

# **Policy and Procedures for Extenuating Circumstances Claims 2021-2022**

## 1 Introduction

The University wishes to be fair to all its students and recognises that there may be significant factors which can have an adverse effect on students' performance in assessments. Claims for extenuating circumstances are managed and considered in accordance with the Assessment [Regulations](#) (Section D8).

“personal circumstances which have affected a student’s performance in an assessment and are brought to the attention of the Assessment Board when considering academic performance. An application for extenuating circumstances will only be considered if the circumstances meet the following criteria: The circumstances are unforeseen, exceptional; they are outside of the control of the student; and **original** supporting documentary evidence is provided”

- a) All undergraduate and postgraduate students have a responsibility to manage their learning during their registration at the University and may be required to complete and submit, or sit, a wide range of assessments. It is therefore essential that students manage their workload efficiently so as not to struggle to meet deadlines or miss them.
- b) However, the University recognizes that there may be times when serious adverse factors, beyond their direct control, prevent students from completing work to a deadline, or to their customary standard of achievement.
- c) For this reason, the University encourages students with extenuating circumstances to inform the University via UniHelp, and to request either an extension to the deadline for submission of a piece of work, and/or to request deferral of an assessment or an interruption of study.
- d) This policy is not intended for students who have a disability or an ongoing medical condition. If a student has a disability or ongoing medical condition, the student should contact the University’s Disability and Dyslexia support team for a Learning Support Form (LSF) to be put in place. However, a disabled student may need to request a deferral or extension if, for example, they experience an acute episode or worsening of their condition which means that the reasonable adjustments in place are no longer sufficient.
- e) No guarantee can be given that, following deferral of assessment or reassessment beyond the next available opportunity, the module content and form of assessment will remain unchanged.
- f) Normally, deferred assessment or reassessment will not be permitted beyond two years following commencement of study for the module (normally the fourth opportunity for assessment of the module component).
- g) A student cannot appeal the decision of an extenuating circumstances panel on whether or not to accept a claim of extenuating circumstances. A student can use the procedures set out in Section G Academic Appeals following publication of results.

## 2. Aims and Purpose

This policy is designed to support students whose learning has been adversely affected by extenuating circumstances and its aims are to:

- a) ensure fair and equal treatment of all students when considering their extenuating circumstances and determining how best to support them.
- b) make clear the types of adverse factors that the University shall consider as extenuating circumstances. (Table A)

- c) create a culture of enhancement seeking to learn from extenuating circumstances and improve the student experience including through appropriate training for decision-makers.
- d) ensure clarity in language and process.
- e) uphold fairness, consistency and natural justice in the treatment of the student body as a whole, as well as for particular individuals including by:
  - i) ensuring decisions are taken by those without conflicts of interest;
  - ii) ensuring that students are neither disadvantaged nor overly advantaged as a result of the process.
- f) maintain awareness through collaboration with support services (academic and welfare), targeted local campaigns, and visible and accessible central information highlighted to students at relevant key points in the academic year

### 3. Principles

The following principles underpin Middlesex's approach to extenuating circumstances (Regulation D8.2):

- a) All students should have a fair opportunity to show they can meet the required standards and be assessed on equal terms.
- b) All work submitted by students for assessment shall be graded on its merits without consideration of any extenuating circumstances known to the marker. Extenuating circumstances will not be used by Subject Assessment Boards to alter the grades of students.
- c) Students must submit extenuating circumstances with documentary evidence, by the specified deadline as per the published guidance. Extenuating Circumstances submitted after the deadline specified should normally be considered only if the student was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling, to disclose them before the deadline and submits documentary evidence to support this.
- d) Extenuating circumstances will be considered by Panels, or their delegated nominees, convened on behalf of Programme Progression Boards and Faculty/School Assessment Boards, who may make a decision based on the published guidance.
- e) The outcomes of the extenuating circumstances panel, which may include an agreed extension to a coursework deadline or deferral of assessment to the next opportunity, will be provided to Programme Progression Boards and Faculty/School Assessment Boards, to support their decision making:
  - i) in considering whether a student may progress to the next stage of the programme
  - ii) in determining the classification for a qualification where the student is borderline or there are conflicting classifications in the profiles of grades
  - iii) consideration for an aegrotat award.
- f) Normally extenuating circumstances shall not be taken into account where the circumstances have already been allowed for (for example, by special assessment arrangements, see Regulation H7 (e)). Special assessment arrangements should be agreed at enrolment in cases of known disability and in any case agreed with the student before an examination period begins.

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## Procedures

### Student Responsibility

1. It is each student's personal responsibility to undertake the required assessments for their programme of study at the required time. Failure to take a required assessment will result in the assessment being regarded as an attempt with a recorded FAIL mark of 20 **unless**:
  - i) these procedures are followed **and**
  - ii) the evidence to support the claim of extenuating circumstances is accepted by the extenuating circumstances panel or delegated nominee.
2. It is a student's responsibility to complete an extenuating circumstances form (available on UniHub), detailing any circumstances which may affect their ability to meet their programme commitments (assessment deadline/s).
3. The University expects students to decide if they are too ill or otherwise affected by extenuating circumstances to take an assessment. Students may seek advice from staff, but such advice should be limited to the procedures to be followed and the required evidence. It must place the onus clearly on the student to make the final decision. Staff should also avoid attempting to judge the likely outcome of a claim submitted under this procedure to an extenuating circumstances panel.
4. Students should note that they must provide valid evidence, a description of the impact on their assessment, including timeframe, confirmation of any previous requests or any ongoing issues, and specify what the preferred outcome is thus taking responsibility for the management of their extenuating circumstances claim.

### Students with on-going conditions or specific differences

5. Students who have a disability or an ongoing medical condition may declare this to the University at any point either prior to their admission to the University or during their studies. If a disability or ongoing medical condition has been declared to the University, the student may have contacted the University's Disability and Dyslexia support team for a Learning Support Form (LSF) to be put in place. The LSF will set out the reasonable additional support or facilities that will be put in place by the University to support that student's learning and assessment. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for an LSF to be agreed in order for reasonable adjustments to be put in place.
6. Where disability-related support-needs arise after initial admission to a programme the University can provide support and guidance to enable students to undertake their programme of study. Where the condition has an immediate impact on assessment activity, the extenuating circumstances procedures can be used for these assessments up until the point that the appropriate support has been put in place. This may include the necessity of the student taking an interruption of study. The student should normally be involved in any discussions relating to this.
7. Once the condition or disability is declared and the appropriate support has been put in place, it is not covered by the extenuating circumstances procedures. However, fluctuations in a student's disability or any unexpected issues that have arisen for the student around their disability-related support are included.

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8. Students with disabilities, who are considering applying for extenuating circumstances, or for an extension to an assessment deadline, should note that support is available to them via the University's Disability and Dyslexia Service.
  9. It is not normally possible to consider extenuating circumstances claims from students once an assessment has been undertaken (retrospective extenuating circumstances) on the basis of a subsequent diagnosis of a disability or specific learning difference.

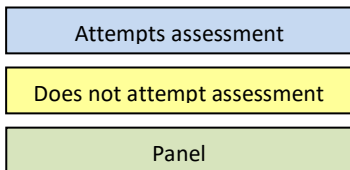
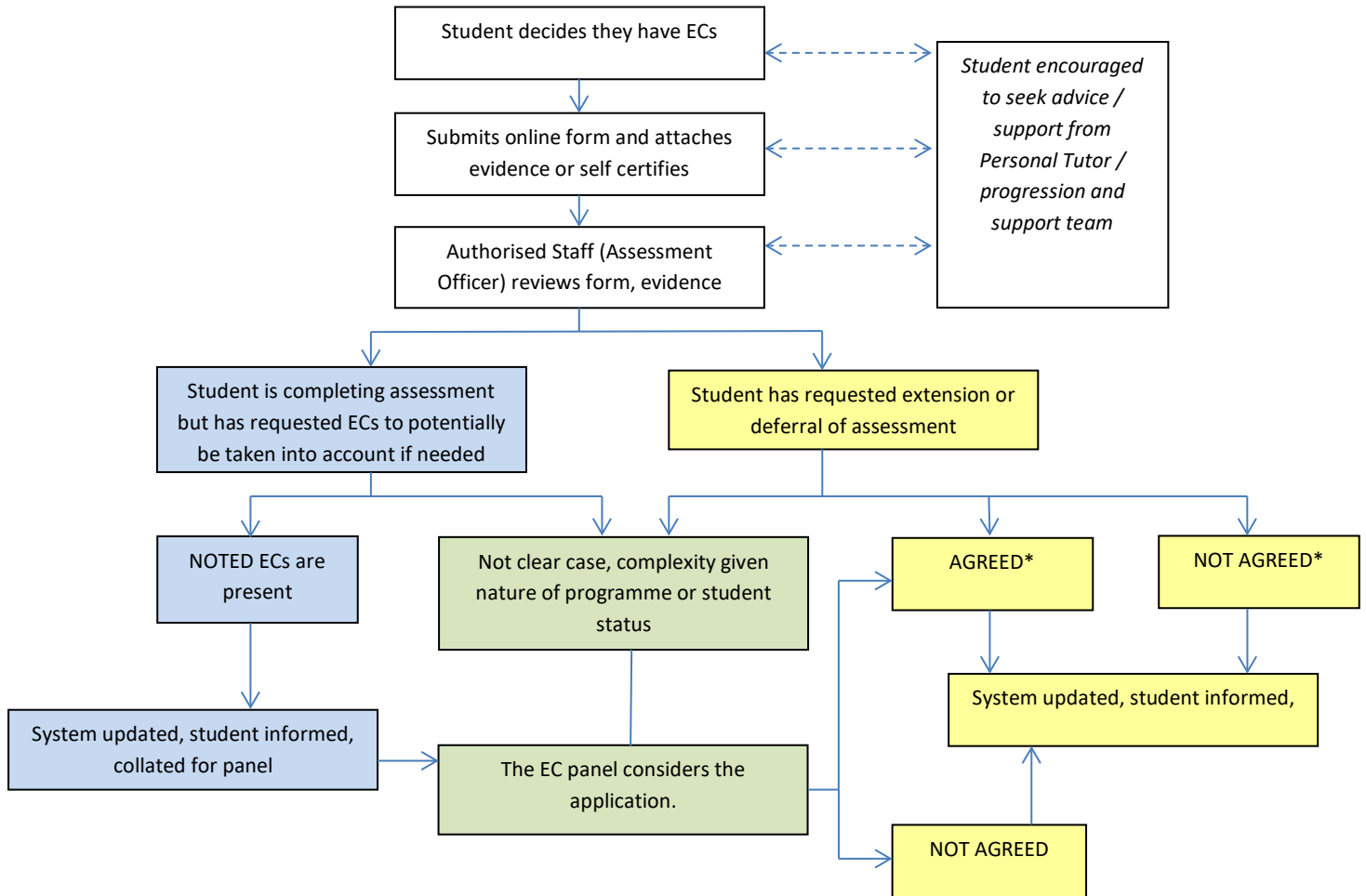
**Confidentiality**

10. The University is committed to complying fully with the Data Protection Act 2018 in its handling of personal data and will treat all claims for extenuating circumstances with confidentiality. Disclosure of information will be restricted to those parties involved in the consideration and administration of extenuating circumstances claims. If a student wishes to make a request for a specific element of his/her extenuating circumstances claim to remain confidential, this should be indicated on the extenuating circumstances claim form along with a brief rationale so that this can be considered by the panel, or delegated nominee.
11. There are circumstances where the University's commitment to confidentiality is overridden by other considerations. These are:
  - i) When a student's health and safety, or that of others, is considered to be at risk.
  - ii) When a student is considered to be at serious risk of abuse or exploitation.
  - iii) When disclosure is required by law.
  - iv) When a student's current behaviour or health requirements compromise the University's responsibilities to outside agencies, including practice placements and partner institutions.
  - v) When a student's current behaviour or health requirements compromise the University's responsibilities to other students to the extent that those other students are being adversely affected to the serious detriment of their academic progress.

## Extenuating Circumstances procedures

The possible outcomes of the extenuating circumstances claim:

- agreed extension to a coursework deadline OR;
- deferral of assessment to the next opportunity OR;
- extenuating circumstances noted for the consideration of the Assessment Board



Extenuating Circumstances are recorded on MISIS and are available to the Second Tier Assessment boards.

\* A list of circumstances when delegated nominees can take a decision on behalf of the Panel and Board is included below - for example when in considering short extensions (with EC evidence supplied) or when there is significant or uncontroversial evidence in support of a deferral, such as a significant stay in hospital. This is to ensure speedy decision-making in support of students and to not overload Panel members with simple, standard cases.

**Purpose of the Procedures**

12. The procedures are designed to ensure that the University is fair and consistent in its treatment of all students undertaking assessments. The University cannot make an academic judgement on the extent to which any extenuating circumstances might have affected a student's performance nor excuse a student from the requirement to complete an assessment. If a student's extenuating circumstances claim is accepted by the extenuating circumstances panel or nominee, they may consider providing an additional opportunity to complete the assessment without increasing the record of assessment attempts or capping the mark achieved.

**Procedure for Making an Extenuating Circumstances Claim**

13. Students who wish to make a claim for extenuating circumstances; request an extension to a submission date; or request a deferred assessment attempt must submit an extenuating circumstance claim form (via UniHelp online) and supporting evidence as soon as they are aware of the extenuating circumstance and by the deadline date for the assessment, as specified by the Module Leader.
14. The University recognises that there are occasions when students are too ill or otherwise affected by extenuating circumstances to take an assessment. However, it needs to separate these legitimate claims from those made by students who take an assessment and feel that they may have performed badly and then submit retrospective claims to justify their disappointing results. Therefore, late claims will not be accepted unless there is evidence to show that the student was prevented from submitting their claim by the required date e.g. the student was seriously ill in hospital/or experienced a sudden onset of clinically diagnosed mental illness. Any claims that are made after the results are published following the Assessment Board will not be considered under this procedure and the student must use the Appeals Procedure.
15. The University will not\* accept claims of extenuation relating to an examination or other assessment event such as a presentation if the student attended the assessment event unless they are taken ill during the event. In this case, a claim must still be made by the student, but corroboration will need to be provided by the examination invigilator or the academic staff responsible for the assessment event.
16. The University will not\* accept claims of extenuation once an assignment has been submitted by the agreed deadline (or agreed extended deadline). In these cases, the University assumes that students have judged themselves fit to undertake the assessment and so no concurrent or subsequent claim for mitigation relating to the assessment will be accepted.

*\*The University may waive these restrictions in the case of a student with evidence of having experienced a period of extreme stress or a certified illness that would have meant that the student would have been unable to exercise the rational judgement necessary at the appropriate time to deem him or herself unfit to undertake assessments and where this is explicitly confirmed by a registered GP or practitioner suitably qualified to make this judgement. See Evidence to Support a Claim for Retrospective Extenuating Circumstances.*

**Submission deadline of Extenuating Circumstances Form**

17. An extenuating circumstances claim should be submitted by the deadline for completion of the assessment component.
18. If a student does not submit a claim by the published deadline, evidence must be provided which justifies the reason for not meeting the deadline, in addition to evidence for the claim. (See Evidence to Support a Claim for Retrospective Extenuating Circumstances)

### Evidence

19. Except in cases of self-certification, students are required to provide evidence from an independent third party to support their claim. Students must authorise the University to seek verification of the evidence under the Data Protection Act 2018.
20. Evidence provided in a language other than English must be accompanied by an independent professional translation.
21. Examples of evidence that is normally acceptable or not acceptable are provided as a guide for students and staff at the end of this policy.
22. Evidence provided by **Care and Concern, Student Welfare or the Exams Office** in support of a student's application for extenuating circumstances shall always be deemed valid. However, the duration of any extension or deferral is at the discretion of the extenuating circumstances panel.
23. The University cannot investigate every claim made under these procedures and it has to trust the honesty and integrity of its student body. However, it reserves the right to audit such claims and to treat any fraudulent or misleading submissions under the Academic Integrity and Misconduct procedure or the Student Conduct and Discipline Procedure. This may result in the termination of registration with no opportunity to complete the programme at the University.

### Medical evidence and Self-Certification

24. The University allows a student to self-certify for a period of illness lasting no more than 7 days if this period of time affects assessment deadlines. When self-certifying, the claim must be received within 7 days from the date the extenuating circumstance arose. Students are trusted to self-certify accurately and honestly. The provision of false information will be regarded as a disciplinary offence by the University. If considered valid, your self-certified extenuating circumstances claim is likely to result in you having
  - i) an extension of up to 14 days for written coursework assessment in a taught module, or
  - ii) for any other type of assessment, deferred submission to the next opportunity, without penalty
25. An illness lasting more than 7 days should be supported by independent, contemporaneous and explicit corroboration from a registered GP, hospital or other medical practitioner. Where such evidence is submitted to support a claim, the university reserves the right to verify these claims. However, the University will not contact medical practitioners to generally discuss a student's medical circumstances. The burden of proof to support a claim under this policy lies with the student at all times.
26. A Learning Support Form (LSF) can constitute the necessary evidence for granting an extension or a deferred assessment attempt. In these cases the LSF will refer specifically to this point. In all cases, however, students must complete an extenuating circumstances claim form and submit it via Unihelp Online. Students will be required to provide information of how their fluctuation or episode links to the assessment in question.



Evidence to support retrospective extenuating circumstances claims

27. The University expects all claims for retrospective extenuating circumstances to be supported by independent, contemporaneous and explicit corroboration from a registered GP or mental health practitioner. Where such evidence is submitted to support a claim, the University reserves the right to verify these claims. However, the University will not contact medical practitioners to generally discuss a student's medical circumstances. The burden of proof to support a claim under this policy lies with the student at all times.

Evidence to support late extenuating circumstances claims

28. The University expects all late extenuating circumstances claims to be supported by evidence that demonstrates why it would have been impossible for the student to have submitted a claim by the deadline published. The burden of proof to support a claim under this policy lies with the student at all times.

**Consideration of Claims for Extenuating Circumstances**

29. Faculties may nominate members of staff to be authorised to take decisions on routine extenuating circumstances claims. These staff will normally be a trained Assessment Officer. This nomination must be ratified by the Academic Registrar.
30. Authorised staff may agree extenuating circumstances under all of the following criteria:
- i) The claim is provided by the deadlines set by the University,
  - ii) The claim is for one of the acceptable reasons for extenuation,
  - iii) There is relevant evidence provided with the claim,
  - iv) The evidence relates to the period of time in which the assessment task or event took place.
31. Authorised staff may reject extenuating circumstances under one or more of the following criteria:
- i) The claim is for one of the unacceptable reasons for extenuation,
  - ii) The claim lacks supporting evidence,
  - iii) The supporting evidence does not cover the time period in which the assessment activity was set.
  - iv) The claim has been made late, with no evidence of prevention of timely submission
32. All other cases will be considered by the extenuating circumstances panel.

**Extenuating Circumstances Panels**

33. A panel to consider extenuating circumstances claims will be convened on a regular basis. It will comprise a minimum of two trained members of staff, one of whom will be designated as chair of the panel, and an officer (Assessment Officer). Chairs of panels will be chosen from a trained group of staff designated for this purpose by the Faculties and will be independent, i.e. will not be directly associated with the student's learning and teaching. Staff who have a personal or professional conflict of interest with any student being considered at a particular meeting must withdraw from the meeting for discussions on that student.

Claims will be considered by a panel (if one or more of the below is apparent):-

- where the evidence does not fully support the reason for the claim; OR
- where the reason is contentious with regard to impacting academic performance; OR
- where the claim may have implications for progression on professional programmes:  
OR
- Where there is need for further review of a claim and evidence to make a decision.

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34. The panels will be scheduled, organised and officered by Academic Registry.
35. The functions of the extenuating circumstances panel are:
- i) to establish that the evidence is valid, i.e authentic and appropriate and that it relates to the assessment in question and that it has been submitted by the required date;
  - ii) to review extenuating circumstances claims and evidence and communicate decisions made to the Assessment Board;
  - iii) to consider whether a reference to the Fitness to Practice or Fitness to Study procedure is appropriate;
  - iv) To receive a regular report of the claims processed by authorised staff and to report to the assessment board the decisions of all claims processed.
  - v) to make recommendations to the Academic Registrar for improvements to the effectiveness and efficiency of the procedure.
36. Extenuating circumstances panels will meet at least monthly. A schedule of dates will be published annually.

#### **Outcomes of Extenuating Circumstances Claims**

37. Staff responsible for considering applications shall come to one of the following decisions and inform the student accordingly:

##### Extenuating circumstances claim confirmed

38. Where students have alerted the University to their extenuating circumstances, staff shall confirm that these have been recognised and advise whether further action should be taken. This might include advising the student to request extension/deferrals, interruption of studies and/or seek advice from student services about establishing a learning support agreement or other support. A note that extenuating circumstances have been approved will be held in MISIS. The details will be available at the Board should they be required.

##### Extenuating circumstances request for extension or deferral claim accepted

39. If the claim for an extension or a deferred assessment attempt is accepted, the Panel or delegated nominee will agree the new date for the assignment and the Assessment Officer will notify the student and the Module Leader.
40. If this is in the form of an extension to the submission deadline, the **maximum** extension that can be granted is **14 calendar days from the original deadline**, and this will only be granted if the panel or delegated nominee considers such an extension the most appropriate response to the extenuating circumstance and where the grade for the work can still be presented to the forthcoming assessment board.
41. If an extension attempt (eg, in class test; presentations; group work, exam) is not possible, the student will normally be given the opportunity to undertake a deferred assessment in the next available assessment period.

##### Extenuating circumstances claim rejected

42. The grounds for rejection (non-submission of evidence; grounds not established or insufficient evidence; deadline for submission of form not met) shall be specified in a notification to the student.

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43. A note of the rejected claim will be recorded in UniHelpOnline and the failure to submit will be recorded as a failed attempt with a mark of 20 against the appropriate assessment.

**Work submitted after the deadline**

44. Any work that is submitted after the assessment deadline, or after an agreed extension or an agreed deferred assessment date will be considered a non-submission and will receive a mark of 20, unless there has been a subsequent successful claim for extenuating circumstances.
45. Where an extension of up to 14 Calendar days has been agreed for an assessment Module Leaders will be informed and should mark the work as if it had been submitted on time. There will be no impact on the grade in MISIS. A note will be made on MISIS that the extension was granted (to include the Module code and assignment date)
46. Where a deferral has been agreed for an assessment the Module Leader will be informed and the student advised to contact the Module Leader to establish the assessment requirements and the next submission date. A record on MISIS will be made giving the next submission deadline.

**Record keeping**

47. The Registry will keep records for six years of decisions on all extenuating circumstances claims considered.

**Annual Review**

48. Academic Registry will annually review outcomes of extenuating circumstances claims against a set of areas agreed by the Academic Registrar and report any concerns. Difficult judgements made by panels will be reported to the Academic Registrar so that the operation of the procedures can be monitored, and case law may be established.

**Appeals**

49. A student cannot appeal the decision of an extenuating circumstances panel on whether or not to accept a claim of extenuating circumstances.
50. A student can use the procedures set out in Section G Academic Appeals to request a review of the decision of the assessment Board if there is evidence that the procedures for the extenuating circumstances panel and/or consideration of its recommendation to the assessment Board were not followed.

**Extenuating circumstances and interruption of studies**

51. If a student is submitting repeated or multiple extenuating circumstances claims, or the student approaches a staff member about circumstances that are having a significant impact on their ability to engage with their studies, the staff member should endeavour to discuss the situation with the student, or refer to the Progression and Student Support Team to ascertain whether an interruption of studies would be a more suitable solution for the student (see Regulations C4). The staff member or the student could also contact the Disability and Mental Health Advisors for further advice if the repeated or multiple claims related to an undeclared condition or disability. If an interruption of studies is pursued, the student should also provide evidence of extenuating circumstances to support their need to interrupt their studies.

**Designated submission points for extenuating circumstances claims**

52. Electronic submissions must be made via UniHelpOnline.

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53. Hard copy submissions of extenuating circumstances forms and supporting evidence may be made to the UniHelp Desk only where the student is unable to access UniHelpOnline.
  54. In all cases students must retain proof that their Extenuating Circumstances application has been successfully submitted and always keep a copy.

Reviewed and updated July 2021

Academic Registry

TABLE A

**Examples of Valid Extenuating Circumstances and evidence required**

Listed below are examples that the University would normally regard as extenuating circumstances that could have seriously affected performance and/or attendance. This list is not exhaustive and where the University deems that a student's application falls within the above definition, it shall be treated under this policy.

| <b>Normally acceptable</b>   | <b>Suggested sources of evidence</b>   | <b>Notes</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>1.</b> Illness (More than 7 days), accident or severe trauma or an unexpected deterioration in an ongoing illness or chronic medical condition                        | Medical certification of illness or serious accident of the student. It is recognised that it can be difficult to get timely verification from hospitals, but you should submit your claim, pending receipt of evidence. | Evidence to show that reason occurs at the time of an assessment. Certification must be current, and not produced retrospectively.   |
| <b>2.</b> An unpredictable deterioration in an ongoing illness or an unexpected issue impacting on completion of assessments because of a disability or health condition | Learning Support Form (LSF) detailing significant fluctuations are expected as part of the ongoing condition/illness. Medical certification or independent verification  | Where relevant statements are included in the LSF University Disability and Mental Health Advisors should be consulted as appropriate.   |
| <b>3.</b> Recent death (< 3 month) of someone close  | Death certificate<br><br>(See point 4. for long term bereavement)  | "Close" can refer to parents (and guardians), children and siblings, a spouse/partner and it may include friends, in-laws, grandparents and grandchildren if it can be shown that the relationship was close.      |
| <b>4.</b> Serious levels of prolonged trauma, stress or anxiety  | Medical certification  | Could be caused by long term effects of bereavement or diagnosed conditions.   |
| <b>5.</b> Unforeseen accident/Serious illness of a close relative  | Medical certification  | Could include sudden deterioration of an ongoing illness.  |
| <b>6.</b> A significant change to the condition or circumstance of someone for whom the student has a caring responsibility  | Relevant medical certification or evidence from social services  | Illness or other event that precipitates more care required by the student just before or on the deadline/exam.  |
| <b>7.</b> Serious personal disruption  | Independent verification such as supporting third-party evidence   | Fire, burglary, requirement to appear in Court etc. relevant to the date of the assessment event or the period leading up to it. Travel problems are not normally accepted as students are expected to plan ahead. |
| <b>8.</b> Significant change of employment circumstances.  | Employer letter providing evidence   | NB: THIS IS NOT NORMALLY VALID FOR FULL TIME STUDENTS  |
| <b>9.</b> Evidence of a declared disability that is provided too late to be taken into account in the deadline for assessment.   | Corroboration from a Disability or Mental health Advisor   | If there is a delay to assessment and/or diagnosis of a disability due to no fault of the student..  |

| Normally acceptable   | Suggested sources of evidence   | Notes  |
|---|---|--|
| 10. Religious Observance impact on scheduled examinations   | A letter from a religious leader explaining the nature of the obligation and the way in which it impacts on the student; (see <a href="http://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/your-study/exams">http://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/your-study/exams</a> ) | Arrangements will only be made for religious days of obligations where it is prohibited to partake in examination activity.  |
| 11. A life changing situation has caused mass disruption, stress or delay to studying, for example, pregnancy and/or giving birth | Confirmation of the birth, i.e. birth certificate   | Giving birth, illness and/or complications during pregnancy or unforeseen caring responsibilities may be considered with supporting evidence. Interruption of studies may be considered.<br><a href="#">Student Pregnancy, Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Fostering Policy</a> |

### Examples of invalid Extenuating Circumstances

The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances unlikely to be regarded as falling within the relevant definition and is unlikely to be accepted as extenuating circumstances.

| NOT normally acceptable  | Examples  |
|--|---|
| 1. Alleged medical conditions (lasting more than 7 days) without supporting evidence   | Claims will not be accepted without appropriate medical evidence.   |
| 2. Alleged medical conditions (lasting more than 7 days) without contemporaneous evidence or sufficiently detailed subsequent evidence | If a student does not consult a medical practitioner at the time of the illness (lasting more than 7 days), it is not acceptable for a student to obtain generic corroborative medical statements at a later date. A letter from a medical practitioner stating, for example, "the student informs me that he/she was unwell during...." will not be deemed acceptable supporting evidence. |
| 3. Social activities   | Hectic social life, parties, visits by/to friends, sporting fixtures.   |
| 4. Temporary self-induced conditions   | Hangovers, drug taking (unless possibly for a registered medical user influenced by the medical treatment involved including prescribed medication for certain conditions where it is known that there may be adverse reactions eg. drowsiness.)  |
| 5. Minor ailments and other conditions   | Coughs, colds, sore throats, sprains (other than in the writing hand/arm). Accidents/illness affecting relatives or friends unless serious or the student is the sole carer.  |
| 6. Examination stress  | Examination stress or stress in practice placement will not, by itself, be considered as an extenuating circumstance. Support on how to deal with Exam Stress is available on Unihub.   |

| <b>NOT normally acceptable</b>   | <b>Examples</b>  |
|--|--|
| 7. Domestic or personal disruptions which could have been anticipated or planned | Moving house, holidays, weddings or other events where the student either has control over the date or may choose not to participate. Change of job or "normal" job pressure (exceptional crises at work might be acceptable), failed travel arrangements, illness of pets, oversleeping, misreading examinations timetable or other assessment details, poor time management. |
| 8. Study-related   | Computer difficulties, losing work not backed up on computer disk or cloud services, deadline congestion, examination congestion, missing books, examination rescheduling, late distribution of materials by the Faculty/School, delays in printing, photocopying and/or binding of assessed work.   |
| 9. Examination conditions  | Disruption in the examination room: poor lighting, ventilation or heating, excessive noise, illness or behaviour of other students, noise from invigilators. Normally such conditions will have been reported by the invigilators, who will pass reports on to the Faculty.  |

**Glossary**

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| Assessment Event                              | An event designed to assess if students have achieved the learning outcomes of a module. It can cover such things as examinations, tests, vivas, presentations, performances, practicals and any other event defined as an assessment by the University  |
| Assignment                                    | Any type of work that has to be submitted by a set deadline for the purposes of assessment   |
| Deferred assessment attempt                   | When an assessment event is postponed to a later date and normally a new assessment task is undertaken   |
| Extension                                     | An agreed change to the submission deadline of up to 14 calendar days for an assessment. The student will normally undertake the same assessment task that was originally set.   |
| Extenuating Circumstances Panel               | The formal group of University staff set up to consider claims made under these procedures.  |
| Interruption of Studies                       | This is where student requests to interrupt his/her studies either prior to or following enrolment onto an academic year but plans to return at a later date which will be agreed with the University  |
| Late Extenuating Circumstance Claim           | A claim for extenuating circumstances that is received after the assessment deadline set by the module leader and where the assignment was not submitted or the assessment event was not undertaken. In these cases, the student would need to be able to demonstrate that it would have been impossible for him/her to have submitted the extenuating circumstances claim by the published deadline. If the assignment was submitted or if the assessment event was undertaken, this is known as Retrospective Extenuating Circumstances (see below). Any claims that are made after the results are published following the Assessment Board will not be considered and the student must use the Appeals Procedure (Academic Appeals). |
| Learning Support Form (LSF)                   | The LSF is used to communicate each individual students' support needs to the relevant school and faculty. It is written by one of the University's Disability Advisors in conjunction with information from medical evidence submitted and information directly from the student about how his/her disability affects him/her in the context of study. It details which reasonable adjustments need to be made so that the student is not disadvantaged whilst studying with the University. It is each student's responsibility to make arrangements for a LSF to be produced in order for reasonable adjustments to be put in place.  |
| Retrospective Extenuating Circumstances Claim | A claim for extenuating circumstances that is received after a student has submitted an assignment or undertaken an assessment event. In these cases, the student would need to explicitly demonstrate that s/he had a certified illness that meant that s/he would have been unable to exercise the rational judgement necessary to deem him/herself unfit to sit that assessment(s).<br>Claims for retrospective Extenuating circumstances can be submitted by the student at any point after the student has  |



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|----------------------|--|
|                      | <p>undertaken the assessment. However, claims that are made after the results are published following the Assessment Board will not be considered and the student must use the Appeals Procedure (Academic Appeals).</p>   |
| Self - Certification | <p>When a student deems themselves unfit to sit an assessment without the need of further evidence following an illness of up to 7 days.</p> <p>Students are trusted to self-certify accurately and honestly, and there is no need to provide further evidence (e.g. a medical certificate) to justify absence from classes. The provision of false information will be regarded as a disciplinary offence by the University</p> |

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**Annexe 1****Extenuating Circumstances claims processed by Panels**

Claims will be considered by a panel (if one or more of the below is apparent):

- where the evidence does not fully support the reason for the claim; OR
- where the reason is contentious with regard to impacting academic performance; OR
- where the claim may have implications for progression on professional programmes:  
OR
- Where there is need for further review of a claim and evidence to make a decision.

**Membership**

The panel will comprise a minimum of two trained members of staff, one of whom will be designated as chair of the panel, and an Assessment Officer (AO). Chairs of panels will be chosen from a trained group of staff designated for this purpose by the Faculties and will be independent, i.e. will not be directly associated with the student's learning and teaching. Staff who have a personal or professional conflict of interest with any student being considered at a particular meeting must withdraw from the meeting for discussions on that student.

**Terms of reference**

To determine outcomes of extenuating circumstances claims in line with the agreed University extenuating circumstances policy and procedures.

1. to establish that the evidence is valid, i.e authentic and appropriate and that it relates to the assessment in question and that it has been submitted by the required date;
2. To review extenuating circumstances claims and evidence and communicate decisions made to the Assessment Board.
3. To consider whether a reference to the Fitness to Practice or Fitness to Study procedure is appropriate.
4. To receive a regular report of the claims processed by authorised staff and to report to the assessment board the decisions of all claims processed.
5. To make recommendations to the Academic Registrar for improvements to the effectiveness and efficiency of the procedure.

**Paperwork**

Cover sheet: to include Student Number, Student profile, date of panel, outcome of claim

extenuating circumstances claim form: to include evidence and desired outcome

**Meetings**

The extenuating circumstances panel will normally convene monthly from October to April and more frequently thereafter, with additional meetings as necessary.

Students will be notified of the outcome their University email address via Unihelp online and the Module Leader will be copied (by email) into the communication to the student.