Education Service

M22-4 – Part IV – Chapter 11 Updates

Lesson Plan

September 2016

Version 1.0

Lesson Overview

| Topic | Description |
| --- | --- |
| Time Estimate: | 1 Hour |
| Purpose of the Lesson: | The purpose of this lesson is to provide VCEs with notice and training on the updated M22-4. |
| Prerequisite Training Requirements: | * Processing Mitigating Circumstances for Post 9/11 GI Bill Claims (TMS ID 1702616) |
| Target Audience: | * VCE (entry level) * VCE (journeyman level) |
| Lesson References: | * [M22-4 – Part IV: Chapter 11 – Enrollment Adjustments](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/22/ref/m22-4/Part%20IV/ch11.htm) * [38 USC 3680](http://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title38/part3/chapter36&edition=prelim) |
| Lesson Objectives: | At the conclusion of this lesson, you will be able to:   * Identify the requirements for documenting phone calls with School Certifying Officials (SCOs) * Determine the circumstances in which to grant mitigating circumstances |
| What You Need: | * Ability to present PowerPoint. * Copy of the Handout. |
| Post Training Requirements: | Upon completion of the classroom portion of the lesson, participants are required to complete an online lesson assessment and survey in Talent Management System (TMS).  To demonstrate successful completion of the lesson participants must pass the assessment with a score of at least 80%.  Participants must also complete the online survey to earn credit for completion of the lesson. |

Instructor Notes

| PowerPoint Slides | Instructor Activities |
| --- | --- |
| Is a screen capture of slide 1 of the powerpoint presentation. It is the required myVA powerpoint template and has the following text:  "M22-4 - Part IV - Chapter 11 - Updates" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Introduce** yourself as the instructor and introduce the lesson. |
| Screen capture of slide two. It has the following text:  Header: "M22-4 – Part IV – Chapter 11 Updated"  Textbox:  " *The M22-4 – Part IV – Chapter 11 was updated  on September 1, 2016  *This update contained a significant amount of cosmetic changes to the chapter and several updates to processing procedures  *This training covers the major processing changes and reviews important processing requirements. Employees are mandated to review the updated chapter" | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Provide an overview of the lesson by discussing the key points.** 2. **Remind trainees that they are mandated to review the** [updated chapter](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/22/ref/m22-4/Part%20IV/ch11.htm)**.** |
| Screen capture of slide three. It has the following text:  Header: "Lesson Objectives"  Textbox:  " At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:  *Identify the requirements for documenting phone calls with School Certifying Officials (SCOs)  *Determine the circumstances in which to grant mitigating circumstances" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Review the lesson learning objectives.** |
| Screen capture of slide four. It has the following text:  Header: "Reporting Reductions and Terminations"  Textbox:  " Section 11.03 (Section a.)  *Method of Reporting (4) states the following:  -“The VCE should record telephonic notices of reduction or    termination on VA Form 119, Report of Contact. Clearly identify the form as a telephonic notice and include all the information required to process a reduction or termination of benefits, the name and title of the person providing the information, and the date the notice is received. The person recording the information should ensure it is captured in the claimant's TIMS folder”  *When recording information received from a SCO the Veterans Claims Examiner (VCE) MUST use VA Form 119 to record this information. The VCE CANNOT use a “NOTE” in The Imaging Management System (TIMS) " | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the information with trainees.** 2. **Reinforce that VCEs must use VA Form 119 when documenting calls with SCOs.** |
| Screen capture of slide five. It has the following text:  Header: "Should the 6 Credit Exclusion Be Applied"  Textbox:  " Section 11.05 (Section a.)  The 6 credit exclusion applies to a course withdrawal only if each of the following requirements are met:   *The student is enrolled under an education benefit provided under Title 38 or Title 10  *The withdrawal is the first instance of withdrawal from courses on or after June 1, 1989  *The student has been awarded benefits for the withdrawn courses  *Mitigating circumstances would normally be an issue (e.g., the withdrawal was beyond the drop period and a non-punitive grade was assigned for the course)  NOTE: If these conditions are met, and none of the conditions of when not to use the 6 credit exclusion apply, the VCE must utilize the 6 credit exclusion. The exclusion cannot be saved (even at the request of the student) for a future occasion." | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the criteria needed to grant the 6 credit exclusion.** 2. **Explain the note in detail:**    1. **In order to grant the 6 credit exclusion all requirements noted on this slide must be met.**    2. **In order to grant the 6 credit exclusion all requirements noted on the following slide must NOT be met.**    3. **Reinforce that if both a. and b. are meet, then the 6 credit exclusion must be granted. Under no circumstances can it be “saved” for future use.** |
| Screen capture of slide six. It has the following text:  Header: "Should the 6 Credit Exclusion Be Applied"  Textbox:  " Section 11.05 (Section b.)  The 6 credit exclusion does not apply if the student:   *Withdraws from a course during the drop period  *Completes a course and receives a non-punitive grade  *Withdraws from a course and receives a punitive (failing) grade  *Withdraws from a course and there is no debt established based on the change  *Was previously granted a 6 credit exclusion for the same or a different benefit  *Withdraws from a course and VA has not awarded benefits yet for that course" | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the criterion that prevents a VCE from granting the 6 credit exclusion.** 2. **Emphasize #4. Remind trainees that if a reduction or withdrawal does not result in any debt, they do not have to apply the 6 credit exclusion.** 3. **ASK trainees for examples of cases they processed recently, and as a group review those situations and identify if the 6 credit exclusion should be granted.** |
| Screen capture of slide seven. It has the following text:  Header: "Documentation Procedure"  Textbox:  " Section 11.08 (Section c. - NOTE)  *It is no longer necessary for the VCE to “FLASH” TIMS folders regarding granting the 6 credit exclusion. The controls set in Benefits Delivery Network (BDN) or Long Term Solution (LTS) are sufficient notification   *It is essential that each student be granted the exclusion when applicable  **A student receives the 6 credit exclusion only one time  *When a school reports that a drop in credit hours occurred, the VCE must always consider the possibility that the 6 credit exclusion rule may apply" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Review the information with trainees.** |
| Screen capture of slide eight. It has the following text:  Header: "Evidence Requirement For Mitigating Circumstances"  Textbox:  " Section 11.12 (Section b.)  In order to grant mitigating circumstances the VCE must be able to answer the following :  *What occurred?  *Was the occurrence unavoidable?  *What was the impact of this event?" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Emphasize these questions, and explain that VCEs must be able to answer them when processing mitigating circumstances.** |
| Screen capture of slide nine. It has the following text:  Header: "Evidence Requirement For Mitigating Circumstances"  Textbox:  " Section 11.12  In order to grant mitigating circumstances the VCE must also have adequate evidence to substantiate the event  *Example: the student indicates that they withdrew due to an illness or injury  **The student needs to provide a medical note from their doctor, a medical bill showing they were hospitalized, or some other evidence that substantiates their illness or injury. If this evidence is not provided, the VCE cannot grant mitigating circumstances  *Example: the student states the withdrawn course was discontinued by the school  **The student should have the school submit documentation stating the course was discontinued. If this evidence is not provided, the VCE (as per duty to assist) should develop to the client and reach out to the State Approving Agency (SAA) and Education Liaison Representative (ELR) to confirm the course was discontinued. If the SAA or ELR confirms the course was discontinued, the VCE can grant mitigating circumstances. If no evidence is received that substantiates the course was discontinued, the VCE  cannot grant mitigating circumstances  NOTE: In instances where the specific mitigating circumstance is of a sensitive nature, it would be insensitive to insist on the submission of corroborative evidence. In these specific cases, the VCE can automatically accept just the student’s statement and grant the mitigating circumstances. Some examples include:  *The student reports the death of a spouse or child  *The student reports a serious illness of an immediate family member  *The student reports that family or financial obligations outside of the student’s control required the student to stop attending school in order to obtain employment" | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the examples with trainees.** 2. **Remember the clarification for presenters note:**    1. **“**If a STUDENT is reporting a serious illness – evidence is required. This evidence does not have to violate privacy concerns (i.e. VCEs do not need to develop for what illness an individual had), but evidence should show that the illness prevented the student from completing the term. If a student is reporting a serious illness of a FAMILY MEMBER – then this is considered a sensitive issue and evidence is not required.” |
| Screen capture of slide ten. It has the following text:  Header: "Evidence Requirement For Mitigating Circumstances"  Textbox:  " Section 11.12 (Section a.)  *Students are expected to document their claimed mitigating circumstances   *Students must provide evidence that substantiates the seriousness and unavoidable nature of the situation that interfered with their enrollment  *A list of potential mitigating circumstances (which is not all inclusive) can be found in Chapter 11.11" | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the information with trainees.** 2. **ASK trainees for examples of mitigating circumstances that would require evidence.** 3. **ASK trainees for examples of mitigating circumstances that would be considered sensitive in nature and would not require evidence.** |
| Screen capture of slide eleven. It has the following text:  Header: "Evidence Requirement For Mitigating Circumstances"  Textbox:  " Section 11.12 (Section c.)  *The student’s school may act as an agent for the student when reporting mitigating circumstances. If the school reports the reason for the student’s reduction or withdrawal, the VCE should consider the statement as coming from the student  *This does not supersede the need for evidence. The VCE must follow the guidance from the previous slides:  **Example: the school indicates that the student withdrew due to an illness or injury  ***The student must still provide a medical note from their doctor, a medical bill showing they were hospitalized, or some other evidence that substantiates their illness or injury  **Example: the school indicates the student withdrew due to a death in the student’s family  ***Due to the sensitive circumstances of the situation, further evidence is not required. The VCE can process mitigating circumstances  NOTE: When evidence is needed, and has not been received, the VCE must develop TO THE STUDENT. The VCE should use PCGL letter M/C-2 to request this information." | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the information with trainees.** 2. **Emphasize that all development letters must be sent to the student, even if the school supplied the initial mitigating circumstances.** 3. **Remind trainees of the provisions of duty to assist. (M22-4 – Part III – Chapter 3 –** [Subchapter 6](http://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/22/ref/m22-4/Part%20III/ch03.htm)**)** |
| Screen capture of slide twelve. It has the following text:  Header: "Evidence Requirement For Mitigating Circumstances"  Textbox:  " Section 11.12  *There is no set standard of evidence needed for what is required when a student request mitigating circumstances  *The VCE is responsible for making sure that the student has provided adequate responses and evidence for:  **What occurred **Proof that the event was unavoidable **The impact of this event  *If the VCE did not request evidence due to the sensitive nature of the provided mitigating circumstance – the VCE should put a “NOTE” in TIMS stating the mitigating circumstance was accepted and further evidence was not requested due to the sensitive nature of the event" | **DISPLAY** slide   1. **Review the information with trainees.** 2. **Emphasize the three questions that the trainees must be able to answer** 3. **Provide the trainees with the handout. Allow them time to complete it and then review all questions and answers.** |
| Screen capture of slide thirteen. It has the following text:  Header: "Lesson References"  Textbox:  " M22-4 – Part IV: Chapter 11 – Enrollment Adjustments  38 USC 3680 " | **DISPLAY** slide  **Review the information with trainees.** |
| Screen capture of slide fourteen. It has the following text:  Header: "Summary"  Textbox:  " Today you:  *Reviewed how to record and document information received from phone calls with SCOs  *Reviewed what is required to accept mitigating circumstances  *Reviewed how mitigating circumstances of a sensitive nature are handled" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Review the information with trainees.** |
| Screen capture of slide fifteen. It has the following text:  Header: "Questions" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Ask trainees if they have any questions.** |
| Screen capture of slide sixteen. It has the following text:  Header: "TMS Assessment and Survey"  Textbox:  " *The assessment and survey have been assigned to you in TMS  *The assessment is comprised of 5 scenario-based questions  *The questions are based on the information you learned today  *You should be able to complete the assessment and survey within one hour  *Be sure to complete both the assessment and the survey in TMS to receive credit for this training" | **DISPLAY** slide  **Provide the TMS assessment and survey information to trainees.** |