



# Special Consideration Policy and Procedure

## 1 Background

Menzies Institute of Technology's (hereinafter known as the "Institute") acknowledges that there are unforeseen circumstances beyond students control in which a student may be disadvantaged in their assessment task in comparison to other students. This policy outlines the policy and procedures relevant to providing special consideration to those disadvantaged students.

## 2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the process for managing requests for special consideration from students who face situations beyond their control.

## 3 Audience

This policy applies to all current students of the Institute.

## 4 Definitions

**Special consideration:** refers to the process by which the Institute takes extenuating circumstances into consideration during the marking of an assessment item or granting an extension to submit assessment items. Extenuating circumstances are defined as circumstances that are unpredictable and unavoidable and beyond the control of a student.

**Misadventure:** refers to an unexpected situation that is not part of the normal risk of studies, employment, family or social life. This situation is beyond student's control to prevent or to overcome. Misadventure disrupts previously satisfactory work. It does not include situations where students incorrectly rely on draft exam timetable dates and times or misread published exam times.

**Normal risk:** refers to risks/situations that ordinary students could be expected to meet in their environment, including but not limited to birthdays, holidays, weddings and any similar family

or personal occasions; inability to cope with studies or adjust to family life; demands of employment (in themselves or as a consequence of promotion), including periods of pressure and being absent temporarily from one's normal residence; tension with or between parents, spouses and other persons closely involved with students; demands of sport, clubs, all social activities and religious commitments, and need for financial assistance.

**Medical reasons:** refers to serious medical conditions which include serious injury, hospitalisation and chronic illness. Temporary ailment situations such as, headaches, colds, sleeplessness, gastric upsets and normal period pain are not considered as grounds for granting special consideration. A serious case of these illnesses may be considered for special consideration.

**Compassionate reasons:** refers to family issues and personal issues that adversely affect a student. This includes, but is not limited to:

- divorce
- death in the family
- ill relative requiring the student's care
- unpredicted or sudden home moves
- attending court cases during the exam period.

Workload is not considered as a compassionate reason and applications for workload-related reasons, such as increased working hours or unpredicted work demands, will not be considered.

**Hardship and trauma:** refers to a sudden change in employment circumstances, severe disruption to domestic arrangements, or when a student is the victim of a crime.

## 5 Policy

- 5.1. All students of the Institute have the right to apply for special consideration. If a student believes that his/her assessment preparation or any item of assessment has been disrupted in a way that will materially affect the likely outcome of the assessment he/she may apply in writing using Request for Special Consideration Form.
- 5.2. Special consideration will apply for situations of misadventure including medical, hardship/trauma and compassionate reasons. These situations exclude normal risk situations.
- 5.3. Students seeking special consideration based on medical reasons should submit a medical certificate. If hospitalised, hospital admission/discharged summary should be submitted along with the medical certificate.

- 5.4. Special consideration applications on compassionate grounds should submit, obituary or funeral notice (documentation such as birth or marriage certificate or a statutory declaration to confirm family relationship), a letter from psychologist or counsellor or police or incident report.
- 5.5. Students applying under hardship or trauma reasons should submit a letter from employer or notice of unexpected cessation of employment and police or incident report.
- 5.6. Students may seek extensions for their submission as per the procedures outlined in this policy.
- 5.7. Extensions will only be granted for situations of misadventure including medical, hardship/trauma and compassionate reasons. These situations exclude normal risk situations.

## 6 Procedures

### 6.1 Procedure for special consideration for assessments

- 6.1.1 Students seeking special consideration should submit the completed Request for Special Consideration Form to the Student Services Coordinator within three (3) working days after the assessment due date with the required evidence documents outlined in the policy.
- 6.1.2 The Student Services Coordinator will review the initial application for completeness and forward the application to the Course Coordinator/Trainer or Assessor. The Student Services Coordinator may contact the student requesting additional information or evidence documentation. Students will be allowed additional five (5) working days to submit all required evidence documents.
- 6.1.3 Students who fail to submit completed applications with the required evidence outlined in the time frame noted in clause 6.1.2 will not be considered for special consideration.
- 6.1.4 Student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the application within ten (10) working days of the application being received.
- 6.1.5 The Course Coordinator/Trainer or Assessor at times may request additional information or refer the matter to the Vocational Management Team for further guidance.
- 6.1.6 Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of a special consideration application may seek recourse in accordance with the *MITP07 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

## 6.2 Assessment extensions and examination deferrals

### 6.2.1 Procedure for assessment extensions and examination deferrals

- a. Students unable to submit assessment tasks by the specified due date may request an extension of the assessment due date (not applicable to formal exams) on the grounds of misadventure including medical, hardship/trauma and compassionate reasons.
- b. Students may be granted an extension for up to a maximum of 14 consecutive calendar days, normally with the approval of the Trainer/Assessor.
- c. Only in exceptional circumstances, the Institute may grant an extension beyond 14 consecutive days, for up to a maximum of four weeks with the approval of the Course Coordinator.
- d. Students requiring longer extensions than the maximum stipulated time are advised to apply for withdrawal from training product without financial penalty.
- e. Students must request extensions in writing by completing the '*Assessment Extension or Exam Deferral – Medical Reasons Form*' or '*Assessment Extension or Exam Deferral – Non-Medical Reasons Form*'. Completed forms must be sent to the Student Services Coordinator.
- f. In some units with major assessment tasks (e.g. end-of-unit 'take home' papers that are used instead of a formal exam), requests for an extension may be granted with the approval of the Course Coordinator.

### 6.2.2 Assessment extensions or exam deferrals under medical reasons

- a. Students seeking extensions under medical grounds need to provide a medical certificate. The medical certificate should contain the following information:
  - i) must be signed by a registered medical, dental, psychological or allied health practitioner (not practitioners of alternative medicine, naturopaths, herbalists unless they are registered practitioners).
  - ii) has a registered provider number or the practitioner's professional association registration number on the document or an equivalent means or certification for a country other than Australia.
  - iii) states the date on which the student was examined and the nature, severity and duration of the complaint.
  - iv) states whether the student was affected by the complaint on the day of the assessment task.
- b. The medical certificate needs to be accompanied by the *Assignment Extension or Exam Deferral – Medical Reasons Form*.

- 6.2.3 Assessment extensions or exam deferrals under compassionate and other reasons
- a. Exceptional circumstances involving compassionate reasons, 'misadventure' or other exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control, and where the circumstances are not within the range of 'normal risk', must include sufficient documentary evidence from an independent person to corroborate the facts and circumstances claimed by the student to support their request.
  - b. The reasons need to be accompanied by the *Assignment Extension or Exam Deferral – Non Medical Reasons Form*.
- 6.2.4 Assessment extension request timelines and penalty
- a. To be considered for an extension without penalty, extension requests and supporting documentary evidence must be submitted to the Student Services Coordinator before or on the assessment due date.
  - b. Students who make a request by phone must follow-up immediately by submitting the requisite form.
  - c. Submitting a request does not guarantee an extension will be granted.
  - d. Students must make all reasonable efforts to submit the assessment by or as soon as possible after the due date, where possible.
  - e. If a student does not submit an extension request or does not give sound reasons for a late request, a penalty fee will apply for the submission of the assessment as outlined in *MITP03 Student Fees and Payment Policy and Procedure*.
- 6.2.5 Assessment extension appeals process
- a. Students, who have submitted an extension request that was not granted, have one opportunity to request the decision to be reviewed by the Vocational Management Team, if students reasonably believe the decision process to have been flawed and unfair.
  - b. The appeal must be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in *MITP07 Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.
  - c. A decision will be reviewed only when the student requested an extension in accordance with this policy and the student requests in writing to the Chair of the Vocational Management Team within five business days of receiving the decision.
  - d. Request submitted must include reasons why a review is requested. It is not sufficient to claim that the decision was unfair without giving reasons to substantiate the claim.

## 7 Review

This policy will be subjected to a review and update at intervals of three years from the approval date. Exceptions to frequency of review can be made if necessary. Any person who wishes to enter a complaint concerning this policy may do so in accordance with the appropriate policies.

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