



Applying for Special Considerations or Extensions remotely

A Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students

21/01/2021 update

All aspects of our lives have been impacted by coronavirus and lockdowns.

The way in which you study and how you are assessed will also have changed.

The University has introduced several changes to help take this into account. The way in which the university takes the impact of unforeseen circumstances into account has also changed.

The current health crisis has however not stopped other unforeseen life events happening, and general changes made by the University during this health crisis cannot take all individual circumstances into account.

How this guide can help you

Special Considerations & Extension requests are how you can inform the University when your studies are impacted by unforeseen circumstances beyond your control.

These processes are key to helping you manage the impact of those circumstances.

We have some top tips to help you with some of the challenges that this process may present.

The key challenge being - *How to capture often difficult and complex circumstances and describe their impact in a short form?*



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Special Considerations – help & support

While you can still contact Personal Academic Tutor, Senior Tutor and The Advice Centre Advisers, staff are now working remotely, which means there may be delays in getting a response. Therefore, reading and following this guide will help you make a strong start with your application in case you are close to the deadline.

Extension Requests & Special Considerations - FAQs

The University has an up-to-date website with information relating to Special Considerations and Extension requests: [Teaching, study and assessment | University of Southampton](#)

This website will answer many common questions. For example: What are the key deadlines? How do I find the right form and where do I submit it? Who do I contact to get the right help & support?

Extension or Special Considerations?

While this is a matter of judgement consider: the time remaining to assessment deadline, whether the assessment allows extensions (you can check this with a Module tutor), the outcome you are seeking. If an Extension is not an option, you can always apply for Special Considerations outlining the impact of any mitigation on your ability to submit work that reflects your academic ability.

Do I have to submit any evidence?

The University recognises that it is difficult to obtain documents and evidence during Covid-19 pandemic. **Therefore, students can now apply for Special Considerations or ask for Extensions without the need for supporting evidence.**

All you have to do is write a short description of how your study and/or assessment has been adversely affected (see top tips below).



Deadlines for Special Considerations & Extensions

Special Consideration requests for Semester 1 assessments - deadline for everyone is now seven working days after the end of the whole Semester 1 assessment period, which is **9th February 2021**.

Extensions – you need to apply for it before the original deadline of your assessment. Please note that not all assessments can have extensions (e.g. those in the final assessment, which replaced traditional exams). You should contact your PAT or module tutor if you are not sure whether a particular deadline may be extended. Otherwise, you may still be able to apply for Special Considerations assessment (see above).

Top tips – the basics...

STEP 1 - READ

The first step is to take time to read the [general guidance on Special Considerations](#).

We also suggest you go over the Special Considerations regulations to understand the process and possible outcomes better. You will find the Special Considerations Regulations [here](#).

STEP 2 - REFLECT

Start with some **basic questions before completing** the form:

- What are the potential outcomes offered by this process?
- Do your circumstances meet the key principles and purpose set out in the guidance?
- What are the deadlines for applying?

STEP 3 - COMPLETE

The Special Considerations or Extension request form's section:

“Please describe your circumstances and how they have affected you?”

Top tips - describing the circumstances:



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This is a process where your application is likely to be compared to the aims and criteria of the process. What are the key words in the guidance? Can you use the words from the guidance in your description of your circumstances?

Top tips – describing the impact

It is easy, when applying, for your focus to be on your circumstances and assume that their impact is self-evident. It is important to make the impact explicit.

When thinking about impact consider:

- Providing clear and concise examples of the practical effect on you
- The consequence of these for the assessment/s
- Steps you may have taken to manage the impact – for example support services/medical professionals contacted

Conclusion

It is normal and understandable that applying for this process will seem challenging when you have already faced tough times. It is well worth reading through this guidance, contacting the support on offer and submitting the strongest possible application. The Special Considerations process may be part of more generally opening up about challenges faced, reaching out for help and support and managing difficult circumstances as best you can.

Important relevant links & forms

- [Special Considerations Guidance](#)
- [Extension Request for Assessment Form](#)
- [Special Considerations Request Form](#)
- [Special Considerations Request Form \(COVID\)](#)

Further help and guidance

For further guidance on the Regulations Governing Special Considerations, contact The Advice Centre. Tel: 02380 592 085 Email: advice@susu.org



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