

Assessment Accommodations Procedure

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Policy Supported:

Assessment Policy

Audience:

Staff, Students, public

Objectives:

- To identify and clarify the roles and responsibilities of staff and students in implementing the *Assessment Policy*.
- To provide transparent and accountable processes for accommodating changes to the published assessment requirements of a unit for individual students who require accommodation to accurately demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes.

Definitions:

The definition of common terms appears in the Murdoch University Dictionary of Terms. Any defined terms below are specific to this document.

- “Assessment Item” is defined in the Assessment Procedure.
- “Alternate Assessment Item” means an assessment item that is substituted for a planned assessment item which provides students an opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the same Unit Learning Outcomes assigned to the planned item.
- “Assessment Accommodation” means a variation to an assessment item requirements or timing for a specific student where need has not been accommodated with an access and inclusion plan.
- “Change of Due Date” means a due date for an assessment item that is not a Final Assessment Item – Examination during the Final Assessment Period which is at an alternate time to the due date notified to students in the Unit Information.
- “Deferred Final Assessment Item – Examination” means an examination that is provided to a student at a time after the scheduled examination time during

the Final Assessment Period of a Teaching Period. Also referred to as "Deferred Exam."

- "Extension" means a due date for an assessment item that is not a Final Assessment Item – Examination and is after the due date notified to students in the Unit Information.
- "Early Sitting of Final Assessment Item – Examination" means an Examination which is undertaken at an earlier time to the scheduled time, often prior to the Final Assessment Period. It does not include minor variations in schedules made to meet accommodations outlined in access and inclusion plans. Also referred to as "Early Sitting of Exam"
- "Learning Outcomes" is defined in the Assessment Procedure.
- "Unit" is defined in the Units Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Different levels of University staff have different responsibilities in relation to this procedure as outlined below:

- Unit Coordinators are responsible for:
 - making decisions regarding applications for Assessment Accommodations for their unit except for deferred Examinations as a Final Assessment Item
 - setting new due dates, designing Alternate Assessment Items and setting new examinations for new or deferred Examinations as a Final Assessment Item where required
 - communicating outcomes of their Assessment Accommodations decisions to the student applying for the accommodation.
- Heads of School or delegate are responsible for:
 - all the responsibilities of a Unit Coordinator where a Unit Coordinator is unavailable or unable to meet their responsibilities
 - the process by which a student applies for a Deferred Final Assessment – Examination
 - determining whether an application for Deferred Final Assessment – Examination is approved or denied, and communicating the outcome to the student
 - the administration of Deferred Examinations as a Final Assessment Item.

Other responsibilities are as stated in the procedure below.

Procedure:*Scope of Assessment Accommodations*

1. Assessment Accommodations take into account circumstances that substantially affect a student's ability to complete an assessment item(s) in such a way that achievement of the learning outcomes cannot be accurately assessed.
2. Where students have an accessibility and inclusion plan (the Plan) which provides the specific accommodation being sought, the accommodation is considered approved. Where the Plan does not refer to the specific accommodation sought, a student may request an accommodation as appropriate through these Procedures and/or seek further consideration regarding their Plan (see Disability Policy).

Forms of Assessment Accommodations

3. Assessment Accommodations can take the form of:
 - a) extension or change to the due date
 - b) Alternate Assessment Item or requirements
 - c) early sitting of a Final Assessment - Examination
 - d) deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination.
4. Deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination has a different application and approval process and is dealt with separately in this procedure.

Applying for Assessment Accommodation (except deferral of Final Assessment – Examination)

5. Students submit a request for Assessment Accommodation in writing by email to the Unit Coordinator(s) of the relevant unit(s).
6. A request for Assessment Accommodation must include the details listed in Schedule 1 Application Requirements (below).
7. If a student has an accessibility and inclusion plan which identifies a particular Assessment Accommodation, and the Plan has been provided to the Unit Coordinator, then the student does not need to apply for the same type of accommodation.
8. A student may request an Early Sitting of a Final Assessment – Examination for extenuating circumstances where a deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination is evidenced as not possible or feasible.

Application Timeline – Extension, Change of Due Date, or Early Sitting of Final Assessment – Examination

9. When requesting an extension, change of due date or early sitting for a Final Assessment - Examination, a student must:

- 9.1. apply to the Unit Coordinator at least two University Working Days prior to the advertised due date and time, except for unforeseen exceptional circumstances.
- 9.2. provide the relevant supporting documentation when applying.
- 10. Where a student experiences unforeseen exceptional circumstances in the period less than two University Working Days prior to the advertised due date that prevent the student from applying for an extension or change of due date, the student must notify the Unit Coordinator as soon as practicable.

Application Timeline - Alternate Assessment Item

- 11. When requesting an Alternate Assessment Item the student must apply to the Unit Coordinator:
 - 11.1. as soon as practicable after the need is identified and no fewer than 10 University Working Days prior to the due date
 - 11.2. providing the relevant supporting documentation
 - 11.3. Where a request is within 10 University Working Days of the due date, the student must provide evidence of extenuating circumstances that would preclude them from requesting the Alternate Assessment Item within the required timeframe.

Assessment of application, deciding an outcome and escalation (excludes Final Assessment Item – Examination)

- 12. The Unit Coordinator must respond to an application for Alternative Assessment for:
 - 12.1. an Extension, Change of Due Date, or Early Sitting of Final Assessment – Examination as far as is practicable, within two University Working Days of the application.
 - 12.2. an Alternate Assessment Item within five University Working Days of the student's request.
- 13. The Unit Coordinator:
 - 13.1. approves or denies the request:
 - 13.1.1. where an Accommodation request is denied, the Unit Coordinator communicates the reasons in writing to the student's email address in the Student Management System.
 - 13.1.2. where an Accommodation is approved, the Unit Coordinator communicates the details to the student in writing to the student's email address in the Student Management System.
- 14. Where a Unit Coordinator does not respond within a reasonable time frame,
 - 14.1. the student may escalate the request to the Head of School or delegate.

- 14.2. The student must provide the original email request and supporting information.
- 14.3. The Head of School (or delegate) receiving the request will communicate to the Unit Coordinator the need to respond to the student, and if the Unit Coordinator is not available:
 - 14.3.1. make and communicate a decision to the student and inform the Unit Coordinator within five University Working Days of receiving the student's email
 - 14.3.2. where an Alternate Assessment Item request is escalated instruct the Academic Chair to provide the student with the new Assessment Item requirements.

Outcomes of an approved application for Assessment Accommodation (excluding Final Assessment Item – Examination)

15. In approving the request for a particular Assessment Accommodation, the Unit Coordinator will:
 - 15.1. consider:
 - a) the supporting evidence
 - b) the impact on student wellbeing
 - c) practical considerations
 - 15.2. determine whether the appropriate levels of supporting evidence are provided. The level of required supporting evidence is determined by the weighting of the assessment item for which an accommodation is being sought.
 - 15.3. seek advice from relevant staff in the Access, Wellbeing and Equity Directorate where clarity or further information will support an informed decision
 - 15.4. apply compassion, understanding and kindness
 - 15.5. meet compulsory requirements set by a professional accreditation body where relevant.

Extensions or Change to Due Date

16. For an extension or change of due date, there must be no change to the Assessment Item requirements outlined in the Unit Information.
17. The extension or change of due date takes into account what is appropriate, just and fair in regard to:
 - a) the reasons for the request and the needs of the student
 - b) the progress and completion of the Unit assessment
 - c) Unit assessment and feedback plan.

18. Where group work assessments are the item for which an extension is requested, the Unit Coordinator identifies whether:
 - 18.1. the group receives an extension, which must be agreed to by all members of the group
 - 18.2. the student's component of the group work can accommodate an individual extension
 - 18.3. an individual Alternate Assessment Item is provided to the student which enables the student to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes.
19. An Assessment Item with a due date beyond the end of the teaching period must be:
 - 19.1. due at a time that endeavours not to impact on a student's engagement with learning in subsequent teaching periods
 - 19.2. due no later than 20 University Working Days after the initial due date
 - 19.3. given the Interim Notation GP.
20. The Grades Procedure outlines the procedure for converting Interim Notations to Final Grades.

Alternate Assessment Item

21. An Alternate Assessment Item is set when circumstances prevent a student from completing an assessment task as outlined in the Unit Information and it is not feasible to re-create the required circumstances for that assessment task.
22. The Unit Coordinator provides an Alternate Assessment Item which:
 - 22.1. is equivalent to the original Assessment Item
 - 22.2. enables the student to demonstrate achievement of the unit learning outcomes aligned with the original Assessment Item.
23. The Alternate Assessment Item may have the same due date as the original assessment or have an extension or change of due date applied.
24. The Alternate Assessment Item provided must enable the student to demonstrate achievement of the Unit Learning Outcomes of the original assessment item and not negatively impact subsequent assessment requirements for the Unit.

Early Sitting of a Final Assessment - Examination

25. If an Early Sitting of a Final Assessment – Examination is approved by the Unit Coordinator, the Unit Coordinator manages the administration of early sitting, including time, location, and any supervision requirements.

26. The Unit Coordinator may choose to alter the form of Examination as long as the alternative addresses the same Learning Outcomes as the original Examination.
27. At the discretion of the Unit Coordinator, the Early Sitting of a Final Examination can be the same as to be undertaken in the Final Assessment Period. If the same Examination is used, the student must complete a Statutory Declaration stating that they will not disclose the contents of the Examination to any other student.

Deferred Examination as a Final Assessment

28. Where a Final Assessment Item is
 - 28.1. an Examination – deferment is granted when circumstances beyond the student's control prevent a student from completing the examination at its scheduled time
 - 28.2. any other form of Assessment – deferment is not available: students may apply for other Assessment Accommodations described above.

Application Including supporting evidence

29. Students submit a request for Deferral of Final Assessment – Examination to the Exams and Assessment Office using the process determined by the Director, Learning, Teaching and Technology and including supporting documentation (refer to Schedule 2 for a list of suggested supporting documentation).
30. If a student is unable to undertake a deferred Examination at the scheduled time and they can provide evidence of need for an additional deferment, the student may submit a second application for Deferral of Final Assessment – Examination. The second application can be for the same or different reason as the first application.
 - 30.1. A student may only apply for two deferments for a particular Unit in a particular teaching period.
31. The second Deferral of a Final Assessment - Examination will be undertaken no more than 20 University Working Days from the approval of the second deferment, excluding any University limited service period.

Application Timeline – Deferment of Final Assessment – Examination

32. Where a student is unable to attend a scheduled Examination due to unforeseen exceptional circumstances the student must submit their application within three University Working Days of the date of the scheduled Examination.

Responsibility for Deciding Deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination

33. The Exams and Assessment Office will review information provided by the student to determine whether the student is eligible for a deferral. The determination will take into account the grounds and evidence provided.
34. The Director of Learning, Teaching and Technology or delegate is responsible for the management of deferred examinations during the standard deferred examination period, including:
 - 34.1. liaising with Unit Coordinators and students
 - 34.2. scheduling the date, time, and location during the standard deferred examination period
 - 34.3. managing and providing examination scripts and related documentation
 - 34.4. organising and managing invigilation (if required).
 - 34.5. for examinations outside the standard deferred exam period, the Unit Coordinator is responsible for administering the exam.
35. The outcome of an approved application for a deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination can take only take the form of a deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination. Other forms of Assessment Accommodation are assessed through a different process (see above).

Responsibility for preparation of the deferred Final Assessment – Examination

36. The Unit Coordinator is responsible for preparing the deferred Final Assessment - Examination Assessment Item, ensuring the student has the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes assigned to the original examination.
37. The Unit Coordinator ensures the deferred examination is a sufficiently different assessment through topic, task, questions, resource or other such differentiator, and ensures students are able to demonstrate achievement of the Unit Learning Outcomes assigned to the original Final Assessment - Examination Assessment Item.

Non-Completion of a deferred Final Assessment – Examination

38. A student who does not complete their deferred Final Assessment - Examination through non-attendance or non-submission is awarded a zero mark for the Assessment Item.
39. Where a student does not complete their deferred Final Assessment Item due to reaching the limit on deferral and it is not a Professional Accreditation requirement for the Course, then:
 - 39.1. If a Minimum 70% of the Unit's assessment weighting has been achieved, and all Unit Learning Outcomes have been demonstrated, a

substitute mark is determined by the Unit Coordinator as an aggregate of the completed assessment items.

39.2. A Unit Coordinator may provide an Alternate Assessment Item. The Unit Coordinator is responsible for designing, managing, and implementing this Item.

39.3. A substitute mark may be approved in accordance with the Results Procedure.

40. If a substitute mark cannot be derived, then the Unit Coordinator determines another outcome in accordance with the Enrolments (Coursework) Procedure.

Escalation of request and Appeals Mechanisms

41. Students may escalate a request for an Assessment Accommodation if the original request followed these procedures, and the Unit Coordinator denied the request.

42. The application is escalated to the Head of School. The Head of School or delegate makes the final decision.

43. If all avenues of escalation for Assessment Accommodations are exhausted, the student can write to the University Secretary, in accordance with the University appeals and grievance processes such as outlined in the Appeals Policy.

Schedule 1

Application Requirements

A request for Assessment Accommodation must include:

1. Full name of student as recorded with their University enrolment
2. Student number
3. Type of Accommodation sought:
 - a. extension or change to the due date
 - b. Alternate Assessment Item or requirements
 - c. early sitting of a Final Assessment – Examination
 - d. deferral of a Final Assessment – Examination.
4. Reason for Assessment Accommodation (the Grounds – refer Schedule 2 below)
5. Supporting evidence (suggestions outlined in Schedule 2 below).
6. Further relevant details and supporting documentation as requested by the University

Schedule 2

Assessment Accommodation application grounds and suggested supporting documentation.

1. Assessment Accommodation can only be requested for the grounds listed in tables 1 and 2 (below).
2. An application for Assessment Accommodation must include current independent supporting evidence. The tables below list suggested forms of independent supporting evidence for each of the grounds.
3. The level of required supporting evidence for:
 - a. all Assessment Accommodations except deferral of Final Assessment – Examination will be determined by the Unit Coordinator
 - b. deferred examinations will be determined by the relevant delegated authority of the Director of Learning, Teaching and Technology.
4. Supporting evidence must be in English or officially translated and notarised.

Table 1: Unforeseen exceptional circumstances

Grounds where there is no warning, or the event is unplanned.

Grounds	Supporting Documentation
Illness or serious health problem or Significant personal trauma	A completed Murdoch Medical Certificate or Medical Certificate with similar information from a registered Medical Practitioner.
Unavoidable community or public service commitments (including emergency response with a recognised emergency management body such as the State Emergency Service (SES) or Bush Fire Brigades (BFB))	<i>Emergency Management body</i> - a signed and dated letter (on the organisation's letterhead) that includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student name • date/s of attendance.
Being a victim of crime, including domestic violence	One or more of the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • police report • written verification from a registered Health Practitioner • statutory declaration (students located in Australia only).
Exceptional family or personal circumstances which are outside of the control of the student.	<i>Recent death of family member or close friend</i> at least one of the following documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written evidence of the situation such as an obituary, funeral notice, or hospital/medical certificate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Death Certificate • Statutory Declaration (students located in Australia only) stating the relationship to the deceased and date of passing • written verification from a registered Health Practitioner. <p><i>Unexpected primary carer responsibilities</i> At least one of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a completed Murdoch Medical Certificate form indicating the student's primary carer responsibilities • a statutory declaration (students located in Australia only) indicating how primary carer responsibilities have impacted the student's ability to study accompanied by relevant supporting documents • written verification from a registered Health Practitioner. <p><i>Natural disaster or political upheaval</i> At least one of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a statutory declaration (students located in Australia only) and a copy of a public record such as a weather report or media coverage • insurance claim • written verification from a registered Health Practitioner. <p>In extreme circumstances where it is not practicable for a student to obtain and/or supply this documentation, the student may make direct request to the Head of School.</p>
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Table 2: Other Exceptional Circumstances

Grounds where there is some warning of the event or the event is known ahead of time.

Grounds	Supporting Documentation
Religious	A signed and dated statement (on the organisation's letterhead) from an imam, pastor, rabbi, priest or equivalent spiritual or community leader that includes:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the student's name that the student is a regular attendee or participant.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Grounds	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students obtain a written communication from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Manager of Kulbardi or delegate an Aboriginal service provider/ incorporated body or a letter from an elder/ community member sighted by the Manager of Kulbardi.
Defence Forces Reserve commitments	<p>A signed and dated letter (on the organisation's letterhead) that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> student name date/s of attendance.
A cultural or sporting commitment at State, national or international representative level	<p>A signed and dated letter (on the organisation's letterhead) that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> student name details about the event details of the student's participation in the event.
Unavoidable community or public service commitments (including legal commitment or planned event with a recognised emergency management body such as the SES or BFB)	<p><i>Legal Commitment</i> - a copy of the summons, subpoena, court order or notice of selection for jury duty stating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> student name the reason for the commitment date/s of attendance required. <p><i>Emergency Management body</i> - a signed and dated letter (on the organisation's letterhead) that includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> student name date/s of attendance.
Wedding of sibling/ parent or student is a member of the wedding party.	<p>At least one of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a copy of the official wedding invitation proof of relationship documents (where surname of betrothed couple and student do not match)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flight booking details (only when wedding is interstate or overseas) • a Statutory Declaration (students located in Australia only) confirming the student is a member of the wedding party. To be completed by the betrothed couple. <p>Deferral is eligible only for the day of the wedding. Where it is an interstate or overseas wedding a one-day travel allowance on either side of the wedding day will be considered.</p>
Employment	<p>A signed and dated letter (on the organisation's letterhead) or official email that includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student name • information advising that the student is required to work on the day of exam.

Related Documents:

Internal policies and procedures.

- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Guideline 2016 January 01](#)
- [Grades Policy](#)
- [Grades Procedure](#)
- [Student Appeals Policy](#)
- [Student Disability Policy](#)
- [Supplementary Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Work Integrated Learning Policy](#)
- [Results Procedure](#)

This procedure is influenced by the following external documents:

- [The Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) :
 - Student Participation and Attainment
 - 1.3 Orientation and Progression
 - 1.4 Learning Outcomes and Assessment
 - Teaching - 3.1 Course Design
- [The Australian Qualification Framework \(AQF\)](#)

- [Racial Discrimination Act 1975 \(WA\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Commonwealth\)](#)

Approval and Implementation:

Approval Authority:	President Academic Council
Responsible Officer(s):	Deputy Vice Chancellor Education
Committee with oversight:	Education Committee
Contact Officer:	Director Learning, Teaching and Technology

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