

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION OF ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Category	Academic
Guidelines Owner	Director of Academic Quality
Last review	16 January 2024
Next review	16 January 2026
Approved by	Director of Academic Quality
Effective date	16 January 2024

1. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines to enable staff and students to understand and apply the rules governing Special Consideration of Assessment (**SCA**) where a student's preparation for or performance in an assessment task has been seriously impaired.

These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the General Academic Statute (**GAS**) and General Academic Regulations (**GAR**) published in the current University Academic Calendar.

2. SCOPE

These Guidelines cover students enrolled in undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses.

Procedures for a research student seeking an extension or resubmission of their thesis or dissertation are outlined in the [Postgraduate Protocols and the University Postgraduate Handbook](#).

3. DEFINITIONS

Academic Accommodation Plan:	An individualised support plan developed by Disability Support Services with students who experience disability or impairment. Academic Accommodation Plans are shared with faculties to ensure students have the appropriate support and provision made within their programme for their needs.
Aegrotat:	An Aegrotat pass is an ungraded pass granted to a student on compassionate grounds where evidence has been accepted by the Assessment Board that the student is capable of meeting the learning outcomes of the course.
Assessment Board:	The General Academic Statute (GAS) specifies Assessment Boards as part of the formal administrative structure of the university. The Assessment Board's primary purpose is to ensure students under its jurisdiction are treated fairly and consistently in assessment and in the awarding of final grades and

qualifications. Assessment Boards make decisions on assessment relating to individual students and ensure that decisions are consistent and fair for all students.

Carer Responsibilities

Responsibilities for dependents which significantly impact a student's ability to prepare for, submit, or undertake an assessment. This may include having to a care for an unwell child or another dependent family member.

Exceptional Circumstances:

Defined as a short-term illness or injury and/or other exceptional circumstance beyond the student's control. Exceptional Circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

- Medical – injury, illness or medical issues related to a student or their dependent.
- Emotional/ mental – may include a sudden and traumatic change in circumstances to a student or their dependent, e.g., sudden illness or injury to a close relative or other significant person or being involved in or witnessing a traumatic event such as a motor vehicle or other accident, or significant injury to another person, or being exposed to a fire, earthquake, or significant natural disaster.
- Bereavement – the death of a partner, close relative, or other significant person.
- Victim of crime - crime involving violence or loss.
- Sporting, cultural or essential religious commitments – a commitment at a significant level – representing country or region, or an essential commitment related to religious or other belief.
- AUT-related issues relating to clinical placements and other AUT-related reasons.
- Other - Exceptional Circumstances not covered elsewhere.

Extension:

A Special Consideration where a change in the due date is approved for a first opportunity for an essay or report other type of assignment that a student works on in their own time. Students must apply for extensions. There are two categories of extension: a) short extension of three calendar days (no evidence required); b) extension of longer than three calendar days (evidence of exceptional circumstances is required).

Interim Grades:

Interim grades are applied in cases where either a student or a marker has not yet completed all assessments for the course. Interim Grades include: Still to Complete (STC) and Under Examination (UX).

Learning Outcomes:

Learning outcomes are statements of what a successful student will be able to demonstrate upon completion of a course.

SCA System:

The AUT online system where SCA applications are lodged and managed. Also known as the [Special Consideration Application tool](#).

Special Consideration:

The process for students to apply for consideration when short-term Exceptional Circumstances beyond their control seriously impair their ability

to prepare for, complete, or prevent them from completing, an assessment they are due to sit, submit or have already submitted.

Student Impairment Report: An AUT templated report signed by a Suitably Qualified Person attesting to exceptional medical circumstances such as illness or injury, or to emotional wellbeing or mental illness circumstances.

Suitably Qualified Persons: Registered medical practitioners, registered dental surgeons, registered midwives, registered counsellors, registered chiropractors, registered psychologists, registered psychiatrists, registered psychotherapist, AUT Student Medical Centre registered nurses or suitably qualified members of the Student Hub, subject to referral where required.

4. GUIDELINES

Special Consideration is designed to support the individual student in progressing through and completing their qualification while maintaining fairness to all students.

All aspects of the Special Consideration will be transparent and consistent with GAR and these Guidelines, regardless of faculty or programme.

Special Consideration processes will demonstrate the University's values of tika, pono and aroha and align with the four strategic goals of Te Aronui, particularly: whakamana (equitable outcomes for all); manaakitanga (care and respect in mana-enhancing ways) and whakanui (eliminating racism and discrimination).

4.2 Information for staff and students

Students can access the SCA tool and a [user guide](#) on the AUT website, or through Canvas (AUT's Learning Management System).

A [Staff User Guide](#) is available on TUIA.

4.3 Decision making

Decisions on Special Consideration will be consistent and transparent and made at the appropriate level by staff with delegated authority. Course Leaders have delegated authority from the relevant Assessment Board to approve in-course SCA applications. In some faculties this delegated authority is exercised by a central faculty administration team.

Decisions on SCA applications will be made with sensitivity to the circumstances of individual students and to the diversity of the student body. This includes recognition of Carer Responsibilities – where a student's ability to complete an assessment is impaired by Exceptional Circumstances affecting a dependant. Carer responsibilities can vary significantly based on the individual's needs and the specific context. Each carer's role is unique and requires flexibility and compassion in determining an SCA outcome, including the provision of appropriate supporting evidence.

4.4 Types of Special Consideration

See [Table 1](#) below for a description of the different types of Special Consideration of Assessment (SCA).

4.5 Eligibility for Special Consideration

A student may apply for an SCA (including for an examination) where short-term, medical or other Exceptional Circumstances have:

- prevented them from completing work for assessment in a course; or
- impaired their performance (at the time of, or prior to the assessment).

There are [dedicated AUT processes](#) to support students with long-term health conditions and/or disabilities. Where student preparation or performance is impaired by recurrence or exacerbation of a long-term health condition the appropriate course of action is to apply for an SCA, with supporting evidence.

Note: Because they are developed and used for a different purpose, Academic Accommodation Plans should not be used as the only supporting evidence in these cases. Students should seek advice from Student Hub.

Special Consideration is not available for circumstances reasonably within a student's control, including but not limited to:

- having several examinations or assessments due at the same time;
- mistaking the due date, or the time of an examination or test;
- failing to turn up to an examination or test for reasons within a student's control, e.g. sleeping in, not setting an alarm.

4.6 Applications for Special Consideration

All applications for and SCA, including requests for extensions, must be made using the [AUT online SCA system](#).

Applications for SCAs, other than for extensions, must be submitted within five days of the original due date of the coursework assessment, test, or examination. Late requests may be accepted if the Course Leader determines there is a compelling reason to do so. Requests for extensions must be submitted before the original due date of the assessment.

If a student cannot submit an application because of illness or injury a staff member may submit the application.

Applications for extensions or rescheduled assessment events (including final examinations) because of known sporting, cultural, essential religious commitments must be made as soon as the clash between the commitment and the assessment event is known, and no later than two weeks before the affected assessment event is due.

4.7 Evidence

For extensions longer than three days and other SCA applications, students must provide evidence to prove that they were, or are, seriously impaired in their ability to sit to complete the assessment task.

Evidence must be relevant to the circumstances and might include for example: a statement from a counsellor, a death notice from a newspaper, a funeral order of service including the student's name, a police incident report, an official letter from a relevant sporting institute or coach, cultural or religious leader, or other evidence depending on the nature of the circumstances. An affidavit should be provided if no other means of proof are available.

For serious impairment because of medical or emotional or mental circumstances a Student Impairment Report must be completed by a Suitably Qualified Person. The Suitably Qualified Person must not have a close relationship with the student that would give rise to a potential conflict of interest (e.g., immediate family, de-facto, or financial relationships).

4.8 Special consideration of assessment outcomes

Where Exceptional Circumstances are verified, the relevant decision maker will determine the most appropriate SCA outcome in terms of the student's timely progression through the course and the requirement for the student to demonstrate they have met the course learning outcomes.

Table 1: SCAs and academic outcomes

Assessment timing	SCA type	For...	Notes
End of course	Aegrotat pass	Examinations or final assessments	See further details below in Section 4.8.3.
In-course	Alternative and equivalent task	All assessment except examinations	The alternative task must test the same learning outcomes.
In-course	Short extension (three calendar days)	Essays, reports, assignments etc Where a student requires a short extension to complete an assignment.	Must be applied for before the original due date. No evidence is required. Available once per student, per course.
In-course	Extension (more than three days)	Essays, reports, assignments etc Where a student requires an extension longer than three days, or an extension subsequent to a short extension.	Evidence of Exceptional Circumstances is required.
In-course or end of course	Rescheduled assessment event	Tests, presentations, exhibitions, etc, or examinations.	Where Exceptional Circumstances mean a student is unable to attempt the assessment event. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Some faculties have specified periods for rescheduled assessment events.A rescheduled assessment event may require a 'Still to complete' Interim Grade.
In-course	Resit	Tests, presentations, exhibitions.	Where Exceptional Circumstances impaired performance.
In-course	Resubmission	Essays, reports, assignments etc	Where Exceptional Circumstances impaired performance.

4.8.1 Extensions

Applications for extensions must be submitted in the online SCA System before the original due date.

Short extensions of three calendar days do not require evidence. Applications for extensions of longer than three days or subsequent to a three-day extension must be accompanied by evidence.

Extensions will not be granted past the date of hand back.

Second or subsequent extensions for the same assessment are not automatic and must be considered carefully in terms of the ability of the student to manage deferred deadlines (possibly in multiple courses) and because the ability of the teacher to provide feedback on the student's work may be affected.

4.8.2 Rescheduled assessment event

Missed tests, exhibitions, laboratory tests, or presentations may be rescheduled where this is practicable. In some cases, such as exhibitions or performances of a student's work at mini-conferences or seminars, the exact conditions cannot be replicated so a similar format may be used. Seminars or oral presentations can still be given in class if time permits.

Rescheduled assessment events must be within the current academic term and before Assessment Board meets.

Examinations will be rescheduled *only* where an aegrotat grade cannot be safely awarded or where the student has applied in advance for an SCA for sporting, cultural or essential religious commitments. Students sitting rescheduled examinations must complete an alternative examination paper.

4.8.3 Aegrotat pass

A student may be considered for an aegrotat pass when, because of Exceptional Circumstances beyond the student's control, the student:

- is unable to present work for a final assessment; or
- is unable to attend an examination; or
- is seriously impaired in his/her performance final examination or assessment; and
- has failed to achieve a pass in the course as a result.

An Assessment Board may grant an aegrotat pass if it is satisfied on the basis of the student's prior performance in assessment(s) that the student would have passed the course. This level of achievement required is normally at least a B-.

In most cases, if the student has met the following criteria, they would normally be considered to be eligible for an aegrotat pass:

- completed approximately 60% of the coursework for the course
- reached a level of achievement of normally at least B- (merit) or above
- presented individual work for assessment.
- Students who achieve a passing grade despite missing an assessment or their performance being impaired are not eligible for an aegrotat pass.
- No more than one third of the total points required for a qualification can be granted by aegrotat pass.

An aegrotat grade may not be granted in a clinical course.

4.8.4 Still to complete

Where a student's study has been affected by Exceptional Circumstances beyond their control, and where it is inappropriate for the student to re-enrol and repeat the whole course, an interim Still to Complete (STC) grade is granted by an assessment board. The STC grade allows students to complete specified sections of assessment to meet the requirements for passing the course.

An STC must be completed within a specified timeframe, normally within six months. A student must meet the assessment requirements related to an initial STC within the timeframe. Extensions may be granted but should be used sparingly. A subsequent STC will not normally be granted.

Note: where new Exceptional Circumstances occur while a student has an STC this must be raised with the relevant assessment board.

Students must be advised that in cases where the STC extends beyond their official period of enrolment there are likely to be implications to Studylink and other Government income supports. Students may seek advice from Student Hub on alternative options for financial support.

Assessment Boards must carefully consider the impact on the student if considering the approval of more than one STC at the same time.

Where the requirements and stated conditions are met the STC will be converted to a pass grade. If they are not met the STC will be converted to a fail grade.

4.9 Student learning progress and wellbeing

A pattern of repeated SCA applications, ongoing mental or physical health concerns, or particularly challenging circumstances shared by the student as part of the process may require referral to support services.

Course Leaders or faculty staff will refer these cases to Programme Leaders. Where necessary, Programme Leaders will follow the procedures set out in the Support to Study Code.

Staff must be aware to any cultural needs or sensitivities in making a decision on an SCA – in some cases a student's Exceptional Circumstances may be difficult to evidence or outside of the decision-maker's experience and this must not disadvantage a student.

4.10 Privacy and information for students

Access to SCA information about a student will be limited, and available to those staff members who require access to the Special Consideration process or to perform the duties of their role. The management of private information and reporting is in line with the University's [Privacy Policy](#) and the Privacy Act 2020.

Students will be notified about the use of their information and the University's policies with respect to privacy when they submit information through the SCA online system.

4.11 Appeals

Students have the right to [appeal against the final result](#) determined by the assessment board under certain conditions listed in Part 6 of the General Academic Regulations.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Academic Quality Office is responsible for:

- Updating and promulgating the Special Consideration Procedures, managing the SCA system, and for University-level reporting on SCA applications and outcomes.

Assessment Boards are responsible for:

- Approving the outcomes of student applications for Special Consideration. Assessment Boards may delegate this responsibility.

Programme leaders are responsible for:

- Managing referrals from Course Leaders where students have repeated SCA applications or potentially ongoing and serious impairment.

Course leaders or faculty staff ('decision makers') are responsible for:

- Managing and approving, under delegated authority from the Assessment Board, SCA applications for most in-course assessments and tests.

6. POLICY BASE

General Academic Regulations, Part 5 - Assessment and Granting of Credit.

7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Assessment Procedures](#)
- [Assessment Board Guidelines](#)
- [SCA Staff User Guide](#)
- [SCA Student User Guide](#)
- [Student Impairment Report template.](#)

Policies and Procedures can be found on [TUIA](#).

8. FORMS AND RECORD-KEEPING

Documents or other artifacts submitted as evidence with an SCA application will be retained for a period of six months after an SCA application is completed, then deleted.

SCA application records will be anonymised after seven years. All personally identifying information will be removed.

9. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

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