**Extenuating Circumstances Application (ECA) Blog:**

**ECA Key points (at a glance):**

* **For assessments worth 20% or more or extensions of 10 working days or more**
* **Must be submitted within 5 working days of an assessment due date**
* **Valid for both exams and other assessments**
* **Replaces “special consideration” and “deferred examination” processes**

**Introduction:**

If you were studying at ANU prior to Semester 2, 2023, you may have heard of either a *“deferred examination”* or a *“special consideration”* process. As of Semester 2, 2023, these processes no longer exist and have been replaced with the Extenuating Circumstances Application (ECA), which has rolled both of these functions into one streamlined process, with some changes.

**What is an ECA?**

An ECA is a formal mechanism for the ANU to provide alternate arrangements when serious, unexpected setbacks impact assessment for coursework students (both undergraduate and postgraduate). This process does not distinguish between examinations and other assessments, meaning it can be used for both formal exams and other assessments, too.

**When should I apply for an ECA?**

**IMPORTANT**: An ECA must be submitted within five (5) working days of the original date of the assessment (including an examination) that the ECA is for. If you do not submit within 5 working days, an ECA will not be accepted unless you can demonstrate serious illness, incapacity or misadventure preventing you from submitting within this timeframe.

You can submit an ECA when an extenuating circumstance impacts your ability to complete an assessment item worth 20% or more of your final grade, or when seeking an extension of ten (10) working days or more to an assessment item (for assessments that do not meet these criteria, you should contact your course convenor or college directly).

The ANU has published the following examples as grounds for an adjustment to be approved:

* Medical: e.g. significant illness/injury; significant exacerbation of condition registered in access plan;
* Hardship: e.g. victim of significant crime including family and domestic violence; financial hardship; significant car accident or widespread public transport issues; significant broad spectrum IT issues; sudden, unavoidable primary caring responsibilities;
* Compassionate: e.g. death/sudden serious illness of immediate family member or close friend;
* Elite: e.g. sport or performer event;
* Duties: e.g. essential, military, emergency/volunteer emergency services;
* Disaster: e.g. significant natural disaster/geo-political event: e.g. flood, fire, pandemic, earthquake, tsunami, outbreak of war, terrorism, cyber-attack;
* Indigenous cultural duties: consistent with the ANU Reconciliation Action Plan.

It is important to remember that extenuating circumstances are often not neat, tidy or fit readily into boxes. If your circumstance does not fit neatly into the above examples, don’t panic! An ECA may still be able to be submitted and the ANUSA Student Assistance Team is happy to help provide you with free and confidential advice.

**How do I apply for an ECA?**

The ECA is an e-form, available through your ISIS account. Step by step instructions have been published and are available [here](https://www.anu.edu.au/files/advisory/ECA%20eForm%20supporting%20documentation%20for%20students%20-%2024%20July%202023.pdf).

**Possible Outcomes of an ECA:**

Once an ECA is submitted, there are set outcomes that can be made. These are:

* Approved: altered assessment due date;
* Approved: deferred examination;
* Approved: alternative assessment;
* Approved: modified assessment weighting;
* Not Approved.

It is important to note that the adjusting of the marks or grades on an assessment item is ***not*** a possible outcome. This was a possible outcome for special consideration applications but is no longer possible under the ECA application.

**I’m submitting an ECA, should I still talk to my course convenors and college?**

If you are able and feel comfortable to do so, then yes.

Even if you are applying for an ECA, it can be a good idea to advise your course convenor or college about your circumstances. In some cases, they may even provide you with a longer extension or a quicker outcome than the ECA.

If you are not comfortable to speak to your college or course convenor, you can discuss your situation confidentially with a member of the ANUSA Student Assistance Team.

**Still have questions?**

The Student Assistance Team at ANUSA is here to help! We are happy to discuss your options for any number of academic issues, including ECA. Please feel free to make an appointment to discuss your situation via sa.assistance@anu.edu.au or by visiting us on level 2 of the Di Riddell building in Kambri. We run one-to-one student assistance appointments either in-person or via Zoom.

**Still not sure who to speak to?**

ANUSA is completely independent of the ANU, so all information you disclose remains completely confidential and is never disclosed to any other party (including the ANU), unless you expressly request us to do so.

You can also consider speaking to the Dean of Students. Information on their role and how to contact them is available [here](https://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/dean-of-students).

If you feel like you may experience difficulties on future assessments, you can consider speaking to the Accessibility Office to put measures in place to support you in advance, such as an Education Access Plan (EAP). Information is available [here](https://www.anu.edu.au/students/health-safety-wellbeing/access-inclusion/how-to-register).