



How to submit a petition or appeal

There might be a time when you need to submit a petition in the course of your studies. Things you might need to file a petition for include:

- Request to write a final exam or assessment at a later date.
- Request to rewrite an exam that you were unable to complete.
- Request to submit course work after the term has ended.
- Request to withdraw from a course after the late withdrawal deadline.
- Request for an early return to your studies if you are on suspension due to your academic standing.
- Request to have a suspension removed so you can continue your studies.
- Request for an exception to degree requirements when you are unable to complete them but cannot postpone graduation.
- Request late application or removal of the CR/NCR course notation.
- Request for credit in a course that you could not complete due to medical circumstances
- Request to take a course for a third time to obtain the necessary marks for a program requirement or a prerequisite for a different course.

In this guide, you can find information on how to file petitions and appeals in the Faculty of Arts & Science. Procedures differ slightly between academic units, but you can find your own academic unit's information on their own website.

Preparing a petition

If you are in the position where you think you may need to file a petition, U of T recommends you reach out to an academic advisor in your College Registrar's Office. These advisors are familiar with U of T's processes and policies, and have experience helping students like you. If you are a student with a disability, it is also recommended that you speak with Accessibility Services to ensure that you are given any necessary accommodations.

The contact details for college registrar's offices are as follows:

- Innis College - registrar.innis@utoronto.ca



- New College - newcollege.registrar@utoronto.ca
- St. Michael's College - ask.smc@utoronto.ca
- Trinity College - registrar@trinity.utoronto.ca
- University College - uc.registrar@utoronto.ca
- Victoria College - vic.registrar@utoronto.ca
- Woodsworth College - wdwregistrar@utoronto.ca

However, we know that students often want advice from someone independent of the university when thinking of submitting a petition. That's where APUS comes in; if you'd like to complement the advice from your college advisor with impartial input from outside the university, we can help. Our Advocacy Coordinator is there to help you with the petitions and appeals process, just complete the onboarding form at <https://apus.ca/academic-advocacy-and-support/>.

Look out for petition deadlines!

Petition deadlines vary depending on the type of petition. See the [Petition Types section](#) on the Faculty of Arts & Science site to find out the correct pertinent deadlines.

Your petition will be considered late if you submit it via the online petition system after the deadline. If you submit your petition after the deadline, be sure to explain why it was late in your personal statement. In most cases, being unaware of the deadline or being unfamiliar with the petition process won't be taken as acceptable reasons for lateness by the university.

Find the right petition type

It's important to make sure that you submit the right type of petition for the remedy you are looking for. You can find key information about this on the [Petition Types webpage](#) but you can also ask the APUS Advocacy Coordinator or your college advisor for advice before submitting the petition.

All of the requests listed on page one of this guide are examples that there are petition types for, but if you're not sure which type of petition your issue fits into, don't hesitate to ask for help!



What to include

All petitions are submitted along with any supporting documentation. In your petition, some of the things you have to include are:

- A copy of your course syllabus for any course-based petitions, such as term work extensions, deferred exams, exam re-write, late withdrawal, late withdrawal without academic penalty, late application of credit
- A personal statement to explain the circumstances that led to your petition request
- Supporting documentation that verifies the claims made in your personal statement

Regarding the last of these, your petition stands a far higher chance of success if all the reasons that you raise for your circumstances are backed up by any evidence you can provide. For example, if you are requesting a term work extension due to illness, make sure to provide as much evidence as you can to testify that you were ill when you needed to complete the work.

Note that any documentation provided in a language other than English must be accompanied by an official translation of that document.

Personal statements

Your personal statement should explain what you are requesting and the rationale for why you believe your request should be granted. Describe in detail the personal, medical or other circumstances outside of your control that led you to submit a petition. Your personal statement should be at most two pages and double-spaced. It should only convey the necessary information about what happened. We know that it can seem natural to make emotional appeals in your statement, but this will not improve the chances of your petition being approved; focus on the circumstances that led you to require submitting a petition and provide evidence to back them up.

Try to provide answers to these questions in your statement:

- What happened or what is happening in your life that caused you to submit a petition?
- How long did your extenuating circumstances last?
- Did you seek help at the time? If not, why not? If so, what happened?



- If applicable, what other course work did you complete in the course? Explain how you were doing in the course overall.
- If documentation is not dated at the time of the circumstances, why?

Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation helps to confirm the details you have described in your personal statement and should relate to the nature of your circumstances.

Below are some examples of supporting documentation for various circumstances. If you have any questions about supporting documentation, talk to your College Registrar's Office or the APUS Advocacy Coordinator, as they can advise you on how to make your petition as strong as possible. Make sure the supporting documentation you are appending to your petition supports the petition type and speaks to the circumstances indicated in your petition. For example, absence or medical documentation should indicate absence or incapacitation during the particular academic event or period.

Sometimes, a member of your community or another professional may have detailed knowledge of your circumstances. In that case, it is best to consider having them write you a letter of support on official letterhead.

- If you are submitting a petition due to health-related issues, you can submit a medical report or letter from a licensed practitioner in the region you are living in. If the reason for your petition is related to a disability, health concern or injury for which you are registered with Accessibility Services, you should submit a letter from your accessibility advisor.
- If the petition being submitted is more complex or related to circumstances longer than what can be indicated on the Absence Declaration tool, submit the U of T Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (VOI). You should seek medical assistance as soon as possible to validate your relevant day or days of illness or injury on the VOI form.
- If you are submitting a petition due to a death, provide a death certificate or other proof of passing (e.g., newspaper article or obituary).
- If you are submitting a petition due to an automobile collision, provide a collision report or police report.



You should make sure that all supporting documentation is in English or that an official translation is appended.

Submitting a petition

Submitting your petition to your College Registrar

Now that you have completed your personal statement and collected supporting documentation, your petition is ready to be submitted. Follow the steps below to submit your petition:

1. Login to the [petition system](#) using your UTORid and password.
2. Create a new petition.
3. Select your course(s).
4. Add petition request(s).
5. Add your personal statement.
6. Add relevant supporting documentation in PDF format (e.g., syllabus, medical documentation). Note that all supporting documentation must be submitted as soon as possible, and within three weeks of when you started the petition.
7. Review your petition and submit it.
8. Login to the online petition system at any time to review the status of your petition request. Monitor your U of T email inbox for the decision about your petition and for possible requests for additional information. In most cases, you can expect a decision within five weeks.

You can also refer to the [Faculty's guide to submitting your petition online](#) for step-by-step instructions.

After your College Registrar's Office has reviewed your petition submission, they will submit the request directly to the petitions unit. If you don't hear from your college or the Faculty of Arts & Science petitions unit, you can assume that your petition is being reviewed.

Requests for More Information

The petitions unit may have questions about your petition or ask for additional documentation. Keep an eye out for notifications within the petitions system and emails from your College Registrar's Office about your petition, as it is important to respond to them as soon as possible.



If any additional information is requested, your petition request will not be complete until you update and re-submit your complete petition.

Cancelling or changing your petition

Once you have submitted your petition online, you may decide that you no longer wish to make the request or realize that you have made a mistake on your petition and want to make changes. In both cases, notify your College Registrar's Office (at the email in the table above) as soon as possible so that they can make the necessary changes or notify the petitions unit.

If the petition has already been processed or decided, it may be too late to make changes to the original request. In this case, your College Registrar's Office will advise you to submit another petition request which reflects the correct information.

Petition Outcomes

Most petition decisions are emailed to students within days of the petition being received by the petitions unit. However, if your petition is complex or requires consultation with others, it might impact the response time. You should expect a decision within five weeks of receiving your petition from your College Registrar's Office.

The following are possible outcomes of your petition:

- **Absolute Grant** - This means your petition has been approved and your request will be implemented. The decision email for an absolute grant does not contain any information beyond the decision.
- **Grant with Recommendations** - This means that in addition to your petition being approved, the decision email also contains specific recommendations for you to consider. These recommendations are strongly encouraged, and it is your responsibility to complete them.
- **Grant with Conditions** - This means that your petition is approved but you are required to complete mandatory conditions outlined in the decision email. In these cases, the College Registrar's Office will monitor if you are meeting the conditions.



- **Grant with Advising** - A petition decision might recommend academic advising. This recommendation may be included in a granted petition result when the Committee on Standing wants to ensure students engage with available supports.
- **Refused with Recommendations** - A refused request means that your petition has been denied. It may include recommendations for you to consider, such as alternative petitions to submit that may have a better chance of being approved. In most cases, a refusal with recommendations will also encourage you to seek academic advising.
- **Refused with Advising** - This means that the Committee wants you to discuss the outcome with an advisor. You are encouraged to get support from an academic advisor at your college, especially if you have new information and want to submit an appeal.
- **Not Considered** - This means that the request was not within the purview of the Committee. You can check if the policy or deadline that you are seeking an exception from falls under the purview of your petition, by consulting with your College Registrar's Office. To learn more about requests that do not fall within the purview of the Committee on Standing, look up [Special Consideration Requests](#).
- **Cancelled** - In most cases, a request to cancel a petition is initiated by the student if they no longer wish to have their request reviewed.

How to appeal a petition decision

If your petition is refused, and you believe that this decision was not fair, you can raise an appeal. Before doing so, feel free to reach out to APUS for advice through the form at <https://apus.ca/academic-advocacy-and-support/>.

In order to be eligible to appeal that decision, you must show one of the following:

- You believe you have new information or evidence to provide in support of your request
- You believe a procedural error or irregularity occurred in the petition process

The Faculty strongly advises that you discuss your appeal with an academic advisor at your College Registrar's Office. If you are not comfortable with this, or want additional outside guidance, feel free to reach out to APUS. Both academic advisors and APUS's Advocacy Coordinator will be able to walk you through the deadlines, processes and necessary documentation and help you put together the strongest appeal possible.



The process of writing an appeal is similar to a petition, as it contains both a personal statement and supporting documentation.

There are three levels of appeals. First appeals go to the Faculty's Committee on Standing. If your appeal is rejected at that level, the next step is an appeal to the Faculty's Academic Appeals Board. The final appeal step available is to appeal to the University's Academic Appeals Committee.

In addition to the information included in a petition, you will either need to provide clear new evidence that you believe may change the outcome of the request, or outline in clear terms why the committee made an error in their initial decision.

Appeals to the Committee on Standing are submitted by the student to the College Registrar's Office via email. You have 90 days from the date of the petition refusal to submit an appeal to the Committee on Standing. You can find more information on the details of appeals at [this page](#), including how to file appeals to the second and third levels.

For more information about academic support, visit [APUS's page here](#) and for other APUS guides and instructions on U of T policies, visit our [Information for Part-Time Students page](#).