

Special Circumstances FAQs

When should I submit special circumstances?

If you have medical/personal circumstances that may have affected your academic performance, then you should submit special circumstances. Examples include but are not limited to:

- short or long-term illness;
- severe financial problems;
- major accommodation problems;
- bereavement;
- or other compassionate grounds.

What are not considered to be special circumstances?

The following list are not considered to be special circumstances:

- Problems with computers;
- lack of access to resources;
- multiple deadlines on the same day;
- struggling with academic material;
- participation in departmental activities such as crisis games, performance productions, or study trips;
- non-academic activities, this includes any part time work you may have outside of university.

How do I submit special circumstances?

If you believe your academic performance has been affected:

- **Complete the online form** via your Student Record.
- **Upload supporting evidence** (e.g. medical notes, letters from support services).
- You must submit the form yourself—others cannot do it for you

What type of evidence will I need to provide to support my special circumstances?

You should submit independent documentary evidence wherever possible. All evidence must be relevant to the date of the assessment(s). Acceptable documentary evidence includes, but is not limited to:

- a medical/health certificate;
- a death certificate;
- a letter of support/explanation from a support service in the University, or other appropriate external support organisation. For full details of the types of letter that may be provided by the University, please visit: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/student-support/letters/>;
- An unavoidable absence from an in-class assessment due to representing Aberystwyth University at an official University sporting fixture may occasionally be accepted, however official confirmation from the Student Union that a student is representing the University **must** be submitted as supporting evidence
- Where students' academic performance has been affected by circumstances involving a third party, students should seek to submit independent documentary evidence that explains the impact that this has had on them. If this is not possible, students may submit evidence relating to a third party (e.g. parent, sibling) provided that they receive written consent from them, which must be submitted with the special circumstances.

What type of evidence is not acceptable to support my special circumstances?

Please note that photos of injuries can't be used as evidence. Any documents you submit must clearly relate to the time when your situation was affected.

What if I cannot obtain independent evidence in support of special circumstances?

The University recognises that it may not be possible for students to obtain independent documentary evidence in all circumstances. In such cases, you should provide a detailed

account of your special circumstances and the impact on your assessment(s). You should explain in full why it has not been possible to obtain documentary evidence.

However, independent evidence remains a requirement for consideration in the Window of Opportunity, Academic Appeals, Final Reviews, and decisions made under the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress.

Should I submit special circumstances if I have missed an assessment deadline?

If you have missed an assessment deadline due to medical/personal reasons, then you should submit special circumstances with supporting documentary evidence that is relevant to the deadline date(s) of the missed assessment(s). If you have missed a deadline due to reasons that are not considered to be special circumstances, then you should not submit a form.

What should I do if I need to be away from the University for a short period of time due to medical or personal reasons?

If you need to be away from university for a short period of time due to medical/personal reasons, then you should only submit special circumstances if this absence has affected your performance in assessments. You should also let your department know that you are going to be absent.

If the absence is likely to extend over a longer period of time for medical or personal reasons, then you should speak to your department as you may wish to consider temporary withdrawal.

What compensation can I expect if my special circumstances are accepted?

If the special circumstances prevented you from completing assessed work or taking an examination, or have resulted in failure, Senate Examination Board may approve uncapped resit(s). It is not normal practice to raise a module mark due to special

circumstances. Further details of what you can expect can be

found here: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/academic-registry/handbook/taught-schemes/>

Have my special circumstances been accepted?

Once submitted, special circumstances are reviewed by a Registry Special Circumstances Panel which meets regularly throughout each semester to review all requests. Students will be informed of the decision on their special circumstances application within 15 working days. Where this is not possible students will be notified of the delay and the reasons for it.