

**Planning and Academic Administration**

**EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PROCEDURES**

Contents

[1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PROCEDURES 3](#_Toc495909685)

[2 OUTLINE OF THE THREE AVAILABLE TYPES OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE REQUESTS 5](#_Toc495909686)

[3 STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE REQUESTS 6](#_Toc495909687)

[4 PROCEDURES FOR SELF-CERTIFICATION REQUESTS 8](#_Toc495909688)

[5 PROCEDURES FOR EVIDENCE-BASED EXTENSION REQUESTS 10](#_Toc495909689)

[6 PROCEDURES FOR IMPAIRED PERFORMANCE REQUESTS 12](#_Toc495909690)

[7 UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE REQUESTS 14](#_Toc495909691)

[8 COMPOSITION, CONVENING AND CONDUCT OF A FACULTY PANEL 16](#_Toc495909692)

[9 CONSIDERATION OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES BY UNIVERSITY PANEL 17](#_Toc495909693)

[10 QUALITY ASSURANCE 17](#_Toc495909694)

[11 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE APPENDIX 18](#_Toc495909695)

# **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PROCEDURES**

##### Context

* 1. Students are expected to plan their work so that they can meet assessment deadlines/dates at the same time as other obligations which they may have both inside and outside of the University.
  2. It is the responsibility of all students to:

1. ensure that they are fit to undertake assessments; *and*
2. undertake assessments as required and at the right time; *and*
3. show proper diligence in the completion of all assessments; *and*
4. overcome the effects of minor illness or personal difficulties and not use an Extenuating Circumstances request as a substitute for personal effort.
   1. The University recognises that students may experience exceptional short term issues outside their control (as defined in 1.13-14) during their studies, which adversely impact their ability to complete or perform in assessments. Extenuating Circumstance procedures exist to support students in these instances, where students meet the established criteria.

##### Terminology

* 1. Definitions of key University terms referred to in these procedures can be located in the University’s ‘Glossary of Terms’.
  2. The term ‘days’ refers to consecutive calendar days; the term ‘working days’ refers to normal business hours from Monday through Friday excluding Bank Holidays and periods of University business closure.
  3. A ‘Student’s Academic Year’ is the period in which a student is expected to complete the current level/stage of study or programme. In most cases this will be a 12 month period starting in September. Where a programme has multiple cohort intakes, the Student’s Academic Year may start at any point in the calendar year (e.g. starting in January) or for some programmes (e.g. postgraduate) may run for more than 12 months.
  4. Where these procedures refer to Programme Director, this may include the Programme Director’s nominee where appropriate.
  5. The term ‘time-specific assessments’ refers to an assessment which is timetabled to occur on a specific date and time, and for a defined period of duration (e.g. formal examinations, OSCEs, recitals, presentations).
  6. The term ‘extension’ refers to a new submission date that is agreed for coursework assessments.
  7. The term ‘further opportunity’ refers to time-specific assessments, as these cannot be extended in the same way as coursework assessments and must therefore be taken at the next available opportunity within the programme’s academic year.

##### Purpose and Scope of the Procedures

* 1. These procedures apply to:

1. all academic assessments; *and*
2. all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes;
3. all programmes delivered in or by collaborative partners, unless specified otherwise in the relevant Memorandum of Agreement.
   1. These procedures do not apply to attendance on placements (or practice based assessments), but do apply to any academic assessments that arise from placements.
   2. The Extenuating Circumstance procedures are designed to support students who are experiencing short term personal difficulties that are outside of their control and prevent them from completing assessments by the specified deadline/date.
   3. In order for a personal difficulty to be considered as an Extenuating Circumstance it must meet all of the following criteria:
4. Short Term (e.g. affecting no more than 14 calendar days); *and*
5. Exceptional (above and beyond the normal challenges faced by students): *and*
6. Unexpected (i.e. could not reasonably have been anticipated by a student); *and*
7. Outside of the student’s control; *and*
8. Have a demonstrable negative impact upon the student’s ability to complete an assessment.
   1. Extenuating Circumstance requests (other than for Impaired Performance, see section 6.1-6.22) should wherever possible have a decision taken at the earliest point. All requests which are considered late, request an extension over 14 days, or are considered to be complex or exceptional will require a decision to be taken at a Panel. **NB**: *to support these procedures the University has therefore defined three tiers of possible decision making, Programme, Faculty Panel and University Panel, which each have clearly defined responsibilities (see section 4.1 onwards).*

##### Circumstances which fall outside the Extenuating Circumstances Request Procedures

* 1. The following circumstances fall outside the scope of the Extenuating Circumstances procedures, and must be taken through an alternative route:

1. **Medium – Long-Term Difficulties**: Where a student encounters disruption to their studies of **more than 14 days** due to an issue not related to a disability, a Negotiated Learning Plan (see Negotiated Learning Plan Procedures) may be appropriate. The student must discuss the matter with their Programme Director prior to the first affected deadline/date and reach an agreement as to the support to be offered to them for the duration of the identified situation.
2. **Reasonable Adjustment**: Where a student identifies a disability, which has not previously been disclosed to the University, they must make contact with the Student Support, Health & Wellbeing Department in order to discuss and agree what reasonable adjustments are to be made and formalise a Learning Support Plan (see Learning Support Plan Procedures) regarding this.[[1]](#footnote-1)
3. **Material Administrative Error**: where a student identifies this type of issue, they must report it directly to either the relevant office of Planning & Academic Administration or their Programme/School responsible for organising the assessment as soon as possible.
   1. The Extenuating Circumstance procedures cannot:
4. Approve an Impaired Performance ‘further opportunity’ for coursework assessments.
5. The University cannot make changes to academic marks awarded, as a result of Extenuating Circumstances.
6. Approve a change in the form of assessment.
7. Change a referral granted by a Board of Examiners to a deferral.
8. Consider Impaired Performance requests made after a student has received marks and/or feedback for that assessment attempt.
9. Consider requests made in relation to an assessment attempt for which the Board of Examiners decision has been published to the student. **NB**: *students may, in such cases, submit an Academic Appeal if they believe they have grounds to do so.*

# **OUTLINE OF THE THREE AVAILABLE TYPES OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE REQUESTS**

##### Where no evidence is required

* 1. **Self-Certification Request**:
* Can be used for coursework or formal examination/time-specific assessments;
* Limited to a maximum of two approved requests in any student’s academic year;
* Where approved, permits a 7 day coursework extension *or* a further opportunity to take a formal examination or time-specific assessment only;
* Requests may be made up to 14 days before an assessment deadline/date (but no earlier);
* Requests must be received no later than the assessment deadline/date.

##### Where evidence is always required

* 1. **Evidence-Based Extension Request:**
* Can be used for coursework or formal examination/time-specific assessments;
* No limitation on the number of requests (however multiple applications may require a programme to discuss alternate support routes);
* Where approved, is used to extend coursework deadlines by either 7 or 14 days, or to offer a further opportunity to take a formal examination or time-specific assessment;
* Requests must include professional evidence when submitting the form;
* Requests (with required evidence) may be made up to 14 days before an assessment deadline/date (but no earlier);
* Requests (with required evidence) must be received no later than 7 days after the date of the assessment deadline/date. **NB:** *any request received after this will be considered as a late request at a Panel and the student must demonstrate an acceptable reason for why the request could not be made on time*.
  1. **Impaired Performance Request:**
* Can be used for formal examination or time-specific assessments only;
* No limitation on the number of requests (however multiple applications may require a programme to discuss alternate support routes);
* Where approved, is used to permit an attempt at a formal examination or time-specific assessment to be considered void, and allow a further opportunity to take that assessment;
* Requests must include professional evidence when submitting the form;
* Requests cannot be submitted before a student has taken the assessment, therefore no request may be made before the published date of assessment;
* Requests (with required evidence) must be received no later than 7 days after the date of the assessment deadline/date. **NB:** *any request received after this will be considered as a late request at a Panel and the student must demonstrate an acceptable reason for why the request could not be made on time*.

# **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE REQUESTS**

* 1. It is the responsibility of students to:

1. ensure they have read information provided by the Programme and University on Extenuating Circumstance procedures; *and*
2. ensure they are aware of and have considered the implications of making such a request[[2]](#footnote-2) before submitting their request form; where they are unclear, they must discuss this with their Programme Team; *and*
3. ensure that they continue to work towards completing or taking their assessment, and for coursework assessments submit as soon as possible, whilst making their request and awaiting an outcome; *and*
4. ensure that they meet the timeframe, criteria and evidence requirements for the type of request they are making, as set out in these procedures; *and*
5. identify within the form the specific timeframe that their circumstance affected them for; *and*
6. submit a complete request using the appropriate form, by the deadline set out in these procedures for that type of request; *and*
7. ensure that they have received an email receipt for their submitted request. **NB**: *if no receipt has been received by the student, they should either submit a new request or contact their programme or the i-zone for assistance*; *and*
8. ensure they monitor their University student email account on a regular basis, following submission of their request and respond in a timely fashion to any communications from University staff; *and*
9. ensure they are aware of any new deadline/date (and associated assessment requirements), set as a result of an approved request, in advance of that deadline/date.
10. act with integrity in making use of these procedures.
    1. All Extenuating Circumstance requests must be made directly by the student, and cannot be submitted by a third party.[[3]](#footnote-3)
    2. All requests must be submitted to the student’s School/Programme. **NB**: *where a student is studying with more than one subject (e.g. combined honours, shared modules or optional ‘starred’ modules), they must ensure the request is sent to both subject areas regardless of the assessments listed on the form.*
    3. Where a student believes a member of University staff has not followed the Extenuating Circumstance procedures, the student may raise this matter as an informal Complaint in the first instance, with their Programme.[[4]](#footnote-4)
    4. Where a student believes a University Body has not followed the procedures, the student may raise this matter through the Academic and Fitness to Practise Appeals Procedures.[[5]](#footnote-5)

##### Evidence requirements for Evidence-Based Extension and Impaired Performance Requests

* 1. Only electronic copies of original documents are to be provided, not the original documents. However, on occasions the University may request to see original copies of documentation.
  2. Where evidence is required in support of the application, this evidence must be submitted **with** the Evidence-Based Extension or Impaired Performance Request form. **NB**: *it is not possible to consider a request which requires evidence where that evidence has not been provided; any such requests will be declined.*
  3. Evidence submitted in support of an Extenuating Circumstance Request must:

1. Be from a professional source; *and*
2. Name the student or (where the issue relates to a relative or dependent) the individual in question; *and*
3. Be dated and (wherever possible) signed and on headed paper; *and*
4. Specifically relate to the circumstance / condition the student is making their request on; *and*
5. Be dated from or refer to the period immediately prior to or on the affected assessment deadline.
   1. It is the responsibility of the student to provide evidence in support of their request; the University will not seek evidence from a third party on a student’s behalf (this includes from other areas of the University).
   2. The University cannot accept the following items as evidence:
6. Statements from family or friends
7. Newspaper articles or social media postings
8. Appointment cards
9. Rppointment cards (where the reason for the visit is not specified)selves, and cannot be submitted by a third party.rall impaceceipts

e) Copies of over the counter medications

1. Phone screenshots
2. Photographs of a personal nature

##### Requirements in relation to outcomes offered through an Extenuating Circumstance request

* 1. Where a student has been offered a coursework extension or further opportunity to complete a formal examination or time-specific assessment, that deadline/date is binding and must be met in order to achieve a mark for that assessment.
  2. It is a student’s responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the new deadline/date, and any associated assessment requirements, in advance of that deadline/date. **NB**: *where the student is unclear, they are responsible for contacting their Programme to seek clarification.*
  3. Where a coursework extension is agreed, the date for mark and feedback return for that assessment is governed by the agreed extension date and not the original submission date.
  4. Should a student fail to meet an extended coursework deadline offered through an approved Extenuating Circumstance request, the standard procedures in relation to late submission of coursework will be applied (where possible) or the assessment will be recorded as a ‘non-submission’ where no attempt is made.
  5. Should a student fail to take up an offered further opportunity for a formal examination or time-specific assessment resulting from an approved Extenuating Circumstance request, the assessment will be recorded as a ‘non-submission’.

# **PROCEDURES FOR SELF-CERTIFICATION REQUESTS**

##### Deadlines and guidelines for submitting a Self-Certification Request

* 1. Students may only receive two Self-Certification approvals in any academic year, even where a student studies with more than one subject (e.g. combined honours, shared modules or optional ‘starred’ modules).
  2. A Self-Certification Request can only be used to extend an assessment deadline / request a further opportunity once. If a student subsequently wishes to request a further extension or opportunity for the same assessment, an Evidence-Based Extension Request must be completed.
  3. A student may make a Self-Certification Request for a coursework extension or further opportunity (for time-specific assessments) when they expect to miss an assessment deadline/date, if they have experienced one or more of the following circumstances:[[6]](#footnote-6)

1. Short term illness; *or*
2. Recent bereavement; *or*
3. Exceptional unexpected caring responsibilities; *or*
4. Exceptional family crisis; *or*
5. An unexpected issue related to pregnancy, maternity or paternity; *or*
6. Serious or significant personal incident.
   1. Students are required to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to a request, as set out in 3.1-3.5.
   2. Students must complete a Self-Certification request using the form within the following timeframe:
7. No earlier than 14 days before an assessment deadline/date; *and*
8. No later than the assessment deadline/date. **NB**: *where multiple assessments are included on a single Self-Certification request, all deadlines/dates must meet both of the above criteria.*
   1. Any request received later than the date of the assessment about which the request has been made (4.5) will be declined, and the student will be required to submit an Evidence-Based Extension Request if they wish to request consideration of their circumstances.

##### Permitted Outcomes from a Self-Certification Request

* 1. If a Self-Certification Request is approved, the available actions are restricted to granting the student one of the following:

1. **For Coursework:** a 7 day extension to an assessment deadline.
2. **For Formal Examinations/Time-Specific Assessments:** a further opportunity to take the assessment at the next available opportunity, following the approval of the request.
   1. **Further Opportunities to take assessments**:
3. Where the request relates to a student’s first attempt at an assessment, any further opportunity will be a deferred attempt (i.e. without any mark penalty)
4. Where the request relates to a referral, any further opportunity will remain a reassessment (i.e. capped).
   1. **Under no circumstances will additional marks be awarded on the basis of a Self-Certification Request.** **NB**: *no ‘consideration’ can be given when marking assessments.*

##### Circumstances where Programmes may approve a Self-Certification Request

* 1. Programmes are required to ensure they meet all University responsibilities in relation to a request, as set out in 7.1-7.10.
  2. Where a student submits a Self-Certification Request form that meets the requirements set out in these procedures, the Programme will make the decision based on the eligibility criteria (4.1-4.6). **NB**: *Students must only have a combined total of two Self-Certifications approved across all studied programmes.*
  3. Where a coursework Self-Certification Request is agreed the Programme will stipulate a revised hand-in date of 7 days from the assessment deadline.
  4. Where a revised hand-in date is agreed, only periods of official University business closure may be excluded from the number of calendar days for which the extension is offered.
  5. Where an extension is agreed, the date for mark and feedback return for that assessment is governed by the agreed extension date and not the original published submission date.
  6. Where a formal examination or time-specific assessment Self-Certification Request is agreed, the Programme Director will be responsible for determining the next available opportunity for that further opportunity and, where required, reporting any deferred assessment to the relevant Board of Examiners in line with deferral procedures.

# **PROCEDURES FOR EVIDENCE-BASED EXTENSION REQUESTS**

##### Guidelines for submitting an Evidence-Based Extension Request

* 1. A student may make a request for a coursework extension or further opportunity for a formal examination/time-specific assessment when they expect to miss or have missed an assessment deadline/date, if they meet the criteria set out in these procedures.
  2. Students must submit a complete request (with required evidence) on the appropriate form, by the deadlines set out in 5.7.
  3. The acceptable reasons upon which a request may be made are set out in the Extenuating Circumstance Appendix.
  4. Requests made on grounds considered unacceptable by the University will be declined.
  5. All Evidence-Based Extension Requests must be submitted with appropriate supporting professional evidence, in line with procedures set out in 5.7-5.10.
  6. Students are required to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to a request, as set out in 3.1-3.5.

##### Deadlines for submitting an Evidence-Based Extension Request

* 1. Students must complete an Evidence-Based Extension Request (including the evidence) using the form within the following timeframe:

1. No earlier than 14 days before an assessment deadline/date; *and*
2. No later than 7 days after the assessment deadline/date in order to be considered in time. **NB**: *where multiple assessments are included on a single Evidence-Based Extension request, all deadlines/dates must meet both criteria.*
   1. Any requests that do not meet the approved deadlines set out above (5.7) must be considered by the Faculty Panel as a ‘Late Request’.
   2. The University recognises that there may be good reason for accepting an Evidence-Based Extension Request submitted beyond the timeframes set out in these procedures (5.7). In such cases students are required to provide a statement to the Faculty Panel that demonstrates the reason why they could not have reasonably submitted the request on time (e.g. having been an in-patient at a hospital or delay in receiving evidence required for submitting request). If a student fails to provide their reason for late submission, the request will be declined at the earliest point as incomplete.
   3. Any request received after results have been ratified by a Board of Examiners will be declined by the Programme (as beyond the maximum timeframe for application) and the student will be made aware of the University’s Academic Appeal process.

##### Permitted Outcomes from an Evidence-Based Extension Request

* 1. If an Evidence-Based Extension Request is approved, the available actions are restricted to granting the student one of the following:

1. **For Coursework:** a 7 *or* 14 day extension to an assessment deadline, the decision whether to offer 7 or 14 days needs to be commensurate with the evidenced time affected; *or*
2. **For Formal Examinations/Time-specific assessments:** a further opportunity to take the assessment at the next available opportunity following the approval of the request.
   1. **Further Opportunities to take assessments**:
3. Where the request relates to a student’s first attempt at an assessment, any further opportunity will be a deferred attempt (i.e. without any mark penalty).
4. Where the request relates to a referral, any further opportunity will remain a reassessment (i.e. capped).
   1. **Under no circumstances will additional marks be awarded on the basis of an Evidence-Based Extension Request.** **NB**: *no ‘consideration’ can be given when marking assessments.*

##### Circumstances where a Programme may approve an Evidence-Based Extension Request

* 1. Programmes are required to ensure they meet all University responsibilities in relation to a request, as set out in 7.1-7.10.
  2. Where a student submits an Evidence-Based Extension Request that meets the requirements set out in these procedures, the Programme Director will make the decision based on the acceptable grounds set out in the Extenuating Circumstance Appendix, except for those complex or exceptional cases where Faculty Panel review is considered necessary. **NB**: *any late request must be referred to Faculty Panel.*
  3. Where the request is agreed, the Programme Director will:

1. For **coursework**, stipulate a revised hand-in date of either 7 or 14 days (commensurate with the time affected) from the deadline; *or*
2. For **formal examinations or time-specific assessments**, offer a further opportunity, the date of which will be determined by the relevant Board of Examiners.
   1. Where a revised hand-in date is agreed, only periods of official University business closure may be excluded from the number of calendar days for which the extension is offered.

##### Circumstances where an Evidence-Based Extension Request is considered by a Faculty Panel

* 1. An Evidence-Based Extension Request must be referred to the Faculty Panel in any of the following circumstances:

1. where a student requests a period of extension in excess of 14 days;
2. all ‘late requests’;
3. any complex requests;
   1. The Programme Director is expected to provide a Faculty Panel with any relevant information required in order to reach a decision on a request.
   2. Where the Faculty Panel accepts an Evidence-Based Extension Request they will make one of the following decisions:
4. For coursework, award a 7 or 14 day extension from the assessment deadline (where work has already been submitted); or
5. In exceptional cases, for coursework, grant an extension of greater than 14 days (based upon a new deadline date / extension length proposed by the Programme); or
6. Require a programme to offer a Negotiated Learning Plan (NLP); or
7. Offer a deferral to the next available opportunity for formal examinations/time-specific assessments and (in very rare instances) coursework (where the assessment date is close to the end of a Semester/term and the student has made a case for more than 14 days of extension).
   1. Where a Faculty Panel finds that that they are unable to make a decision on any particularly complex case, they may refer that case to the University Panel for a decision.

# **PROCEDURES FOR IMPAIRED PERFORMANCE REQUESTS**

##### Grounds upon which Impaired Performance requests may be made

* 1. A student may only make an Impaired Performance request for examinations or time-specific assessments. *They cannot request this type of Extenuating Circumstance for any coursework assessment.*
  2. A student may make an Impaired Performance Request if they have suffered an illness or experienced other grounds (as set out in the Extenuating Circumstance Appendix), which they believe adversely affected their performance in an examination or time-specific assessment they have undertaken.
  3. Where a claim is made for Impaired Performance, the student must have commenced the examination or time-specific assessment in question on the date and time scheduled, even if the student had to abandon that assessment attempt before the end.
  4. The acceptable grounds upon which a request may be made are set out in the Extenuating Circumstance Appendix.
  5. Requests made on grounds considered unacceptable by the University will be declined by a Faculty Panel.
  6. All Impaired Performance requests must be submitted with appropriate supporting professional evidence, in line with procedures set out in 6.8-6.12.
  7. Students are required to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to a request, as set out in 3.1-3.5.

##### Deadlines for submitting an Impaired Performance Request

* 1. Students must complete an Impaired Performance Request using the form (with required evidence) within the following timeframe:

1. No request can be made before a student has attempted the assessment.
2. No later than 7 days after the assessment date in order to be considered in time. **NB**: *where multiple assessments are included on a single Impaired Performance request, all dates must meet both criteria.*
   1. Any requests that do not meet the approved deadlines set out above (6.8) will be considered a ‘Late Request’.
   2. The University recognises there may be good reason for accepting an Impaired Performance Request submitted beyond the timeframes set out in these procedures (6.8). In such cases students are required to provide a statement to the Faculty panel that demonstrates the reason why they could not have reasonably submitted the request on time (e.g. having been an in-patient at a hospital, delay in receiving evidence required for submitting request).
   3. Any Impaired Performance Request received after the mark and/or feedback have been returned, will be declined by the Programme (as beyond the maximum timeframe for application) and the student will be made aware of the University’s Academic Appeal process.
   4. Any request received after results have been ratified by a Board of Examiners will be declined by the Programme (as beyond the maximum timeframe for application) and the student will be made aware of the University’s Academic Appeal process.

##### Permitted Outcomes from an Impaired Performance Request

* 1. If an Impaired Performance Request is approved, the available actions are restricted to granting the student a further opportunity to undertake an assessment.
  2. Where a request for Impaired Performance is approved, the student will not receive the mark and/or feedback for the original assessment attempt. **NB**: *a student will need to undertake the offered further opportunity for the assessment in question, in order to receive a mark.*
  3. **Further Opportunities to take assessments**:

1. Where the request relates to a student’s first attempt at an assessment, any further opportunity will be a deferred attempt (i.e. without any mark penalty)
2. Where the request relates to a referral, any further opportunity will remain a reassessment (i.e. capped)
   1. **Under no circumstances will additional marks be awarded on the basis of an Impaired Performance Request**. NB: *no ‘consideration’ can be given when marking assessments.*

##### Programme responsibilities relating to Impaired Performance Request

* 1. An Impaired Performance Request must be sent to the Faculty Panel for a decision.
  2. Programmes are required to ensure they meet all University responsibilities in relation to a request, as set out in 1.3-7.10.
  3. The Programme Director will review each Impaired Performance Request before it is sent to Faculty Panel and provide a Faculty Panel with any relevant information required in order to reach a decision on a request.

##### Faculty Panel decision process for Impaired Performance Requests

* 1. A Faculty Panel decision will be communicated to the student for any Impaired Performance request normally within 21 days of receipt of the Impaired Performance Request.
  2. Where the Faculty Panel accepts an Impaired Performance Request they will either offer:

1. A further opportunity prior to the relevant Board of Examiners (e.g. re-scheduling of a presentation, recital or in-class test), where is it possible to facilitate this; *or*
2. A deferral (or deferral of a reassessment) to the next available opportunity through the relevant Board of Examiners.
   1. Where a Faculty Panel finds that that they are unable to make a decision on any particularly complex case, they may refer that case to the University Panel for a decision.

# **UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ALL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCE REQUESTS**

* 1. All staff responsible for any element of these procedures (administrative or decision-based) must undertake training prior to the commencement of that role. **NB**: *Programmes/Schools will be responsible for identifying staff which require training in a timely fashion.*
  2. It is the responsibility of the University to:

1. process Extenuating Circumstances Extension Requests in accordance with these procedures; *and*
2. communicate the decision to the student within the timescales set in these procedures; *and*
3. consider each request on its merits and impartially.
   1. Extenuating Circumstance requests are to be dealt with as speedily as possible.
   2. Programme decisions (including sending a request to a Panel, where required) should normally be given to a student within 3 working days of receiving a complete request.
   3. A Panel decision will be communicated to the student normally within 21 days of receipt of the complete request.
   4. For any request which is declined, a student must always be provided with a reason for that decision and information about the University’s Academic Appeal process.
   5. Any coursework extension granted to a student through these procedures is to commence from the assessment deadline, and not the date of submission or decision for the Extenuating Circumstance request.
   6. Where a coursework extension is agreed, the date for mark and feedback return for that assessment is governed by the agreed extension date and not the original submission date.
   7. Where a student studies with more than one subject (e.g. combined honours, shared modules or optional ‘starred’ modules), Programmes are expected to ensure that all subjects are aware of and (where required) involved in the decision making for a student’s request.
   8. Where there is reasonable suspicion of abuse of the Extenuating Circumstances arrangements, the student may be subject to action under the University’s Student Disciplinary Procedures.[[7]](#footnote-7)

##### Arrangements for processing an Extenuating Circumstance request

* 1. It is the responsibility of the Administrative Officer receiving the Request Form to:

1. ensure that a copy of the request is held by both programme administrators where a student studies with more than one subject (e.g. combined honours, shared modules or optional ‘starred’ modules); *and*
2. send the request to the member of staff[[8]](#footnote-8) responsible for reviewing and deciding upon that type of request and mode of assessment[[9]](#footnote-9); *and*
3. communicate the decision to the student using approved University templates; *and*
4. maintain a record of all requests received and decisions taken; *and*
5. provide a summary regarding all requests received to the Director of Planning & Academic Administration annually; *and*
6. hold all request forms in line with the University’s document Retention Policy.
   1. When reviewing a request, the nominated member of staff will consult the other Programme where a student studies on more than one programme
   2. The Programme Director will report any Extenuating Circumstance requests to the Board of Examiners where a deferral is required.

##### Processes following Panel decisions

* 1. The Panel Administrator is responsible for communicating to the student and Programme the Panel’s decision and, where the request is approved, the outcome the student has been offered.
  2. The Programme(s) is responsible for implementing the outcome from a Panel, in line with all relevant University Procedures.
  3. If a Panel has required a Negotiated Learning Plan to be offered, the Programme is responsible for making that offer to the student in a timely fashion. **NB**: *They will be required to retain a record of that offer and the student’s response, and to report on the student’s decision to the next Panel meeting.*

# **Composition, Convening and Conduct of a Faculty Panel**

##### Composition of a Faculty Panel

* 1. The Director of Planning & Academic Administration, in consultation with the relevant Dean of Faculty, will approve the arrangements for the establishment of Faculty Panels and may appoint suitable individuals to serve on those Panels.
  2. At least two members will sit on each Faculty Panel, one of whom shall be the Chair. A Faculty Panel may however consist of more than two members.
  3. A Faculty Panel Chair will be independent from the student under consideration and therefore may not be the Programme Director or Chair of the Programme’s Board of Examiners. **NB**: *Chairs should be individuals with significant experience of Board of Examiners processes.*
  4. A Faculty Panel Member will be independent from the student under consideration and therefore may not be the Programme Director or Chair of the Programme’s Board of Examiners. **NB**: *Panel members will be drawn from academic staff.*

##### Convening of a Faculty Panel

* 1. Faculty Panels will normally meet on a regular basis to ensure timely consideration of requests. Panels may consider requests from a range of programmes at the same meeting.

##### Conduct of a Faculty Panel

* 1. Faculty Panels are not programme specific and therefore may consider any request from a student on any taught undergraduate or postgraduate programme.
  2. The Faculty Panel will consider each request on its own merits, based on the grounds set out in the Extenuating Circumstance Appendix.
  3. Where a Faculty Panel confirms a request meets all required criteria for approval (as set out in these procedures), a decision and appropriate offer will be taken by the Panel on a case-by-case basis in line with these procedures. **NB**: *where a proposed extension length or date for a further opportunity has been provided by a Programme, the Faculty Panel will also confirm whether that timeframe/date is considered acceptable and may therefore be applied.*
  4. Where a Faculty Panel determines a case to be exceptionally complex, they may refer the request to the University Panel for consideration (e.g. where multiple elements exist to the case which may require action under more than just the Extenuating Circumstance procedures or where a student has submitted a request substantively outside the required deadlines but has presented an extraordinary case for consideration).
  5. A Faculty Panel decision (including any referral to University Panel) will be communicated to the student normally within 21 days of receipt of an Extenuating Circumstances Request.

##### Procedures following a Faculty Panel

* 1. Following a meeting of the Faculty Panel, the Panel’s administrative officer will send all decisions to the students and relevant Programme Administrative staff.
  2. The Programme will take appropriate action and communicate and additional information to the student, as required regarding the assessment arrangements.

# **CONSIDERATION OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES BY UNIVERSITY PANEL**

* 1. A request may only be sent to University Panel by a Faculty Panel.
  2. Where a request is sent to University Panel, both the Programme and Faculty Panel will be required to provide appropriate supporting information in relation to the request and reason for it being set to that Panel.
  3. Where a request is sent to University Panel, a student must be informed of this, the reason for it and offered the opportunity to comment upon any relevant information in relation to that reason.
  4. Following a meeting of the University Panel, the Panel’s administrative officer will:

1. Communicate the Panel’s decision to the Programme and Faculty Panel;
2. Notify the student of the Panel’s decision and appropriate outcome, where approved.

# **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

* 1. The Director of Planning & Academic Administration will present a report annually to the Quality Monitoring and Review Sub-Committee on the operation of the arrangements, including the data based on the records maintained by the Programmes and (where relevant) Panels.
  2. In submitting an Extenuating Circumstance request through one of the three available routes, a student may reveal sensitive personal information. The University will respect confidentiality, and ensure such information is stored securely and not disseminated beyond the requirements of the procedure.
  3. All Extenuating Circumstances information will be retained and destroyed according to the University’s Data Retention Policy.
  4. An Extenuating Circumstance will not be recorded on a transcript of marks.

# **Extenuating Circumstance Appendix**

**Key: Yes = available request route; X = cannot be requested through this route, as evidence should be available to the student.**

| Acceptable Grounds for Making a Request | Where evidence is required - examples of Professional Evidence: | What type of request can be submitted based on the grounds | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Coursework | | Time-Specific Activity | | |
| Self-Certification  (7 days) | Evidence-Based Extension Request (7 or 14 days) | Self-Certification  (7 days) | Evidence-Based Extension Request (7 or 14 days) | Impaired Performance |
| Accident or injury: | Dated and signed letter from doctor, consultant, hospital, dentist, or counsellor; prescription or photo of medication with label clearly stating date and whom it was issued; ambulance documentation; solicitor or insurance letter. | X | Yes | X | Yes | Yes |
| Appearance at Court: | Jury service letter (showing date(s) required for attendance), Court or Solicitor's letters. | X | Yes | X | Yes | X |
| Bereavement: | Death Certificate, Order of Service, Letter from doctor or counsellor or University Wellbeing Advisor. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Crime: including being the victim of violent crime, theft or being investigated by the police | Crime reference number *and crime report*, solicitor letter, dated and signed letter from doctor or counsellor relating to the impact, bail information or charge sheet. | X | Yes | X | Yes | Yes |
| Exceptional Unexpected Caring Responsibilities: including illness of child, parent, sibling, spouse or partner | Dated and signed letter from doctor, consultant, hospital, dentist, or counsellor; prescription or photo of medication with label clearly stating date and whom it was issued; or ambulance documentation. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Exceptional Unexpected Professional Difficulties: including direct involvement with OFSTED or other professional body inspection | Dated and signed letter from employer which specifies the dates concerned and the reason. | X | Yes | X | Yes | Yes |
| Exceptional Family Crisis: including major illness of relative or partner, divorce or separation | Dated and signed letter from doctor, consultant, hospital, dentist, or counsellor; prescription or photo of medication with label clearly stating date and whom it was issued; ambulance documentation, or letter from solicitor. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Exceptional Financial Difficulties: where there is clear evidence that the situation is serious, unexpected and not of the student’s own making | Bank letters, Student Finance letter, council letters, documentation from the Citizens’ Advice Bureau, employer's letter, Counsellor or doctor's Letter. | X | Yes | X | Yes | Yes |
| Hospital Appointment: (when reasonably cannot be rescheduled and directly conflicts with a time constrained assessment) | Dated and signed letter from doctor, consultant, hospital, dentist or counsellor. | X | Yes | X | Yes | X |
| Involvement in an Elite Event: including participation in a national or international sporting or fine art event. | Formal invitation with event dates, letter from organisation. | X | Yes | X | Yes | X |
| Major and Exceptional Travel Disruptions: where evidence clearly shows that an alternate mode would not be possible or could not have been remedied by better time organisation | Flight, National Rail and/or Stagecoach/National Express Disruption summary. | X | Yes | X | Yes | Yes |
| Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity: including a difficult or unplanned pregnancy. | Dated and signed letter from doctor, consultant, hospital, or counsellor; prescription or photo of medication with label clearly stating date and whom it was issued; ambulance documentation; or solicitor’s letter. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Serious or significant personal incidents: including house fire, homelessness, unexpected house move, direct experience of natural disaster | Insurance documentation, solicitor's letter, council letters, documentation from Citizens' Advice Bureau, counsellor's letter (external or University), doctor's letter, financial documentation or employer's letter. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Short Term Illness: including flu, gastroenteritis, migraine, emergency dental issues | Dated and signed letter from doctor, consultant, hospital, dentist, or counsellor; prescription or photo of medication with label clearly stating date and whom it was issued; or ambulance documentation. | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Major and Exceptional Travel Disruptions: where evidence clearly shows that an alternate mode would not be possible or could not have been remedied by better time organisation | Flight, National Rail and/or Stagecoach/National Express Disruption summary. | X | Yes | X | Yes | Yes |

##### Circumstances that would normally NOT be considered as grounds for requesting an extenuating circumstance

* Term-time holidays or weddings
* Normal work/life/study pressures
* Childcare issues (unless exceptional and unexpected)
* Pregnancy of a relative or friend (not student’s partner or wife)
* General financial difficulties
* Minor ailments e.g. cough, cold or headache
* Hangover
* Oversleeping
* Misreading assessment deadline or examination timetable
* Medical conditions not diagnosed or properly supported by a doctor including medical notes that states ‘patient informs me that…’ or ‘student declared they had been unwell…’
* Taking the wrong examination
* Doing the wrong coursework assessment
* Stress resulting from involvement in a plagiarism, professional suitability or fitness to practice case
* Academic workload pressure: including multiple deadlines within a short period of time
* Not understanding the subject or question
* Difficulties in accessing resources or computing accounts due to outstanding University debt (unless evidence to prove that it is not of the students own making)
* Issues between friends
* Illness or loss of pets
* Unexceptional transportation difficulties including delayed public transport or car breakdown
* Computer difficulties or equipment failure: this includes loss of file, uploading incorrect file to Turnitin, inability to access internet or computer breakdown (unless this relates to specialist software/equipment required for reasonable adjustment of a student disability)
* Supporting a friend at court
* Circumstances supported by evidence from a relative, or where there is a conflict of interest

1. Where there is an additional short-term issue not covered by these adjustments and for reasons not associated with those for which adjustment has been made, an Extenuating Circumstances Request may be made additional to any reasonable adjustment that is made. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. I.e. that extending a deadline may impact upon other, future deadlines (students will not be permitted to request additional extensions on the basis of increased workload as a result of previous extensions), or that an approved impaired performance will void the previous attempt and therefore require the student to undertake an assessment at the next opportunity in order to achieve a mark. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Where a student is suffering from a debilitating condition, the matter may be reported by the next of kin to Student Support, Health and Wellbeing but not through the Extenuating Circumstance procedures. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/students/academic-services/policy-zone/complaints.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/students/academic-services/coursework-and-examinations/Initiating-an-academic-appeal.aspx> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See the Extenuating Circumstance Appendix. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/students/academic-services/policy-zone/policy-zone-a-z.aspx#D> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This may include trained administrators, where appropriate. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. For formal examinations / time-specific assessments, a decision whether a Self-Certification Request can be approved may be taken by a member of staff other than the Programme Director, but the Programme Director will be responsible for determining the timing of that further opportunity (in conjunction with the Board of Examiners, where appropriate). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)