



## **B/3.5 Assessment of Special Circumstances Procedure**

### **1. Purpose**

To provide guidance on how the AVA assesses [Special Circumstances](#) and what documentary evidence is needed to support a claim for [Special Circumstances](#)

### **2. Scope**

This procedure applies to all [AVA CVP Students](#).

### **3. Procedure Overview**

3.1 This procedure explains how the AVA decides if a situation meets the criteria to be called a [Special Circumstance](#) and what supporting evidence is required.

3.2 If an [AVA CVP Student](#) is assessed as having [Special Circumstances](#), the way that other AVA Chartered Veterinary Practitioner™ policies and procedures may change. [AVA CVP Students'](#) who wish to apply for [Special Circumstances](#) should follow the application process set out in the relevant policy or procedure, including any applicable timeframes and deadlines.

### **4. Procedures**

#### **4.1 Special Circumstances**

4.1.1 The AVA will treat a situation as [Special Circumstances](#) when the circumstances:

- were unexpected and outside of the [AVA CVP Student's](#) control;
- had a significant impact on the [AVA CVP Student's](#) study progress or wellbeing, or their ability to meet a submission deadline; and
- could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the [AVA CVP Student](#).

#### **4.1.2 Examples of Special Circumstances for AVA CVP Students**

[Special Circumstances](#) can include, but are not limited to:

- Medical illness or injury, whether existing or new, including physical injury or serious illness and episodes of mental illness or cognitive function impairment;
- [Sad News/Sorry Business](#), death of a [Close Relative](#) or close friend;

- Hardship or trauma, including unexpected events/accidents, victims of crime, sudden change in domestic arrangements (e.g. homelessness, eviction), unexpected serious financial difficulties or hospitalisation of a family member;
- Major upheaval or [Natural Disaster](#) affecting the [AVA CVP Student's](#) place of residence or that has impacted the AVA CVP Student's Close Relatives, and which requires the [AVA CVP Student](#) to undertake immediate emergency travel;
- Employment related reasons such as an employer unexpectedly increasing an [AVA CVP Student's](#) working hours or an employer-directed transfer of an [AVA CVP Student](#) to a new location or redeployment to a different position;
- An unexpected sporting commitment at the state, national or international representative level;
- Active Defence Force member, compulsory Defence Reservist or other emergency services mobilisation;
- Legal commitments such as court appearances or jury selection; and
- Constraints outside of an [AVA CVP Student's](#) control arising from involvement with the justice system.
- Significant and unexpected changes to [Carer](#) responsibilities.

## 4.2 Circumstances that would not be considered Special Circumstances

4.2.1 The AVA will not treat a situation as [Special Circumstances](#) when the circumstances are:

- Considered to be within the control of an [AVA CVP Student](#); or
- Are to be expected in the normal course of the [AVA CVP Student's](#) study, work, family or social life.

4.2.2 Examples that would not be considered Special Circumstances.

- Instances where the [AVA CVP Student's](#) personal travel or holiday plans have made them unable to attend required sessions or meet required submission timelines, unless other [Special Circumstances](#) apply;
- Failure to understand or ask for clarification of key dates or procedures where an [AVA CVP Student](#) could reasonably be expected to have understood or asked for clarification;
- For [Courses](#) with a professional or work engagement component, inability to obtain release from the [AVA CVP Student's](#) regular paid employment to undertake or complete the placement, unless other [Special Circumstances](#) apply;
- Misreading or failing to ask for clarification of the timing of the [Assessment Items](#) as shown in the Course Profile;
- The [Course](#) is not what was expected;
- Minor illnesses (as determined by a registered medical practitioner);
- An increase in hours or duties of paid or unpaid employment which is at the request of the individual [AVA CVP Student](#);

- Social and leisure events and activities including sporting commitments not at state, national or international representative level; and
- An [AVA CVP Student](#) not following their planned or expected pattern of [Enrolment](#) and/or studying [Courses](#) which do not contribute to their accreditation.
- Information technology challenges close to the submission timeline of [Assessment Items](#).

### 4.3 Supporting Documents

4.3.1 Documentation supporting requests for Special Circumstances must:

- Identify the circumstances;
- Include dates and/or length of circumstances, for example the start and end date of an illness or injury; and
- Explain the impact of the circumstances on the [AVA CVP Student's](#) study progress or wellbeing, or their ability to meet a submission deadline.

4.3.2 Requests may be delayed or denied if supporting documentation is not provided at the time of application. The AVA reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation from the [AVA CVP Student](#).

4.3.3 Supporting documentation can include, but is not limited to, the following examples:

Special Circumstance	Examples of Documentation
Medical illness or injury; psychological illness; cognitive function impairment	AVA Medical Certificate; or medical documentation or psychological report from a registered health practitioner.
Sad News/Sorry Business; death of Close Relative or close friend	Death certificates or death/funeral notices or funeral service pamphlet plus evidence of the relationship with the deceased person (if requested by the AVA staff member processing the request); or a Statutory Declaration
Adverse experience, including witnessing or being the victim of a serious crime, domestic violence or sexual assault	Statutory Declaration and appropriate supporting documents (for example, eviction notice, police report)
Natural Disaster; political upheaval; acts or war or terrorism; global pandemic	Government department advisories and Public Health Directions; or known facts, media reports or other information relating to political upheaval, Natural Disasters, pandemics or other circumstances
Employment-related reasons	Signed letter on official letterhead from a current employer or, if self-employed, a signed letter from the business accountant

Sporting commitment reasons	Signed letter on official letterhead from the relevant sporting body
Active Defence Force, Defence Reservist or other emergency services commitments	Signed letter on official letterhead from the Defence Reserve or recognised emergency services organisation
Legal commitments	Jury notice or court appearance order
Involvement with the justice system	Letter or email from the relevant case manager or office
Significant and unexpected changes to Carer Responsibilities.	AVA Medical Certificate; or medical documentation or psychological report from a registered health practitioner for the AVA CVP Student.  Medical certificate for the immediate family member plus evidence of the relationship with the deceased person (if requested by the AVA staff member processing the request); or a Statutory Declaration

#### 4.4 Applications for Special Circumstances

[Special Circumstances](#) may apply to a range of situations such as [Assessment Items](#), Show Cause submissions or for taking [Leave of Absence](#) for a period of up to 12 months. [AVA CVP Students](#) should refer to the relevant policy or procedure for details on how to request that [Special Circumstances](#) are taken into consideration for their particular situation and any applicable timeframes.

#### 5. References

Nil.

#### 6. Schedules

This policy must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

#### 7. Policy Information

Accountable Officer	AVA Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Officer	Head, Education
Policy Type	AVA Chartered Veterinary Practitioner
Policy Suite	AVA CVP Learning and Teaching
Subordinate Schedules	

Approved Date	New
Effective Date	New
Relevant Legislation	<a href="#">Fair Work Act 2009 s12 and 97</a>
Related Policies	B/3.1 Assessment Policy and Procedure C/3.1 Admissions Policy and Procedure C/3.2 Enrolment Policy and Procedure
Related Procedures	B/3.2 Grading Procedure C/3.4 Leave of Absence Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	<a href="#">AVA Chartered Veterinary Practitioner Website</a> AVA Medical Certificate <a href="#">Fair Work Ombudsmen, Sick and Carers Leave.</a> <a href="#">Sad news, Sorry business: Guidelines for caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through death and dying.</a> (Version 2). Statutory Declaration
Definitions	<p><b>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</b></p> <p><b>Assessment Item</b></p> <p>An individual Assessment task as outlined in the Assessment schedule for a Course. Assessment Items may consist of Assignments or Formal Examinations and may be Formal, Informal, Formative or Summative in nature.</p> <p><b>AVA</b></p> <p>The term 'Association' or 'AVA' means the Australian Veterinary Association Limited.</p> <p><b>AVA CVP Student</b></p> <p>A person who is admitted to the AVA CVP Education Pathway offered by the AVA and is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>currently enrolled in one or more Courses; or</li> </ul>

- not currently enrolled but is on approved leave of Absence or whose Admission has not been cancelled.

### **Carer Responsibilities**

Provision of care and support to an immediate family member or household member. An immediate family member is a spouse or former spouse; de facto partner or former de facto partner; child (including foster child); parent; grandparent; grandchild; sibling; or child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the AVA CVP Student's spouse or de facto partner.

### **Close Relative**

Close relatives for this purpose are spouse/partner, parent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter, son, stepdaughter, stepson, stepfather, stepmother, stepsister, stepbrother, half-sister, half-brother, grandparent, granddaughter, grandson, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, any other person approved by the AVA Chief Executive Officer or delegated officer.

### **Course**

A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single Teaching Period, in which the AVA CVP Student enrolls and on completion of which the AVA CVP Student is awarded a Grade.

### **Enrolment**

The process of admitting AVA CVP Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year.

### **Leave of Absence**

An approval granted to an AVA CVP Student to cease formal study as an enrolled AVA CVP Student for a specified period of time.

### **Special Circumstances**

Matters which are, in most cases, beyond the control of an AVA CVP Student and which will impact their capacity to progress with their planned program of study or meet a submission deadline. In some legislation, Special Circumstances are referred to as "compassionate and compelling circumstances".

	<p><b>Definitions that relate to this policy only</b></p> <p><b>Natural Disaster</b></p> <p>An event of force of nature that is caused by environmental factors that has catastrophic consequences.</p> <p><b>Sad News</b></p> <p>Torres Strait Islander term that refers to the passing of a person.</p> <p><b>Sorry Business</b></p> <p>Aboriginal terms that refers to the passing of a person.</p>
Keywords	Special Circumstances, Assessment, Leave of Absence
Record No	

Complying with the law and observing AVA Policy and Procedure is a condition of working for, and volunteering with, the Australian Veterinary Association.