

PACE International GPA Special Consideration Policy

Purpose

PACE International is committed to providing opportunities for all students to participate regardless of socio economic status, living circumstances, ethnicity, gender and capacity. PACE International is committed to equity and fairness in recruiting participants to the program, and has defined criteria for selection to which the applicants and the selection panel are accountable.

PACE International requires students applying for the program to hold a GPA equal to or greater than 2.0. In stating a commitment to equity and fairness, PACE International recognises that there may be circumstances where a student does not reach the required GPA for entry to the program due to unavoidable disruption, hardship or other issue affecting their academic performance.

This policy provides provisions for students who experience serious and unavoidable disruption, hardship, or other issue that prevents them from reaching their demonstrated usual GPA, to apply for special consideration of their application.

Scope

This policy applies to all students applying to participate in a PACE International project encompassing off-shore and campus based projects as either academic or co-curricular participation.

The policy must be followed by all staff involved in the recruitment and enrolment of PACE International participants.

Policy

PACE International GPA Special Consideration is intended for students who meet all the eligibility requirements of the PACE International program with the exception of holding a minimum 2.0 GPA, where there is a demonstrable incident of disruption, hardship or other issue affecting academic performance, that has prevented them from performing to their usual level in academic studies.

For an application for GPA Special Consideration to be considered, the student must have been maintaining a GPA greater than 2.0 up to the point of disruption, hardship or other issue affecting academic performance, and/or for a minimum of two consecutive semesters after.

In accordance with the University Special Consideration Policy, a serious and unavoidable disruption to studies is defined as resulting from an event or set of circumstances that:

- could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student; and
- was beyond the student's control; and
- caused substantial disruption to the student's capacity for effective study and/or the completion of required work; and

- substantially interfered with the otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of unit or course requirements.

Where a student is applying for GPA Special Consideration due to serious and unavoidable disruption to studies as outlined above, the application must be submitted to the PACE International Program Officer and supported by evidence to demonstrate the severity of the circumstance(s) and that substantial disruption has been caused to the student's capacity for effective study.

Students may also apply for GPA Special Consideration where they can demonstrate that other issues not covered in the above, have affected their academic performance. This includes but is not limited to;

- Demands of family responsibilities or similar that have negatively impacted on a student's GPA over a discrete period of time, where the student can demonstrate that they have held a GPA of 2.0 or greater up to the point of disruption and/or for a minimum of two consecutive semesters following the period of disruption;
- Unsatisfactory performance in a prior course of study where the historical effect of the student's prior performance has reduced their GPA to less than 2.0, and where the student can demonstrate that they have held a GPA of 2.0 or greater for at least two consecutive semesters following the transfer of course of study.

Where a student is applying for GPA Special Consideration caused by other issues affecting their academic performance as listed above, the application must be submitted to the PACE International Program Officer with contact details of a referee. The referee must be a Macquarie University academic who can provide significant insight into the student's academic performance.

All applications for GPA Special Consideration must be submitted on or before the specified closing date of the relevant PACE International intake. Applications will only be considered if the student has also submitted a full and complete application to participate in the PACE International program, and meets all of the other eligibility criteria.

The PACE Academic and Programs Director has final authority on assessing a student's application for GPA Special Consideration.

Procedure

This procedure requires action by the following;

- Student
- PACE International Program Officer
- PACE International Program Coordinator
- PACE Academic and Programs Director

Student

If the student believes they have suffered unavoidable disruption, hardship, or other issue affecting their academic performance that has prevented them from reaching their usual GPA, and has supporting documentary evidence and/or the contact details of a Macquarie University academic who will act as a referee, an application for GPA Special Consideration may be submitted. The student must also have completed the PACE International project application by the due date to be eligible for consideration.

How to Apply

An application for GPA Special Consideration Form should be downloaded from the PACE International website. The application form must be completed by the student and submitted via email to paceinternational@mq.edu.au no later than the specified closing date of the relevant PACE International project intake. No late applications will be considered.

For an application for GPA Special Consideration to be valid, it must include all supporting evidence. PACE International will not follow up on outstanding evidence, nor contact any person or body on behalf of the student, except where the student is applying due to other issues affecting their academic performance, and has provided the contact details of a referee.

Where the particular circumstances are medical in nature, an original medical certificate indicating the severity and impact of the circumstances must be included with the application. Details of the actual medical condition are not required, but may be included if the student feels it will provide the reviewing team with the context required to make a decision on the application for GPA Special Consideration.

Where the particular circumstances are non-medical in nature, and have caused serious and unavoidable disruption to studies, appropriate supporting evidence indicating the severity and impact of the circumstances must be included with the application. Details of the actual circumstances are not required, but may be included if the student feels it will provide the reviewing team with the context required to make a decision on the application for GPA Special Consideration.

Where the particular circumstances fall under the category of other issue affecting academic performance, the student must provide contact details of a Macquarie University academic who will act as a referee. Where the circumstances are not private or confidential in nature, the student is encouraged, but not required, to provide details to provide the reviewing team with the context required to make a decision on the application for GPA Special Consideration.

For a GPA Special Consideration application to be granted, the student must have been upholding a GPA of 2.0 or higher up to the date of the unavoidable disruption, hardship or other issues affecting academic performance and/or for at least two consecutive semesters after the disruption or hardship.

PACE International Program Officer

The PACE International Program Officer arranges for applications to be assessed for the required content and supporting documentary evidence. The PACE International Program Officer categorises the application as one of the following before submitting it, with a copy of the student's current academic transcript for further consideration to the PACE International Program Coordinator:

- Complete (provides all of the required documentation and has been submitted by the required means by the due date)
- Invalid (does not contain required documentation, was not submitted by the required means, and/or was not submitted by the due date).

PACE International Program Coordinator

The PACE International Program Coordinator conducts a reference check with the nominated Macquarie University Academic staff member and provides a recommendation to the PACE Academic and Programs Director based on consultation with internal staff and the student's referee.

PACE Academic and Programs Director

The PACE Academic and Programs Director has final authority for determining the outcome of the GPA Special Consideration.

The outcome of a GPA Special Consideration application will be one of the following:

- Granted (application considered with the student being granted permission to proceed with their application for the PACE International program provided all other eligibility requirements are met)
- Not Granted (application considered and rejected. The student is not eligible to apply for the PACE International program.)

The student is to be notified of the outcome of their application (Granted / Not Granted) for GPA Special Consideration within five (5) working days of receipt of the application by PACE International.

Correspondence to the student will be via the student's official email address.