

Academic Consideration Requests and the ACR Submission Portal

A resource for Students,
Administrators and Instructors

Policy 167: Academic
Consideration

Toronto
Metropolitan
University



“Academic consideration is a form of alternate arrangement that may be available with the approval of the course instructor or faculty/contract lecturer, when a student experiences extenuating circumstances that prevents them from completing an academic requirement”

Alternate Arrangement

The general name given to a number of different **remedies** that *may be* available in response to a student who's request for academic consideration is approved by the instructor.

Academic Requirement

An academic requirement can include (but is not limited to);

- attending or participating in a class
- attendance and/or participation in a lab(s)
- writing a scheduled quiz, term test or final exam
- an assignment deadline
- a written assessment or academic paper

*Students should refer to their individual course syllabus for information on academic requirements and grading impacts

Extenuating Circumstances

- Circumstances that are of a short-term duration (normally **no more than 3 days***), and that have a significant and adverse effect on the ability to fulfill an academic requirement.
- In addition to being “short-term”, extenuating circumstances are occurrences that*;
 - (a) are outside of a student’s immediate control;
 - (b) could not have been reasonably foreseen or avoided; and
 - (c) significantly impact a student’s ability to fulfill their academic requirements.

*see Policy 167: Academic Consideration, Section 5 Policy

Circumstances that generally **do not*** meet the definition of an extenuating circumstance can include:

- Family or personal events (e.g, wedding, vacation, general or extended travel, etc.)
- Pre-scheduled competing commitments (e.g. work, volunteering, extra-curricular activities, etc.)
- Technological difficulties including persistent computer failure and ongoing intermittent (or unavailable) internet access as it is the student's responsibility to ensure they have access to the tools they require for their studies.

* Consult with your instructor if you are not sure your circumstances meet the definition of extenuating circumstances

The “one-time only, no documentation” option

Students may submit an academic consideration request “one time per semester” with no-documentation required*. Students must still meet the requirements for extenuating circumstances. Instructors/verifiers maintain the right to ask for clarification of the circumstances if needed.

This option **cannot** be used for:

- final exams/final assessments, **absences longer than three days**,
- for absences with an “**anticipated**” return exceeding three days or
- absences with an “**unknown**” duration,
- in combination with the Religious, Aboriginal or Spiritual Observance or the “Canadian Armed Forces” extenuating circumstance subcategories.

*Once used, any subsequent requests for academic consideration in the same semester must always be accompanied by documentation.

Documentation

Documentation* is always required for **brief absences** in any one of the following three circumstances:

- (a) a request for academic consideration without documentation has already occurred in that academic term (see slide 11);
- (b) the Academic Consideration involves a final examination or final assessment; or
- (c) in cases of temporary absence that last more than three days

*for example, a [Toronto Metropolitan Health Certificate](#).

Documentation (cont.)

While students are not required to disclose specific details of the Extenuating Circumstances in support of their request for Academic Consideration:

- documentation which is vague or overly general may be deemed insufficient to support a finding of Extenuating Circumstances; and
- documentation submitted by the student will be shared with the Instructor, Chair, or Director for decision making purposes.



Student Responsibilities

Submitting an ACR

Students are responsible for;

Knowing who they must contact first* (and preferably in advance), when requesting academic consideration, for example;

- The Instructor(s)
- The [Program or Academic Advisor](#), or Program Administrative office of their program
- Chair or Director of the teaching department for their course (if different from the program e.g. a liberal studies course)
- In some circumstances, the Chair or Director of their academic program **ONLY** if no response has been received from previous contacts and within 5 days of submitting the request.

*The Senate Office has no jurisdiction to accept or grant Academic Consideration requests. Please only forward issues of a technical nature to the Senate Office when attempting to submit an ACR.

Students are responsible for;

Understanding that approval of an academic consideration request is always **at the discretion of the course instructor**. *Submitting a request or verification of a request does not guarantee approval.*

Knowing it is their responsibility to contact each instructor (in person or via email) to discuss their request *immediately after a verification notification is received.*

Knowing that based on the circumstances of the request, **only the instructor(s)** will decide whether or not academic consideration can be given and what, if any alternate arrangements can be made.

Students are responsible for;

Knowing Policy 167: Academic Consideration and the procedures for submitting requests for academic consideration (ACR)

Obtaining and submitting **relevant** and timely documentation (when required) to support extenuating circumstances. Note: **submission of supporting documentation does not guarantee that academic consideration will be granted**

Submitting all supporting information through the [online ACR portal](#) and regularly checking their TMU email for status and update notifications

Knowing that submitting more than two requests for academic consideration per term will result in a shared notification advising them to contact their program to discuss their academic needs

Accessing the Academic Consideration Request (ACR) portal and submitting a request

- 1) Use the [link to the ACR portal](#) to sign in using your TMU Credentials
- 2) Select the *Academic Consideration Requests - Students Portal link*.
- 3) Read and accept conditions on the ACR summary page and proceed to input your information.
- 4) Select the extenuating circumstance that best fits your situation
- 5) Select the “date of onset” and “expected return date” for your request*

* Note: requests that involve a longer term (more than three days) absence may not qualify for an ACR. Always contact your department/program administrator if your extenuating circumstances and/or expected return is anticipated or unknown and will exceed 3 days.

cont./

- 6) Select the course(s) that fall within the time of the absence along with the course component and date of the missed academic assessment.
- 7) If using the "one time per semester no-documentation" option, select "yes" and proceed. If documentation is required, select "no" and proceed to upload supporting documentation.
- 8) Select "enter" and record the reference number of the request.
- 9) Once a verification notification has been received, contact the course instructor(s) to advise that a request has been submitted, to discuss options (if available) for academic consideration.

Common Submission Issues

When submitting a request for academic consideration (ACR)



What If I get an error?

Some conditions can occur that may restrict access to the portal or generate an error when trying to submit an ACR. Here are some common issues and what you can do to avoid them.

Please always try to resolve the matter first before contacting the Senate Office



What If I get an error?

Problem: Repeated attempts to submit an ACR generate a system error.

- This is common when trying to change onset and return dates, upload documentation or select course obligation dates that don't align with system (policy) rules. Students submit the request multiple times and eventually they are blocked by a submission error.

Solution: You must clear the browser cache and start a fresh session. Try again using a different browser (Firefox, Edge, Safari). A successful submission will be followed up by a reference number and email notification to your TMU email address.



What If I get an error?

Problem: Scheduled system maintenance - evenings and periods of outage

- Students are “blocked” or restricted from accessing the portal and submitting their request.

Solution: The Portal Bulletin Board (located on the login landing page) and the Senate Website will notify you if scheduled maintenance is happening. Please check these locations first for updates when you are blocked from access. The Portal bulletin board and Senate webpage are the source for information about service interruptions that might impact you when trying to submit your ACR.



What If I get an error?

Problem: Message indicating a student is “not enrolled or known” to the portal

- Students are “advised that their enrolment is unknown to the portal and are unable to access their information.

Solution: The Portal relies on current student enrolment information from MyServiceHub. Outstanding fees, late or incomplete enrolment or changes to enrolment status can impact the latest update to your information. In these situations, wait 24 hours and try your submission again. If you continue to experience access issues **after 24 hours**, you can contact the Senate Office.

For more information on Academic Consideration follow these links:

- [Senate Webpage - Academic Consideration](#)
- [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#)

or Contact your Program/Academic Advisor