

# Higher Education Extension / Deferral of Assessment Guide



## Purpose

This guideline provides supplementary support to the **Higher Education Assessment Deferral and Extension Procedure**. This guideline is intended to provide assistance to:

- Students making applications for extensions to assignment due dates and deferred assessment.
- Decision makers who review and make decisions about student applications for deferrals and extensions to assessment due dates.

## Assessment, Assignments and Exams

### *What is an assessment?*

Includes any form of works that the student is required to complete in order to successfully meet the unit of study requirements. This may include assignments, exams, journals, literature reviews, demonstrations, oral presentations, portfolios, and practical activities.

### *What is an assignment?*

An assignment is an assessment task that is generally undertaken outside of scheduled class time, and builds on work delivered in your class/tute/clinic. Assignments have specific submission dates and times, can be limited by word count and they are generally unsupervised. The following are examples of assignments:

- case studies
- essays
- laboratory reports
- literature reviews
- clinical reports
- research-based assignments
- planning documents
- problem sets (e.g., math problems)
- proposals.

### *What is a deferred assessment?*

A deferred assessment is an assessment task that is scheduled to occur on a specific date at a specific time, generally within a scheduled class time. The assessment task is usually supervised. At TAFE Queensland these are collectively commonly referred to as examinations, the following are examples:

- exam, test or quiz (in-semester or end of semester)
- presentation or performance (technical or professional – examination of skills)
- clinical practice/demonstration (examination of clinical skills)
- guided discussion, presentation with peers (examination of personal and communication skills, Mooting, oral presentations, etc.).

Assessment (exam) deferral is an application-based process and the approval of it is not automatic.

Sometimes serious misadventure, accidents, or compassionate and/or compelling circumstances may mean the student cannot attend an assessment task that is scheduled to occur on a specific date and time.

Depending on the circumstances, you may be eligible for a deferred assessment and be permitted attend that assessment task at a later scheduled time. Examples include:

- illness – medical certificate
- accident – statutory declaration
- temporary disability – medical certificate
- bereavement – bereavement notice or statutory declaration
- sporting or cultural commitment at state, national or international representative level – letter from sporting body
- other compassionate circumstances – statutory declaration.

Applications are made as follows:

- Assignments - Extension of a due date
- Examinations/Assessments - Deferral of an assessment date (i.e. deferred exam, deferred presentation)

## Eligibility

Deferred assessments and extensions to assignment due dates may be approved in situations where a student has experienced unforeseeable, adverse (compassionate and/or compelling) circumstances that has/will have impacted their ability to demonstrate their learning achievements.

The application may be approved on compassionate and/or compelling grounds when circumstances are:

- beyond your control, and
- impact on the ability to study, and
- are documented by evidence (see below).

### Beyond Your Control

Circumstances are considered to be beyond the control of a student if a situation occurs which a reasonable person would consider is not due to the student's action or inaction, either direct or indirect, and for which the student is not responsible. The situation must be considered to be unusual, uncommon, or abnormal.

### **Compassionate or Compelling Circumstances**

These are circumstances beyond the control of the student and they have an impact on the student's capability and/or ability to progress through a course. Decisions on whether or not a circumstance is considered compassionate and/or compelling are at the discretion of TAFE Queensland. See below for further information.

## Assignment Due Date Extension

### **Application Dates**

Applications for an extension to an assessment/assignment due date are to be made at least **two (2) working days prior** to the due date of the assessment task.

Exceptions:

- in emergency circumstances; or
- in compassionate and/or compelling circumstances which arose less than five (5) working days before the assessment/assignment due date; or
- in cases of serious illness or injury, where you will need to provide a Medical Certificate (see Medical Certificate Fact Sheet).

If the assessment/assignment date has passed:

- the application must generally be made by 5 pm on the second working day after the concluding date on the Medical Certificate:

*(For example, the Medical Certificate states the medical issue and inability to study until Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, then the application for an extension to the due date must be submitted no later than 5 pm Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May);*

- in all other exceptional cases, by 5 pm on the second working day after the assessment due date.

*(For example, the assignment was due on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March, then the application for an extension to the due date must be submitted no later than 5 pm Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March).*

All applications are reviewed on a case by case basis and decisions are made on individual circumstances and the supporting evidence.

### **Allowable Time Frames**

Generally, the maximum amount of time granted for a successful application for extensions to an assessment/assignment due date that is supported by a Medical Certificate will be the duration of the Medical Certificate.

*Examples:*

1. *the due date for the assessment is Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June and a Medical Certificate provided to TAFE Queensland states the student was unfit for study until 13<sup>th</sup> June, then the maximum extension allowable is three working days.*
2. *the due date for the assessment is Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June and a Medical Certificate provided to TAFE Queensland states the student was unfit for study from 9<sup>th</sup> June to 13<sup>th</sup> June, then the maximum extension allowable is five working days.*

All applications are reviewed on a case by case basis and decisions are made on individual circumstances and the supporting evidence.

## **Deferred Assessment (Exam)**

### **Application Dates**

Applications for a deferred assessment must be made at least **five (5) working days prior** to the assessment due date.

Exceptions:

- in emergency circumstances; or
- in compassionate and/or compelling circumstances which arose less than five (5) working days before the exam date; or
- in cases of serious illness or injury, where you will need to provide a Medical Certificate (see Medical Certificate Fact Sheet).

If the assessment date has passed:

- the application must generally be made by 5 pm on the second working day after the concluding date on the Medical Certificate:

*(For example, the Medical Certificate states medical reason and inability to study until Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, then the application for a deferred exam must be submitted no later than 5 pm Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May);*

- in all other exceptional cases, by 5 pm on the second working day after the scheduled date/time.

*(For example, the exam was scheduled on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March, then the application for a deferred exam must be submitted no later than 5 pm Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March).*

All applications are reviewed on a case by case basis and decisions are made on individual circumstances and the supporting evidence.

**Note:** this is for the first request for a deferred assessment. See below for deferral of a deferred Assessment.

## Misconduct – False Information

Submission of false supporting documentation is considered serious misconduct in accordance with the Student Rules. Furthermore, making a false statutory declaration is an act of perjury in accordance with the Criminal Code 1899. Perjury is a criminal offence and the penalties can be severe.

## Compassionate and/or Compelling Circumstances

The following information is intended to provide clarity about what is considered compassionate and/or compelling and the types of evidence that would ordinarily be required to support the application and review process.

### EXAMPLES

- Serious illness or injury, where a Medical Certificate states that you were unable to attend your exam on the exam date or submit your assessment on the due date.
- If you have a close family member who is ill, you must supply evidence of your relationship to them (e.g. Birth Certificate(s), passport, etc.) as well as evidence of the illness from a Doctor or hospital.
- Mental health condition of a student or a student's close relative that results in hospitalisation or cognitive functional impairment.
- Bereavement - close family members such as parents, grandparents and children.
- Major political upheaval or natural disaster in your home country requiring emergency travel.
- A traumatic experience could include, but is not limited to:
  - i. involvement in or witnessing an accident or crime;
  - ii. a crime committed against you;
  - iii. an event affecting your family or home country

and these experiences have impacted on your ability to study.

- Inability to begin studying on the unit commencement date due to delay in receiving a visa.
- Occurrences that are the result of TAFE Queensland, partner, or agent error.
- Significant employment related reasons, such as an employer unexpectedly increasing a student's working hours or an employer-directed transfer of a student to a new location or redeployment to a different position.

- Inability of TAFE Queensland to offer a pre-requisite or other unit/s of study.
- Situations where an International Student has failed occasional units of study throughout the course, but has not done so poorly as to require academic intervention for academic progression (Standard 9 of the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018).
- Other clearly compassionate and compelling circumstances at the discretion of the relevant decision maker.

### **Unlikely Circumstances**

Instances that are not approved for a deferred examination or an extension to an assessment due date include but are not limited to:

- a. where the condition or circumstances are the consequence of a student's own action or inaction, either direct or indirect;
- b. where the independent professional assessment and opinion provided of the student's illness or event are not likely to affect the student's capacity to undertake the assessment concerned;
- c. the illness or event and their impact are not severe or relevant to the assessment type and the deadline.

The following are examples of situations in which applications are not approved.

### **GENERAL EXCLUSIONS**

- Mild illness – a cold, mild virus, illness in days preceding examination date, sore throat, cramping, mild gastro-intestinal infections, feeling out of sorts etc. on the day of the examination. (*Excluding COVID-19 and Queensland Health directives*)
- Pre-arranged holidays, including overseas travel.
- Unexpected event causing loss of a few hours of dedicated time close to the examination – minor accident.
- Circumstances that do not meet the requirements of the consideration for which the Student is applying.
- Misreading or misunderstanding your exam timetable.
- Failure to understand or seek clarification of the Census Dates or withdrawal procedures.
- For general social and leisure events, including sporting and cultural commitments other than at state, national or international representative level. The circumstances are considered to be within the control of a Student, or which are to be expected in the normal course of the Student's study, work, family or social life.
- If you did not sit an exam because you misread the timetable, forgot the examination, or slept in.
- If you have entered the wrong exam venue.
- For work commitments, unless it can be shown the employer has refused you leave.
- Not allowing enough time to travel to an exam venue.
- If you have sat the exam or submitted the assessment work.
- Having to sit two exams on one day.
- Forgetting or not being in possession of your Student ID Card.
- English language difficulties.
- Forgetting or not being in possession of permitted exam materials (e.g. a calculator).
- Having to sit exams on successive days.
- An exam timetable that is demanding or personally inconvenient.

## Withdrawing

Depending on your circumstances, if you are unable to submit your assessment item, you may need to withdraw from a unit of study on compassionate and/or compelling grounds and apply for a withdrawal without academic and/or financial penalty. Speak to your faculty Administration Officer for further information.

## Deferring a Deferred Assessment

Students who are prevented from sitting a deferred assessment due to exceptional circumstances are to submit a written request to the Dean Higher Education within three (3) working days of the date of the original deferred assessment to have this restriction reconsidered, and possibly waived. Complete the 131 FM **B Higher Education Request for Deferral of a Deferred Exam Form**.

## Supporting Documents/Evidence

- Supporting evidence should be in written English (or translated by a NAATI-accredited translator).
- Statutory declarations are only allowed when the student cannot obtain the required supporting evidence (e.g. a police report, road service report etc.).
- Students should keep original copies of their supporting evidence for at least 6 months. Failure to produce original documents may result in an application being refused or overturned.

*Supporting documentation must:*

- Be on official letterhead (where applicable), signed, and dated.
- Indicate whether the situation was unexpected and unavoidable (e.g. out of your control).
- Summarise the nature and duration of the condition/circumstances.
- Clearly state the severity/impact on your ability to attempt or complete the assignment/exam (applications may not be approved without this).
- Where applicable, use an appropriate template (e.g. Statutory Declaration).

The following table provides examples of circumstances, acceptable and unacceptable supporting evidence.

## Evidence and Documentation Guide

Reason provided	Example of acceptable documentation
Accident, not involving medical injury	Police report, statutory declaration, other e.g. A report or document from an automotive road service (e.g. RACQ) or from an authorised vehicle mechanic (Including the time and location of the breakdown).
Sporting commitments	Letter on official letterhead from sporting body
Death/bereavement	Death Certificate, death notice, funeral notice, and evidence of relationship. Where appropriate, confirmation of relationship (e.g. Statutory Declaration, Birth Certificate, letter from a highly regarded, independent member of the community that supports the relationship claims).
Serious illness of a family member or close relative	Statement from medical practitioner confirming medical status of patient, relationship to student, and relevant dates. The medical practitioner must be independent. They cannot be a near relative (e.g. a spouse, partner, child, brother, sister, or parent) or a close associate (e.g. a close friend, neighbour, or partner or child of a colleague). The doctor's written assessment of their condition must state how it affected their capacity to undertake the examination on the relevant date.
Defence forces or emergency services	A letter or statement on official letterhead, signed by an authorised officer of the relevant organisation that details their role within the service, and the start and finish dates of training or activity.

Medical grounds	Medical Certificate from a registered medical practitioner or other appropriately qualified professional, such as a psychiatrist, physiotherapist, dentist, or registered psychologist. (Refer to the Medical Certificate Factsheet for further information – <i>Medical certificates from optometrists, herbal doctors and pharmacists are not acceptable.</i> )
Jury duty	A copy of the jury summons. The summons must include the start and finish dates of the jury duty.
Serious crime or accident	Police reports outlining the student's involvement in the crime or accident
Academic commitments and / or progression	A confirmation letter from a relevant staff member. The letter must detail the nature of the academic commitment and how it will benefit their studies.
	International student visa holders applying for considerations based on academic intervention must provide evidence of an academic intervention strategy plan and a program study plan.
Significant family / religious/ social commitment / cultural reason	Wedding invitation, evidence of relationship/part of bridal party (e.g. statutory declaration), letter from organisation on letterhead.
Unavoidable work commitments	Letter from the student's current employer verifying a change in employment conditions and impact on the student's study, or a statement indicating that the student cannot be released from work on a required date/s.
Major public transport delay	Evidence from websites (e.g. TransLink, Queensland Police, news sites) outlining the nature of the event, including the date and time of the event.
Significant personal problems	A statement from a counsellor, psychologist, or psychiatrist that confirms how their circumstances affected their ability to attend an exam/submit an assignment at the scheduled date/time, be written on official letterhead, and cover the relevant dates. A police report or a statement from a relevant authority. The report or statement must confirm the occurrence of the trauma, crime misadventure, etc.
Civil war/significant political unrest or natural disaster	For International Students, evidence sourced from the relevant Australian Government Department Responsible for Foreign Affairs of civil war/significant political unrest or natural disaster, along with evidence of student's residency in the specific affected region.
Natural Disaster	State and/or Australian Government official advice of a natural disaster affecting the student's place of residence, along with evidence of student's residency. Medical documentation or a psychological report advising potential functional impacts may also be required.
Visa Delay	Correspondence from the relevant Australian Government Department responsible for Immigration regarding a delay in student visa processing.
Sick During an Exam/Assessment	Special consideration may be applied. A Medical Certificate must address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the suddenness of the onset of the medical condition,</li> <li>• the student predisposition to the condition,</li> <li>• the seriousness of the symptoms, and</li> <li>• how the medical condition affected the students' ability to remain and complete the exam/assessment (Refer to the Medical Certificate Factsheet for further information)</li> </ul>
Other	Statutory Declaration

## How to Apply

- Obtain the **Higher Education Request for Extension / Deferral of Assessment Application Form** from the administration staff in the faculty of in which the course is delivered.
- Complete the form fully, including all relevant dates.
- Obtain independent supporting documents (See table above for examples).
- Ensure Medical Certificates comply with the requirements outlined in the Medical Certificate Fact Sheet.
- Submit the completed application with supporting documents to the administration staff in the faculty or email to [Highered@tafeqld.edu.au](mailto:Highered@tafeqld.edu.au)
- You may be requested to provide additional documentation i.e. samples of your assessment preparation, drafts etc.

**NOTE:** Incomplete, inaccurate and evidence-deficient applications will not be processed for consideration and if you miss your assessment due date, then you may be academically penalised for a late submission.



## Decision Outcomes

- Applications will be approved if the grounds and supporting documentation of the application are accepted.
- Students will receive written notification of a decision.
- An interim administrative unit grade of “DA” (The student has been granted a deferred assessment), or “AI” (Assessment incomplete) will be entered on the students record.
- Approved applications will outline details of the deferred exam or the new assessment due date.
- For deferred examinations, students are to be available throughout all exam periods (including supplementary and deferred) to attend the exams at the required time, date and location. Deferred exams are generally unable to be deferred a second time.
- For unsuccessful applications, the decision notice will provide reasons why the application has been declined and how the decision can be appealed.

## Appeals

A student may request an internal review of a decision made in response to a student application. Students will be provided with the relevant form to complete in the decision outcome notice. A student has 20 business days from the date of their decision outcome letter to appeal the decision.