

Special Consideration Policy

Document

Document Name	Special Consideration Policy
Brief Description	This policy outlines the circumstances and the process for students applying for special consideration at Sydney Institute of Business and Technology (SIBT).
Responsibility	Senior Management Team
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Version Control

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
13/05/2010	1	Updated footer and reference table to reflect details of new template.	Senior Management Team
06/10/2011	2	Reformatted in line with UPD. Removed reference to AQTF.	Senior Management Team
19/06/2012	3	Added statement - <i>SIBT may commence applicable disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this policy applies breaches this policy (or any of its related procedures).</i>	Senior Management Team
25/06/2012	4	Clarified attendance and progress will be consideration when an application is received for special consideration	Senior Management Team
15/07/2013	5	Amended differences in table in costs for application and approval, for local and international students	Senior Management Team
03/07/2014	6	Complete review of policy. Updated the policy to include the new online application process	Senior Management Team
19/06/2015	7	Update and Review	Senior Management Team
10/03/2016	8	Updated, endorsed and approved by SMT	Senior Management Team
10/8/2023	9	Provision of rejecting late SC applications was amended – added: <i>if the impact of the circumstances prevented them from lodging the application on time.</i> Removed provision that SC applications will be considered if student had good academic progress and attendance rate.	Senior Management Team

Date/Approval	Version No.	Summary of Changes	Reviewer Name and Department/Office
		Definitions added and strengthened. Purpose strengthened. Appendices A and B added. Reasonable assessment adjustments examples added. Removed provision for the Professional Authority Form. More details added to the section 8.	

Related Documents

Name	Location
Student Complaints and Appeals Policy	SIBT Website
Assessment Policy	SIBT Website
Program Progress Policy	SIBT Website
Attendance Policy	SIBT Website
Refund Policy	SIBT Website
Special Consideration Application Form	SIBT Website
Higher Education Support Act 2003	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000	https://www.legislation.gov.au/
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018	https://www.legislation.gov.au/



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1. Purpose

- a) The Special Consideration Policy sets out:
- i. Extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances which may affect/have affected student's academic performance;
 - ii. Process for assessing these circumstances; and
 - iii. Support avenues available to students.

2. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Certified Translation	A translation of documents conducted by a translator who has received accreditation from a professional association such as National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI) or American Translators Association (ATA) or other.
Assessment Task	An activity students undertake to demonstrate (or display) the nature and depth of their learning and to confirm whether or not they have achieved the learning outcomes as set out in the Unit Guide. Assessment tasks include but are not limited to essay, report, journal, problem scenario, group work, demonstration, video, presentation, written / oral examination, test, quiz, discussion posts, peer feedback, online polls.
Assessment	The process of collecting evidence and making judgments on whether learning outcomes have been achieved.
Examination	A time-limited assessment task conducted under invigilation e.g., tests, practical assessments, quizzes, and final examinations.
Supplementary Assessment	Another opportunity for a student to complete the assessment task for a unit. Students may be eligible to attempt a supplementary assessment where certain conditions have been met.
Deferred Assessment Task	A concession allowing students who are unable to complete an assessment task at the scheduled time to take the assessment task at a later date.
Close Family Member	A close family member includes a spouse, de facto spouse, parent, grandparent, parent-in-law, sibling, and a child.
Reasonable Adjustment	The modification of an assessment procedure or resources to ensure that the needs of students with specific requirements or disabilities are met.
Financial Census Date	Last day (Friday) of week four (4) in any given study period.
Academic Census Date	Last day (Friday) of week eight (8) in any given study period. Withdrawal/Cancellation of enrolment occurring after this date will result in academic penalties.

3. Application

The Special Consideration Policy applies to all students enrolled at SIBT and staff involved in teaching and assessing applications for special consideration.

4. Policy Statement

- a) SIBT is firmly committed to treating all students equitably and fairly in all aspects of its learning and teaching.
- b) SIBT recognises that a student's academic performance, when completing assessment tasks, may be affected by extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances, and as such, student do not reach their usual performance level.
- c) Special Consideration Policy allows for reasonable adjustment to the standard assessment requirements and ensures staff and students can act consistently, impartially, and transparently.

5. Special Consideration Application

- a) The Special Consideration Application Form, including all supporting documents, must be lodged before, or no later than two (2) working days after the due date of the assessment task/the date of the final examination.
 - i. Students applying for special consideration for an assessment task/final examination must complete the Special Consideration Application form located SIBT Student Lounge or on the SIBT website.
 - ii. Students may apply for special consideration based on by extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances as set out in the Appendix A
 - iii. All Special Consideration Applications must be accompanied by a relevant supporting documentation. Refer to the Appendix B.
 - iv. Documents written in a language other than English must be accompanied by a certified English translation prepared by an accredited translator.
- b) Special Consideration applications are considered by the Program Convenor normally within five (5) working days. Program Convenor might seek Academic Director's advice when required.
- c) Students may apply for special consideration after the prescribed timeframe if the impact of the circumstances prevented them from lodging the application on time.
- d) Students who are unable to meet extended deadline for the assessment task, attend the deferred or supplementary examination, re-sit the examination, may further apply to the Program Convenor in writing, with sufficient documentary evidence of extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances to support their application, for permission to have an alternate date allocated for the assessment task. Such circumstances must be different to the circumstances previously used or clearly demonstrate that the student's situation has worsen since the last application.
- e) All cases of unsuccessful assessment tasks will be reassessed if the Special Consideration Applications were submitted late, and extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances have been accepted by SIBT.

6. Grounds for Special Consideration

- a) Students can apply for Special Consideration when:
 - i. A student's performance at any time during the study period was affected by extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances which prevented the student from preparing for all, or part of, an assessment task/final examination; or

- ii. During the performance of an assessment task or final examination, a student was affected by extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances.
- b) The following factors would not normally be considered as reasonable grounds for extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances:
 - i. Non serious medical condition (for example short-term illness, which can easily be treated);
 - ii. Transport delays;
 - iii. Routine demands of employment;
 - iv. Difficulties in adjusting to college life, to the self-discipline needed to study effectively, and to the demands of academic work;
 - v. Routine financial support needs;
 - vi. Lack of knowledge of requirements of academic work;
 - vii. Misreading the final examination timetable;
 - viii. Recreational travel (domestic or international) that was planned in advance.

For a complete definition and examples of extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances, refer to the Appendix A.

- c) SIBT will use its professional judgment to assess each case on its individual merits.
- d) When determining whether extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances are valid and accepted, SIBT will consider documentary evidence provided to support the claim.
- e) Students who experience technical difficulties (such as internet connectivity or browser issues) when submitting online activities and assessments should contact their Unit Coordinator directly rather than submitting an application for Special Consideration.

7. Possible Outcomes of the Application

- a) The Application may be rejected where there is a reason to believe that a student is seeking to achieve an unfair advantage, having regard to the particular circumstances of the student's application, the student's history of applications (and the reasons for such applications), and any other relevant circumstances:
 - i. On the grounds of inadequate documentation provided;
 - ii. When the circumstances are not significant enough to warrant special consideration;
 - iii. Due to the confirmed academic misconduct for the assessment task;
 - iv. Application was submitted outside of the prescribed timeframe and there were no circumstances that prevented a student from lodging the application on time.
- b) The Application may be considered, and no additional assessable work required.
- c) The Application may be approved, and reasonable assessment adjustment implemented as deemed appropriate including but not limited to:
 - i. A longer extension (more than 7 calendar days) for assessment submission or examination. The period of extension will start from the date of notification sent to the student;
 - ii. Provision of an alternative assessment task that will resemble as closely as possible the original assessment item and carry the same percentage of total weighting for the unit;
 - iii. Resubmission of the assessment task or re-sit of the examination;

- iv. Supplementary assessment;
- v. Adjustment of marks for an assessment task or recommend the change of grade for a unit;
- vi. Reasonable adjustment to the attendance requirement;
- vii. Application to withdraw from the unit with no financial or academic penalties to be submitted for consideration.

8. Notification to Students

- a) Students will receive a reply advising them of the receipt of their application.
- b) SIBT Student Admin Team will:
 - i. Verify all submitted documents and advise the student that:
 - In case where the documents are found fraudulent, the case of alleged misconduct will be forwarded to the appropriate committee for their consideration and outcome; or
 - In case where the documents are found authentic, the application will be submitted to the Program Convenor for their consideration.
 - ii. Inform the applicant of the outcome of the application within five (5) working days and provide any additional arrangements for the student, depending on the outcome.
 - iii. Notify the respective Academic Unit Coordinators, Teachers, and of special consideration decisions and arrangements via email, when required.

9. Appeal

- a) Students who apply for special consideration and are dissatisfied with the outcome of their application may appeal any decision made under this policy within 20 working days from the receipt of the notification in accordance with the Student Complaints and Appeals Policy.

Appendix A: Extenuating (Compassionate and Compelling) Circumstances

- a) Extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances are unusual or abnormal events or situations that:
 - i. Are beyond a student's control and could not reasonably have been foreseen or prevented; and
 - ii. Have been severe enough to prevent them from successfully completing their unit of study.
- b) Extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Serious illness or injury, including deterioration of a pre-existing health condition;
 - ii. Family or personal circumstances which have severely impacted the student's ability to continue with study;
 - iii. Bereavement of close family members such as parents or grandparents;
 - iv. Major political upheaval or natural disaster, in the case of international students this may include such situations occurring in their home country requiring emergency travel where this has impacted on the international student's studies;
 - v. A traumatic experience, which could include:
 - Involvement in, or witnessing of a serious accident; or
 - Witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, and this has impacted on the student (these cases should be supported by police or psychologists' reports);
 - vi. Where SIBT was unable to offer a pre-requisite unit, or the international student has failed a pre-requisite unit and therefore faces a shortage of relevant units for which they are eligible to enrol.
- c) Students whose circumstances are outside the ones listed above should seek assistance from a SIBT Student Learning Advisor or other professional services and attach supporting documentation obtained from them. 'Other' circumstances may include but are not limited to:
 - i. Severe disruption to domestic arrangements;
 - ii. Relationship breakdown;
 - iii. Religious observance or obligations;
 - iv. Formal legal commitments;
 - v. Jury duty;
 - vi. Military or/and emergency service;
 - vii. Service with a recognised emergency management service;
 - viii. Participation in significant national or international events.
- d) Students will need to be able to prove their claim for extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances by providing appropriate supporting documentation (see Appendix B).

Appendix B: Acceptable Supporting Documentation

Circumstances	Documents
Visa Delay/Refusal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter advising that the applicant has not been able to obtain a visa yet issued by Department of Home Affairs (DHA); Visa refusal letter issued by Department of Home Affairs (DHA).
Failure to meet academic and/or English entry requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IELTS (or similar) test results; or High school results (or similar)
Medical and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An original certificate/letter/report from a doctor or registered treating health professional on a letterhead, including signature or providers stamp, provider's number, and a statement that student was unable to attend classes; A medical certificate stating just "illness" or "medical condition" or "medical reason" may not be sufficient.
Personal and Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A statement from a doctor, counsellor, social worker, or independent member of the community (e.g., A Justice of the Peace or a Minister of Religion); A certificate from a funeral director; A death certificate; A certified call to Australian Defence Forces; A letter/report describing the nature of emergency attended by the State Emergency Service or Country/Rural Fire Service; A copy of an accident report; A court summons or similar.
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of any academic advice received from their program convenor or a student learning advisor.

- a) Supporting documentation for extenuating (compassionate or compelling) circumstances must be from an independent source or authority, and clearly indicate:
 - i. What the special circumstances were;
 - ii. When they occurred;
 - iii. How long they lasted;
 - iv. The level of impact of the special circumstances.
- b) A personal statement from a student, their friend or family member, outlining their circumstances is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate extenuating (compassionate and compelling) circumstances.
- c) For international students a lack of funds is not accepted by the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) as an extenuation (compassionate and compelling) reason to defer or take leave. It is a condition of a student visa that students have access to funds to cover their tuition fees and cost of living for their first year of study in Australia. International students should not rely on income from paid employment while in Australia to cover their fees and living expenses during this period. Students experiencing an unexpected and unforeseeable change in circumstances should meet with student support to discuss their situation.
- d) Supporting documentation must be in English (or accompanied by certified translation), on official letterhead (if relevant), signed, and dated.