



ENGLISH PROGRAMS SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

- (1) The College English Programs recognises that there may be serious misadventure, accident or extenuating circumstances (including cultural events) beyond a student's control which are of such severity or gravity that they may impact adversely on academic performance.
- (2) To pass English courses, students must demonstrate that they have achieved the course level and learning outcomes. Granting Special Consideration recognises extenuating circumstances, and provides alternative ways in which a student may be assessed, so they are not disadvantaged. Granting Special Consideration for assessment tasks (including examinations) will generally not take the form of allocating additional marks, or changing grades without undertaking an alternative assessment.
- (3) The underlying principle of this policy is that all students have the right to equity and fairness when undertaking the assessment components of their studies. The policy has been instituted to support students who would under normal circumstances reach their usual demonstrated performance level but are significantly affected by serious misadventure, accident or extenuating circumstances beyond their control.

SECTION 2 - DEFINITIONS

- (4) For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:
 - a. "Special Consideration" - refers to those situations where a student wishes to formally advise The College that they have suffered unforeseen severe and/or grave illness, misadventure, accident, or have extenuating circumstances, and, as a result, have:
 - i. been prevented from meeting an assessment deadline;
 - ii. performed below their usual standard during an assessment, including formal examinations; or
 - iii. been unable to attend a compulsory component of their unit.
 - b. "Serious Misadventure" - accident or extenuating circumstances is any unexpected event that is outside a student's capacity to prevent or overcome that demonstrably affects their capacity to complete teaching/learning and/or assessment tasks, or achieve the level of attainment typical of their previous performance in the course.

Circumstances which can be grounds for special consideration may include:

- i. medical conditions or events, including physical and psychological trauma;
- ii. financial hardship arising from substantial change to economic circumstances beyond the student's control;
- iii. substantial unanticipated change to routine accommodation and residential arrangements or status beyond the student's control; and/or
- iv. compulsory involvement in a ceremony or significant cultural activity of a unique nature.

Circumstances which would not normally be considered as grounds for special consideration may include:

- i. demands of employment;
- ii. difficulties with visa arrangements that could have been reasonably anticipated;
- iii. scheduled anticipated changes of address, moving home, house moves etc;
- iv. recreational travel (domestic or international); and/or
- v. planned events, such as vacation, ceremonies and family events.

c. "Examinations" -

- i. Mid-term and Final Examinations - formal, supervised assessment activity used to assess student English levels which normally takes place in weeks five (5) and 10 of every module.
- ii. Deferred Examination - an examination granted to a student as a concession for inability to attend the mid or final examination in a unit due to serious misadventure, accident or extenuating circumstances. Deferred examinations are held immediately after the Mid-term or Final examinations.

d. "The College" - Western Sydney University The College a division of UWS Enterprises Pty Ltd.

e. "The University" - Western Sydney University.

SECTION 3 - POLICY STATEMENT

The Policy

- (5) The policy applies to students enrolled in The College English courses. The policy refers to the full length of the current course the student is enrolled in.
- (6) The policy addresses Special Consideration requests from students who are affected by short-term illnesses or serious misadventure during the current course. Special Consideration should not be utilised repetitively in order to manage longer-term illness, disabilities or ongoing severe disruptive circumstances. In such circumstances students should refer to the University's [Disability Policy](#) and should seek advice from staff in

Counselling and Disability Services. Students with disabilities should contact the Student Advisor and the [Disability Services](#).

- (7) It is the student's responsibility to notify The College of illness, misadventure or extenuating circumstances and to obtain documentation which demonstrates the severity and/or gravity and timing of the circumstance.
- (8) On the basis of the information provided by the student, the following may be taken into account:
 - a. the severity of the event;
 - b. the student's performance on other items of assessment in the course;
 - c. history of previous applications for Special Consideration.
- (9) All staff who deal with Special Consideration applications are required to maintain confidentiality of information presented by students.

Delegations to Approve Special Consideration

- (10) Relevant Education Coordinator English: Assesses and makes judgement that "serious misadventure, accident or extenuating circumstances" has been proven and evidence provided, or has not been proven.
- (11) Head of Program, English determines and documents outcome.

SECTION 4 - PROCEDURES

Part A - Applications

- (12) Applications should be made on the form available from the relevant Education Coordinator English. Forms are to be lodged with the Education Coordinator English.
- (13) The Education Coordinator English will review the Special Consideration request and forward the judgement to the Head of Program English for approval.
- (14) Applications must be submitted on the first working day (e.g. the first working day after the expiration of the medical certificate) that the student is deemed fit to resume studies.
- (15) A request for a Deferred Examination should only be made in exceptional circumstances where the student will not be able to sit the examination and where a rescheduling of the examination is demonstrated to be the only reasonable option.
- (16) Students should note that the fact of submitting an application does not automatically mean that Special Consideration or a Deferred Examination will be granted.

Acceptable Documentation for Applications

- (17) All applications should be submitted using the application form, with any supporting documentation or request for confidentiality attached.

- (18) Documentation and certificates signed by family members will not normally be accepted. Documents must be in English, and if not, supplied with a certified translation.
- (19) If medical information is provided, it must clearly indicate:
 - a. the date on which the student first sought attention and information about further visits if appropriate;
 - b. the severity and/or gravity of the condition, degree of incapacity and its duration or probable duration in relation to the student's capacity to study, sit an examination or complete an assessment task.
- (20) For causes other than sickness, (e.g. road accident, court hearing or death of a relative) written evidence (e.g. a police report, a court summons, or a death certificate) is acceptable.
- (21) Documentation relating to serious misadventure or extenuating circumstances should provide evidence to support the claim and indicate the severity and/or gravity of the circumstances, and the extent of the impact on the student. Where the extenuating circumstances have arisen from substantial changes to financial situations the application should be supported by documentation.
- (22) Students should note that The College will not approach doctors, hospitals, police, etc, to obtain documentation on behalf of the student. The College may seek verification from these agencies that the certificate has been issued to the student.

Part B - Outcomes

Special Consideration for an Assessment Task in the current course of study

- (23) The Head of Program English will consider the application and judgement from the Education Coordinator English and determine the outcome which may be:
 - a. special consideration granted, this may include:
 - i. setting a different (but equivalent) assessment task;
 - ii. granting an extension of time to complete an assessment task;
 - iii. omitting the assessment task from the final grade calculation;
 - b. no special consideration granted.
- (24) The Head of Program English is required to document the outcome in relation to this policy.

Special Consideration for the Mid-term and/or Final Examinations in the Current Course of Study

- (25) The Head of Program English will consider the application and judgement from the Education Coordinator English and determine the outcome which may be:
 - a. special consideration granted, this may include:

- i. granting a deferred examination;
 - ii. granting an aggregate or average to achieve a percentage;
 - iii. omitting the examination from the final grade calculation;
- b. no special consideration granted.

(26) The Head of Program English is required to document the outcome in relation to this policy.

SECTION 5 - GUIDELINES

Related Legislation/Policies/Procedures

- a. The College English Assessment Review Policy
- b. Western Sydney University Disability Policy
- c. The College Student Complaint Handling and Resolution Policy English Programs

ENGLISH PROGRAMS SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

STATUS AND DETAILS

Status:	Current		
Version:	2		
Effective Date:	27 September 2016		
Review Date:	27 September 2019		
Approval Authority Policy:	UWS Enterprises Board		
Endorsed by:	English and RTO Committee		
Approval Date:	27 September 2016		
Expired Date:	N/A		
Unit Responsible:	English Language Programs		
Enquiries Contact:	Margaret Miller P: 9685 9841 E: Ma.Miller@westernsydney.edu.au		
Available On:	SharePoint	<input type="checkbox"/>	Website <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Summary of Changes from Previous Version

Section 2 (4) f. and g. - updated the definition wording of 'Western Sydney University' and 'The College'.

Section 4 (14) - wording amended to the definition of the 'first working day' that a student returns to study.

Section 5 c. - new wording added - Student Complaint Handling and Resolution Policy.