# STUDENT ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION POLICY

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<th>Approved by:</th>
<th>UOW College Academic Board</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>19 March 2015</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Custodian:</td>
<td>Academic Program Manager</td>
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**Supporting Documents, Procedures & Forms:**
- Assessment Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Privacy Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Student Conduct Policy
- Student Grievance Policy

**References & Legislation:**
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- State Records Act 1998
- General Retention and Disposal Authority GDA 23
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1 Purpose of Policy

1.1 The purpose of the Student Academic Consideration Policy is to enable student requests for academic consideration for specific assessment tasks, examinations, or academic progress in a subject relevant to their course to be evaluated in a fair, reasonable, timely and consistent manner throughout UOW College (the College).

1.2 This policy sets out clear and defined requirements allowing for transparency, ease of interpretation and implementation. Consistency in criteria, procedures, and outcomes in the processing of applications for academic consideration for all forms of assessment are requirements of this policy.

2 Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word/Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Progress</td>
<td>Successful completion of subjects within established time limits.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>An academic task which a student is required to complete to provide a basis for an official record of achievement or certification of competence in a subject, as stipulated in the Subject Outline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment Committee</td>
<td>The Committee of staff responsible for declaration of final results.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>A program of study that includes those courses leading to higher education awards and non-award courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated Staff</td>
<td>Those administrative and reception staff of UOW College that verify any documentation to be submitted to UOW College from Students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Disability, in relation to a person, includes:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a. total or partial loss of a person’s bodily or mental functions;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. total or partial loss of a part of the body;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. the presence of a body of organisms causing disease or illness;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. the presence of a body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. the malfunction, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of a person’s body;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>f. a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning different</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Services</td>
<td>Provide reasonable adjustment advice and support for current and prospective students with a disability or health condition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examiners’ Committee</td>
<td>The committee of staff responsible for reviewing final marks and applications for academic consideration which makes recommendations to the Assessment Committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination Period</td>
<td>Period during which final examinations are held.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grievance (complaint)</td>
<td>A complaint by a student concerning a decision, act or omission by a member of College staff or committee which affects the student’s academic experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Test</td>
<td>A test, examination, quiz or review conducted during a session or cycle under classroom supervision.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head of Program</td>
<td>Refers to the Academic Program Manager, English Language Centre Manager, English Language Coordinator, Academic Support Coordinator, and Relevant Vocational Program Coordinator of UOW College.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasonable Adjustments</td>
<td>Alternative arrangements that are made to ensure that students with a disability are able to undertake their study and complete their course requirements without disadvantage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registered Medical Practitioner</td>
<td>A person registered with a professional body to provide a specialised medical opinion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>A period in which subjects may be offered in the Academic, Vocational and</td>
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### 3 Application & Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled in:

- a. UOW College English Language Programs,
- b. UOW College Higher Education Programs – (Diplomas),

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOLSMail</td>
<td>The Student Online Services email system. It is an official method for communication with students at the College.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Any person who is enrolled in any course or program offered at, or in conjunction with, UOW College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Online Services (SOLS)</td>
<td>SOLS is the official enrolment system of the University of Wollongong and UOW College. It is a web-based system that enables a Student to self-manage their enrolment, update their personal details, check final results and receive important messages from the University and the College.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Advisor</td>
<td>A member of staff who provides liaison, information, support and referral to ensure students meet their educational goals as effectively and efficiently as possible and are aware of available options in relation to their study pathways.</td>
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<td>Subject</td>
<td>A self-contained unit of study in any course or program offered at, or in conjunction with, UOW College. A self-contained unit of study or vocational unit of competency in any course or program offered at, or in conjunction with, UOW College.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Coordinator</td>
<td>A staff member with nominated responsibility for the coordination of a subject/s.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Outline</td>
<td>The document governing content, delivery and assessment of material for a subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplementary Assessment</td>
<td>An assessment task, including an examination, available in place of, or in addition to, assessments as scheduled in the subject outline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Verified Application</td>
<td>An application for academic consideration is considered verified when the required supporting documentation has been validated.</td>
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c. UOW accredited courses – Foundation Studies Program 2-Session Program (FSP), Foundation Studies 3-Session Program (FSP3), Special Tertiary Entrance Program (STEP) University Entrance Certificate (UCE) and University Access Program (UAP), and

d. UOW College Vocational Programs.

3.2 Academic consideration is only granted in serious or exceptional circumstances which are beyond a student’s control and which significantly impair a student’s ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the subject outline, or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course.

3.3 Academic consideration is not intended to excuse students from meeting their assessment task responsibilities, as stated in the subject outline, or to accommodate those common occurrences which interfere with daily life. Students who need assistance with study skills, essay writing or time management should contact a Student Advisor.

3.4 Students enrolled in a UOW College course who make five or more applications for academic consideration within six calendar months must contact the relevant Head of Program for academic advice.

3.5 Students cannot apply for academic consideration once grades have been declared for that subject. In these circumstances, students can consult with the relevant Head of Program or lodge a formal grievance in accordance with the Student Grievance Policy. Refer to http://www.uowcollege.edu.au/current-students/policies-procedures/index.html.

4 Policy Principles

4.1 Underlying the requirements, definitions, and procedures of this policy are the principles of equity, consistency, transparency and natural justice.

4.2 All UOW College students and staff are required to follow the requirements stipulated in this policy.

5 Academic Consideration

5.1 Academic consideration is a process intended to help minimise the impact of serious or extenuating circumstances beyond a student’s control which significantly impair a student’s ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date, as stipulated in the subject outline, or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course. Academic consideration may be granted on the basis of medical grounds, compassionate grounds, and/or extenuating circumstances.
5.2 It is not possible for academic consideration to compensate for every consequence of illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance affecting a student's academic progress. However, academic consideration, where appropriate, may help to minimise the impact of such circumstances by providing a mechanism to vary assessment requirements of a subject, or to avoid some of the usual consequences of failure in a subject. Approved academic consideration applications may, for example, result in one or more of the following outcomes:

a. an extension of time to submit an assessment task or complete an examination,

b. permission to undertake a supplementary assessment task or examination,

c. recommendation for a late withdrawal without academic penalty (only the relevant Head of Program can approve this recommendation),

d. under limited circumstances, recommendation for an average to be awarded for an assessment task such as minor quizzes (averaging will not be applied to final exams),

and in exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Assessment Committee:

e. consideration in determining a final mark, and

f. consideration in marking a particular assessment item.

5.3 Academic consideration applications may be denied where the application does not meet the criteria for eligibility as set out in section 8, or where the supporting documentation does not satisfy requirements as set out in section 10. Students should refer to section 15 of this policy if they do not agree with a decision made regarding their application.

6 Responsibilities

6.1 The College has a responsibility to:

6.1.1 ensure that this policy is accessible to all staff and students,

6.1.2 ensure that this policy is implemented and applied consistently across all programs,

6.1.3 promote good practice in considering applications for academic consideration, and

6.1.4 provide guidelines for considering applications for academic consideration which allow for:

a. timeliness of response,

b. fairness and equitable consideration,
c. respect for privacy, and
d. keeping all parties informed of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the application of academic consideration.

6.2 Students have a responsibility to meet deadlines for work to be submitted as set out in the Subject Outline and in accordance with the Assessment Policy. Students who cannot meet such deadlines because of illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance as outlined in section 8 of this policy, and who are seeking academic consideration must then:

6.2.1 Lodge an Academic Consideration application via SOLS within the timeframe fixed by section 9.2.

6.2.2 Provide supporting documentation for verification within the relevant timeframe as outlined in sections 10.9 and 10.10.

6.2.3 Retain the supporting documentation for twelve months from the date of verification and provide such documentation when requested.

6.2.4 Ensure that the date/s specified in the supporting documentation is/are relevant to the date of the assessment task.

6.2.5 seek academic or administrative advice as appropriate, and

6.2.6 behave ethically and honestly in all respects when applying for academic consideration.

6.3 Designated staff have a responsibility to:

6.3.1 receive the supporting documentation

6.3.2 verify the authenticity of the supporting documentation ensuring compliance with procedural requirements of this policy, and

6.3.3 return the supporting documentation to the student.

6.4 The Subject Coordinator, has a responsibility to:

6.4.1 ensure consistent application of this policy and its guidelines so that all students are treated fairly and equitably as far as practicable

6.4.2 review supporting documentation as deemed necessary

6.4.3 approve or deny the verified academic consideration application within five working days, and

6.4.4 ensure that all applications for academic consideration are dealt with according to the provisions of this policy,

6.4.5 notify the Head of Program if unable to respond.
6.5 The Head of Program has a responsibility to:

6.5.1 ensure every subject has an assigned Subject Coordinator specified in the subject database, and

6.5.2 ensure that all applications for academic consideration are dealt with according to the provisions of this policy.

6.6 The Examiners’ Committee is responsible for reviewing all applications for academic consideration in determining the recommendation to the Assessment Committee of final marks for subjects in which the student is enrolled.

7 Privacy and Confidentiality

7.1 All staff designated to access information contained in applications for academic consideration are obliged to preserve confidentiality in accordance with the UOW Enterprises Privacy Policy, the UOW Enterprises Code of Conduct and other relevant privacy legislation.

7.2 Records relating to academic consideration applications will be retained and disposed of in accordance with the State Records Act 1998, General Retention and Disposal Authority GDA 23, and the Records Management Policy.

8 Eligibility

8.1 Students are eligible to apply for academic consideration if their ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date as stipulated in the subject outline or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study has been significantly affected by illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance.

8.2 Applications for academic consideration will be considered on the basis of medical grounds, compassionate grounds and/or extenuating circumstances.

Medical Grounds

8.3 Applications made on medical grounds may include illnesses of short-term duration, which would require the student to seek medical attention and which significantly impair the student’s ability to complete an assessment task or performance in their course of study. Medical grounds may include, but are not limited to, illness or injury, hospitalisation, treatment programs or exacerbation of existing medical condition or disability.

8.4 Students with a disability and students who are associates of persons with a disability who may require reasonable adjustment are encouraged to disclose the nature and
8.5 Students who have a disability, or students who are associates of persons with a disability, and require reasonable adjustment are eligible to and should apply for academic consideration in circumstances where their ability to complete an assessment task on or by the due date or to progress academically in a subject relevant to their course of study is significantly affected on medical grounds unrelated to their or their associate’s disability such as for short-term illness, injury, other seriously cause or extenuating circumstances as defined in section 8.8.

8.6 Students who are deemed to require ongoing reasonable adjustments remain eligible to apply for academic consideration under the terms as defined in section 8.1. In normal circumstances; these students will not be required to apply for academic consideration for each assessment task.

Compassionate Grounds

8.7 Applications made on compassionate grounds, that is, where a student is affected by suffering or misfortune, may include, but are not limited to:

a. loss or bereavement – such as death of a family member, immediate relative or close friend, family relationship breakdown, or

b. hardship or trauma – such as sudden loss of income or employment, significant disruption to domestic arrangements, victim of crime.

Extenuating Circumstances

8.8 Applications made on extenuating circumstances of reasonable significance that interfere with the student’s ability to meet a subject’s requirements may include, but are not limited to:

a. carer’s responsibilities – where a student has substantial unplanned responsibilities to either members of their immediate family or members of their household who need their care and support,

b. legal commitments – where a student is called for jury duty or is required to attend a court or tribunal,

c. timetable clash for simultaneous in-class tests,

d. military service,

e. accidents or natural disasters,

f. participation in sporting events at state, national or international level,
g. religious reasons where a student is required to observe religious obligations,

h. one-off unusual work commitments, or

i. participation in major cultural event.

8.9 Academic consideration will not be granted on grounds such as usual work or family commitments, clashes with recreational activities or holiday arrangements.

9 Applications

9.1 Students must apply for academic consideration for all forms of assessment through SOLS.

Timing of Applications

9.2 Applications will normally be made:

9.2.1 in advance of the due date of an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-class test or final examination,

9.2.2 on the due date of an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-class test or final examination,

or, on rare occasions, where advice is sought from, and approval provided by, the relevant Head of Program

9.2.3 no later than three working days after the scheduled date or due date for an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-class test or final examination, in the event of an illness, injury, other serious cause, or extenuating circumstance coinciding with the scheduled assessment date.

9.3 In exceptional circumstances, the above timing requirements may be exempted by the Head of Program. These timing requirements will only be exempted where requests for exemption are emailed to the relevant Head of Program with appropriate supporting documentation attached. This must be submitted at the time of late application for academic consideration. Late applications will be denied for non-compliance unless an exemption is granted. Examples of exceptional circumstances justifying an exemption may include, but are not limited to, an accidental injury or sudden illness requiring the student’s immediate hospitalisation, or a student being homebound without access to a computer.

9.4 All applications for academic consideration must be supported by appropriate documentation in accordance with section 10.
10 Supporting Documentation

10.1 Students applying for academic consideration must submit supporting documentation which verifies their eligibility as stipulated in section 8. Supporting documentation must be submitted in person to the College reception. Supporting documentation must be in hard copy and written in English or be a certified and signed translation.

10.2 All applications for academic consideration must be supported by appropriate documentation as fixed by sections 10.4 to 10.7. Supporting documentation must comply with the criteria set out in these clauses; failure to comply will result in the application being denied. Applications without supporting documentation will not be considered.

10.3 Supporting documentation should be an original document. In circumstances where this is not possible, an original certified copy will suffice. All supporting documentation should indicate the exact dates of the event or circumstance and how this will impact on the assessment.

10.4 Supporting documentation for academic consideration applications on medical grounds includes an original medical certificate (or original certified copy) which must indicate:
   
a. the name of the student,

b. the date the certificate was written and signed,

c. practitioner provider number

d. the date on which the doctor considers the student is likely to return to studies, and

e. should indicate the degree of incapacity of the student.

10.5 Medical certificates must be written by the doctor during the period of illness and, in normal circumstances, on the first day of illness. Except in exceptional circumstances, as defined in section 9.3, backdated or late certificates will not be accepted.

10.6 Supporting documentation for academic consideration applications on compassionate grounds may include:

   a. notification or letter from a registered psychologist (for example, a University Counsellor),

   b. death certificate or death notice, plus a UOW Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration if the relationship between the student and the deceased is not obvious from the death notice or death certificate,
c. police report, or event number plus a UOW Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration,

d. letter from a minister of religion (or the like) on relevant letterhead, or

e. letter from an employer on company letterhead.

10.7 Supporting documentation for academic consideration applications on extenuating circumstances may include:

   a. notification or letter from a registered psychologist (for example, a University Counsellor),
   b. letter from a minister of religion (or the like) on relevant letterhead,
   c. jury notice or letter from relevant authority on relevant letterhead,
   d. police report, or event number plus a statutory declaration for academic consideration,
   e. satisfactory written evidence from the armed forces on relevant letterhead,
   f. statutory declaration,
   g. letter from an employer on company letterhead,
   h. selection confirmation on the letterhead of the state, national or international sporting body, or
   i. letter from a relevant cultural authority on relevant letterhead.

10.8 Where it is not possible to obtain supporting documentation, students must seek advice from the Subject Coordinator prior to application lodgement. In some cases, the Subject Coordinator may refer the student to the Head of Program for further consultation. Following consultation with the Subject Coordinator or Head of Program, the student must complete a UOW Statutory Declaration for Academic Consideration to support the application. The declaration should state in detail the facts upon which academic consideration is based, attaching any relevant information or documentation to support statements made in the declaration.

10.9 For applications for academic consideration made in advance or on the due date of an assessment task, including the scheduled date for an in-session test or end of session examination, supporting documentation must be submitted within three working days of the SOLS application.

10.10 For applications for academic consideration made after the due date of an assessment task or the scheduled date for an in-session tests or end of session examination, supporting documentation must be submitted on the same or next working day of the SOLS application.
10.11 Subject Coordinators are formally notified of applications for academic consideration by email only after supporting documentation is verified.

**Verification of Supporting Documentation**

10.12 In submitting supporting documentation for verification, students consent to the College conducting an audit of the document's legitimacy regarding the contents and origin of the documentation. In lodging an application for academic consideration, students consent to the release of information to relevant third parties for the purpose of the audit.

10.13 From the date of verification of the supporting documentation, students are required to retain the supporting documentation for twelve months and may be requested to provide it for further inspection.

10.14 The Subject Coordinator is entitled to inspect the supporting documentation prior to making a decision in regard to the academic consideration application and may request sighting the supporting documentation before a decision is made in regard to the academic consideration application.

10.15 The submission of fraudulent documentation will be regarded as serious misconduct and will be managed in accordance with the Student Conduct Policy and associated procedures. The matter may also be referred to the State or Federal Police.

**11 Criteria for Granting Academic Consideration**

11.1 In deciding whether or not to grant a request for academic consideration, and in deciding what form of academic consideration, if any, may be appropriate, regard may be had to:

a. the seriousness of the circumstances and the extent to which these impact on the student's academic progress in a subject.

b. the extent to which the circumstances and their impact were beyond the student's control

c. the extent to which the student may have contributed to producing the circumstances

d. whether the academic consideration sought would unfairly advantage the student in relation to other students enrolled in the subject

e. the relevance of the supporting documentation

f. the student's academic progress in the session

g. the student's attendance in the session, cycle or course
h. previous applications by the student for academic consideration, and
i. any other relevant consideration.

12 Response Times

12.1 The Subject Coordinator should respond through the Student Management System (SMP) within five working days of receiving the email notification of the application.

12.2 If the Subject Coordinator has not responded within five working days, the Subject Coordinator will be sent an email, copied to the student, requesting an urgent response within two working days.

12.3 Students who have not been given a response within ten working days of submitting verified documentation should discuss the matter with the Head of Program.

12.4 If after that period no response has been given, the application will be forwarded automatically to the Head of Program who is responsible for investigating the delay, taking advice from the Subject Coordinator as appropriate, and may determine the outcome of the application within three working days. Students should contact the Head of Program as soon as possible if no response has been given after this period.

13 Outcomes of Academic Consideration

13.1 Students will be notified of the outcome and relevant details of their academic consideration request via SOLSmail. It is the student’s responsibility to check their SOLSmail regularly. The College will not be held responsible if the student fails to read their SOLSmail and follow the instructions contained therein.

Assessment Tasks (excluding in-class tests and final examinations)

13.2 The following outcomes are available in cases where academic consideration for an assessment task is approved:
   a. revised submission date (i.e., extension), or
   b. supplementary assessment task.

13.3 A revised submission date will not be granted beyond the date upon which the assessment task is marked and returned to other students in the class.

13.4 Supplementary assessment task details will be included in the SOLSmail notification.
In-class Tests

13.5 In cases where academic consideration for an in-class test is approved, a supplementary test will be provided.

13.6 The Subject Coordinator will determine, in a reasonable manner, the nature, date, time and venue of any supplementary test. The student will be informed through SOLSMail, at least three working days prior to this date.

13.7 If a student is not able to attend the scheduled supplementary in-class test, in extenuating circumstances, the Subject Coordinator has the discretion to allow the student to undertake the supplementary in-class test at an alternative time. Alternatively, the student may be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the subject without academic penalty or may be awarded a zero fail for the in-class test.

Examinations held during the final examination period

13.8 In cases where academic consideration for an examination held during the final examination period is approved, a supplementary examination will be provided.

13.9 The SOLSmail notification will include supplementary examination details including the date, time and venue of the supplementary examination.

13.10 A student who is not able to attend the scheduled supplementary examination may apply for academic consideration again in accordance with this policy. However, on this occasion, they must apply in writing to the Head of Program following the timing of application procedures outlined in clause 9.2. The Head of Program has the discretion to allow the student to undertake a second supplementary examination, or to complete a substitute piece of assessment where this option is offered in the Subject Outline.

13.11 Alternatively, the student may be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the subject without academic penalty or may be awarded a zero fail for the examination.

Application Denied

13.12 Students will be notified through SOLSmail if their academic consideration application has been denied. This notification will include the reason/s why the application has been denied and the name of the staff member who has made this decision and will inform the student of their right to appeal the decision pursuant to the UOW College Student Grievance Policy.
14 Support Available for Students

14.1 Students who require advice about the Student Academic Consideration Policy or assistance with its procedures may contact a Student Advisor, Subject Coordinator or the Head of Program.

14.2 The University provides a free and confidential counselling service to students who are having difficulty coping with disruptive, though relatively common, life events. Students who are experiencing any difficulties are encouraged to seek counselling support by first contacting a Student Advisor.

14.3 Students are encouraged to access College and UOW support services and seek assistance from staff to develop good academic study patterns, time management skills, note taking and essay writing skills, and examination preparation skills.

15 Appeal Against a Decision on Academic Consideration

15.1 The outcome of an application for academic consideration is determined by one of the following: the Subject Coordinator, Head of Program or Assessment Committee. If a student does not agree with a decision made regarding their application, a grievance may exist. Students are advised to refer to the Student Grievance Policy at www.uowcollege.edu.au/policies for further details. Students may file a grievance in writing in accordance with the Student Grievance Policy.

16 Version Control and Change History

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<th>Version Control</th>
<th>Date Effective</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18/10/10</td>
<td>WCA Academic Board</td>
<td>New Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20/6/11</td>
<td>Ian Tobin</td>
<td>Updated for name change. Correction to numbering Clauses 5.4 and 10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19/03/2015</td>
<td>UOWC Academic Board</td>
<td>Updated branding, changes from hard copy process to online process. Alignment with UOW policy.</td>
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