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Queensland Uni Under Fire Over Assault Case

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A Queensland university is facing mounting public backlash after it emerged that a medical student found guilty of assaulting his ex-girlfriend was still on track to graduate.

Uvindu Pansuja Samarasi Jayasekara, a student at James Cook University (JCU), appeared in Townsville Magistrates Court last week, where he avoided conviction despite admitting to the violent assault. The court heard that during a university medicine ball event, Mr Jayasekara grew jealous when his former partner spoke to another person. He cornered her and punched her multiple times. While she bled and cried from her injuries, he used her phone to take a selfie with her.

Mr Jayasekara received a sentence of two years' probation and was ordered to pay \$500 in compensation to the victim. The absence of a conviction sparked anger among community members, particularly after it was revealed that a JCU staff member had provided a character reference on his behalf.

The university has since been heavily criticised for its response. Many Australians have called for the institution to bar Mr Jayasekara from graduating, expressing concerns about his future as a medical professional.

In a public statement, JCU defended its handling of the case, stating that the character reference was provided "as a member of the public" rather than in an official capacity.

James Cook University does not tolerate domestic or family violence and is committed to fostering a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all members of its community, the statement read.

The university confirmed it has suspended the student and is now conducting a formal review to determine whether he is fit to continue in the medical program. The outcome of this internal review will decide if Mr Jayasekara will be permitted to complete his studies and enter the medical profession.

The case has reignited national debate about the accountability of Australian universities in managing serious student misconduct, especially in disciplines like medicine and law, where graduates are expected to serve the public with integrity.