Circumstances system.

(23) The Course Co-ordinator (or nominee), will determine the outcome of the application as soon as possible and usually within 3 working days.

(24) Students will be notified of the outcome of the application via the Adverse circumstances approval authorisation email.

(25) The Adverse Circumstances Approval Authority email issued to the student must be retained by the student.

Requests for a Rescheduled In-Class Examination Following Adverse Circumstances that have Affected a Student's Performance During an In-class Examination

(26) Students who experience adverse circumstances during the in-class examination prior to leaving the examination room are required to advise the exam supervisor of their intention to submit an Adverse Circumstances application.

(27) Students must submit their application via the online application system as soon as possible after the scheduled in-class examination and no later than 3 calendar days after the in-class examination.

(28) Students must supply the supporting documentation online through the Adverse Circumstances system within 3 calendar days after the submission of the online application. Appropriate supporting documentation is described in Clauses 18 to 25 of this procedure.

(29) Students may also be required to complete additional forms as part of their adverse circumstances application. When required, this information will be supplied with the Course Outline.

(30) The Course Co-ordinator will keep the student's examinations answer booklet until such time as they have assessed the Adverse Circumstances application. The application may be either:

- a. granted - an alternative examination or assessment is granted, the original examination booklet will be held unmarked until the alternative examination or alternative assessment is completed; or
- b. denied - the original examination booklet will be marked; or
- c. withdrawn by the student - the original examination booklet will be marked.

(31) When a student is granted an alternative assessment item, the final mark awarded for the assessment item will be the mark achieved in the alternative assessment item - not whichever mark is higher.

(32) Students who have attempted an in-class examination by virtue of the attendance sheet (or equivalent) are not eligible for a supplementary examination or alternative assessment item unless they comply with the requirements

specified above (Clauses 26 to 29).

Requests for a Rescheduled Examination Following Adverse Circumstances that have Affected Either Preparation for or Attendance at a Formal Examination

(33) Students must submit their adverse circumstances application via the online application system prior to the scheduled date of the examination as listed in the Formal Examination timetable.

(34) Students must supply the supporting documentation online through the Adverse Circumstances system within 3 calendar days after the submission of the online application. Appropriate supporting documentation is described in Clauses 58 to 64 of this procedure.

(35) Students may also be required to complete additional forms as part of their adverse circumstances application. When required, this information will be supplied with the Course Outline.

(36) Following lodgement of the application, on presentation and acceptance of appropriate supporting documentation the Course Co-ordinator will determine the outcome of the application.

(37) Where a student is granted a special examination, this is to be scheduled in the Special examinations period.

(38) The special examination will be scheduled by the Examinations Office.

(39) Students will be advised of the outcome or progress of the application, within 3 working days after lodgement.

Requests for a Rescheduled Examination Following Adverse Circumstances that have Affected a Student's Performance During a Formal Examination

(40) Students who experience adverse circumstances during the examination are required to indicate their intention to submit an Adverse Circumstances application to the Exam Room Supervisor prior to leaving the examination room.

(41) Students must submit their Adverse Circumstances application via the online application system as soon as possible after the examination and no later than 3 calendar days after the examination.

(42) Students must supply the supporting documentation online through the Adverse Circumstances system within 3 calendar days after the submission of the online application. Appropriate supporting documentation is described in Clauses 58 to 64 of this procedure.

(43) Students may also be required to complete additional forms as part of their adverse circumstances application. When required, this information will be supplied with the Course Outline.

(44) The Course Co-ordinator will keep the student's examinations answer booklet until such time as they have assessed the Adverse Circumstances application. The application may be either:

- a. granted - an alternative examination or assessment is granted, the original examination booklet will be held unmarked until the alternative examination or alternative assessment is completed; or
- b. denied - the original examination booklet will be marked; or
- c. withdrawn by the student - the original examination booklet will be marked.

(45) Where an examination is scheduled for the Special examinations period or an alternative assessment is authorised, the final mark awarded for the assessment item will be the mark achieved in the special examination or alternative assessment - not whichever mark is higher.

(46) Students who have attempted an examination by virtue of the attendance sheet are not eligible for a special examination or alternative assessment unless they comply with the requirements specified above (Clauses 41 to 45)

Request for Reschedule of Placement (including WIL)

(47) Students who are unable to complete a placement (including WIL) due to adverse circumstances may apply for a reallocation of the placement.

(48) Students must submit their adverse circumstances application via the online system as soon as possible after allocation of placement and no later than 3 days before the commencement of the placement.

(49) Students must supply the supporting documentation online through the Adverse Circumstances system within 3 calendar days after the submission of the online application. Appropriate supporting documentation is described in Clauses 58 to 64 of this procedure.

(50) The adverse circumstances application will be referred to the relevant Course Co-ordinator to determine the outcome of the application.

(51) Where a student is to be granted a special placement this will be scheduled by the relevant Faculty Placement Officers.

(52) Students will be notified via email of the outcome of the application by your Course Co-ordinator.

Extraordinary Circumstances

(53) In extraordinary adverse circumstances, after all other options have been explored, the Course Co-ordinator or Head of School may recommend to the School Assessment Body that an adverse circumstances application will be taken into consideration for the determination of a final result in a course.

(54) Marks will not be modified as an outcome of these applications, but a recommendation for an alternative assessment item may be considered by the School Assessment Body.

(55) Where an examination is scheduled for the Special examinations period or an alternative assessment item is authorised, the final mark awarded for the assessment item will be the mark achieved in the special examination or alternative assessment – not whichever mark is higher.

(56) In extraordinary circumstances an adverse circumstances application may be referred to Campus care for advice.

Supporting Documentation

(57) Students are required to submit any adverse circumstances supporting documentation through the online through the Adverse Circumstances system.

(58) The University will record the details of the supporting documentation in the Adverse Circumstances system and return the supporting documentation to the student for safe keeping for a period greater than six months and in accordance with Clause 17 of the [Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Policy](#).

(59) The decision maker, whether Head of School or Course Co-ordinator (or nominee) is entitled to request a copy of the supporting documentation from the student at any time.

(60) As per Clause 57 in extraordinary circumstances, and when deemed necessary for the welfare of the student, a disclosure may be made to Campus care.

(61) All documentation provided must be submitted through the Adverse Circumstances System as described in Clauses 15-19 of the [Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Policy](#).

(62) Students are responsible for ensuring the authenticity of any documentation that they provide to the University

as described in Clauses 15-19 of the [Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Policy](#).

(63) Allowable supporting documentation may include:

- a. a letter or medical certificate from an accepted health professional, which should include the date(s) that the health grounds have adversely affected the relevant assessment item(s);
- b. evidence demonstrating compassionate grounds - this may include a funeral notice (both newspaper hardcopy or online digital will be accepted) or letter from a counselling service;
- c. evidence demonstrating hardship - this may include a letter from a counselling service;
- d. evidence demonstrating trauma - this may include a letter from a police officer, fire officer or letter from a counselling service;
- e. evidence supporting unavoidable commitments as a student Reservist, an elite sportsperson or religious responsibilities - this may include an official notification or letter from a person/s in authority such as a letter from Elite Athletes Coordinator;
- f. evidence supporting jury duty or other court ordered appearance - this may include a court subpoena; or
- g. a Statutory Declaration. This document will only be accepted when used to demonstrate compassionate grounds, hardship or trauma and it must be provided with other supporting documentation. Statutory Declarations will not be accepted for health grounds.

Appeals

(64) Students may appeal the outcome of the adverse circumstances application within 3 working days of being notified of the outcome. The appeal should be made in writing via email to the Academic Registrar.

(65) The Academic Registrar will refer these matters to the relevant Head of School or nominee for consideration and assessment.

(66) The Head of School will notify the student of the outcome of the appeal, in writing to the student's University of Newcastle email account and normally within 7 working days of receipt.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	6th July 2016
Review Date	31st December 2019
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Approval Date	6th July 2016
Expiry Date	25th March 2020
Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Council" - The governing authority of the University established under section 8A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Joint Medical Program (JMP)" - The Bachelor of Medicine or Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine as delivered in partnership by University of Newcastle and University of New England.

"Working day" - Any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a public holiday in Newcastle, on which business may be conducted.

"Accepted health professional" - Medical practitioners including hospital-based medical practitioners; general practitioners; specialist medical practitioners such as psychiatrists, ophthalmologists and surgeons dentists; clinical psychologists; pharmacists; social workers; accredited counsellors or members of the counselling service from Newcastle Australia Institute of Higher Education (Singapore).

"Adverse circumstances approval authorisation" - The email issued to the student's University of Newcastle student email account, approving an adverse circumstances request.

"Assumed knowledge" - The knowledge base upon which a course builds and which is deemed necessary at the commencement of that course to succeed in that course.

"Calendar days" - All days in a month including weekends and public holidays.

"Campus Care" - The program which has been set up as a central point of enquiry for information, advice and support in managing inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviours.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"In-class examination" - A quiz, test, laboratory assignment, tutorial exercise, or any other work that is undertaken in a classroom during the term and is used to measure student learning outcomes and determine the student's final result of a student in a course.

"Officer" - Has the meaning given in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), or any replacing legislation.

"Student hub" - Is located at Callaghan, Ourimbah, Newcastle and Port Macquarie or the administrative units for students enrolled at Sydney or Singapore.

"Unavoidable commitments" - Includes caring responsibilities, cultural or religious commitments, commitments within the Australian Defence Forces or similar international bodies, commitments as an elite athlete to attend an event, obligations to jury duty, or another commitment that cannot by its nature be rescheduled.