You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances beyond your control, interfere with your assessment performance. Are you receiving assistance from Disability Services?

Sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond your control may:

- Prevent you from completing a course requirement,
- Keep you from attending an assessable activity,
- Stop you submitting assessable work for a course,
- Significantly affect your performance in assessable work, be it a formal end-of-term examination, a class test, a laboratory test, a seminar presentation or any other form of assessment.

**NOTE: UNSW now has a Fit to Sit / Submit rule**, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you’re declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. To find out more about what this means for you, please refer to this Document (PDF, 700k, 2pages).

**Application**
When to apply

If you need to submit an application for special consideration for an exam or assessment, you must submit the application prior to the start of the exam or before the assessment is due, except where illness or misadventure prevent you from doing so.

Where misadventure has prevented you from submitting or sitting for an assessment, applications must be made within three working days of the assessment or the period covered by the supporting documentation.

Applicable exceptional circumstances:

Your circumstances are considered exceptional if it is short-term, serious and unavoidable if it arises from circumstances that:

- Were unexpected and beyond your control and;
- Caused disturbance to academic work by a substantial degree due to illness or other cause and;
- Could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by you

And either:

- Occurred during an event critical study period and was more than 3 consecutive days duration or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and;

or

- Prevented the ability to complete or attend an assessment task for a specific date (e.g. final exam, in class test/quiz, in class presentation)

In addition to meeting these criteria, an absence or inability to complete an assessment task within the required time frame must be supported by a medical certificate or other document that indicates clearly that you were unable to comply (please see supporting documentation).

Applications are normally not considered if:

- The condition or event is not related to performance or is considered to be non-applicable circumstances
- Any key information is missing
- Supporting documentation does not meet requirements

In exceptional circumstances UNSW may waive these requirements, for example, if an accident or sudden illness occurs which requires your immediate hospitalisation.

Non-Applicable Circumstances

The University does not provide special consideration for conditions or circumstances that are the consequence of a student’s own actions or inactions.

Some common examples of circumstances that are not considered exceptional include:

- misreading the unit guide;
- misreading the examination timetable;
- attending events such as:
  - concerts;
  - talk shows;
  - sporting events (excluding university games/elite competitions);
  - protests;
  - weddings;
- holidays;
internet outage (certain exceptions e.g. in prison/remote rural students);
computer failure (certain exceptions e.g. in prison/remote rural students);
professional experience organised independently by student;
heavy academic work load;
overloading with additional courses in the given term;
two or more assessments due on the same date;
work commitments;
commencement of cross-institutional study.

Important things to note

- Please be aware that if you provide falsified documents in support of your application, then this will result in one of a range of penalties, from failure in the course to suspension or exclusion. In some cases, the matter could also be reported to ICAC. As a student, you must be aware of your obligations and responsibilities under the **Student Code**.
- Depending on the circumstances, UNSW may take action to allow you to overcome the disadvantage, e.g. give you additional assessment or extend a deadline.
- Merely submitting a request for Special Consideration does not automatically mean that you will be granted additional assessment, or that you will be awarded an amended result. For example, if you have a poor record of attendance or performance throughout a Term or Semester in a course, you may be failed regardless of illness or other reason affecting a final examination in that course.
- UNSW has a centralised procedure for Special Consideration applications.
- It sometimes happens that a student encounters a situation so significant or personal that they do not want to use the Special Consideration procedures. In a case like this you may prefer to contact the University Health Service, Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), an academic adviser in your program office or the Head, Student Lifecycle. It is always important to let UNSW know if there is anything that may affect your ability to continue your studies.

How to apply

**To apply for Special Consideration:**

1. You must submit the application prior to the start of the relevant exam, or before a piece of assessment is due, except where illness or misadventure prevent you from doing so (UNSW has a fit to sit/submit rule which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so).

2. The application must be made through Online Services in **myUNSW** (My Student Profile tab > My Student Services > Online Services > Special Consideration).

3. You must obtain and attach Third Party documentation before submitting the application. Failure to do so may result in the application being rejected.

4. Where possible, medical processional certifying your illness or misadventure should complete the **Professional Authority Form (PDF 46KB)**

Supporting documentation

To give UNSW sufficient and appropriate information on which to base its decision about your request, you must support your application with certified official documentation.

The evidence must:

1. Identify the circumstances
2. Include dates and/or length of circumstances
3. Explain severity and impact of the circumstances
4. Clearly describe how circumstances have adversely affected your capacity for effective study to which an assessment relates
5. Include the date(s) on which you were seen by the professional providing the evidence

**Please note:** If your supporting documentation is in a language other than English, you must supply copies of the original language document/s, and a complete English translation of the original language document/s. For recognised translation services please refer to [https://www.unsw.edu.au/document-certification](https://www.unsw.edu.au/document-certification).

Common applicable circumstances and the corresponding supporting evidence required are detailed in the table below. The table lists common applicable circumstances, however this list is **not** exhaustive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exceptional Circumstance</th>
<th>Supporting Evidence Required</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Short-term illness</strong></td>
<td>- Medical Certificate (provided by health practitioner)</td>
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<td><strong>2. Hardship or trauma, including:</strong></td>
<td>- Medical Certificate (provided by health practitioner) - Official letter from relevant source/authority</td>
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<td>- Sudden change in domestic arrangements: e.g. eviction, homelessness and serious financial difficulties</td>
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<td>- Bereavement</td>
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<td>- Victims of crime</td>
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<td>- Unexpected events/accidents</td>
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<td>- Unexpected financial difficulties</td>
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<td><strong>3. Death of a relative/close friend</strong></td>
<td>- Death Notice/Certificate - Medical Certificate (provided by health practitioner)</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>4. Unavoidable commitments</strong></td>
<td>- Letter from religious leader/Elder - Letter from doctor/medical certificate - Letter confirming attendance to Jury Duty/court date - Medical Certificate (provided by health practitioner) - Carers requirements list - Letter from other University confirming exam schedule</td>
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<td>- Funerals</td>
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<td>- University Competitions</td>
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<td>- Religious commitments</td>
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<td>- Unavoidable medical procedures</td>
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<td>- Court dates/Jury Duty</td>
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<td>- Unexpected carers requirements</td>
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<td>- Exams held at another University</td>
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<td><strong>5. Exacerbation of ongoing illness</strong></td>
<td>- Medical Certificate (provided by health practitioner) - Letter from Disability Unit if student is registered with them</td>
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<td><strong>6. Elite athletes or Performers</strong></td>
<td>- Official letter from UNSW Elite Athlete Program supporting increased training commitments/competition - Official letter from competition owner</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Students part of UNSW Elite Athlete Program</td>
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<td>- Students representing UNSW/State/Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7. Army Reservists/SES commitments and Volunteer Firefighters</strong></td>
<td>- An official training notice from organiser explaining why attendance is required</td>
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</table>
Can I use an online doctor service?

Online medical certificates provided as a result of technology-based patient consultations are an appropriate alternative to consulting with a patient in the same physical room, when they are used:

- as an adjunct to normal medical practice;
- for regular patients of the practice;
- for patients who have been referred by another medical practitioner; and
- when it is clinically appropriate for the patient’s circumstances.

UNSW will accept online medical certificates if:

- it is evident that a tele-health consultation was necessary and appropriate in the given circumstances, based on the criteria listed above;
- it was provided by an AHPRA registered provider; and
- it can be confirmed that the service was provided as a Tele-Health Service e.g. through Skype, FaceTime etc.

All online medical certificates submitted as part of an application will be verified as part of the process to confirm their appropriateness and authenticity.

After application

What happens after I apply?

Your details, including all of the documentation provided by you, will be received by the Student Case Reviews Team. UNSW’s procedures ensure that the confidentiality of this information is maintained.

On the basis of the information provided in your application, the Student Case Reviews Team will make an assessment and determine the outcome if it is clear your application is eligible. If necessary, the Student Case Reviews Team will contact the Course Convenor to determine the appropriate response in your particular case.

On the basis of the information provided in your application, the relevant course authority will decide on the appropriate response in your particular case.

The following may be taken into account:

- Your performance in other items of assessment in the course
- The severity of the event and its effect on your performance
- The nature of the assessment in which performance was affected
- Your academic standing and academic progression in other courses and in the program

What outcomes can I expect?

Special Consideration is primarily intended to provide you with an extra opportunity to demonstrate the level of performance of which you are capable. If Special Consideration is approved, one of the following outcomes are possible:

- A supplementary or alternative assessment may be offered to you. This requirement is independent of the weighting of the assessment task; or
- Marks derived from other, completed comparable assessment tasks may be aggregated or averaged to achieve an overall mark if you are unable to complete the assessment task; or
- The deadline for the assessment may be extended.

In the absence of additional assessment, there is no provision for your final mark in a course to be increased even if Special Consideration has been approved.
Need help?

Contact specialconsideration@unsw.edu.au for advice about the policies or procedures relating to special consideration.