Guide to Withdrawal Without Penalty

I AM EXPERIENCING A SIGNIFICANT DISRUPTION AND CANNOT COMPLETE MY STUDIES, WHAT CAN I DO?
If you experienced a serious disruption after the census date that prevents you from studying, you may apply for Withdrawal Without Academic and/or Financial Penalty.

A successful Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty will change a F - Fail, FW – Fail Withdrawn, or FA - Fail Absent grade to a W - Withdrawn grade which does not impact upon your GPA. A successful Withdrawal Without Financial Penalty will refund the fees for a particular unit.

WHAT IS THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA?

Timing
You must prove (through your evidence) that:
1. Your disruption began after the census date OR
2. Your disruption became worse after census date (which was unforeseen and uncontrollable)

Criteria
That an event or circumstance:
   a. could not have reasonably been anticipated, avoided or guarded against by the student, and
   b. was beyond the student’s control, and
   c. caused substantial disruption to the student’s capacity for effective study and/or the completion of required work and
   d. occurred during an event critical study period and was at least three (3) consecutive days duration, and / or
   e. prevented completion of a final examination.

Find the Eligibility criteria here: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/discontinuing-study/withdrawning-without-penalty

For Withdrawal Without Financial Penalty Applications you need to prove the above criteria as well as:
1. That you would have passed the unit had it not been for the special circumstance
2. That the circumstance made it impractical for you to complete your studies in that unit/s at a minimum of a pass level.


Fit to Sit – Have you attempted all tasks for your unit?
The Fit to Sit model states that by completing your assessments you are declaring you are fit and able to do so. Special consideration (including Withdrawal Without Penalty) can only be granted if you can demonstrate:
- You were unfit to make reasonable judgement on your fitness to undertake the assessment, due to mental illness or other exceptional circumstances; or
- You were taken ill during the assessment (in the case of an examination or test), and this can be independently corroborated.
WHAT EVIDENCE DO I NEED?
Evidence provided must confirm the information you write in your personal statement.

**Medical Evidence** must:
- Be provided by a Registered Health Practitioner ([https://www.ahpra.gov.au](https://www.ahpra.gov.au))
- Be written using a Professional Authority Form, or on the health practitioner’s letterhead
- Include the dates of consultation after the census date
- Include the date your health practitioner first recognised that you were not well enough to study
- Indicate the impact that the circumstances had on your ability to continue your studies (including impact on ability to focus, concentrate, attend classes or complete academic tasks)
- Indicate how serious the condition was after the census date
- Include a comment in support of your application.

**Non-medical evidence** must include:
- What the circumstance is that is affecting your studies
- When the circumstance first began to affect your studies
- Specifically how the circumstance is affecting your ability to complete your studies (including impact on ability to attend classes, complete academic tasks etc.)
- How long the change in circumstance has lasted for
- This documentation may be from your employer, faculty/department, police, solicitor or in the form of a Statutory Declaration which *refers to independent supporting documentation*.

**Check that your evidence:**
- Explains the impact that an event had on your ability to study (what you could/could not do including read, write, concentrate, focus, attend classes or complete academic tasks).
- Includes the specific dates after census, during session that you were affected.
- Explains how the situation was beyond your control.
- Explains how you could not have anticipated the situation prior to the census date.
- Includes a comment in support of your application for Withdrawal Without Penalty.
- (If relevant) Includes a comment to explain why you passed some units but could not complete others in a particular session.
- Is a letter which addresses the points above. Don’t submit, test results, photos, x-ray images or prescriptions as they will not be considered.

HOW DO I LODGE AN APPLICATION?
1. Write a personal statement which addresses the eligibility criteria
2. Obtain documentation
3. Submit an application online via [https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/forms/display/withdrawal](https://ask.mq.edu.au/account/forms/display/withdrawal)

HOW LONG DO I HAVE TO APPLY?
An application for Withdrawal Without Penalty must be submitted before the date for the final examination for that unit. If there is no final examination an application must be submitted before the date of the final assessment item. In exceptional circumstances the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Registrar may approve an application submitted at a later date, however Withdrawal Without Financial Penalty is unable to be provided after 12 months have passed.

WHAT IF I AM STILL HAVING TROUBLE, HOW CAN I GET HELP?
If you still require assistance with your application, visit Request for Help – Student Advocacy and Support Services: [https://it-mqu.formstack.com/forms/studentadvocacyrequestforhelp](https://it-mqu.formstack.com/forms/studentadvocacyrequestforhelp)