

Special Examination Policy

Version	1.0
Policy Code/Category	SU – 2.8.1/Assessment Methods, Standards and Moderation
Purpose	To outline SU's policy and stipulations for Special examinations
Scope	This policy is for all academic staff and students
DMS File Number	
File Location	Q-Drive
Related Documents	
Key words	Special Exam continuous assessment marks, maximum grade awarded, publication of results.
Comments	
Prepared by	QA Office
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Overview

If any student (undergraduate or postgraduate) feels that circumstances outside of his/her control have adversely affected performance, then he/she may apply to take a Special Examination.

The most common reason for a Special Examination is a medical condition that prevented the student from attending or preparing for a final examination.

Examples of circumstances that would normally justify this special consideration include:

- an acute illness rendering the student unable to carry out the assessment task as required
- a serious personal injury, such as a broken limb or one with an incapacitating effect
- being the victim of a serious crime such as robbery, burglary or a violent assault during the period immediately preceding the assessment
- a serious illness or death of a close relative: normally a partner, parent, child, sibling or grandparent
- unforeseen and unavoidable and imposed work pressures serious enough to interfere with the student's study or ability to meet an assessment deadline or sit an examination

Circumstances that would **not** normally be acceptable include:

- any claim not supported by reliable evidence
- financial problems or difficulties with housing
- difficulties with child-minders or other domestic or work arrangements
- travel arrangements such as airline bookings that conflict with assessment or examination timetables
- failure to attend an examination or failure to submit an assessment because of confusion over time, date or location
- retrospective medical certificates, i.e. dated/issued after a student has recovered from the illness claimed

Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances

- Mitigating Circumstances must be formally reported to the Course Coordinator (a special form is available from the Q Drive) by a student within one week of the affected assessment item. Documented evidence is always essential.

- Mitigating Circumstances which affect an individual item of coursework will normally be dealt with by the Course Coordinator granting an extension. In extreme circumstances, the student may be allowed to defer submission until a later date.
- Mitigating Circumstances that affect a significant portion of the course assessment or the examination will be considered by the Course Coordinator with recommendations on action to the Level and Program/Faculty Examiner's Meetings.
- Action on all Mitigating Circumstances requests will be recommended by the Course Coordinator and adjustments to this recommendation, if any, reported through Level, Program/Faculty Examiner's Meetings to the University Examination Board.
- A student whose claim for Mitigating Circumstances is approved will normally be reassessed with no academic penalty (i.e. mark not restricted to a threshold pass, as in the resit examination). If the student had taken the assessment and passed, then consideration may be given to upgrade the result.
- Special Examination can be awarded by the University Examination Board.

A Special Examination:

- is set by the University's Exam Board and falls within the normal exam period outlined on the University calendar.
- Replaces the final examination in the course assessment.
- Allows students to carry forward all continuous assessment marks for that course.
- is not available as a supplement to a student not presenting himself/herself for a Special Examination
- Can be executively awarded by the Pro Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs in special circumstances that are assessed after the meeting of the University Examination Board

Sometimes legitimate mitigating circumstances may cause a student to miss too much of a course. For example, a car accident in week 5 puts the student in the hospital for more than three or four weeks. In such a case, special consideration cannot overcome the inability of the student to fully participate in all the learning activities. When this occurs, a student must retake the course, but should be allowed to withdraw without academic or financial penalty.

Students must register for a special examination by filling in the appropriate form which is available from the faculty secretary or Registration.