Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures

1. Policy

1.1 Introduction

During their study students may encounter significant personal difficulties that are outside their control and impact on their ability to study and/or complete assessments.

In order to be considered an Extenuating Circumstances, such difficulties must meet all of the following criteria:

• They must be out of the student's control – the student could not have prevented them.

• They must have had an impact – they must have had a demonstrably negative impact on the student's ability to study or to undertake an assessment.

• The timing of the circumstances must be relevant to the claimed impact.

The appropriate management of extenuating circumstances affecting students' study and assessment is significant in ensuring that academic standards are maintained and that students perceive that they are being treated fairly.

This policy is applicable to all types of student on all programmes or courses.

1.2 Types of Circumstance

Two types of circumstances may affect student performance in study and/or assessment:

(a) Long term conditions/disabilities for which adjustments can be put in place to support study and assessment

(b) Shorter term circumstances such as a self-limiting illness which require consideration as and when they arise and may affect study and/or assessment

1.3 Procedures to Follow

Dependent on whether study and/or assessment has been affected and on the types of circumstance there are different procedures to follow.

(a) Long Term Conditions/Disabilities affecting the Ability to Study and/or Comply with Assessment Requirements

Students who are aware of a disability, long-term medical condition or other long-term circumstances that are expected to have an impact on their performance should make their School aware of those circumstances at the earliest possible opportunity.

In addition they should seek relevant adjustments using the following procedures:

• circumstances affecting assessments: follow the procedural document regarding Examination Arrangements for Students who have a Disability or Long-term Medical Condition.

• Circumstances affecting study: seek advice to support their study through Student Services. Such arrangements are intended to make full adjustment for the condition/disability so no further adjustment or consideration would be appropriate. It may be appropriate for students to consider
voluntarily interrupting their studies whilst arrangements are made and appropriate support is put in place.

If using this procedure, students should ensure that they access relevant support services that are available to them to ensure that all possible assistance is provided.

**Late Diagnosis of Long Term Medical Conditions/Disabilities**

Where Academic or Disability Support has assessed a student as requiring adjustment to normal arrangements for assessment but it is too close to a scheduled examination for the adjustment to be put in place for a centrally arranged examination the School should follow the procedure on the Student Services - Service Development website and if possible arrange for the assessment to take place in the School. If this is not possible the student may request deferral of the relevant examination(s) such that the adjustment can be made to a centrally arranged examination. Where diagnosis of a long term medical condition/disability is made after an assessment has taken place it may be appropriate to annul assessments from the current session and allow the student to take them again such that they can gain a properly representative mark or to take the circumstances into account at a final examination board in accordance with paragraph 2.11.1.1 A (c) of the policy relating to circumstances affecting assessments. Further backdating of any adjustment will not occur.

Where diagnosis of a long term medical condition/disability that requires support for study to be put in place is made during the academic year it may be appropriate to allow the student to repeat the relevant year/semester (for which a fee would be payable). Alternatively one of the outcomes from paragraph 3.6 of the policy relating to circumstances affecting study may be applied. Further backdating will not occur.

Where a student has not had appropriate adjustment in the current session for a late diagnosis they should submit an Extenuating Circumstances form as soon as possible. Where the condition is not covered by the Equality Act 2010, and in line with paragraph 2.9, such claims will be considered if submitted within seven days of the affected assessment and may be considered at the discretion of a School after that time, but will not be considered if submitted more than one month after notification of a progression or award decision.

Where the condition is covered by the Equality Act 2010, a School must consider claims submitted within one month of the notification of a progression or award decision and allowance should be made if full evidence is further delayed. In making a decision on the action to be taken, Schools should consider what adjustment would have been made had the condition been known earlier in the session. If any appropriate adjustments have already been applied, no further action is necessary, otherwise actions should be backdated to cover the most recent session only.

Advice on the Equality Act is available from the University’s Disability Support section.

**(b) Short-Term Circumstances affecting the Ability to Comply with Assessment Requirements**

Students should follow the Procedure for Students who are Unable to Comply with Assessment Requirements (2 below).

**(c) Short-Term Circumstances affecting the Ability to Study**

Students should follow the Procedure for Students whose Ability to Study is affected (3 below).

**1.4 Responsibilities of Schools**

Schools should ensure that all students are aware of this policy. As a minimum they are expected to include information in their initial induction packs and remind students each year of its existence. This may be done by inclusion in the School/Programme Handbook.

Each School should ensure that students are aware of primary contacts for submission of extenuating circumstances claims and should ensure that advice about possible outcomes/consequences is easily
available to students. There may be times when a School will need to respond to students in a short timeframe so their procedures must support the ability to do this.

Schools should consider and respond to claims as in the procedures below. Schools should keep complete records of all claims and ensure that they manage and note extensions to deadlines and deferrals of examination such that relevant University offices are informed of the later assessment.

Schools making decisions about claims regarding coursework submission should inform the student’s home School. Schools making decisions about examinations delivered by other Schools should tell the School owning the module.

1.5 Responsibilities of Students

- Students are responsible for ensuring that they inform their School (or, in the case of coursework relating to modules being studied in other Schools, all relevant Schools) of any circumstances that they consider are affecting their ability to study and/or undertake assessments using the procedures in this policy and following instructions from relevant Schools.
- Students should note that there are defined timeframes for the submission of claims relating to extenuating circumstances.
- Students are responsible for providing the required evidence demonstrating their claimed extenuating circumstances.
- Students should make every effort to ensure that they are fit to study and undertake assessment, and where a student feels that there are circumstances that are affecting them adversely it is their responsibility to seek professional help, where relevant, to assist in resolving the problem.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that they are available for all necessary study and assessment. A student will be in breach of the University's attendance and engagement requirements if they do not attend an examination or comply with a coursework deadline and do not submit an extenuating circumstances form, or if that form is deemed by the School to be insincere.

1.6 Guidance on Acceptable and Unacceptable Circumstances

Guidance on types of circumstances and whether or not they might be considered as good cause for failing to comply with an assessment requirement is provided in each procedure.

1.7 Ongoing Circumstances

Where a student has had extenuating circumstances for one period accepted but continues to be affected by or has a recurrence of the same circumstances, they should seek medical/other advice. If necessary they should either follow the procedure for Students with Long Term Conditions/Disabilities so that appropriate support for study or individual arrangements for examinations can be put in place or discuss with their School the possibility of voluntarily interrupting their studies until the circumstances have been resolved.

Students may not submit the same extenuating circumstances covering more than one semester except where they have accessed appropriate support to manage the circumstances but there is an unexpected acute episode at a particularly significant time.

Where the circumstances are external to the student and extend over more than one semester, such as chronic illness of a relative, it may be appropriate to accept the same circumstances for a longer period if it is not appropriate for the student to voluntarily interrupt their studies. In such circumstances the student must discuss the situation with their School and submit an extenuating circumstances form each semester to ensure that appropriate account is taken of the circumstances and appropriate support can be offered to the student.
Where a student has suffered from a series of discrete short-term illnesses they should seek medical advice to ascertain whether there is an underlying problem that may require further treatment, and should consider the possibility of an interruption of study.

1.8 Formal Complaint

If a student has made, or is making, a complaint under the Complaints Procedure and feels that the matters covered by that complaint may have affected their assessment performance, they should make the School aware in writing of their complaint such that it can be taken into account if appropriate.

1.9 Evidence

All claims made under this policy must be supported by evidence as detailed in each procedure. Claims will not be considered if appropriate evidence has not been submitted.

The University has standards relating to evidence as detailed in Appendix 2. All extenuating circumstance claims must comply with these standards.

1.10 Confidentiality of Evidence

Confidential information will only be shared within the University for the purposes of implementing this policy in a fair and rigorous manner. Any student wishing to restrict the sharing of such information should make their wishes known to the appropriate members of staff, preferably in writing. Students should be aware that the School cannot respond to a student's circumstances if they remain unaware of relevant information.

Normally such wishes will be respected unless to do so would be against the best interests of the University community or the interests of safety or security of any person.

1.11 Outcomes/Actions

Schools should consider all cases individually, establishing whether the circumstances meet the criteria laid down in paragraph 1.1 and satisfying themselves whether or not sufficient cause exists, and deciding on the outcome (ie whether or not the claim has been accepted as being with sufficient cause) and actions (ie what will happen where the claim has been accepted) in accordance with the relevant procedure. The final effect of a claim where circumstances have been reported may not be known for some time (eg where the circumstances will be taken into account at a final Examination Board) but students should be informed what action has been agreed as soon as that decision has been made.

In making decisions on actions, schools should bear in mind the possible effects on the individual student as well as the possible effects on decision-making. For instance, requiring a final year student to take a first sit in order to gain a fully representative mark may make final decision-making more objective but may significantly disadvantage the student.

An individual student’s marks should not be changed as the result of a claim of extenuating circumstances.

In cases where the assessment process has in some way been disrupted (eg a problem with an examination paper) appropriate adjustments may be made to the outcomes for the affected cohort, including potentially to marks, by following the University’s normal moderation process. In such circumstances the student should not be required to submit a claim for extenuating circumstances.

1.12 Informing Students of Outcomes
Service Centres should inform students in writing of the outcomes of claims decided by Schools, including all information in the appropriate template dependent on the relevant outcome and according to the relevant procedure in a timely and reasonable manner (see template letters here).

### 1.13 Dissatisfaction following a claim of Extenuating Circumstances

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of an Extenuating Circumstances claim should first discuss the matter with their School.

A student may appeal against the outcome of an Extenuating Circumstances claim using the **Academic Appeals procedure**. Appeals will only be accepted if submitted within one calendar month of the student receiving notification of the decision against which they wish to appeal. New evidence should first be submitted for consideration by the School with an explanation as to why the student could not submit it at the time of making the original claim. It will be considered by the School in line with the time limits on submission of claims set out in this policy.

If new evidence not previously considered by the School is submitted with an Academic Appeal, the Academic Appeal will be closed and the student advised accordingly.

Students are advised to contact an Education Adviser in the Student Advice Centre or equivalent office on the campuses in Malaysia and China for guidance on the appropriate course of action.

### 1.14 Authority

Decisions regarding Extenuating Circumstances are made by Schools on behalf of the Quality and Standards Committee through **School Examination Boards**. Where a decision has been made that is subsequently subject to appeal or review, as in paragraph 1.13 above, the Quality and Standards Committee may substitute another decision on behalf of the University if they believe the original decision to be unsound.

### 1.15 Further Information and Forms

Guidance on this policy can be obtained by e-mailing

ug-regulations@nottingham.ac.uk (for UG students) and pg-regulations@nottingham.ac.uk (for PGT/PGR students).

Advice on the merits/strengths of individual circumstances will not be given as a full consideration of a student’s circumstances will be undertaken by the School.

**Links:**

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Extenuating Circumstances Form](#)
- [Religious Observance Form](#)
- [Assessment Regulations](#)
- [Guidelines for obtaining Medical Certification from Cripps Health Centre/other Health Centres](#)
- [Voluntary Interruption of Study Policy](#)
- [Regulations Governing Attendance and Engagement](#)
2. Procedure for Students with Short-Term Circumstances who are Unable to Comply with the Requirements of Assessment

2.1 Introduction

This procedure forms part of the Extenuating Circumstances procedures for the University, and the introduction above to those procedures should be read in conjunction with this document. It should be used by students who have circumstances such as a self-limiting illness affecting their ability to comply with an assessment requirement. Students with longer term circumstances must follow the relevant procedure.

2.2 Preparing for and Taking Assessments

Preparing for and taking assessments can be a demanding time both physically and psychologically and feeling ‘below par’ is a natural and common experience for many students. Students who feel ‘below par’ or generally unwell whilst preparing for and/or engaging in an assessment or assessments should make reasonable efforts to comply with the assessment requirements(s) as normal. The typical symptoms associated with ‘exam stress’ (eg anxiety, sleeping disturbances, feeling nauseous etc) are not considered to be good reasons for missing or underperforming in an assessment. As general guidance an illness/ailment that does not require medical treatment or does not lead to a student being bedridden or will not cause a significant risk to others should not cause a student to be absent from an examination, to underperform in an assessment, or to fail to submit by a deadline.

2.3 Guidance on Acceptable and Unacceptable Circumstances

Guidance on types of circumstances and whether or not they might be considered as good cause for failing to comply with an assessment requirement is provided in Appendix 1.

2.4 Evidence

All claims made under this policy must be supported by evidence as detailed in Appendix 1. The University has standards relating to evidence as detailed in Appendix 2. All extenuating circumstance claims must comply with these standards.

2.5 Meeting Coursework Deadlines

A student who through short-term circumstances is unable to meet a coursework deadline should follow the guidance in paragraph 2.8 below prior to the submission deadline.

Where a student has submitted an extenuating circumstances claim but has not had a response with regard to whether or not an extension is being granted, the student should submit direct to the School whatever work they have completed at the time of the deadline such that, if necessary, it can form the assessment. This work will only be marked if the extenuating circumstances claim is not accepted. Students who have not completed their work because of claimed extenuating circumstances should continue working in order that, should an extension be granted (which would be from the original submission date), they have been able to take full advantage of any extra time allowed.

A student who has not submitted an acceptable claim for extenuating circumstances prior to a coursework deadline and misses that deadline will be managed according to the policy governing late submission of coursework.
2.6 Attending Timetabled Examinations

A student who considers that they are not fit enough to attend a timetabled examination should submit an extenuating circumstances claim as detailed in paragraph 2.8 and in accordance with the time limits defined in paragraph 2.9 of this procedure.

A student who has not submitted an acceptable extenuating circumstances claim for a scheduled examination that they do not attend will receive a mark of zero.

2.7 Illness Affecting Performance at a Scheduled Examination

Where a student is unwell during a scheduled examination such that they believe that their performance has been affected they should submit an extenuating circumstances form with evidence as detailed below.

2.8 Submitting a Claim

Any student wishing their circumstances to be considered under this policy should submit an Extenuating Circumstances form (but see exception under Coursework below) accompanied by appropriate evidence as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2. Only in exceptional circumstances may a form be submitted by another party.

Claims accompanied by appropriate evidence should be submitted as detailed below. Information regarding how to submit a claim can be found on the Student Services web pages.

2.9 Time Limits on Submission of Claims

The completed extenuating circumstances form should be returned, as in Section 2.8 above, as soon as possible and in accordance with the following time limits:

Coursework: Claims must be submitted before the coursework deadline.

Timetabled examinations: Claims must be submitted within seven days of the examination.

Supporting evidence: All evidence which the student wishes to use to support the claim should usually be submitted with the extenuating circumstances form. Where evidence is not available at the time of submission of the form, it must be submitted within fourteen days of the coursework deadline or examination. In circumstances where this will not be possible, the student may request an extension of time in which to submit evidence. Any extension of the deadline will be confirmed to the student in writing.

Claims will be forwarded to the School for consideration.

Schools are entitled to reject automatically and without consideration all extenuating circumstances claims that are submitted after the deadline above.

Schools have discretion as to whether to consider extenuating circumstances claims that are submitted after the seventh day from the affected assessment.

Notwithstanding the above, extenuating circumstances claims will in any case not be considered if they are submitted more than one month after notification of the outcome of an assessment.

The only exception to this provision is where the student provides acceptable evidence as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 that because of the illness they were unable to submit the claim any
earlier. Where such an exception is made, the student's claim will be considered under this policy without prejudice.

If a claim is being submitted by post it should be sent by recorded delivery where this service is available and in all cases an email sent to the relevant Service Centre to notify them that a claim is being submitted.

Previously undisclosed Extenuating Circumstances cannot be submitted as part of an appeal.

2.10 Consideration of Claims

It is the responsibility of the student's home school to confirm whether or not a claim submitted under this policy has been upheld and to decide on an outcome in accordance with section 2.11 below except where the claim relates to extending a coursework deadline, in which case it is the responsibility of the School setting the coursework to decide on the action.

Where a home school accepts a claim relating to extending a coursework deadline for a module taken in another school, the home school must notify the module-owning school immediately in order that a decision on the action can be made and notified to the student by the relevant Service Centre.

Schools will consider claims as soon as possible, deciding whether the evidence supports the claim, and whether the student has sufficient cause for non-compliance with the requirements of the assessment. All claims should be considered individually.

Where the circumstances arise extremely close to the deadline/examination (eg on the same or previous day), it may not be possible for the School to consider the claim before the relevant deadline or examination or for the student to acquire the necessary evidence. In the case of an examination the student must make their own decision as to whether to miss the examination, and in the case of a coursework deadline the student should submit any work that they have done at the deadline as detailed in paragraph 2.5. If the circumstances are not subsequently accepted they will receive a mark of zero for the relevant examination or the coursework as submitted under paragraph 2.5 above will be marked.

2.11 Actions

2.11.1 Where circumstances have been accepted as constituting sufficient cause for not meeting the requirements of assessment, Schools should apply one or a combination of the following actions.

A. For Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students on taught programmes:

either

(a) Grant an extension to the relevant coursework deadline(s) taking into account other deadlines that the student has to meet

or

(b) Allow a 'first sit' (ie allow a further assessment for which the mark gained will count as the student's first mark and therefore towards an award if relevant) in the affected assessment(s) (with or without attendance)

or
(c) Take the circumstances into account at the Board of Examiners at the award classification stage under the Study Regulations

or

(d) Use the marks from completed components as the full module mark subject to regulation 5 of the Assessment Regulations

or

(e) Annul the affected year/semester and offer the student a repeat period of study and assessment (for which tuition fees will be payable) subject to this being an option supported by any sponsor or legal obligation and to the University's policy on Maximum Period from Initial Registration. Where option (a), (b), (d) or (e) has been applied no further consideration of the circumstances will take place at an examination board. For instance, where the School has offered a 'first sit' but the student declines to take that opportunity, the circumstances will not be taken into account at the final examination board.

B. In the case of Postgraduate Research students the School may:

either

(a) Undertake a further annual review if the student fails their annual review (including, possibly, a further period of supervised study prior to the repeat review) and if relevant support the student in applying for an extension to their registered period of study

or

(b) Support the student in applying for an extension to their thesis pending period

2.11.2 Schools should arrange for a Service Centre to inform the student of the outcome of claims in writing including the information in the appropriate template letter in a timely and reasonable manner and no later than the end of the academic year in which the student's claim is submitted.

2.11.3 Notwithstanding the School's authority to apply one of the outcomes listed above, where a claim has been accepted as being with good cause and where the affected assessment forms more than the equivalent of 5 credits of assessment, the student may request to take the assessment again in order to gain a fully representative mark. Such requests should be made within one month of the outcome of the assessment being made known to the student and Schools should not unreasonably refuse such requests. Any mark gained as a result of such an assessment would be treated as a replacement for the affected assessment and be full mitigation of the circumstances, such that no further consideration of the circumstances should be necessary at an examination board.

Links:

Academic Appeals Policy
Extenuating Circumstances Form
Religious Observance Form
Assessment Regulations
Guidelines for obtaining Medical Certification from Cripps Health Centre/other Health Centres
Voluntary Interruption of Study Policy
Maximum Period from Initial Registration
3. Procedure for Students with Short-Term Circumstances affecting their Ability to Study

3.1 Introduction

This procedure forms part of the Extenuating Circumstances procedures for the University, and the introduction to those procedures at link should be read in conjunction with this document. Where a student has short-term circumstances that significantly affect their ability to study they should discuss the situation with their School and if appropriate submit an extenuating circumstances form with evidence as detailed below. Students with longer term circumstances should follow the relevant procedure.

The University has policies regarding attendance and it may be relevant for a student to consider voluntarily interrupting their study.

3.2 Notifying the School and Submitting a Claim

Where a student has personal short-term circumstances, such as a self-limiting illness, they should contact their School immediately to let them know that they will not be able to attend teaching.

A School may require a student to submit a formal claim of extenuating circumstances if they consider this necessary. In exceptional circumstances a third party may notify the School and submit a form.

Previously undisclosed circumstances cannot be submitted as part of an appeal.

3.3 Guidance on Acceptable and Unacceptable Circumstances

Guidance on types of circumstances and whether or not they might be considered as good cause for missing teaching or undertaking required study is provided in Appendix 1.

3.4 Evidence

All claims made under this policy must be supported by evidence as detailed in Appendix 1. The University has standards relating to evidence as detailed in Appendix 2. All extenuating circumstance claims must comply with these standards.

3.5 Consideration of Submissions

The student's School is responsible for making decisions on how to manage the student's study, bearing in mind any constraints of the student's programme, and for informing all Schools in which the student is taking a module of the circumstances and relevant outcomes.

In making their decision Schools should consider how substantial the effect on the student has been. Where it is very substantial voluntary interruption of study might be most appropriate. If it is less substantial, but nonetheless significant, other outcomes might be suitable. A low level of effect is likely to be considered part of everyday life and therefore may not be accepted for special consideration.

Alternatively Schools may wish to manage the situation in accordance with the University's Attendance Procedure.

3.6 Outcomes

Where a student declares circumstances that lead to them being unable to pursue their studies effectively the School should discuss with them potential actions including the possibility of interrupting their studies until such time as the student is no longer affected by the circumstances.
If the circumstances do not warrant interrupting study, or if this is not a realistic option and there is a significant effect on the student, the School should either

(a) For any student

Provide support for the student to compensate for the extenuating circumstances. If this is provided and is intended to fully adjust for the circumstances, the same extenuating circumstances cannot be used for any other University procedure.

or

(b) For Undergraduate Students and Postgraduate Students on taught programmes

Bring the extenuating circumstances forward for consideration at the Board of Examiners which may consider annulling the affected year/semester and offering the student a repeat period of study (for which tuition fees will be payable) subject to this being an option supported by any sponsor or legal obligation and to the University’s policy on Maximum Period from Initial Registration.

or

(c) For Postgraduate Research students

One or more of the following actions should be applied:

(i) Undertake a further annual review if the student fails their annual review

(ii) Support the student in applying for an extension to their period of study and to the University’s policy on Maximum Period from Initial Registration

(iii) Support the student in applying for an extension to their thesis pending period and to the University’s policy on Maximum Period from Initial Registration.

Short term circumstances affecting study should not be considered to constitute good cause for underperforming in assessments as adjustments should have been made, if appropriate, in accordance with this procedure.

3.7 Informing Students

Schools should arrange for a Service Centre to inform the student of the outcome of claims in writing including the information in the appropriate template letter in a timely and reasonable manner.

Links:
- Academic Appeals Policy
- Extenuating Circumstances Form
- Religious Observance Form
- Assessment Regulations
- Guidelines for obtaining Medical Certification from Cripps Health Centre/other Health Centres
- Voluntary Interruption of Study Policy
- Maximum Period from Initial Registration
4. Appendix 1 - Guidance on Circumstances and Required Evidence

4.1 Acceptable circumstances

The following gives examples of the kind of acceptable circumstances (i.e., where the student might be able to demonstrate sufficient cause for non-compliance with an assessment requirement or for missing teaching or required study) and the associated evidence that is normally required. This is given without prejudice and for general guidance; it is not exhaustive, definitive or prescriptive. The University considers each claim of extenuating circumstances on its own merits, as an individual case and according to the relevant procedure.

Students should note that the Cripps Health Centre and the University Counselling Service in the UK or equivalent services on other campuses will be unlikely to provide such confirmation if the student has had no prior engagement with the service(s) prior to the student's claim.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstance</th>
<th>Required Evidence</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>An original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional or a letter from the University Counselling Service (or equivalent) confirming the nature of the illness and the likely impact it is having on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.</td>
<td>Short-term illness (less than 7 days) will not generally be regarded as an extenuating circumstance with regard to assessed coursework, where the student is given a number of weeks/months to complete and submit such work, although a School may decide to grant an extension dependent on individual circumstances.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospitalisation</td>
<td>A medical letter/certificate from the relevant hospital confirming the nature and severity of the student's circumstances and the likely period of impact on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family illness</td>
<td>A medical certificate/letter from an independent medical professional confirming the nature and severity of the family circumstances and the likely impact it is having on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bereavement</td>
<td>A death certificate or a letter confirming the death from an independent person (usually not a family member) with their Only applicable where there is a demonstrably close relationship between the student and the deceased.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Acute Personal/Emotional Circumstances</strong></td>
<td>An original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional or a letter from the University Counselling Service (or equivalent) confirming the nature of the illness and/or circumstances and the likely impact it is having on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pregnancy</strong></td>
<td>The University has a policy on pregnancy related issues. Students who are pregnant should follow the guidance in this document. In some cases it may be appropriate to use the Extenuating Circumstances procedure (for instance when a student suffers from a specific illness caused by the pregnancy), in which case the requirements for illness or hospitalisation above should be followed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Victim of crime</strong></td>
<td>A written statement of events which is supported by written evidence from the Police (including a crime reference number). Where the impact of the crime has lead to a medical or other professional consultation, an original medical certificate or letter from an appropriate medical professional or a letter from the University Counselling Service (or equivalent) confirming the likely impact the reported crime had/is having on the student's ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Domestic Disruption</strong></td>
<td>Where significant and unforeseen domestic disruption has occurred very close to a timetabled examination a letter from an appropriate independent individual/authority detailing the relevant circumstances and an indication of the likely impact with their contact details provided. This applies only in relation to examinations unless the circumstances are exceptionally severe and extended. Disturbances caused by housemates would generally be considered to be normal and therefore not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Representing the University at a national event or involvement in some other significant/prestigious event</strong></td>
<td>A letter of confirmation from the relevant organising body and a supporting statement from the student explaining why the event should be considered as significant/prestigious and the reason(s) why they are required to be absent from University.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jury Service (UK)</strong></td>
<td>A letter from the Court together with proof that a deferral has been requested and rejected or proof that a previous request for deferral has been accepted.</td>
<td>A student who is asked to undertake jury service that would affect their ability to meet any of the requirements of their programme should make a request to the Court for the Jury Service to be deferred. Only where the Court has refused such a deferral will Jury Service be considered as an acceptable extenuating circumstance. Deferral of Jury Service is only permitted once by the Courts.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Court Attendance (UK)</strong></td>
<td>Where a student is required to attend a tribunal or court as a witness, defendant (but see ‘Criminal Conviction’ in Section 2, Unacceptable Circumstances) or plaintiff the student should provide official correspondence from the tribunal/court confirming attendance or a solicitor’s letter detailing the nature and dates of the legal proceedings and the requirement for the student to attend.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>The list of circumstances cannot be exhaustive and it is possible that other circumstances will arise that should be considered as acceptable. Examples that have arisen are listed in the next column and additional examples will be added as they become known.</td>
<td>Examples of other circumstances that might be considered to be acceptable: Requirements of military service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Unacceptable Circumstances

The following gives examples of circumstances that are likely to be considered as unacceptable (ie where the student is unlikely to be able to demonstrate sufficient cause for non-compliance with an assessment requirement or lack of engagement with required study activities). This is given for general guidance and is not exhaustive, definitive or prescriptive. As stated in paragraph 1.11 all cases should be considered individually. Due regard should be given to the reasonableness of the outcome, and it may be that in some circumstances these examples would be deemed to be acceptable particularly where the circumstances are exceptional or could not have been foreseen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstance</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transport issues</td>
<td>It is expected that students will ensure that they arrive at the assessment on time, irrespective of the form of transport used or relied upon. An inability to travel as a result of circumstances beyond the student's control may though constitute sufficient cause. Students should, however, allow a reasonable contingency time in any travel arrangements made, as moderate delays are considered to be a normal expectation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they are available for all study activities and all assessments, including any assessments taking place on Saturdays in the main examination periods or offered in the reassessment period (August – September). All holidays and vacations should take place at a time that will not impact on the student's availability to study or undertake or prepare for an assessment(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation disturbances</td>
<td>It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that they have access to suitable accommodation, including for any assessments offered in the reassessment period, and therefore ongoing or foreseeable problems with accommodation are unlikely to constitute good case. Disturbances caused by housemates would generally be considered to be normal and therefore not acceptable as an extenuating circumstance. (See also Domestic Disruption, Victim of Crime and Acute...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/Emotional Circumstances in 4.1 – Acceptable circumstances.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Misreading the examination timetable</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the student's responsibility to ensure that they know and remember the location, time and duration of all formal assessments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paid employment or voluntary work</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is expected that students will ensure that any paid employment or voluntary work does not interfere with their ability to engage with their studies or assessments. It should be noted that examinations may be scheduled to take place on Saturdays during the published examination periods. The University has guidance for students undertaking employment or other activities during their studies. Where unforeseen or exceptional work commitments arise in the case of part-time students these may be considered to be acceptable dependent on individual circumstances.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exam stress</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling 'below par', stressed and anxious leading up to and during an assessment(s) is a common experience of many students. It is not considered to be an acceptable extenuating circumstance unless a medical diagnosis of illness has been made. (See Acute Personal/Emotional circumstances in Appendix 1.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IT and/or computer failure</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss or corruption of files is not an acceptable extenuating circumstance. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all work which is electronically stored, generated and/or submitted is sufficiently backed up.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreseeable/preventable circumstances</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where the circumstances are within the control of the student they are unlikely to constitute sufficient cause for failure to comply with the assessment requirements or engage fully with their studies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scheduling of assessments/deadline</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadlines being close together or examinations scheduled close together are unlikely to constitute acceptable circumstances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being reluctant to disclose the circumstances for any reason</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University can only consider circumstances if they are disclosed in accordance with this policy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Submitting the same extenuating circumstances more than once except where the student has accessed appropriate support to manage the circumstances but there is an unexpected acute episode at a particularly significant time</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See Section 1.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following will not be acceptable as extenuating circumstances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circumstance</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminal conviction</td>
<td>If a student is convicted of a criminal offence any disruption caused by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the investigation or sentence is not an acceptable extenuating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>circumstance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal of IT facilities or</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>suspension for reason of debt</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3 Religious Observance in relation to Scheduled Examinations

If a student has completed the Religious Observance Form by the published deadline and it has not been possible to make alternative arrangements centrally, the School should take reasonable steps to provide an alternative assessment opportunity. Where this is not possible, the School may consider a claim under this policy. This will not, however, normally be regarded as an extenuating circumstance with regard to assessed coursework where the student is given a number of weeks/months to complete and submit such work. Absence from an assessment for reason of religious observance, where no Religious Observance Form has been completed, or where the relevant permission for absence has not been obtained prior to the assessment, will not be deemed an acceptable extenuating circumstance.

### 5. Appendix 2 – Standard of Evidence

All claims made under this policy must be supported by independent, reliable documentary evidence of inability to comply with the assessment requirements or to attend teaching or undertake required study.

The burden of proof to support a claim lies with the student at all times.

The University reserves the right to take such steps as are deemed necessary to verify the evidence submitted without prior notification. Where the University is unable to authenticate the material to its satisfaction, the claim may not be accepted.

Evidence presented by students must meet the following standards and should be:

(a) Written by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent to the student. If Schools wish they may accept evidence provided by the student's personal tutor, a Hall Warden, the student support staff, the Examinations Officer or the School Manager

(b) On headed paper and signed and dated by the author. Evidence presented by email may be acceptable if the email has been sent by the author from the official domain name of the author’s organisation

(c) Confirming specifically that the circumstances were witnessed on the relevant date as opposed to being reported retrospectively
(d) In English. It is the student's responsibility to provide supporting documentation and any translation should be undertaken by an accredited translator (eg be a member of the Association of Translation Companies -

http://www.atc.org.uk/

(e) Original. Copies of supporting evidence will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and

(f) Unaltered by the student. Documentation that has been amended for any reason will be deemed inadmissible by the University.

The School should only consider upholding a student's claim of extenuating circumstances when, in their opinion, all of the above conditions are fully satisfied.

If there is evidence that a student has fraudulently presented documentation to the University the matter will be referred to the Senate Disciplinary Committee and/or a Fitness to Practise Committee.