

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY <i>Inspiring Minds</i> <i>Faculty of Engineering</i> Short-Term Missed Work and Absence Reporting	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Faculty of Engineering	<i>Approval Date:</i> <i>USC: 14-Jun-23</i> <i>FC: 22-Jun-23</i>
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Associate Dean's Office	<i>Amendments:</i>

Related Policies: Dalhousie's Code of Student Conduct, Student Accommodation Policy.

- A. Background & Purpose: This document specifies the procedure for student absence reporting in the Faculty of Engineering. This policy is intended for short-term (three days or less) unintended absence.
- B. Application: This policy applies to all credit-bearing undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Engineering at Dalhousie. This policy does not apply to any Co-op courses in the Faculty of Engineering.

This policy implements a centralized Missed Work and Absence Reporting system to ensure a fair, consistent, and transparent process for all engineering courses.

- C. Guiding Principles:
- a. Students are expected to do their best to complete all course assessments and deliverables.
 - b. It is not a student's right to have a missed work request approved. The Associate Dean's office reserves the right to reject any Missed Work Request or Student Declaration of Absence.
 - c. The intent of this policy is to help students when they miss assessments and deliverables because of unforeseen circumstances.
 - d. Students who miss assessments and deliverables need to be treated fairly and consistently across the faculty.
 - e. Students must be aware that missing assessments and deliverables can greatly restrict their ability to receive feedback and learn course material.
 - f. The course syllabus should clearly communicate and properly describe alternate coursework arrangements for missed or late academic requirements. Alternative coursework arrangements are at the discretion of the individual course instructor.
 - g. The office of the Associate Dean will monitor student absence requests to identify when extra student support is needed or when system abuse is occurring.

D. Definitions:

- a. "Academic requirement" refers to all deliverables in a course.
- b. "MWA" refers to missed work or assessment.
- c. "Primary care health professional" refers to occupations such as physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, registered nurse, social worker, counsellor, therapist, or dentist.
- d. "Short-term absence" refers to absences of three (3) consecutive days or fewer due to minor physical or mental health conditions, or other extenuating circumstances such as caregiving duties; immediate family illness, injury, or death; involvement in an accident; legal proceedings or being a victim of a crime.

E. Procedure:

A student who requests an accommodation due to an absence of three (3) consecutive days or less during the semester that results in missed or late academic requirement must adhere to the following procedures.

1. Report the absence within 3 days before or 3 days after the missed or late academic requirement. Failure to report within this time frame could result in rejection of the absence request.
2. The student must submit a Missed Work or Assessment (MWA) form using the following link: <http://forms.engineering.dal.ca>.
3. Each missed or late academic requirement requires a student to submit a separate MWA form.
4. The Associate Dean's office is responsible for the processing and subsequent approval or denial of all MWA forms. The submission of an MWA does not provide an automatic exemption from any academic requirement that was missed or late during an absence.
5. A maximum of two MWA requests can be submitted per course per semester, with a total semester maximum of six.
6. The MWA will be automatically approved if all the following conditions are met:
 - 1.1. The value of the missed assessment or deliverable is less than 20%,
 - 1.2. The maximum number of MWA submissions for the course or semester, as indicated in (5), has not been surpassed,
 - 1.3. No flags or concerns have been identified by the instructor or the Associates Dean's office.
7. In some cases, the Assistant Dean of Students may request to meet with the student to review their MWA request, prior to a final decision. The student may be requested to provide documentation or demonstrate they have met with an Academic Advisor prior to the MWA being approved.
8. The Assistant Dean of Students, or designate, will review all MWA requests that are not

- automatically approved, as indicated in (6).
9. Following the approval of an MWA, an email is automatically sent to the student, with a copy to the course instructor, indicating approval of the MWA. The student is instructed to contact the instructor to coordinate the accommodation. The email notification does not outline the reason or details identified by the student to justify the MWA request – this is confidential information that remains with the Associate Dean’s office.
 10. The student is responsible for following up with the instructor to finalize the accommodation. It is the student’s responsibility to contact their instructor within one week or else the accommodation may not be provided.
 11. The course instructor will determine the appropriate type of accommodation or alternate coursework arrangements and the timing/schedule for missed or late academic requirements, as outlined in the course syllabus.
 12. If the MWA is denied by the Associate Dean’s office, no further action is required by the instructor.
 13. If a student exceeds the maximum number of MWA requests, as defined in (5), they must meet with the Assistant Dean of Students or an Academic Advisor before any additional MWA requests are considered. Alternative options (i.e., backdated withdrawal, alternative course plans, regular meetings with an advisor, academic supports, etc.) and/or an action plan to manage the recurring short-term absences may be required. This may require documentation, as outlined below in section (17).

Special Considerations

14. There are assessments that require special considerations as follows:
 - 14.1. Any in-course assessment worth more than 20% (e.g., Quizzes, Tests, Midterm Exams)
 - 14.1.1. A maximum of one (1) MWA request can be submitted per course per semester. This is included as part of the maximum allowed per course per semester, as outlined in (5) above.
 - 14.1.2. In instances where a student **attempts** an assessment (i.e., quiz, test, midterm exam, or final exam) while not feeling well or ill, an accommodation will not be provided. If the student experienced exceptional circumstances and notified the instructor during the assessment and received approval from the instructor to leave during the assessment, then the student must submit an “Application for a Waiver of an Academic Regulation” form and supporting documentation to the office of the Associate Dean requesting an accommodation.
 - 14.2. Group Projects or Group Academic Requirements
 - 14.2.1. Group projects and group deliverables are often done jointly with significant lead time given to students. An individual group member who experiences a short-term absence should have ample time to recover and contribute fully to the required academic requirement. An extension for individual student components of a group project will not be granted, therefore, the student request would have

to justify the entire group being granted accommodation. Documentation will be required as per (17). The group must contact their instructor prior to the deadline if they anticipate being late.

14.3. Final Exams

- 14.3.1. A student missing an examination that is scheduled within the final exam period will be granted that request only in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances include major illness or other mitigating circumstances outside the control of the student. Documentation will be required as per (17). Minor illnesses (such as headaches, stomach bug, workload) or elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time. The policy around attempts at an exam assessment is noted in 14.1.2.
- 14.3.2. A Final Exam MWA is submitted as outlined above, using the following link: <http://forms.engineering.dal.ca>, with the following exceptions:
 - 14.3.2.1. Documentation must be attached to the MWA form, as per (17), otherwise the request will be rejected.
 - 14.3.2.2. Final Exam MWA request are not included as part of the maximum allowed per course per semester, as outlined in (5) above.
- 14.3.3. If a student has a chronic or recurring illness that affects their ability to write an exam, they must request accommodation through the Accessibility Centre.
- 14.3.4. It is the student's responsibility to schedule their travel accordingly, no exceptions will be made based on student's travel plans, as per the Dalhousie Academic Calendar, "[Policy for the Scheduling of Courses/Examinations](#)".
- 14.3.5. If a student request for an alternative final exam date/time is approved, the format of the make-up exam will be the same as the original exam (i.e., if the original exam was scheduled as an in-person exam, the make-up exam at an alternative time will also be an in-person exam). Exceptions to this requirement will only be considered in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Assistant Dean of Students.
- 14.3.6. There will be no make-up exams for a make-up exam in the same course. The make-up exam is the last opportunity for a student to write the exam. Even if documentation is provided, multiple exams will not be considered. Make-up exams will be scheduled with enough time to allow students to recover from a minor illness (i.e., 7 days). Illnesses longer than this are considered long-term.

Mandatory Documentation:

15. Documentation is mandatory in all cases for the following MWA submissions:

- 15.1. Any missed academic work with a value of 20% or greater,
- 15.2. Final exams,
- 15.3. Group projects or a group academic requirement.

16. If the MWA request is rejected because the documentation submitted is insufficient or does not address the need for an absence, the student may submit an “Application for a Waiver of an Academic Regulation” form with a more detailed explanation and appropriate documentation to the Office of the Associate Dean for assessment.

MWA Documentation Requirements:

17. Submitted documentation must conform to the following guidelines:
 - 17.1. It must cover the date of the missed work,
 - 17.2. Medical documentation is not required and should not be specifically sought out by the student, but it can be submitted if it is part of a normal health process,
 - 17.3. Documentation must validate the student request (i.e., it must say more than “student claims to be ill”),
 - 17.4. A student Letter of Circumstance can be submitted if other documentation is not available, this must include:
 - 17.4.1. A detailed description/justification for the student absence,
 - 17.4.2. One paragraph describing how the absence will affect the student’s ability to perform to the best of their ability in the course,
 - 17.4.3. One paragraph describing the student’s plan to get back on track in the course,
 - 17.4.4. A description of the support services the student will explore and use to help get back on track.
 - 17.4.5. If a student is not in the state of mind to prepare a Letter of Circumstance, they can meet with an Academic Advisor or the Student Engagement Advisor, who can follow up on the student’s behalf.
 - 17.5. Documentation must be signed by an appropriate authority (e.g., primary care health professional, varsity coach, military officer, the student for a Letter of Circumstance, etc.).
18. Students who provide false or fraudulent medical or other evidentiary documentation for their absences are subject to the University discipline under the Code of Student Conduct.

Accessibility Centre Student Plans:

Students with accessibility plans that allow for coursework deferrals or deadline extension must still submit an MWA form, as outlined above, and indicate the name of their Accessibility Advisor and contact information in the comment box.