

FAQs - Final Discretionary Attempt



I have been informed of my results and I have failed an assessment for a second time. What happens now?

Provision for a final Discretionary attempt is set out in the Programme Regulations and Schemes of Assessment for the following courses:

MBBS4 (MBBS4 International) ¹	MBBS5 (MBBS6 International) ¹	MBBS4 (University of Nicosia) ¹	BSc Biomedical Science
BSc Healthcare Science	BSc Diagnostic Radiography	BSc Therapeutic Radiography	BSc Physiotherapy
Fd/BSc Healthcare Practice	BSc/Fd Paramedic Science	BSc Paramedic Practice	BSc Occupational Therapy
BSc Clinical Pharmacology			

Programme Regulations and Schemes of Assessment are available on the Portal.

¹ MBBS and MBBS International students should note that the MBBS Programme Regulations allow **ONE** Discretionary Attempt throughout the entire MBBS programme.

For these courses, St George's allows students to have two automatic attempts at an assessment (first attempt and one resit). Students who fail an assessment at resit (second attempt) will be considered in accordance with St George's *Procedure for Consideration for a Final Discretionary Attempt at an Assessment*.

There are two routes by which students might be permitted a third and final attempt – 'Fast-Track Route' and 'Full Consideration Route'.

Who makes the decision whether I will be 'fast-tracked' or require 'full consideration'?

The Board of Examiners will apply course-specific fast-track criteria which have been devised by staff responsible for teaching and assessment on your programme of study.

How will the Board of Examiners reach its decision?

The fast-track criteria have been constructed by individual Course Teams, working in conjunction with Assessment Leads and the Students' Union to identify those students who have narrowly failed an assessment and who are likely to pass at third attempt. The criteria also take into account factors which have a bearing on success such as having previously had good academic record at St George's, good attendance and engagement at PBL/CBL/SBL, lectures, clinical placements etc and having maintained excellent professional behaviour (SPMC monitoring).

How do I know which route applies to me?

You will be notified by Examinations Team or your Course Administrator regarding whether you have been 'fast-tracked' or require 'full consideration'. You will be notified of the decision normally within 3 working days of the Board of Examiners meeting.

I've been fast-tracked. Is there any else I need to do?

Yes, you need to confirm in writing to your Course Team that you wish to take up the fast-track offer.

We would also strongly advise you to speak to your Course Director or his/her nominee about your academic performance and we would encourage you to reflect on how you will improve your performance ahead of making your final Discretionary attempt at the assessment(s).

What should I do if I have not been granted a 'fast-track' third attempt?

If you have not been granted a fast-track third attempt by the Board of Examiners, you are still able to make a written application to a Discretionary Panel for a third attempt. A Panel will decide whether or not you will be permitted to repeat the assessment(s) for a third and final time.

How do I apply to the Discretionary Panel?

It is possible to make a written application to the Panel. It is not possible to present your case in person. Before you make a written application, it is important that you read the *Procedure for consideration for a final discretionary attempt at an assessment*. You should then complete the *Discretionary Attempt Application Form*.

The completed application form must be submitted alongside all the evidence you wish to include in support of your written statement. Guidance questions are listed on the application form. You might find these guidance questions useful when structuring your personal statement. We recommend that you keep to a timeline of events and refer to evidence where it exists. This information will help the Panel to make their decision whether you can continue on your programme of study.

What might the Discretionary Panel take into consideration?

Please refer to the *Criteria in respect of applications for a Final Discretionary Attempt* document.

The Panel will consider each application individually based on the information that you present and relevant documentation from your student file.

What information does the Discretionary Panel already have and I do not need to provide?

The Panel will be provided with copies of your results, records of attendance and information about mitigating circumstances which you have formally declared using the proper process. The Panel also have access to any other relevant information from your student file.

Does the Discretionary Panel consider mitigating circumstances and should I include these in my statement and supporting documents?

If you experienced mitigating circumstances during the assessment period which you felt adversely affected your performance, you should have already informed St George's of your circumstances.

Students who submitted a Mitigating Circumstances Form(s) requesting 'consideration' or those who have notified the Board of Examiners ahead of their meeting (guidance is provided in the General Regulations and the Course Handbooks about how to do this) will have their circumstances taken into account by the Discretionary Panel. Dates of the Board of Examiners meetings can be found in the Examinations Calendar which is available on the Examinations section of the St George's website.

If you did not report your mitigating circumstances before the Board of Examiners meeting, then it is important that you explain in your statement to the Discretionary Panel why this was the case. Be sure to attach your supporting evidence.

When completing the application form, what should I include in my personal statement and how long should it be?

Your statement should be a short, focused summary of your case and **should not be more than 1000 words in length**. You should take time to read the guidance notes accompanying the Discretionary Attempt Application Form and ensure that you have only included information which is truthful and completely relevant to your case. Focus on the key reason why you have failed and devise a realistic strategy that will help you to overcome this obstacle should you be granted another attempt.

I am not sure what to write in my statement or what supporting documents to provide. Who can help me prepare my statement?

The Vice-President (Education and Welfare) and the Education & Welfare Support Officer of the Students' Union can offer guidance. They will often be prepared to read a draft of your written statement but you must keep in mind that you will need to allow them several days to do this. This is because there are likely to be other students requesting their help. The Vice-President (Education and Welfare) and the Education & Welfare Support Officer receive a large volume of statements to review between July and September each year. It is likely that if you refer to mitigating circumstances that you have not previously disclosed to the University in accordance with the General Regulations, then the Students' Union will remind you of the importance of providing evidence to support your statement.

What if I want to provide academic references?

You have the opportunity to provide up to two academic references. Think carefully who will be able to provide an appropriate reference (i.e. relevant to your circumstances, and which directly refers to the assessment(s) that you have failed). Academic staff often have numerous conflicting commitments and take annual leave over the summer so it is courteous to provide your referee with as much notice as possible that you would like a written reference from them. Students are personally responsible for requesting written references from their chosen referees and for submitting their references alongside their Discretionary Attempt Application Form.

Whilst in the majority of cases your referee will support your application for a final attempt, on occasion you may find that they are unable to do so. Your referee will tell you if this is the case.

Who might I approach for an academic reference?

More weight is attached to a reference if the referee is familiar with your programme of study and knows you well enough to comment on your engagement and commitment to study, your academic performance and any factors that may have prevented you from performing to the best of your ability.

Guidance for Academics on Writing References for Students

Please limit your academic reference to 1 side of A4.

Only agree to write a reference if you know the student and you have taught the student.

Firstly, outline your role in relation to teaching and assessment and explain the capacity in which you know the student.

You may wish to comment on:

Attendance at PBL/CBL/SBL, lectures clinical/communication skills sessions

Performance on clinical placements

Preparedness for sessions

Contribution to sessions and interaction with peers

Examination performance including performance in previous examinations (any unusual improvement or decline)

Academic strengths and weaknesses

Any personal circumstances/mitigation the student disclosed to you prior to the assessment.

Recommend any additional self-directed learning or student support that might improve chances of academic success.

Comment on any extra-curricular awards or prizes obtained by students for academic or research activity whilst at St George's.

How long do I have to prepare my documents after I have received my results?

Once results are confirmed, pass/fail results (listed by candidate number) will be notified to students. If you find that you have failed an assessment for a second time then you have a minimum **10 working days** from the date that the pass/fail results were published to submit your application. You should **not await the receipt of your results letter by post** before preparing your documents for the Discretionary Panel.

Where are the Discretionary Panel application deadlines published?

Course specific deadlines are published on the Procedure for Consideration for a Final Discretionary Attempt at an Assessment webpage. The cut-off time for submitting documents is **12 noon** on day of the deadline.

<https://www.sgul.ac.uk/for-students/your-academic-life/student-conduct-and-compliance/student-procedures/procedure-for-consideration-for-a-final-discretionary-attempt-at-an-assessment>

Who should I submit my application to?

Your completed Discretionary Attempt Application Form, references, statement and supporting evidence (if relevant) can be submitted by email or be hand delivered or posted to the Student Conduct and Compliance Team.

The address to send your documents is as follows:

By Email: discretionaryattempt@sgul.ac.uk and ahiggs@sgul.ac.uk

By Post: (Please do not post documents during remote working due to Covid-19)
Student Conduct and Compliance Team (C/O Frances Stannard)
St George's University of London
Governance, Legal and Assurance Services (GLAS)
Ground Floor, Hunter Wing
Cranmer Terrace, Tooting, SW17 0RE

Hand deliver: Student Centre (Ground Floor) – please clearly mark your envelope for the attention of the Student Conduct and Compliance Team (C/O Frances Stannard) and mark it as URGENT.

The cut-off time for submitting documents is **12 noon** on day of the deadline. If you opt to post your documents then these must be received by the deadline. We recommend that you use a recorded delivery service and retain your proof of postage.

Format for Submitting Application Forms and Evidence

The Student Conduct and Compliance Team receive a large number of applications each year. To assist with the collation of documents, students are asked to provide documents in the following order:

Discretionary Panel Application Form
Evidence (eg medical reports, death certificates, major extra-curricular contribution etc)
Academic References (no more than 2)
Other supporting documents

Students submitting their application **by email** should provide a **single PDF** containing all the documents for the Panel. Entitle the PDF: **SURNAME_FIRST INITIAL Discretionary Panel Application**

Students submitting their application **in hard copy** should **not staple documents together**.

What if I do not want to make an application for 'full consideration'?

Having failed your assessments the maximum amount of times permitted under the Programme Regulations, your registration will be terminated and you will cease to be an St George's student in the event an application is not received.

If the Panel turns down my application, can I appeal the decision?

Yes under certain circumstances which are detailed in the *Procedure for consideration for a final discretionary attempt at an assessment*.

Student Conduct and Compliance Team

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