What is an AC (Assessment Continues) Grade?

Sometimes life doesn't go to plan.

Unexpected events such as illness, injury, family responsibilities, personal hardship, employment commitments, caring responsibilities, or other extenuating circumstances can make it difficult to complete assessment tasks by the required deadlines.

An AC (Assessment Continues) grade may be available when a student has been unable to complete one or more assessment items due to circumstances beyond their control but is still capable of successfully completing the outstanding work.

An AC grade is designed to give eligible students additional time to complete outstanding assessment requirements without immediately receiving a fail grade for the unit.

What does this mean in real terms?

An AC grade is not a pass or fail grade.

Instead, it acts as a temporary placeholder while you complete the remaining assessment requirements for the unit.

For example:

- You have successfully completed most of your assessments.
- You experience an unexpected illness towards the end of semester.
- You are unable to submit your final assessment item by the due date.
- You provide supporting evidence and are approved for an AC grade.

Rather than receiving a final grade immediately, you may be given additional time to complete the outstanding assessment.

Once the work is submitted and marked, a final grade will be awarded.

Who can apply for an AC grade?

Students may wish to discuss an AC grade with their Course Coordinator where:

- Extenuating circumstances have affected their ability to complete assessment tasks.
- They have outstanding assessment items that have not yet been submitted.
- They believe they will be able to complete the outstanding work within an agreed timeframe.

An AC grade is not intended to provide unlimited time and is generally used where there is a realistic pathway for the student to complete the remaining assessment requirements.

How do I apply?

The first step is to contact your Course Coordinator as soon as possible.

Explain:

- What circumstances have affected your studies.
- Which assessment items remain outstanding.
- What work has already been completed.
- A realistic timeframe for when you believe you can submit the outstanding assessment items.

The earlier you communicate with the University, the more options may be available.

What evidence should I provide?

Supporting evidence should be relevant to the circumstances that affected your studies.

Examples may include:

- Medical certificates or letters from treating practitioners.
- Hospital documentation.
- Counsellor or psychologist letters.
- Employer letters confirming unexpected work commitments.
- Statutory declarations.
- Evidence relating to significant family or personal circumstances.
- Other documentation that supports your request.

Evidence should ideally explain:

- The nature of the circumstances.
- The period of impact.
- How those circumstances affected your ability to complete your studies.

What should I include in my request?

It is important to provide a clear and balanced explanation.

Consider addressing:

- What prevented you from completing the assessment.
- What steps you took to manage the situation.
- The work you have already completed within the unit.
- Why you believe additional time will allow you to successfully complete the remaining requirements.

What happens if my AC grade is approved?

If approved:

- An AC grade will appear against the unit.
- You will be given a timeframe of up to 3 months to complete the outstanding assessment requirements.
- Once the assessment is submitted and marked, the AC grade will be replaced with your final result.

It is important to meet any agreed deadlines, as failure to do so may affect the final outcome for the unit.

What if my AC grade request is declined?

If your request for an AC grade is not approved and you believe:

- Relevant information was not considered;
- Supporting evidence was not adequately taken into account;
- A policy or procedure may not have been applied correctly; or
- There are concerns about procedural fairness,

you may wish to lodge a complaint.

How do I lodge a complaint?

CDU has an easy-to-complete online complaint form that allows students to raise concerns about decisions made by the University.

When lodging a complaint:

- Clearly explain the decision you are concerned about.
- Provide any supporting evidence or documentation.
- Explain why you believe the decision should be reviewed.
- Include the outcome you are seeking and why.

When do I need to do this?

Students should act promptly.

Requests for support and complaints should generally be raised within 10 working days of the issue or decision you are concerned about. Requests made outside of this timeframe may not be accepted.

What happens after I submit a complaint?

The complaints team will review the information provided and determine whether further investigation or review is required.

You may be contacted to provide additional information during the process.

Student Advocacy Tip:



An AC grade is intended to support students when genuine life circumstances temporarily impact their studies. The strongest requests clearly explain what happened, how it affected your ability to complete the assessment, what evidence supports your request, and how you intend to complete the outstanding work if additional time is granted.

Remember, an AC grade is not simply about needing more time. It is about demonstrating that there is a genuine reason for the delay and a realistic plan to successfully complete the remaining assessment requirements.

Need Support?

The Student Advocacy team is independent, confidential, and free for all CDU students.

We can help you understand your options, navigate University processes, and prepare requests or supporting documentation.

Phone: (08) 8946 6288 (select option 3)

Submit an enquiry online via the Student Advocacy webpage:
www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/life-health-wellbeing/student-advocacy

CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

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