

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure

Purpose

This policy and procedure establishes the principles and processes that support students seeking to notify Whitecliffe Institute of Creative Arts and Technology ("Whitecliffe") when they have been impacted by short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, which may affect their performance.

Scope

This Policy and procedure applies to short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable, and significantly disruptive, which may affect a student's performance.

This Policy and procedure applies to:

- all students;
- all types of assessment;
- staff involved in the administration, teaching, assessing, or managing units of study at Whitecliffe; and
- student wellbeing staff.

This policy and procedure does not address grievances related to academic matters such as academic progression, grading matters or academic misconduct, or non-academic matters (*refer to the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*).

Related Policies and Documents

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Access and Equity Policy
- Application for Special Consideration
- Application to Suspend Enrolment for a Leave of Absence
- Assessment Policy
- Attendance and Participation Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Deferral, Suspension and Cancellation of Enrolment Policy
- Misconduct Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progression Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedure
- Request for Extension
- Support for Students Policy and Procedure

All documents referenced herein can be accessed via the [Forms & Policies](#) section at the bottom of the homepage of the Whitecliffe website.

Definition of Key Terms

Special consideration refers to those situations where a student wishes to formally advise Whitecliffe that they have suffered severe and/or grave illness, misadventure, accident, or have extenuating circumstances, and, as a result, have:

- a. been prevented from meeting an assessment deadline;
- b. performed below their usual standard during an assessment,

Evidence means documentation as outlined in Appendix A: Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule of this policy and procedure document.

Policy

General Principles

Whitecliffe is committed to equity and fairness in all aspects of its learning and teaching. It recognises that students may experience events beyond their control that adversely affect their academic performance in assessment activities.

1. To support students who have experienced short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive and that affect their capacity to undertake or perform in an assessment, Whitecliffe will attempt to provide affected students with an opportunity to undertake the affected assessment or an alternative assessment in order to demonstrate that they have met the relevant learning outcome(s) of a unit or units. The opportunity provided under such circumstances is referred to as Special Consideration and may be granted after careful evaluation of an application.
2. Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive are those that:
 - a. could not have reasonably been avoided or guarded against by the student;
 - b. were beyond the student's control;
 - c. caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for undertaking assessment for the unit(s);
 - d. prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date (e.g. final assessment, in class test/quiz, in class presentation).
3. Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive may be unexpected in nature, including:
 - serious medical condition or injury
 - bereavement of a close family member
 - major political unrest or natural disaster
 - a traumatic experience such as an accident, crime or being a witness to these experiences
 - military service or jury service

- severe disruption to domestic arrangements
 - imprisonment
4. Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive may be unexpected in nature, do not include:
 - Minor illness or ailments: regular colds, headaches, minor injuries, or other minor health issues that are easily treatable and do not significantly impair a student's ability to study.
 - Personal events or issues: birthdays, weddings, or relationship issues.
 - Travel: general travel, holidays, or visits from family/friends.
 - Internet outage or computer failure
 - Work commitments.
 - Heavy academic workload
 - Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of course requirements or deadlines.
 5. Students may apply for:
 - An assessment extension exceeding five (5) days,
 - Assessment resubmission,
 - Aegrotat assessment,
 - Consideration in grading,
 - Groupwork assessments, and/or
 - Late withdrawal from unit without academic penalty.
 6. All applications for Special Consideration must be supported by documentation as described in Appendix A: Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule and be submitted by the deadline prescribed in this Policy and Procedure document.
 7. Students with a pre-existing disability/health condition or prolonged adverse circumstances are advised to seek support from the Student Support Advisor and should also refer to the *Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Procedure*.
 8. Students are expected to manage their time so that they can meet assessment deadlines at the same time as other obligations which they may have, both inside and outside Whitecliffe.
 9. Special Consideration is not a mechanism to appeal against an assessment outcome.
 10. Special Consideration applications will be determined by the responsible Course Coordinator in consultation with the lecturer who will approve or reject an application typically within three (3) to four (4) business days from the application submission date.
 11. Students may appeal an adverse outcome of a Special Consideration application in accordance with the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

Procedure

1. Students apply for special consideration by completing a '*Application for Special Consideration Form*' online through [Forms and Policies](#).
2. All applications for Special Consideration must be supported by evidence as described in Appendix A: Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule.
3. Where it is not possible to provide evidence, and at the discretion of Whitecliffe, the student may be required to make a statutory declaration.
4. Whitecliffe will not accept supporting evidence from a relative or a student's friend or student's family's friend.
5. Applications for Special Consideration for assessment extensions must be submitted as close to the date of original impairment as possible and no later than 10 business days from the original assessment submission due date.
6. Less than three (3) business days before the assessment due date, a student can apply for the extension only on Application for Special Consideration basis.
7. In the case when an Application for Special Consideration is not received within prescribed time frames the assessment task will be deemed unsuccessful and marked 0% – Fail.
8. When it is not possible for a student to apply for special consideration within prescribed time frames due to the impact of the circumstances, and an application is received after this time, the student's case will be reassessed.
9. The Registrar will review the application for completeness:
 - 9.1. If the application is incomplete, the registrar will notify the student
 - 9.2. If the application is complete, the registrar will notify the Course Coordinator.
10. The Course Coordinator will:
 - 10.1. assess the application in consultation with the relevant lecturer,
 - 10.2. approve or decline the Application for Special Consideration,
 - 10.3. notify the Registrar of outcome from the assessment of the Application for Special Consideration.
11. Where a significant impairment has been established, the Application for Special Consideration may be approved and one or more of the following outcomes may be determined:
 - 11.1. A maximum of 10 days extension for assessment submission.
 - The period of extension will commence immediately from the formal notification sent to the student by Whitecliffe.

- Previous extension (not based on the Application for Special Consideration), if in place, will not affect the duration of extension based on the Application for Special Consideration.
- 11.2. A longer, non-standard period of extension may be recommended to the Chief Academic Officer for approval,
 - 11.3. For late submissions, normal penalty rates apply as set out in the *Assessment Policy*,
 - 11.4. Withdrawal/deferral of the unit of study with no academic penalties may be recommended to the student,
 - 11.5. An alternative assessment task that will:
 - Provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate competency like those related to the original assessment task; for example, an oral examination may take the place of a written examination,
 - Resemble the original assessment item as closely as possible and will have been appropriately validated prior to use.
 - 11.6. An aegrotat assessment against any or all uncompleted units of study within the current study period, where the student is unable to complete the necessary work to fulfil requirement of the unit may be recommended to Academic Board for approval,
 - 11.7. Resubmission of the assessment task,
 - 11.8. Mark adjustment of an exam result, considering the circumstances that affected the student's work and student's overall performance within the qualification,
 - 11.9. Other reasonable assessment adjustment deemed appropriate,
 - 11.10. No action.
12. Where a significant impairment has not been established, the Application for Special Consideration will be declined.
 13. Written notification advising of the decision and outcome of the Application for Special Consideration will be emailed by the Registrar to the student within five (5) business days. Where the application is denied, the student will also be advised of the reasons for the decision and their right to appeal.
 14. Students have the right to appeal the decision and should refer to the *Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.
 15. Where the request for special consideration is made by an international student and the decision to deny may affect their course progression or ability to complete their course in their recorded duration, Whitecliffe will not report any changes in PRISMS during the appeal period. However, if any subsequent appeal is unsuccessful, Whitecliffe will report the change to enrolment to the Secretary via PRISMS within five working days of end of the appeal process in accordance with Standard 8 of the National Code 2018.

Change and Version Control

Version	Date Approved	Authored by	Approved by	Description
1.0	11 August 2020	Dean	Academic Board	Approved, by previous ownership
1.1	4 May 2023	QA Manager	Director of Education	ICAT Letterhead
1.2	24 Aug 2023	Director of Operations and Compliance	Academic Board	Addition to related policies and documents, Student Responsibility for Learning and Academic Progress, Planned/Unplanned Leave, Reasonable Adjustment, Academic Integrity
1.3	05 Nov 2025	Academic Compliance Lead	Academic Board	Changed policy title. Added new Procedure and Appendix sections. Removal of absences from scheduled classes as a need to apply for special consideration Updated the roles and responsibilities in accordance with the org chart. Added Appendix A

Policy Information

Author:	Academic Compliance Lead
Policy owner:	Chief Academic Officer
Approved by:	Academic Board
Approval date:	05 November 2025
Status:	Approved
Next review due:	05 November 2028

Appendix A: Special Consideration Supporting Evidence Schedule

All applications for Special Consideration must be supported by evidence as described below.

General Evidence Requirements:

Evidence must demonstrate that substantial disruption has been caused to the student's capacity for effective study during an event critical study period and must:

- identify the circumstances or events;
- include dates and/or the length of the circumstances or events;
- explain the severity and impact of the circumstances or events;
- clearly describe how the circumstances or events have adversely affected the student's capacity for effective study to which an assessment relates; and
- where relevant, include the date(s) on which the student was seen by the professional providing the evidence.

Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive	Evidence (Appropriate Supporting Documentation)
1. Short-term illness*	• Medical Certificate.
2. Difficult personal circumstances • Sudden change in, or severe disruption to, domestic arrangements: e.g. eviction, homelessness and serious financial difficulties • Accidents causing injury or trauma* • Unexpected Carer responsibilities • Unexpected financial difficulties • Natural disasters (e.g. fire, floods, earthquakes) • Domestic or family violence, e.g. an abusive incident, leaving an abusive situation • Family or relationship breakdown, e.g. divorce, separation • Traumatic experience, e.g. witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime such as sexual harm or assault, or witnessing or being involved in a serious accident • Internet outage/computer failure for students living in remote areas or incarcerated students • Imprisonment	• Statutory Declaration or • Medical Certificate or • Official letter from relevant source/authority or • a Statement of Fact.
3. Death of a relative/close friend	• Statutory Declaration – stating the relationship to the student or

	• Medical Certificate or • Death Notice/Certificate or • a Statement of Fact.
4. Unavoidable commitments • Unavoidable medical appointments • Court dates/Jury Duty • Army Reservists/SES commitments and Volunteer Firefighters/emergency volunteers	• Letter from doctor/medical certificate or • Letter confirming attendance at Jury Duty/ court date or • Statutory Declaration or • a Statement of Fact.
Any Short-term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive and denoted with an *, requires students to submit medical evidence (e.g. Medical Certificate) as supplied by a registered health professional (registered with a National Board of Australia that is accredited by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)): • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice • Chinese Medicine • Chiropractic • Dental • Medical • Medical Radiation Practice • Neurology • Nursing and Midwifery • Occupational Therapy • Optometry • Osteopathy • Pharmacy • Physiotherapy • Podiatry • Psychology • Social workers.	