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1. **Guidance Note: Confidentiality**

Students routinely disclose personal information to School staff who are then responsible for maintaining the appropriate confidentiality of this information, whilst ensuring that it is acted upon correctly. In broad terms, confidentiality within the University is based on the ‘need to know’. This means that the appropriate University staff should be made aware of circumstances in order properly and legally to accommodate these circumstances and mitigate risk on behalf of the institution. A staff member **cannot** promise a student complete confidentiality. The student may disclose details that must legally be passed on: this includes, for example, disability information, or details of criminal activity. In addition, the University would not want staff to be put in a position where they are the recipient of information regarding serious student issues, without an outlet to seek support from colleagues.

If a disability is disclosed to you, you must contact Student Services. You may also need to consult with other relevant Schools, e.g. in the event of an appeal in one module on the basis of disability that may be expected to affect modules in other subjects. If you are unsure whether the information disclosed to you indicates a disability, please contact Student Services to check.

If the information disclosed is not a disability, but you feel the student’s situation may affect their ability to engage with other modules and areas of the University, please contact Student Services, who will in turn inform other School and Units as necessary. It is good practice to explain to the student that you will be passing on the ‘need to know’ information, explaining that this avoids the student having to go over all the details again with other staff unnecessarily.

For more information, see: [http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/dataprotection/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/staff/policy/dataprotection/)
FOR SCHOOLS ONLY

2. **Guidance Note: School discretion**

The School may wish to consider the following when determining whether to provide academic adjustment for a student. Some or all of these considerations should help the School to build a picture of the full situation.

The circumstances given by the student:
- The plausibility
- The likelihood of being able to secure supporting information
- Any existing information the School has which would support/disprove the circumstances given
- Does the student state that they have contacted Student Services about the circumstances?

Previous interactions with the student:
- Does this student often ask for academic adjustments, or is this the first time they have asked?
- Is the student on any sort of academic probation, i.e. absolute credit requirements, or particularly difficult academic situation?

The compulsory element/s missed:
- The weighting of the piece of assessment within the module
- The ability of the School to provide alternative assessment
- Has the student requested academic adjustment for this type of compulsory element previously?
3. Academic Adjustment Key

This key outlines the criteria for a range of possible academic adjustments, where the student has legitimate circumstances for requesting such adjustments. It allows Schools to map out which options may be available depending on the student’s situation, including factors such as:

- At what stage in the semester the student informs the University about their circumstances?
- How much of the teaching/assessment has been affected by the circumstances?
- How much of the assessment has been completed/passed?
- Which level of module (e.g. 1000, 2000, etc.) is affected?

It is recognised that the timing of the student’s request can greatly affect the ability of Schools to appropriately accommodate for the circumstances, and that not all options will be available for every module. The key is designed to assist the School only in what might present as the most appropriate method of academic adjustment, rather than being prescriptive. Students should not assume a particular adjustment will be automatically granted. It is acknowledged that there will be exceptions to this key. The key assumes three statements:

1. The student has legitimate circumstances for requesting allowance
2. The circumstances have not been adequately accommodated for in advance of the request
3. Arrangements for students with disabilities are separate from this key

Where a student wishes to request an alternative adjustment than the one offered by the School, they may submit a Stage 1 academic appeal.

Where a student chooses not to accept the adjustment offered by the School, they should be aware that the ability of the School to accommodate for the circumstances at a later date will be significantly affected. In most cases, it will not be possible to make a retrospective adjustment.

4. Academic Adjustments

Refer for Leave of absence is an option for all semesters where:

- The circumstances have affected, are currently affecting, or will affect the ability of the student to engage with the teaching; and
- the student or University feels that these circumstances cannot reasonably be accommodated by other means such as allowance for absence or extensions or deferrals; and
- the student will not normally have completed all assessment for the module; and
- the request for leave has been made during the teaching weeks or in advance of the semester.
All Leave of Absence requests must be referred to the Prodean via the Registry support Officer. Note that Leave of Absence will not normally be an option once the teaching is complete. However, an exception could be made if the student is able to explain why the circumstances have affected teaching (and therefore cannot be resolved with deferred assessment) and explained satisfactorily why they did not request a leave during teaching weeks. If a student requests a Leave of Absence for a previous semester, the case must be referred to the Dean, and there must be strong justification as to why the student did not request the leave before the publication of grades.

Extensions for assignments are an option for all modules where:

- The circumstances have significantly affected the ability of the student to prepare for or submit the assignment; and
- the student has not completed all ongoing assessment for the module; and
- Leave of Absence is not an option.

Note that the length of the extension given is at the discretion of school but should be based on the ability to mark and return the assessment fairly compared to the rest of the class. Extended submission deadlines for assessments should not normally exceed the return date of that assessment to others on the module.

Alternative assessment is an option for all modules where:

- The circumstances have not significantly affected the ability of the student to engage fully with the module/s for the teaching period, but HAS significantly affected the ability of the student to prepare for and sit the scheduled final assessments in their original format.

Note that it may not always be possible for a School to provide alternative assessment.

Deferred assessment is an option for all modules where:

- The circumstances have not significantly affected the ability of the student to engage fully with the module/s for the teaching period, but HAS significantly affected the ability of the student to prepare for and sit the scheduled final assessment/s; and
- the student has completed all ongoing assessment for the module except for the final exam; or
- the student has not completed scheduled assessments by the reporting deadline; and
- alternative assessment is not an option.

Note that leave of absence should never be an option in this case, as the learning of the module was unaffected and offering deferred assessment when the student is fit to return is the most appropriate way to allow them to complete the module. If the student is registered for modules with another School, the School should consult that
School and Student Services to determine the most appropriate arrangement for the module affected.

**Waived assessment** is an option for *all modules* where:
- The circumstances have significantly affected the ability of the student to prepare for or submit the assignment; and
- the module assessment is incomplete, but student has completed the minimum specified assessment for the module; and
- alternative assessment, deferred assessment and Leave of Absence are not an option.

This option involves a re-weighting of elements within the module; it will not always be possible. Schools should indicate in the module handbook how much of the assessment must be completed to award credit; this will be no less than 75%, and can be 100%.

**S-coding** is an option for *3000, 4000 & 5000 level modules only* when:
- The circumstance has significantly affected the ability of the student to engage fully with the module for more than half of the teaching, which may or may not include the exam; and
- the student has completed, or aims to complete all assessment for the module (and has a good reason as to why any adjustments/allowances given were insufficient); and
- alternative assessment, deferred assessment and Leave of Absence are not an option.

Note that S-coding may be requested by a student both before and after the exam. If it is requested prior to the exam, other options may still be available, such as leave of absence, or deferred assessment. If S-coding is requested once the exam has been sat, the option of deferred or alternative assessment will not be available. Where a student requests S-coding for modules in a previous semester, Decanal discretion will always be required. This will not normally be granted, and there would need to be a strong justification as to why the student did not alert the School before the publication of grades.

**Stage 1 Appeal (permission to resit)** is an option for *all modules* where:
- The circumstances have significantly affected teaching and or exams; and
- the student has completed, but has failed the module without the right to reassessment.

The student may submit a Stage 1 academic appeal requesting permission to resit. Schools may reconsider a student’s eligibility to reassessment based on their circumstances.

**Qualified Honours Entry or Stage 1 Appeal** is an option for *2000 level modules only* where:
- The circumstances have significantly affected teaching and or exams; and
- the student has completed and passed all assessment for the module; and
- the student has not met the Honours entry requirements.

Qualified Honours Entry will only be available in particular Schools. For Schools where qualified Honours entry is not an option, the student may submit a Stage 1 academic appeal.

**Case referred to Dean** will occur where:
- The circumstances cannot be accommodated for via the adjustments listed above.

This may include retrospective requests for adjustments, and cases where multiple Schools are involved.
**Academic Adjustment Key**

This three part key can be used to assist Schools in determining the most appropriate academic adjustment for students citing circumstances which have affected their studies. The key assumes that the student has legitimate circumstances which have affected their studies which have not already been adequately accommodated for. A separate process exists for determining arrangements to accommodate for disabilities. The key is separated according to the time point at which the student requests academic adjustment.

**Key 1:** Where the student has requested academic allowance prior to teaching or during the teaching weeks

- Refer for Leave of Absence
- Has the student specifically requested Leave of Absence?
  - Y: Where the ability to prepare for, submit or sit assessment was affected
  - N: Where the ability to engage with the module was affected

- Extension for assessment
  - Y: Can the circumstances be accommodated for by extensions?
  - N: Can alternative assessment be offered?

- Alternative assessment
  - Y: Is the student able to complete assessment?
  - N: Go to Key 3

**Key 2:** Where the student has requested academic allowance in revision/exam period prior to completing assessment

- Where the ability to prepare for and/or sit final assessment in the original format was affected
  - Y: Alternative assessment
  - N: Deferred assessment
  - Go to Key 3

- Where the ability to prepare for and/or sit final assessment in the any format was affected
  - Y: Waived assessment
  - N: Refer for Leave of Absence

- Where the ability to engage fully with the module was affected
  - Y: S-coding
  - N: Stage 3 Appeal (permission to rest)

**Key 3:** Where the student has requested academic allowance after completing all assessment for the module

- Has 50% or more of the module been affected?
  - Y: Has the student completed the specified minimum assessment?
    - Y: General appeal or Stage 3 Appeal
    - N: Specialist Appeal
  - N: Has the student failed the module without the right to reassessment?
    - Y: General appeal or Stage 3 Appeal
    - N: Specialist Appeal

- Is the module affected 3000, 4000 or 5000 level?
  - Y: Qualified Honours Entry Requirements
  - N: The ability to engage fully with the module affected?