I Failed a Unit. Can I Apply for a Supplementary Assessment?

A supplementary assessment is an additional assessment opportunity that may be offered to some students who have come very close to passing a unit.

If you successfully complete a supplementary assessment, your final grade may become a PS (Pass Supplementary) grade.

It is important to understand that you cannot receive a PS grade unless you have first been approved for, and successfully completed, a supplementary assessment.

Who may be considered for a supplementary assessment?

Under the CDU Grading Policy, students may be considered for a supplementary assessment where they achieve a final composite mark between 47% and less than 50% in a unit.

However, achieving a mark within this range does not automatically guarantee that a supplementary assessment will be offered.

What else is considered?

The University will generally look at factors such as:

- Your overall performance across the unit.
- Whether all assessment tasks have been completed.
- Whether you have demonstrated achievement of most of the unit learning outcomes.
- Whether you have passed more than 50% of the assessment tasks within the unit.
- Any other requirements outlined by the Faculty or University policy.

Can I ask to be considered?

Yes.

If you believe you may be eligible, you can contact your Course Coordinator and ask whether your results have been considered against the University's supplementary assessment requirements.

What should I include in my request?

It is important to provide a balanced academic rationale.

Rather than focusing only on being a few marks short of a pass, consider explaining:

- Your overall performance in the unit.
- The assessments you successfully completed.
- Evidence that you achieved most of the learning outcomes.
- Why you believe a supplementary assessment would provide an appropriate opportunity to demonstrate the remaining requirements of the unit.

What are not usually strong reasons on their own?

While these concerns are understandable, they are unlikely to be persuasive on their own:

- "I only missed out by one or two marks."
- "I worked really hard."
- "I need this unit to graduate."
- "Failing will cost me money."
- "I need to maintain my visa."

Instead, focus on your academic performance and evidence that demonstrates your capability to meet the unit requirements.

What happens if I am granted a supplementary assessment?

If approved, you will be provided with details of the supplementary assessment and any associated deadlines.

While the supplementary assessment is being completed, your grade may be recorded as SA (Supplementary Assessment).

If you successfully complete the supplementary assessment:

- Your grade will normally be updated to PS (Pass Supplementary).
- You will receive credit for the unit.

If you do not successfully complete the supplementary assessment, your final result will generally remain a fail grade.

What if a supplementary assessment is not granted?

If you ask to be considered for a supplementary assessment and the request is declined, you may still have options available.

If you believe:

- Relevant information was not considered;
- A policy or procedure may not have been applied correctly;
- There were concerns about procedural fairness; or
- There are exceptional circumstances that have not been adequately considered,

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.

Complaints should generally be lodged within 10 working days of the decision they are concerned about. Requests made outside of this timeframe may not be accepted.

What happens after I submit a complaint?

The University 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:



If you are seeking a supplementary assessment, focus on your overall academic performance and how you have demonstrated achievement of the unit learning outcomes. If a supplementary assessment is not granted and you choose to lodge a complaint, focus on why you believe the decision should be reviewed, rather than simply explaining why you need to pass the unit. Complaints are strongest when supported by evidence, academic rationale, and any relevant policy considerations.

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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