

Special consideration on the grounds of illness and misadventure
Units of study taught by the School of Electrical and Information Engineering

The Faculty of Engineering has resolved that a student, who has been prevented by duly certified illness or misadventure from completing all or part of the assessment for a unit of study, may be tested at such times and in such a way as the head of the relevant engineering department shall determine.

The School of Electrical and Information Engineering (EIE) will take serious illness or misadventure into account when considering a student's performance in a unit of study taught by the School, for students proceeding towards the BE or any other course. The form of the special consideration will depend on when the illness/misadventure was experienced and its severity.

An application for special consideration based on **serious ill-health** must be supported by a medical certificate where the medical practitioner has specified: the date of the consultation(s); the severity and duration of the illness; and its affect on the student's ability to study, complete assessment and/or prepare for/undergo examinations, as appropriate.

Any student with a serious, on-going illness or disability should also seek support from the appropriate University body such as the University Health Service, the Counselling Service and/or the Disability Services.

It is not possible to define all instances of **misadventure**; generally it means circumstances beyond the reasonable control of a student (such as involvement in an accident or natural disaster or the serious illness or death of a close family member). Misadventure does not include demands of employers, pressure of employment or time devoted to non-University activities (unless these are relevant to serious ill health or misadventure); nor does it include misreading deadlines or examination time-tables.

Illness or misadventure affecting during-semester attendance and/or assessment

Short absences

1. While attendance at classes is compulsory, it is recognised that students may miss classes for short periods because of relatively minor illness or misadventure.
2. As short absences would not normally be regarded as the reason for overall poor performance, students are discouraged from submitting applications for special consideration for absences totalling less than a week, **unless** the absence has affected specific attendance requirements, sitting for a quiz, submitting graded work, and the like.
3. If the illness/misadventure has affected the student's assessment, the student should follow the procedures that have been advised by the unit co-ordinator (which may vary from unit to unit and may, for example, require the submission of documentation to the unit co-ordinator or the formal submission of a Special Consideration form).
4. It is the responsibility of the student to ascertain what is required to make up any work missed during a period of absence. In the case of illness of more than a few days, a student should obtain a medical certificate at the time of the first visit to the doctor; there is no need to submit it unless the illness becomes prolonged, further frequent absences are required or it is required as set out in (3) above.

Recurrent absences and absences longer than a week

1. Students should document **recurrent** short absences.
2. Any student who misses more than a week of classes in any semester **MUST** notify the School by lodging an Application for Special Consideration form, together with supporting documentation. (In accordance with the Resolutions of the Faculty of Engineering a student who, without good reason, misses more than a fortnight of classes in a unit of study may be failed in that unit.)
3. A students who, because of serious illness or misadventure, is prevented from attending classes for prolonged periods, should also seek an interview with the Year Advisor/Director of Undergraduate Studies. In some cases, the student might be advised to consider whether his/her best academic interests are served by discontinuing with permission from the course until able to resume studies effectively. (International students may also need to seek advice from the International Office in respect of visa implications.)

How the School takes account of applications for special consideration during semester

The form of special consideration given will vary from unit to unit and will depend on the nature of the studies affected. Some possible forms of special consideration are as follows:

- a student may be given an extension of time to complete laboratory work and/or hand in an assignment;
- a student may be given the opportunity to sit a quiz or the like at another time;
- a student's marks may be aggregated and averaged in respect of the piece of assessment missed.

Any special consideration given must, however, be equitable to other students.

Students with serious disabilities

A student with a serious disability that is likely to affect a high proportion of the assessment for a unit of study is advised to discuss the situation with his/her Year Adviser. In this case, further assessment is unlikely to provide a solution.

Illness or misadventure affecting end-of-semester examinations

A student who becomes seriously ill or experiences misadventure during the examination period and/or on the day of the examination should:

1. lodge an application for special consideration; and
2. decide whether the severity of the illness/misadventure warrants missing the examination(s), in the light of the following.

A student who sits for an end-of-semester examination

If a student sits for an end-of-semester examination and applies for special consideration:

1. the student is unlikely to be offered further assessment; but
2. the unit co-ordinator is usually asked instead to take the application for special consideration into account, with the possibility of making an adjustment to the student's final result.

Further assessment should in no way be regarded as a second attempt at passing an exam. In the rare case of further assessment being offered to a student who attempted the original end-of-semester exam, the original exam paper would immediately be discarded without being marked.

A student who misses an end-of-semester examination

1. Non-attendance at an examination, with the submission of an application for special consideration, does **not** guarantee that further assessment will be offered.
2. If a student misses an examination and is offered further assessment, this normally takes the form of a written or oral examination.

Time-table of further assessment examinations

1. Further assessment examinations are normally scheduled to commence immediately after the end-of-semester examinations.
2. If a student is granted permission to sit for a further assessment examination, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that he/she has obtained the schedule of further assessment dates/times/locations from the EIE Academic Support Office.
3. If a student is granted permission to sit for a further assessment examination and the student then fails to attend that examination, no further opportunity of further assessment will normally be granted.

Lodging an application for special consideration form

1. Where to obtain and lodge the form

- (1) Application forms are available from the Engineering Faculty Office or the Student Centre or may be down-loaded from: http://www.usyd.edu.au/current_students/documents/student_administration/forms/special_con.pdf
- (2) Application forms **MUST** be lodged at the Engineering Faculty Office.
- (3) A copy of any application for special consideration in an ELEC.... unit **MUST** be lodged at the EIE Academic Support Office on Level 4 of the Engineering Link Building.

2. When you must lodge the application

Applications **MUST** be lodged within seven days of the event for which special consideration is requested (eg, within seven days of the due date for an assignment, within seven days of the date of an exam that has been missed). The copy of the application to be lodged in the EIE Academic Support Office must be lodged in the Office within one day of the submission of the application in the Faculty Office.

3. Documentation to be submitted

- (1) A **Professional Practitioner Certificate** is supplied with the special consideration form and should be completed by a registered medical practitioner, or counsellor, for a student whose work during a teaching period or whose performance in an assessment task, including examinations, has been affected by illness or misadventure. Certificates signed by family members are not acceptable.

The Professional Practitioner Certificate includes:

- (a) dates of consultation;
 - (b) an evaluation by the practitioner, psychologist etc. as to the severity, duration and effect on the student's ability to attend classes, learn or complete assessment requirements;
 - (c) a description of the nature and seriousness of the student's problems, within the limits of confidentiality, so that an academic assessment can be made of the possible effects of the illness or accident on the student's performance;
 - (d) any other relevant information relating to the student's illness, trauma etc.;
 - (e) any other documentation that may be relevant; and
 - (f) the practitioner authorises the University to contact them to confirm the authenticity of the certificate.
- (2) **Other documentation** will depend on the nature of the misadventure, but it should be provided to support the student's account of the circumstances and indicate the likely duration and the effect of the problem on the student's performance. (The documentation may take the form of a statement from the Counselling Service or a police report.)

Late Applications for Special Consideration

Each year, the School receives a number of late applications, the majority of which are unsuccessful. With the scheme outlined above, there is little, if any, opportunity for a student making late application to attend time-tabled further assessment examinations. A late application will be accepted, however, when it is accompanied by documentation in which the student details the reasons for failure to submit within the correct, seven-day period. In the rare case that the late application is successful, it is possible that a special oral examination may be held for the student concerned.

Notification of result of application for special consideration

1. The School will normally notify each student of the result of his/her application within fourteen days of the date of submission of the application. This notification will be by e-mail to the student's University e-mail addresses.
2. If the application results in a student being granted permission to sit for a further assessment examination, the School will normally include in the e-mail information about the examination date/time/location. It is the student's responsibility, however, to ensure that he/she has received the further assessment examination schedule and has been able to ascertain from it the exam arrangements.
3. If a student has not received advice about the outcome of his/her application within ten days of the date of submission of the application to the EIE Academic Support Office, he/she should contact the Office on 9351 3229 or e-mail rita@ee.usyd.edu.au, setting out clearly the student's name, SID, date the application was submitted to the ASO and for which unit(s) of study.

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