

## Common Questions and Answers

# Exam and Assignment Deferrals

**NOTE:** These common questions and answers are meant to help you navigate the sometimes-complicated policies, but they may not apply to every situation. They are NOT a substitute for the official policy and procedures, which hold precedence and can be found here: <https://umanitoba.ca/health-sciences/rady-faculty-health-sciences-policies>. If you have any questions about details in the policy, please contact Student Affairs and/or the Policy Contact (listed at the bottom of each policy)

### 1. Do I have to tell Student Affairs the reason for my deferral and produce documentation?

No, for the first two deferrals of an academic year, you can use the self-declaration form, (<https://entrada.radyfhs.umanitoba.ca/community/ugmestudentaffairs:forms>), rather than producing a medical note or other documentation, **if you have one of the qualifying reasons** for self-declaration. If you are requesting deferral for a reason that is not on the form, you should contact Student Affairs at StudentAffairsMed@umanitoba.ca for further direction and advice. If you are requesting more than two deferrals, we may require further documentation.

### 2. Since I get two self-declared deferrals per year, should I max them out in order to give me more time to study?

No. The self-declaration process trusts you, as an adult learner, to decide whether your situation would preclude you from writing the exam without having to waste time on doctor's notes or other documentation, and to maintain your privacy. However, we advise you to use deferrals very carefully and sparingly. If you defer a midterm exam, the weight usually transfers to the final exam, making that one more "high stakes." If you defer a final exam, you get a chance to write the supplemental version, but often not until the summer, long after the material has been taught and after you have moved onto other courses. In our experience, exam deferrals do not result in a better exam result for most students who are able to write the initial exam. In some instances, an exam deferral can hurt a student's chance to obtain their best possible score by putting

more time between the course and the exam, resulting in the material being less 'fresh' or top-of-mind.

So, while you can, and should, defer when you are really not able to write an exam on the original date, you should always consider what the consequences of a deferral will be, and whether they are "worth it" in your individual circumstance. Do not use deferrals as a procrastination tool, as it will not be to your benefit to do so in the long term.

### 3. How much notice should I give when submitting the self-declaration form?

For anticipatable reasons, it is our expectation that the deferral form be submitted as soon as you know that you will need to defer, ideally 20 days, and **at least 2 days** in advance of the exam. This would include issues like an illness that may or may not improve in time for the exam, or the anticipated death of a close relative or friend. When in doubt, let us know in advance if you may need to defer, even if you're not totally sure.

### 4. I was really very sick/was in a collision/got terrible family news and missed my exam without being able to contact anyone in advance. Now what happens?

We know that emergencies happen and will accommodate exam deferrals for serious issues like these where you were truly incapable of contacting us in advance. You must email the evaluations coordinator ([preclerkevaluations@umanitoba.ca](mailto:preclerkevaluations@umanitoba.ca)) and



the Student Affairs office ([StudentAffairsMed@umanitoba.ca](mailto:StudentAffairsMed@umanitoba.ca)) as soon as you are able to explain what happened - a friend or family member can also do this for you if needed. If you miss an exam and we do not hear from you, we will reach out to you to make sure you are OK, which may include contacting your emergency contacts. Please get back to us as soon as you can, even if it's just a brief check in. Within 48 hours of the missed exam, please submit a deferral form which can be found on the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences policy page and in the Student Affairs Community on Entrada (<https://entrada.radyfhs.umanitoba.ca/community/ugmestudentaffairs:forms>). We will work with you to request the least intrusive documentation as possible and will respect your time, and emotions, in arranging for the deferral.

**5. I have two exams in one day. I feel sick, but I could probably handle one of the exams, but not both of them. Can I defer one and not the other?**

No. When you are deferring an exam you are declaring that you are unable to complete an academic requirement due to an extenuating circumstance. The exams are designed to be written on the same date since the courses run concurrently, and therefore, an extenuating circumstance applies to both exams. So, if you have two or more exams scheduled for the same day (e.g. EM1 and OBG1) you must defer both or neither- you cannot defer one without the other. The only exception would be if, during the exam itself, there is an emergency that occurs after you have finished one exam and before you finish the other (e.g. sudden illness)

**6. I slept through an alarm and missed my exam, or traffic was really bad, and I got to campus super late. Can I defer retroactively? I worry that this will appear on my transcript and ruin my chances at residency.**

We do not approve exam deferrals for missed alarms, buses etc. as it is your personal responsibility to be prepared to attend an exam on time, and to plan appropriately for weather and traffic. If you missed the alarm due to a sudden illness or major personal issue, then let us know so we can help if needed.

We advise you to plan to arrive at your exams 15 minutes before the start time. We are sensitive to major weather situations, like blizzards, and will accommodate the entire class when required. You can arrive late to an exam (up to 30 minutes) but do not get extra time. If you arrive later than this, or miss an exam completely, you will receive a zero. You will have a chance to write supplemental exams in the summer. While this can be frustrating, most students who this happens to (and it happens multiple times a year) do fine on the supplemental exams. As with other supplemental exams, as long as you pass within the required number of attempts to pass the year, there will be no record of the failure on your transcript. If the reason you missed the alarm was due to illness, then submit as a medical deferral.

**7. I maxed out my self-declaration deferrals, but now I really need a third one. Do I have to still write when I am sick, or grieving?**

We set a two-deferral maximum for self-declaration so that students carefully consider if a deferral is the right choice for them (see question 2 above). Although it may seem helpful to have extensions on assignments and deferred tests and exams, the deadlines can pile up and interfere with other deadlines, work and courses. However, we can help more if your life circumstances require multiple deferrals. Deferred final exams are written in a relatively compressed timeline in the summer, which can affect other important events (summer research, vacation etc.). However, we do know that unexpected things happen and you may need to defer more than twice. If you need exam deferrals in excess of the two self-declarations per year, we will do our best to accommodate you. We may request additional documentation and/or for you to meet with us, and may need to discuss your situation with the Associate Dean UGME and/or the Progress Committee, as appropriate. We will maintain your privacy to the greatest degree possible in these communications.

**8. Are all deferred exams automatically written in the summer?**

Many, but not all, deferred exams are written in the summer. Please refer to the UGME deferral policy, as the deferred examination schedule depends on numerous factors at the discretion of UGME, including the type of exam being deferred (midterm, final or an exam in a modular course) and the reason for deferral. CV1 and RS1 supplemental exams are written over the Winter Break and must be passed before you can move on to CV2 and RS2. In general, deferred midterms are not rescheduled - their weight gets transferred to the final exam. Final exams deferred for student government, athletics, research presentations, bereavement or religious observance can often be written within 10 business days of the deferred exam. For longitudinal courses, deferred examination schedules depend on the exam and course and is variable. In clerkship, deferred NBME exams usually cannot be written until August (near the end of core rotations.) When in doubt, please refer to UGME policy on exam deferrals, and don't hesitate to reach out to Student Affairs to help clarify for a given exam or situation in question.

**9. I have big plans in the summer (travel or something else very important to me) Can I schedule my deferral date to work with these plans? Can I write exams remotely?**

No, the summer deferral schedule cannot be adjusted based on individual student requests. The supplemental exams (for students who have deferred or failed the first attempt during the school year) are written over a very compressed period and are designed based on the number of exams required and the number of students needing to write them. We cannot accommodate individual requests. We require you to write the exams, in person, on the date assigned. If you have summer travel plans, we **strongly encourage** you to avoid non-refundable plans as we cannot, and will not, reschedule these exams for individuals.

**10. What happens if I need to defer an assignment? Do I still have to do it? When will it be due?**

The answer to this question really depends on what the assignment is and how long you need to defer it. Some assignments may be waived, and others need to be submitted late. We will do our best to work revised due dates around other assignments and exams, but also need to consider the flow of the course and marking deadlines.

If you need to defer an assignment, please apply as far in advance as possible by filling out the assignment deferral form, which can be found here (<https://umanitoba.ca/health-sciences/sites/healthsciences/files/2022-02/application-for-assignment-extension.pdf>) If a deferral is approved, the Student Affairs office will work with you and the course director to figure out a revised submission date.

**CONTACT US**

We welcome feedback. Please let us know if you find this document helpful and if you have tips you would like us to add! Contact us at [StudentAffairsmed@umanitoba.ca](mailto:StudentAffairsmed@umanitoba.ca).