



APRIL 2020

## Applying for Special Considerations Remotely

All aspects of our lives been impacted by coronavirus.

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 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

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

The process is key to helping you manage the impact of those circumstances, and to inform the University of the impact on your studies sooner rather than later.

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.*

### 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.

### Top tips – the basics...

#### READ

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



# Support Advice Centre

We also suggest you go over the main **FAQs on Special Considerations linked to Covid-19** before proceeding further. You will find the most up-to-date information including email addresses for submission of Special Considerations in the link below:

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/studentadmin/academic-support-guidance/assessments.page>

## 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?

## COMPLETE

The Special Considerations' form's section:

***"Please describe your circumstances and how they have impacted on you?"***

### Top tip - describing the circumstances

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

## The evidence

A common question is - *what is the evidence that I should supply with my application*



# Support Advice Centre

The best general answer is - to provide the **best evidence that is available** and consider an account of why evidence may be missing.

Do not miss an application deadline simply because evidence is not yet available but explain that evidence may be delayed but will be submitted when available.

## The good news!

For requests relating to **assessment due for submission after Thursday 12 March 2020 you do not need to submit supporting evidence with your completed form**. However, you need to focus on describing the impact of the extenuating circumstances (see Top tips above).

## 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

- General Special Considerations guidance and forms:  
[https://www.southampton.ac.uk/quality/assessment/special\\_considerations.page](https://www.southampton.ac.uk/quality/assessment/special_considerations.page).
- Special Considerations forms for **circumstances linked to Covid-19**:
  - [Special Considerations form](#)
  - [Extension request form](#)

FAQs on assessment, including Special Considerations due to Covid-19:

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/studentadmin/academic-support-guidance/assessments.page>