

Rules pertaining to absence from compulsory activities

Please consult the respective course guidelines to make sure you know which teaching activities are compulsory for the course (i.e. due performance requirements) and the consequences of missing such activities. Please note that **ALL** assessments are compulsory. If, for any reason whatsoever you miss an assessment, be it a test, examination or the deadline for an assignment, you will be given zero for that assessment unless you can justify your absence. The reason cited must describe a circumstance that is both *unexpected* and sufficiently *drastic* that your absence was effectively *unavoidable*.

NB: The onus is on the student to present this justification to the appropriate authorities timeously. These are:

- In the case of June or November examinations: the **Office of Student Support** in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Please note that if you miss an examination you ***must*** apply for a deferred examination through the Office of Student Support, Faculty of Health Sciences.
- For all other assessments or compulsory teaching activities: the **Course Coordinator**, who will receive it on behalf of the relevant Head of School.

'Timeously' means ***within three days*** of the assessment you missed. In *special* circumstances this may be extended at the discretion of the relevant authority.

Types of justification:

- **Medical Reasons:** in the case of sudden illness or injury, a medical certificate from an appropriate health practitioner must be submitted. The certificate must state that the nature of the illness or injury is, in that practitioner's professional opinion, sufficiently serious to justify the absence. No other detail of the relevant condition need be given.

NB: This certificate must be countersigned and stamped by Campus Health.

Please note the University may contact the health practitioner to confirm the severity of the illness or injury.

- **Other Reasons:** for any non-medical reason for absence; a sworn statement outlining the circumstances must be presented together with whatever other supporting documents may be appropriate. **These include:**
 - **Legal Reasons:** for example if you have to appear in court – in whatever capacity – you must obtain written confirmation of the necessity of your court attendance from your attorney, or whatever source is appropriate.
 - **Compassionate reasons:** for example if a close relative dies or is suddenly ill, and you need to attend to matters that arise, you must obtain whatever relevant documents you can – such as copies of death certificates – and submit these together with your sworn statement.
 - **Unrest & security issues:** in the event of circumstances on campus becoming unsafe, for example through protest action, the University will make an appropriate announcement. In the absence of such an announcement you are ***not*** free to absent yourself from a scheduled assessment on the grounds of 'feeling unsafe'. The accepted means of justifying your absence will be specified at the time.

NB: Submission of justificatory documents does not in and of itself guarantee that your excuse will be accepted. If the documents you provide fail to convince that your absence was for genuinely pressing reasons, your excuse may be rejected, in which case you will be given zero for the relevant assessment.

If your excuse *is* accepted, the following will apply:

- For examinations, please note that you must apply for the deferred examination at the Office of Student Support for your excuse to be considered.
- For class tests, you will be '*excused*' – meaning that the missed assessment will not be included when calculating your year mark– i.e. you will **not** be given zero. Please refer to the course guidelines to ensure you understand any additional consequences of missing a test. MBBCh II students, please note that missing a test means that you *cannot* be exempted from the final exam, irrespective of your final year mark. Deferred *tests* are not granted in MBBCh I or MBBCh II.
- For assignments, compulsory teaching activities or other such work, alternative submission dates or arrangements will be negotiated.

Temporary leave of absence:

In any instance where a student expects to be absent in advance, *temporary leave of absence* must be applied for at the Office of Student Support. This applies, for example, to students who may need to be away from Campus to represent the University - or perhaps the country - in some important sporting event, such as the Olympics, or academic event, such as a conference. Temporary leave of absence will be granted depending on the merits of each individual case.

NB: Temporary leave of absence must be applied for in advance through the Office of Student Support, it is never granted retrospectively.

NB: Such reasons as attendance at music festivals and family holiday plans are not considered a valid reason for temporary leave of absence, so *don't* make plans that clash with the University calendar.