

About the Special Circumstances Policy

An alternative format of this summary is available. Please contact the Student Support team via [Contact Us](#) (phone +44 (0)300 303 5303), or via [StudentHome](#) if you are a current Open University student.

This summary was written alongside the main policy to offer a short introduction. Support from our advisers is available so please [Contact Us](#) to discuss this. Welsh-speaking Students and Learners may speak with a student support adviser in Welsh on +44 (0) 29 2047 1170.

The [Special Circumstances Policy](#) has been written for students who want to report any circumstances that may have affected their ability to study, take an exam or submit other forms of assessment. The information and evidence you give us will be made available to the Module Result Panel (MRP) when they meet to agree your result. The MRP will look at the information submitted if it meets the criteria as specified in section 4.3 of the [policy](#). The Special Circumstances Policy covers special circumstances affecting continuous assessment including Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs) and interactive Computer-Marked Assignments (iCMAs). It also covers Special Circumstances affecting the final assessed task, including exams, End-of-Module Assessments (EMAs) and end-of-module Tutor-Marked Assignments (emTMAs).

We will follow these principles

- We will use the information you provide about your special circumstances to your benefit, it will not be used to lower your mark.
- We will pass on your special circumstances form to your Student Support Team. Advisers there will review the information you provide and may contact you to offer additional support to you.

- Your special circumstances form will be made available to Module Result Panel (MRP) when they meet to determine your results. The MRP can review your information if it meets the criteria specified in section 4.3 of the [policy](#).
- Students living in Wales have the right to communicate with us in Welsh. Phone +44 (0)29 2047 1170, or email wales-support@open.ac.uk.

You need to be aware

- You can tell us about your special circumstances at any time from the start of your module, right up until 23:59, UK local time, four calendar days after the submission date for your final piece of assessment.
- Supporting third-party evidence can be submitted within 14 calendar days of your Special Circumstances' submission.
- Special Circumstances submitted outside of the above timeline may not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please refer to sections 3 'Reporting and submitting Special Circumstances' and 5 'Late notification of Special Circumstances' of the [policy](#). Please contact your SST for advice.
- We will not be able to assist you if you do not tell us about your special circumstances that affected your performance in your assessments. Guidance and information on how to submit the form and what third-party evidence is accepted can be found at [Special circumstances – assignments](#) in the Help Centre.

Your data and confidentiality

For full details about how we will handle your data and rules on confidentiality, please refer to the [Special Circumstances Policy](#) and [The Student Privacy Notice](#). Please [Contact Us](#) for support.

How to question a decision made under this policy

For information about how to appeal against a decision made under this policy please refer to the [Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#). Please [Contact Us](#) for support.

Give Us Your Feedback

If you have any comments about this policy summary document and how it might be improved, please share this with us, by emailing SPR-Policy-Team@open.ac.uk.

Charity Statement

The Open University is incorporated by Royal Charter (RC 000391), an exempt charity in England and Wales and a charity registered in Scotland (SC 038302). The Open University is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority in relation to its secondary activity of credit broking.

Document Information

Short summary for Special Circumstances Policy effective from October 2024

Approved by Director, Assessment, Credit and Qualifications, Academic Services

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