

Guidance notes for negotiating a coursework deadline extension for students with a Support Plan.

A coursework deadline extension is a reasonable adjustment for students with a Support Plan. This reasonable adjustment is to be used primarily to enable students to stagger their submission dates such that they can build in enough time to complete the assessment, such that they can demonstrate their full potential.

This reasonable adjustment should be accommodated wherever possible. However, an extension may not always be possible due to other issues, such as the release of feedback/solutions to student peers and exam boards. Therefore, in some instances a student's deadline extension request may need to be turned down. In this situation it may be appropriate for a student to request a deadline extension for a different piece of coursework to enable them to stagger their submission dates. Where a deadline extension is possible, the new submission date is usually negotiated by the student and the designated person in their academic School. Thus, the student should be told of the new coursework submission date on submission of their coursework extension form.

Things to consider: student

It's important to consider the following points when you are planning to ask for a coursework extension:

1. Timing of the request for an extension.
 - The request for a coursework deadline extension needs to be made before the original submission date.
 - Aim to plan ahead and get any extensions agreed well in advance – write down all your submission dates and types of assessment for the Semester on the coursework extension request form in order to identify a suitable new submission date. This is important as it may not be possible to accommodate your original request and you may need to request a deadline extension for a different piece of coursework to enable you to stagger your submission dates.
 - Consider how much time you need to prepare for any exams you may have and make sure you do not move coursework submissions into this preparation time.
 - Think about the support you may need to access prior to the submission date, for example, a meeting with your lecturer, personal tutor, or Study Support Tutor.
2. Number of assessments and other assessment deadlines.
 - It would be helpful for the member of staff who is negotiating an alternative submission date with you to see your other assessment deadlines. They may not

have access to this information, particularly if you are taking a module outside your home School.

- It would be helpful to have all your submission dates and any exam dates entered in an electronic diary, paper diary or planner. Writing the type and length of an assessment would also be helpful. e.g. a 10 minute group presentation or a 3,000 word essay.

3. Type of assessment.

- Think carefully about the type of assessment. An extension of a week may be sufficient for a 3,000 word essay, whilst more than a week may be required to complete a dissertation. An additional 24 hours may be enough for 500 words.

4. Being informed about the new submission date.

- You should always be told the new coursework deadline date on submission of the coursework extension request form.

Things to consider: module convener (or other designated person)

1. Timing of the request for an extension.

- A key skill that students need to acquire to be successful in their studies is good time management and organisation. Planning and organisation can be particularly challenging for students with Support Plans.
- It is important that students are given the opportunity to learn how to assess how long each task will take and how to plan for multiple pieces of work, so encouraging the use of time management and organisation tools is essential.
- Study Support Tutors often work with disabled students to identify tools to improve time management and organisation skills. This often involves plotting all the submission and exam dates in an electronic diary, paper diary or planner along with the type of assessment e.g. group presentation (10 minutes) for a semester. This enables students to allocate time for each task to be completed and identify any potential deadline bottlenecks.
- **Thus**, students may approach you very early in the semester to ask about a deadline extension.
- Some students may request a deadline extension very close to the submission date due to an unpredictable flare up in their condition or the effects of a treatment cycle. These students will require a quick response to their request to avoid any unnecessary anxiety.

2. Number of assessments and other assessment deadlines.

- It would be helpful to ask the student negotiating a coursework deadline extension with you, if they have looked at the number and type of other assessments they need to complete and the submission dates.
- Please encourage students to share with you the number and type of other assessments they have.

3. Type of assessment.

- The length of an extension should not be a fixed amount, as a reasonable adjustment should accommodate the individual needs of the student. The type of assessment they are completing is also important. An extension of more than a week may be required to complete a dissertation, or a 3,000 word essay/report, but an additional 24 hours may be enough for a piece of work 500 words in length.

4. Communicating the new submission date.

- A quick response to an extension request is essential to minimise anxiety. Students should always be told the new coursework deadline date on submission of the extension form.

5. Fixed length of coursework extensions.

- Some Schools/Departments are adopting fixed lengths of assessments to help manage the number of extension requests that are being made. For example, an extension of one week can be agreed with the Student Service Centre staff rather than the module convenor/personal tutor/DLO etc.
- However, it is important to note that the above approach needs to be managed carefully as it circumvents the general advice given above. This may:
 - create another deadline bottleneck later in the term.
 - prevent an holistic approach to the student's situation, such that opportunities for interventions are missed.
 - miss an opportunity to identify struggling students e.g. is the student avoiding the deadline (procrastinating).

Disability Support Services

Updated 19th December 2019.