

# Support for Student Defence Reserves and Emergency Service Personnel Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines the support available to students who are members of the Defence Reserves and/or members of the Emergency Services to combine their academic and defence/emergency service activities successfully.

## Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies Australian Catholic University (ACU) students who are members of the Defence Reserves and/or members of the Emergency Services.

## Section 3 - Principles

(3) ACU recognises that students who are members of the Defence Reserves and/or members of the Emergency Services may require reasonable adjustments to ensure that they are not disadvantaged academically, or financially, as a consequence of their service. For Defence Reservists this meets ACU's obligations under the [Defence Reserve Service \(Protection\) Act 2001 \(Cth\)](#).

## Section 4 - Definitions

(4) Terms used in this Policy are consistent with the [Glossary of Student and Course Terms](#). The following specific definitions also apply:

Term	Definition
Approval authority	means a staff member normally National Unit Leader or Course Adviser, authorised by the University to approve an Application for Special Consideration.
Defence Reservist	means any student who is registered as a member of the Australian Defence Reserves.
Defence Service	means any service by a Defence Reservist, including service on Reserve Service Days (training) and all periods of Protected Continuous Full-time Service.
Emergency Services personnel	means any student who is registered as a member of any formally-endorsed state, territory or federal emergency services organisation or other competent authority under a State Disaster Plan.
Emergency service	means any service by Emergency Services personnel during an emergency situation in which the relevant Emergency Services unit is involved.

## Section 5 - Special Consideration

(5) A student who undertakes Defence Service or Emergency Service that directly affects their studies, may complete an application for Special Consideration using the prescribed form, in accordance with the [Special Consideration Procedure](#).

(6) The application must be submitted as soon as possible after the receipt of notification of such activity from the relevant organisation and prior to the commencement of that Defence Service or Emergency Service activity. Where circumstances prevent prior submission, the application should be made as soon as possible following the activity.

(7) A separate application for Special Consideration must be submitted for each activity and/or occurrence for which Special Consideration is sought.

(8) An application for Special Consideration based on Defence Service or Emergency Service activity, will be determined by the relevant ACU approval authority taking into consideration the circumstances of the case.

## Section 6 - Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty

(9) Where withdrawal from a unit without academic penalty on the basis of involvement in any Defence Service or Emergency Service activity has been approved by a Head of School, or equivalent under the [Academic Regulations](#), withdrawal without financial penalty will be applied by Student Administration, subject to the provisions of the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#).

## Section 7 - Interruption of Studies

(10) A student may interrupt their studies to render Defence Service or Emergency service, in accordance with the Interruption of Studies provisions of the [Academic Regulations](#).

## Section 8 - Associated Information

(11) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	7th May 2026
<b>Review Date</b>	7th May 2028
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Governance Officer
<b>Approval Date</b>	29th April 2026
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Helen Murnane Academic Registrar
<b>Responsible Manager</b>	Gerard Goodwin-Moore National Manager, Student Policy and Appeals
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Catherine McKiver Senior Policy Officer <hr/> Student Administration