Special Consideration Policy (Pegasus Scholarship Trust)

1. Introduction

Before submitting a claim for consideration, we recommend that you contact us for support and guidance via pegasus@innertemple.org.uk.

2. Definitions

Extenuating circumstances are normally circumstances that are exceptional, unforeseen and outside of your control. Such circumstances have a direct and substantial impact on you preparing for or undertaking a summative assessment (including an application or interview) or a mandatory component of an assessed course.

Special consideration is the term used when we consider such cases of extenuating circumstances.

3. Scope

Below are examples of situations that this policy should be used to address:

- (i) Late submission of a scholarships application form.
- (ii) Absence from a scholarship interview.
- (iii) Significant disruption outside of your control.
- (iv) Instances where a reasonable adjustment could not be put in place due to, for example, a late diagnosis of a long-term medical condition. In such cases, please also refer to the Pegasus Trust Reasonable Adjustments Policy and contact the Pegasus Scholarship Trust team for further guidance.

4. Policy

If you are unable to submit an assessment or application on time, you must notify us within 48 hours of the published deadline.

If you are unable to attend an interview or event on the scheduled date, you must notify us within 48 hours of the date of the interview or event.

If you are aware of an extenuating circumstance prior to the timeframes as set out in 4.1. and 4.2., you must inform us immediately.

If you do not present your special consideration claim within the timeframes as set out above, you will be considered as 'fit to sit' the assessment, application, interview or event concerned.

All completed claim forms and supporting evidence must be submitted within five working days after notification of the claim.

Special Consideration claims submitted after the published timescales will not be accepted.

Any claims for special consideration that have been separately addressed through our Reasonable Adjustments Policy will not be covered by this policy.

5. Acceptable extenuating circumstances

The following is a non-exhaustive list of extenuating circumstances which we would normally consider acceptable:

- (i) Bereavement/death or serious illness of a partner/child/close family relative (normally parents or siblings)/carer.
- (ii) Serious, short-term illness, accident, injury or hospitalisation that cannot be addressed through a reasonable adjustment request and which is sufficiently serious to negatively impact your performance.
- (iii) Unexpected caring responsibilities for a family member or dependent.
- (iv) Pregnancy when this leads to a specific illness (see 5 (ii) above).
- (v) Long-term recurring or deteriorating health condition, including mental health conditions, which cannot be addressed through a reasonable adjustment request.
- (vi) Serious adverse personal or family circumstances.
- (vii) Victim or witness of a crime or traumatic incident.
- (viii) Jury service.
- (ix) Significant disruption at the assessment venue.
- (x) Incorrect or misleading information provided by us which impacts on your performance.
- (xi) Administrative failure on our part which is detrimental to your performance.
- (xii) Failure of Inner Temple electronic devices which is detrimental to your performance and outside of your control.
- (xiii) Other significant and exceptional circumstances outside of your control.

Where religious observance will impact on your ability to attend, sit or submit on a particular day, please complete our separate Religious Observance Form. Such requests would not be considered within the scope of this Special Consideration Policy.

6. Unacceptable extenuating circumstances

The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances that would normally fall outside of the scope of special consideration:

- (i) Special consideration claim without acceptable supporting evidence (see Section 7 below).
- (ii) Medical condition which has been addressed through our reasonable adjustment policy.
- (iii) Minor medical conditions, e.g. a cold.
- (iv) Evidence which is retrospectively dated and does not align with the assessment date(s).
- (v) Holidays, regardless of the date of booking.
- (vi) Work commitments.
- (vii) Moving house or attending events, such as weddings, which are planned in advance.

- (viii) Issues with personal or workplace electronic devices, e.g. a broken laptop, and/or failing to back-up your work and/or loss/corruption of electronic files.
- (ix) Poor time management or organisation, e.g. misreading a deadline or location details.
- (x) Late disclosure by you of extenuating circumstances.
- (xi) Assessment performance which has been impacted by you breaking the law or consuming alcohol or non-prescribed drugs.
- (xii) Transport delays or issues without satisfactory supporting evidence. Any such delays and issues must be exceptional and outside of your control.

7. Applying for special consideration

Any claim for special consideration must be submitted on a Special Consideration Application Form and supported by independent documentary evidence. The supporting evidence must demonstrate that the circumstances:

- were unforeseen;
- outside of your control and could not have been prevented;
- relate directly to the timing of the affected assessment or event.

The following list gives examples of supporting independent evidence. This list is not exhaustive and is provided to offer guidance as to the types of information expected:

- GP or other medical professional official letter/documentation
- Hospital admission/discharge papers
- Death certificate
- Crime reference number
- Official court or police correspondence
- Employer or university correspondence

All supporting evidence must be in English, independently signed (including electronically) and/or on headed paper (as appropriate) and include your name and the date.

Any claim or supporting evidence will be treated as confidential.

8. Outcome

Your special consideration claim will be overseen by a panel approved by the Pegasus Scholarship Trust Council. The Panel will consist of the following members:

- A delegated member of the Pegasus Scholarship Trust Council.
- Two senior members of professional staff (one of whom will act as Secretary). One staff member will be independent.

The panel has the option to delegate responsibility for certain claims to other relevant professional service staff. For example, straightforward claims on medical grounds would be processed by staff, then endorsed by the Panel, to enable faster resolution.

Once your claim has been reviewed, we will apply one of the following outcomes:

- Approve your claim and allow you an extended deadline or alternative interview.
- Approve your claim and take your extenuating circumstances into consideration when making a decision.
- Decline your claim and no special consideration awarded.

We will notify you of the outcome of your special consideration claim in writing (usually via email) within five working days from receipt of the full claim (including supporting evidence). If a special consideration claim is declined, the reason for this will be provided.

9. Complaints process

You have the right to submit a formal or informal complaint against a special consideration decision if you believe the process has not been followed properly. Any complaint will be considered in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

10. Data protection

By submitting a special consideration claim, you agree to personal data being held for the purposes of processing the request in accordance with the 2018 Data Protection Act.