

Complete Policy Title

Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by

Senate

Date of Most Recent Approval

June 23, 2023, effective September 1, 2023

Date of Original Approval(s)

March 10, 2021, effective May 1, 2021

Supersedes/Amends Policy dated

- March 10, 2021, effective May 1, 2021

Responsible Executive

Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

Policy Specific Enquiries

[Provost and Vice-President \(Academic\)](#)
[Student enquiries should be directed to their respective Faculty/Program Office](#)

This policy was effective from September 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024

This policy is superseded by the

McMaster Student Absence Form Policy [MSAF Policy]

effective July 1, 2024

Disclaimer: If there is a discrepancy between this electronic policy and the approved copy held by the University Secretariat, the approved copy prevails.

Accessible Format Requests: policy@mcmaster.ca

PREAMBLE

1. McMaster University recognizes that students periodically require relief from academic work for medical or other personal situations. This Policy will support the management of these requests by considering the needs and obligations of undergraduate students, instructors and administrators. It is the prerogative of the course instructor(s) to determine the appropriate relief for missed term work in their course. Students must follow up directly with instructors within 24 hours of filing an MSAF (Self-Report) or receiving notice that their MSAF (Administrative Report) has been processed to request details regarding the nature of any relief to be granted. Any concerns regarding granting relief should be directed to the respective [Faculty/Program Office](#).
2. Requests for relief should be made with a commitment to academic integrity in mind. Requests that deviate from this commitment will be handled under the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and/or [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), where appropriate.

Definitions

3. **MSAF (Self-Report)** means the *McMaster Student Absence Form (Self-Report)*, where students can self-report absences that result in missed academic work.
4. **MSAF (Administrative Report)** means the *McMaster Student Absence Form (Administrative Report)*, where Faculty/Program Office staff may record approved longer-term absences for students that result in missed academic work.

Privacy

5. The University, and its employees and agents, will protect personal information and handle records in accordance with the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FIPPA\)](#) and the [Personal Health Information Protection Act \(PHIPA\)](#).

Exclusions

6. This Policy **cannot** be used:
 - a) for academic work that has already been completed or work that has been attempted (which **includes** the viewing and/or partial completion of online assessments (quizzes, tests, etc.));
 - b) to seek an accommodation to meet religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (see the [Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances](#));
 - c) to seek an accommodation related to a permanent or temporary disability or a retroactive accommodation (see the policy [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#)); or
 - d) to apply for relief for any final examination or its equivalent (see [Petitions for Special Consideration](#) in the *Undergraduate Calendar*).
7. Students can apply only one request for relief (*Self-Report* or *Administrative Report*) to a single piece of work.
8. The *MSAF (Self-Report)* tool is available in the [MOSAIC](#) Student Center (in the drop-down menu under **Other Academics**).

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF: MSAF (SELF-REPORT)

9. Self Report (MSAF) requests for relief are for missed academic work worth **less than 25%** of the final grade resulting from medical or personal situations lasting **up to three (3) calendar days**.
10. Students shall use the [MOSAIC](#) MSAF tool to make *MSAF (Self-Report)* requests, which:
 - a) may only be submitted **once** per term;
 - b) must be submitted **within 24 hours** of the end of the three (3) day period, and failure to do so may negate the opportunity for relief;
 - c) applies only to work due within the period for which the request applies, i.e., the three-day period specified in the MSAF; however, all work due in that period can be covered by one request; and
 - d) where applicable, students must provide documentation proving they have not attempted the work if they submit a request for relief.
11. The MOSAIC MSAF tool will send an automated email to the course instructor(s) to inform them of the request.
12. The instructor(s) will determine the appropriate relief for the request.
13. Students must immediately follow up with their instructor(s) after submitting the request.
14. For absences that exceed three (3) calendar days, students are directed to the MSAF (*Administrative Report*), as described in the next section.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF: MSAF (ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT)

15. *MSAF (Administrative Report)* requests for relief are for:
 - a) medical or personal situations lasting **more than three (3) calendar days**; and/or
 - b) missed academic **work worth 25% or more of the final grade**; and/or
 - c) any request for relief in a term where the *MSAF (Self-Report)* tool has already been used once.
16. Students must contact their [Faculty/Program Office](#) to report their absence within 24 hours after returning to their academic activities. Failure to contact and report an absence promptly will negate the opportunity for relief. Students may or may not require an appointment to process the request and will be contacted by the Faculty/Program Office within normal business hours. Where applicable, students must provide documentation proving they have not attempted the work if they submit a request for relief.
17. Students must arrange a meeting with an academic advisor for absences that last more than two weeks or relief may not be provided.
18. Supporting documentation may be required for an *MSAF (Administrative Report)*.
19. If the request is granted, the Faculty/Program Office will process the relief request and notify the instructor(s) and the student.
20. Normally, relief for missed work will not be provided:
 - a) where the cumulative value of missed work within a course is greater than 35% (prior to the exam period); or
 - b) for more than **two** *MSAF (Administrative Report)* requests within a single term.
21. Students must meet with an advisor to discuss their options when the cumulative value of missed work within a course is greater than 35%, or they have exhausted their one *MSAF (Self Report)* and two *MSAF (Administrative Reports)*, and further work is missed.
22. The instructor(s) will determine the appropriate relief for *MSAF (Administrative Report)* requests.
23. Students must immediately follow up with their instructor(s) after being notified that their request has been processed. Failure to do so may negate the opportunity for relief.
24. The *MSAF (Administrative Report)* applies only to the work due within the period for which the request applies; however, all work due in that period can be covered by one request. The exception is any work for which relief has already been granted either through an *MSAF (Self Report)* or another *MSAF (Administrative Report)* (see *clause 7* above).
25. In some circumstances, students may be advised to submit a [Petition for Special Consideration](#).
26. Students can apply only one request for relief (*Self-Report* or *Administrative Report*) to a single piece of work.

APPENDIX A: FACULTY / PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

<p>Arts & Science Program artsci.mcmaster.ca/contact-us/</p>	<p>Faculty of Humanities humanities@mcmaster.ca humadvising.humanities.mcmaster.ca/</p>
<p>DeGroote School of Business buscom@mcmaster.ca ug.degroote.mcmaster.ca/contact/</p>	<p>Faculty of Science science@mcmaster.ca science.mcmaster.ca/associatedean/contact-us.html</p>
<p>Faculty of Engineering eng.mcmaster.ca/programs/academic-advising</p>	<p>Faculty of Social Sciences socscfac@mcmaster.ca socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/current-students/academic-advising/</p>
<p>Faculty of Health Sciences</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) bhsc.mcmaster.ca/contact/ bhsc@mcmaster.ca</p> <p>Honours Biochemistry B.H.Sc. (Honours) healthsci.mcmaster.ca/biochem bbsug@mcmaster.ca</p> <p>Biomedical Discovery and Commercialization Program bdcpprogram@mcmaster.ca bdcpprogram.mcmaster.ca/contact/</p> <p>Bachelor of Science Nursing Program nursing.mcmaster.ca/student-life-services-school-of-nursing-mcmaster-university/academic-advising/policies-procedures-and-forms/</p> <p><i>McMaster University and Mohawk College Sites:</i> bscnadvising@mcmaster.ca</p>	<p>Honours Biology & Pharmacology Co-op Program biopharm.healthsci.mcmaster.ca biophrm@mcmaster.ca</p> <p>Integrated Biomedical Engineering and Health Sciences Program (IBEHS) ibiomed.mcmaster.ca ibiomed@mcmaster.ca</p> <p>Midwifery Education Program midwifery.mcmaster.ca/ midwifery@mcmaster.ca</p> <p>Physician Assistant Education Program fhs.mcmaster.ca/physicianassistant/ paprogram@mcmaster.ca</p>