



Special Considerations & Extensions Requests

What is 'Special Considerations'?

Special Considerations is a policy you can use if you believe you have been affected by **unexpected circumstances outside of your control that had or will have a negative impact on your studies and assessment** (for example exams, coursework, dissertation, etc.).

Unexpected circumstances may include: illness, personal or family crisis, bereavement, significant failure of due process by the University or significant disruption in the exam. Generally, these situations should have been outside of your control.

To apply for Special Considerations, you must complete a Special Considerations form located [here](#), and attach relevant evidence to support your request. You can send the request to your faculty's student office.

You must do that at the time the situation is affecting your assessment and normally not more than 5 working days after the exam or assessment in question.

What is 'Extension Request'?

The Special Considerations policy also allows for extension to deadline requests. An extension request can be made when you know you won't be able to meet a particular assessment deadline submission date and you need extra time. You still need to provide evidence why you are not able to meet the deadline. The evidence should relate to extenuating and unexpected circumstances. You should submit the Extension Request for Assessment form in due time before your deadline. You will find the form [here](#).

Advice Alert!

- **Do** get your request in on time (for Special Considerations - normally not more than five working days after any assessment, exam or deadline may have been affected).
- **Do** submit evidence to support your request. If it is unavailable at the time you submit your form let the Assessment Team know what it is, why it is delayed and when it will be available.
- **Do** submit a request if you think your performance was affected, even if you think you probably did enough to pass.



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Remember!

In case of requesting an extension to your submission date, you need to submit the form in good time before the deadline.

Where do I find more information about Special Considerations and Extensions?

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students:

The University's Special Considerations and Deadline Extensions Regulations for undergraduate and postgraduate taught students can be found on the University website [here](#).

Postgraduate Research (PhD) students:

Research students should follow the Regulations Governing Special Considerations for Research Degree Programmes located on the University website [here](#).

What Special Considerations are available to PhD students?

Under the Special Considerations policy research students can apply for:

- An extension to candidature;
- A suspension from candidature;
- An extension to a Progression Review Report submission deadline;
- For Special Considerations to be applied to work to be assessed.

There are 2 different forms that can be completed, depending on whether the form is used for unforeseen circumstances (form SC1), or for foreseen situations relating to suspension that are not extenuating (e.g. planned parental leave), where form SC2 should be used.

Both forms can be found on the University's Student Handbook website [here](#).

Forms should be submitted to the Faculty's Graduate School Office with relevant evidence.

What should I write on the form to explain my circumstances?

The Special Considerations Board may have limited time to consider each application due to the number of cases they consider. It is important that you summarise the situation and get



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your key messages and points across clearly and concisely. If you need any help and tips, contact the Advice Centre.

Top Tip:

Remember that you need to make a link between the unexpected events or illness and your performance being adversely affected. The timing of the incident/s must tally with the time of the exams, assessments or other submissions.

What evidence should I include?

It will depend on the circumstances. Evidence may include: a letter from your GP or a medical professional, an exam invigilator's incident report, a letter of support/explanation from First Support or Enabling Services, or a University self-certificate for short illnesses.

I don't have evidence, what can I do?

The University accepts Self-Certification for illnesses up to 5 days. The Self-Certifications form has to be signed off by your tutor, senior tutor or another academic in your faculty. You should make an appointment to see them and discuss your circumstances before submitting the form.

What recommendations can the Special Considerations Board make?

The Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught Special Considerations Board, can make one or more recommendations based on your application and evidence. This varies from giving you another attempt of an assessment, waiving later submission penalties, removing the cap from referrals or repeats, or disregarding marks in computing the final classification. You will find the full list of recommendations in the regulations for [Special Considerations and Deadline Extensions](#), Section A Policy, Point 6, which can be found on the University Calendar.

For Postgraduate students, **the PGR Special Considerations Board** can make a number of different recommendations to the Faculty Director of the Graduate School, for example recommending a suspension or extension request is approved, recommending an additional viva, reject the request etc. For a full list of possible outcomes of the request, please see:



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[Regulations Governing Special Considerations and Suspension of Candidature for Postgraduate Research Students](#), Section A Policy, point 4.

When will I find out about Special Considerations or an Extension decision?

With regards to an extension, you will be informed in time before the original deadline what your new deadline is.

As for **the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Special Considerations**, you will be notified of the decision and recommendation(s) of the Special Considerations Board and the reasons normally within 10 working days of the Board's meeting.

For Postgraduate Research students' requests, the decision will normally be communicated within 20 working days of submission of a completed request.

Time critical decisions should normally be communicated to a student within 15 working days of submission of a completed request

Can I appeal Special Considerations recommendations?

The Special Considerations Board will only make a recommendation. The final decision lies with the Exam Board or the Faculty Director of the Graduate School.

You can appeal the decision of the Exam Board or the Faculty Director of the Graduate School if you have grounds and supporting evidence. For more details, see the University's Academic Appeals Regulations [here](#).

Further Guidance

For further guidance on the Special Considerations regulations, contact the Advice Centre.

- 02380 592 085
- advice@susu.org

You can also visit us in Building 40, Highfield campus. Our opening hours are Monday–Friday 09.00–17.00.

Disclaimer: While care has been taken to ensure that information contained in the Advice Centre publications is true and correct at the time of writing, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information. The Advice Centre and SUSU cannot accept responsibility for any actions taken as a result of advice given in this publication.
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