

Quality Handbook

Extenuating Circumstances Guidance Notes

Extenuating Circumstances are events:

- which are exceptional and beyond your control - in other words not foreseeable and/or preventable
- which have prevented you from demonstrating or acquiring skills, knowledge or competencies required for an assessment
- which were at a time that you can show would have affected that assessment
- which you can evidence
- which you report in advance of the assessment

Examples of events which are extenuating circumstance include:

- bereavement
- serious short-term illness or accident
- significant adverse family or personal circumstances
- worsening of a long-term health condition

Examples of events which are *not* extenuating circumstance include

- un-evidenced claims
- minor illness or ailments, e.g. that would not keep someone off work
- poor practice such as not keeping back-ups of work (**always** back up your work) or last-minute computer or printer problems
- being on holiday
- work commitments for full time students
- Ordinary and routine pressures of assessment that any student might expect

“Fit to sit” means:

- that you must decide whether or not your assessment will be affected by the circumstances and if it has been, you **must** submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances in advance
- if you sit an exam or hand in coursework, you have deemed yourself fit and **cannot** subsequently apply for Extenuating Circumstances (if you are taken ill unexpectedly in an exam or other assessment, procedures do exist to handle that). Unforeseen exceptional situations will be considered

To apply:

- familiarise yourself with the full procedure (linked in your student/programme handbook)
- fill out the form on line promptly and no later than the deadline provided by your faculty
- submit the form as soon as you can, and no later than the dates set by your faculty (if in doubt contact your Module Leader), with appropriate evidence attached, we will treat

anything handed in as confidential. NB: If for good reason you cannot at that point provide the necessary evidence you should clearly state this on the application or request form instead, indicating when the University can expect the evidence, what it is, and why there is a delay. YOU MUST still submit the form by the deadline, or it will not be considered

- we expect any application to be from you and not from a third party, except in exceptional circumstances where you are incapacitated and unable to submit a claim. Any third party acting on your behalf would have to provide us with evidence as to why
- students at partner institutions complete the hard copy form available from study centre administrators

On the form:

- make sure you have told us of the dates affected by the circumstances and what the assessment is for which you are claiming the circumstances and the exact submission date of the assessment
- if it is more than one assessment, you have to specify them all – we will only consider extenuating circumstances for those assessments that you have listed
- it is your responsibility to provide us with all the information that we need to make a decision on whether to grant the request

The evidence you provide should:

- cover the entire time affected. A General Medical Practitioner's fit note from later which records that they saw you and heard of your previous ill-health does not constitute evidence
- be appropriate independent evidence, clearly linked to the dates for which you are claiming extenuating circumstances e.g. this might be from a relevant professional, such as a note from a General Medical Practitioner or other professional, who has seen you at the time at which you were not well, or the production of a police crime reference report

As a reminder: submitting fraudulent evidence is a disciplinary offence and academic misconduct (and, if applicable, a fitness to practise issue), for which submitting your Extenuating Circumstances form you are telling us that everything referred to is accurate and truthful. Submitting fraudulent death certificates is a criminal offence.

If you do not submit an application

- your case will not be considered unless you can provide compelling and exceptional reason through the Academic Appeal process why you could not submit by the deadline stipulated

If you disagree with an outcome:

- you do have the right of appeal against an assessment decision on the grounds of unconsidered extenuating circumstances, but to succeed you would have to be able to demonstrate that you had compelling and exceptional reason why you could not submit an applicable at the time
- remember the "Fit to Sit" rule would apply unless you could evidence that you were incapable of making that judgement

Where can I get support/discuss my claim

- from your personal tutor, Programme Leader/Manager, or from Students' Union

