



**Policy Name: Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or Other Extenuating Circumstances**

**Originating/responsible department: Office of the Vice President, Students and Enrolment**

**Approval authority: Senate**

**Date of Original Policy: January 1, 2024**

**Mandatory revision date: January 1, 2029**

**Contact: Associate Registrar**

## **Introduction**

Carleton University recognizes that due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfil the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The University supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically.

This policy will aid the equitable provision of academic consideration to all students for a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances through the use of an online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation.

The University's response to requests for academic consideration due to extenuating circumstances are grounded in the principle of good faith. This principle requires the university and instructors to assume that student circumstances and documented requests are legitimate unless there is strong evidence to the contrary.

This policy also recognizes that while good faith efforts shall be made by the university and instructors to provide academic consideration, not all requests for consideration are necessarily reasonable or can be feasibly accommodated while maintaining learning outcomes and accreditation requirements for professional programs.

The use of this policy to provide false or misleading information constitutes academic misconduct. Any students found engaging in such practice will be subjected to the University's [Academic Integrity](#) procedures.

## Definitions

### **Academic Consideration:**

Process for the university and instructors to provide alternate academic arrangements consistent with learning outcomes to students who may be unable to meet an academic obligation due to extenuating circumstances. Consideration may include an alternative assignment, re-weighting of term marks, modified schedule for assignments, projects, and labs, or other options at the discretion of the instructor such that learning outcomes and accreditation requirements for professional programs are maintained.

### **Extenuating Circumstances**

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances that:

- are beyond a student's control;
- have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations; and
- could not have reasonably been prevented.

Extenuating circumstances may include sudden illness or incapacitation, including mental health and compassionate circumstances.

Experiencing diverse challenges and stressors is considered typical within the university experience and are not considered extenuating circumstances; for example, managing workload, competing deadlines, inclement weather, amongst others.

### **Good Faith:**

Having honest or sincere intention.

### **Short-term:**

Medical or extenuating circumstances (normally) lasting up to five days.

### **Long-term:**

Medical or extenuating circumstances (normally) lasting more than five days.

## Scope

This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods, and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University. This policy will apply to all academic deliverables

This policy does not include students seeking accommodations related to an established disability. Such considerations are governed by [the Academic Accommodation Policy for Students with Disabilities](#).

## **Principles**

Carleton University seeks to ensure that fundamental elements of this policy are managed appropriately. The following principles serve as the foundation for this policy:

- Carleton University's expectations for students regarding academic considerations will be clearly communicated.
- Requests for academic consideration shall be handled in a fair and equitable manner in accordance with learning outcomes and accreditation requirements for professional programs.
- The Registrar's Office shall monitor requests to identify students who may require additional support (e.g. in cases of extensive usage or concerning circumstances). Outreach for additional support shall be initiated by the Registrar's Office.
- The use of this policy to provide false or misleading information constitutes academic misconduct. Any students found engaging in such practice will be subjected to the University's [Academic Integrity](#) procedures.

## **Delegation of Responsibilities**

### **Students**

1. Notify your instructors or supervisor as appropriate of your absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable in question within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances,
  - i. In the case of undergraduate final exams, the student must apply for a deferral through the Registrar's Office.
2. Complete and submit appropriate documentation as requested.
3. Work with your instructors and/or the Registrar's Office to determine any academic considerations.
4. Complete academic deliverable according to the timeframe of any implemented academic accommodations.
5. Act within the principle of good faith when requesting Academic Consideration.

### **Instructors**

1. Recognize the University's Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or other Extenuating Circumstances.

2. Recognize self-declaration forms submitted by students in accordance with the policy's principle of good faith.
3. Determine the appropriate academic consideration options for students, if applicable (see Guidelines for Instructors).
4. Consult and/or work with the academic departments and the Registrar's Office for clarification or facilitation of academic consideration, as required.
5. Consult with student in question and communicate the appropriate academic consideration while ensuring all learning outcomes and accreditation requirements are met.
6. Ensure confidentiality of any sensitive information or documentation received.

### **Registrar's Office**

1. Manage ongoing communications to departments, programs, instructors, staff, and students regarding this policy and its related procedures.
2. Administer processes to:
  - i. Enable students to submit requests for academic consideration through the online self-declaration form.
  - ii. Track and retain submitted self-declaration forms in accordance with Corporate Records and Archives Policy and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).
  - iii. Monitor the requests and initiate outreach for additional support as needed.
  - iv. Respond to incomplete requests.

### **Appeals**

In cases where the student has concerns about a request for academic consideration, the student may initiate an informal appeal with the instructor and, as appropriate, the Chair or Director, within 3 working days of the original decision.

If the informal process does not address their concerns, a student may submit a formal appeal to the Faculty Dean of the Faculty offering the course within 3 working days of the completion of the informal appeal. The decision of the Dean is final.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

The student's privacy will be upheld and safeguarded throughout the Academic Consideration process, as per FIPPA and PHIPA.

All records related to requests for Academic Consideration will be gathered, stored securely, and disposed of in accordance with the Corporate Records and Archives Policy.