

Regulations for Students on Pearson Programmes

2023/2024

Extenuating Circumstances

Version 5.0
Updated: August 2023
Date of Review: August 2024

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

1 Definition

- 1.1 Extenuating circumstances are formally defined as "circumstances beyond the student's control which have an impact on their assessed work". Extenuating circumstances can fall into the following categories:
- Circumstances which cause the student to perform less well in the assessment;
 - Circumstances which cause the student to miss an assessment event or not to submit an assessment;
 - Circumstances where the student is unable to submit the coursework by the deadline or to attend a summative assessment event;
 - Circumstances which mean the student needs extra time to submit a dissertation (taught postgraduate students only).
- 1.2 In general, extenuating circumstances will be of a medical or personal nature affecting the student for any significant period of time and/or on the day of the assessment event, or immediately preceding the time of the deadline.

2 Procedures for notification of Extenuating Circumstances

- 2.1 If a student informs a member of staff that extenuating circumstances have affected a piece of **coursework** he or she is submitting, the member of staff should tell the student to submit an extenuating circumstances form, failing which the extenuating circumstances may not be taken into account by the examiners.
- 2.2 Where **examinations** are missed due to illness, or students claim to have been affected their assessment, the member of staff should tell the student to submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form, failing which the extenuating circumstances will not be taken into account.
- 2.3 It is the student's responsibility to inform University Centre Colchester of any circumstances that they feel may have affected their assessed work or examinations by submitting an Extenuating Circumstances Form by the stipulated deadline.
- 2.4 Students are invited to make a statement on their Extenuating Circumstances Form regarding what they consider to be the material effect their extenuating circumstances may have had on their results, on their ability to undertake the assessment or on their ability to meet deadline.
- 2.5 Students are normally required to submit third party documentary evidence to support their claim, in accordance with the relevant guidance.
- 2.6 Guidance for students on submission deadlines, and required supporting evidence, for extenuating circumstances and late submission of coursework claims can be found in Appendix A.
- 2.7 The Extenuating Circumstances Form must be completed and returned to UCC

Academic Services (along with the medical evidence form where appropriate) before the deadline specified on the form for the current year. If a student is making a late submission of coursework claim the form should be submitted within one week of the assessment deadline. Forms can be submitted in person to UCC Academic Service in room HE103 or via the email address uccec@colchester.ac.uk UCC reserves the right to check on the validity of any document submitted by contacting the third party directly.

- 2.8 Deciding whether circumstances are extenuating is a matter of judgement. The impact of circumstances on different forms of assessment of different disciplines may not be the same. The range of things that can happen and how that affects people is too large to list. Whether circumstances extenuate, should be decided by a small panel of members relying on their discretion, judgement and experience; the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

3 Extenuating Circumstances Panel and Boards of Examiners

- 3.1 All applications for Extenuating Circumstances will be considered by a UCC Extenuating Circumstances Panel which will normally meet at the end of each semester and after the resubmission period. The Panel considers extenuating circumstances claims for all taught students in relation to:

- Late submission of coursework;
- Extenuating circumstances claims for exam absence, non-submission and/or completion of assessment, and extenuating performance;

- 3.2 The Panel will take decisions on claims as follows:

- Late submission claims, where the Panel decides the claim is valid, to permit the uncapping of work and for the original grade to count;
- Extenuating circumstances claims, where the Panel decides the claim is valid to invite the internal board to refer/make a recommendation to the exam board;

- 3.3 The Panel may defer a decision on an application where insufficient evidence has been provided.

- 3.4 Boards of Examiners must try to determine whether and to what extent, extenuating circumstances have affected academic performance and what action, if any, should be taken. Boards will normally take into account the following:

- The severity of the problem and the length of time involved;
- Any supporting documentary evidence;
- Whether all work in the same period appears to have been equally affected;
- Whether it is possible to gauge the effect of the extenuating circumstances upon academic performance;

- Whether the student's achievement is consistent with past performance;
- The type of assessment affected, and how long the student had to complete the work (i.e. date when work set and deadline for submission).

3.5 It is not possible to list every circumstance that the Board of Examiners would not accept or take into account. However some of the more obvious examples are listed below:

- General pressure of work is not taken to be circumstances beyond a student's control, as they are expected to plan their work schedule;
- A short-term problem or illness which has occurred during the year and which is not deemed to have had an overall effect on performance;
- Personal disruptions or events which could have been anticipated; such as holidays, weddings, changing address or employment, religious holidays or festivals which are usually known in advance;
- Excessive demands on time or pressure of one's employment, which could have been anticipated;
- Financial constraints commonly experienced by students;
- Missing an examination because of misreading the timetable or oversleeping;
- Having more than one examination on the same day or on consecutive days (unless the student was already suffering from illness or injury);
- Problems with the teaching timetable where a student has not taken the necessary action to ensure appropriate unit choices are made;
- Where extenuating circumstances have affected a student throughout their time on programme, it is difficult to determine what a student's academic profile might look like otherwise. In such cases the Board of Examiners is unlikely to take any action.

4 Powers of the Board of Examiners

4.1 On the basis of recommendation(s) by the Internal Board a Board of Examiners may agree to take no action or to take other appropriate actions, including those below:

- Where there is no grade available for a unit at all, or there is a grade below a pass and insufficient evidence that the learning outcomes have been met, the board can recommend that the assessment be taken again as a first attempt;
- To offer voluntary reassessment as a first attempt in cases where a student has passed a unit but the grade appears to be out of line with other grades;

- Where a student's performance has been affected by extenuating circumstances resulting in a grade below a pass, or no grade at all, the Board of Examiners will be able to exercise discretion where other evidence exists of learning outcomes having been met, (e.g. a coursework grade but no exam grade). In such cases the Exam Board can offer uncapped resits.
- Where a student is prevented from attempting reassessment by accepted extenuating circumstances, offer the opportunity to either finish the programme (where up to 15 non-core failed units can be condoned) or to undertake reassessment;
- To extend a student's maximum period in a case where the circumstances are significant and the student must undertake repeat study or reassessment in the next academic year;
- Take no action because there are insufficient or illegitimate grounds, e.g. complaints about exam timetable;
- Take no action because no material effect on the outcome is possible;
- Take no action because the extenuating circumstances have no material effect on the final result, e.g. a student's results suggest a clear Pass or Merit classification in any case.

4.2 The following actions are not valid as students must achieve credit:

- Leaving coursework, exam or unit aggregate grades blank on grid;

4.3 A Board of Examiners will not:

- Permit a student who presents extenuating circumstances to proceed to the next year of study if he or she has not met the necessary requirements, unless the examiners are satisfied that it is appropriate to do so on academic grounds;
- Permit a student to fail a core unit;
- Award a higher result if the examiners are not satisfied that this is a fair result based on the student's demonstrated academic performance;
- Add extra marks because a student's grade has been affected by extenuating Circumstances;
- Amend grades from a previous year of study;
- Annotate statement of results/transcripts with comments about the existence of extenuating circumstances.

5 Appeal against the decision of an Extenuating Circumstances Panel

5.1 A student may appeal by writing to UCC Academic Services setting out their grounds for appeal and providing all supporting evidence. Students must do so within 10 working days of the publication of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel

decision to reject a student's claim. Students may submit an appeal on the following grounds:

- Further information of which the Extenuating Circumstances Panel was unaware and of which the student could not reasonably have been expected to inform the Panel in advance, of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the result might have been different had they not occurred;
- Procedural irregularity in the conduct of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel (including alleged administrative error) of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome might have been different had they not occurred.

5.2 The Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will refer to the Panel any appeal that meets the stated criteria. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will decide whether the appeal is well founded and what if any action to take.

5.3 If the Panel dismisses the appeal or if the student is dissatisfied with any other decision taken by the Panel they may be able to appeal under the Academic Appeals Procedures for students on Pearson programmes once their end-of-year results have been published.

LATE SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK GUIDANCE

This is for students on **Pearson** validated programmes who have not met an assignment deadline and wish to submit the work late and have their grades uncapped by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. Please note that submission of this form does not mean the grades for the assignment will automatically be re-instated. You are encouraged to submit incomplete work if you cannot satisfactorily complete your assignment by the deadline so that in the event your claim is unsuccessful, you will still have grades for consideration by the Board of Examiners.

The final decision on late submissions will be made by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. Non-approval of the request for re-instatement of grades does not affect a student's right to submit an Extenuating Circumstances request for consideration by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for recommendation to the Board of Examiners.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

This is for students who wish to make the Board of Examiners aware of any extenuating circumstances which they believe may have adversely affected their performance, ability to submit work or sit an examination. Only the most serious extenuating circumstances are likely to have a significant effect on overall results. Students are advised to take time to assess their situation carefully and only submit details of extenuating circumstances if they are sure that they have *significantly* affected the quality of their work.

Requests will be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, who will make a recommendation/refer a decision to the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners will consider the affected work in the context of the rest of a student's submissions through the year(s) and will consider what, if any, action is taken. The Board of Examiners will not change grades awarded, but will assess whether their performance was adversely affected and will take this into account when making decisions about student progress or degree classification.

It is essential to inform the Board of Examiners of any extenuating circumstances before it meets. It will not be possible to appeal against any subsequent decision on the grounds of extenuating circumstances if a student could reasonably have been expected to inform the Board in advance.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

The form and supporting evidence should be submitted as follows:

LATE SUBMISSION: Submitted to *UCC Academic Services (room HE103 or uccec@colchester.ac.uk)* **within 7 calendar days** of the coursework deadline.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES: Submitted to UCC Academic Services (room HE103 or uccec@colchester.ac.uk)

SUMMER REASSESSMENT PERIOD: Extenuating circumstances claims only and be submitted to UCC Academic Services

Guidance on evidence

The following table provides examples of the types of acceptable circumstances that will be considered by the Board of Examiners and the associated evidence that is normally required. Examples are outlined to make clear the expectations and requirements; however, this list is not exhaustive and does not guarantee that your request will be accepted.

University Centre Colchester considers each claim of extenuating circumstances on its own merits, as an individual case and according to the relevant procedure.

Circumstance	Required Evidence	Comments
Long term condition/disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written independent evidence on headed paper from a medical professional. <p>The evidence is expected to provide an explanation of why and how your studies have been affected over and above any reasonable adjustments already made.</p>	Where the effects of a long-term health condition or disability may be expected to have a potential impact on your studies, it is expected that you would have discussed this in good time with UCC Academic Services before assessments to determine whether UCC needs to make reasonable adjustments to your studies or assessments.
		The Board of Examiners will consider cases for this scenario where a new conditions or disability is diagnosed too late to allow reasonable adjustments to be considered or put in place, or if you have been affected by a sudden deterioration or change in your condition.
Physical/mental illness or acute personal/emotional circumstances: including long term and short term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A medical letter/certificate from an appropriate medical professional. 	<p>Please note that many medical professionals will not issue medical certificates either for short-term or minor illnesses, neither will they issue medical certificates when you were not treated at the time and you report your illness to a doctor retrospectively.</p> <p>In many cases Boards of Examiners may judge that a short-term or minor illness has not had a significant effect on your overall performance.</p>
Hospitalisation: including accident or emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A medical letter/certificate from the relevant hospital confirming the nature and severity of your circumstances and the likely period of impact on your ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study. Letter of appointment for a specialist consultation, investigation or outpatient treatment. 	
Family illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A medical letter/certificate from an independent medical professional. 	Confirmation of the nature and severity of the family circumstances and the likely impact it is having on your ability to undertake formal assessment and/or study will need to be outlined as part of the evidence.

Bereavement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A death certificate or a letter confirming the death from an independent person (usually not a family member). ▪ Other evidence can include a funeral service booklet, newspaper obituary or letter from the minister. 	<p>The claim should make clear the nature of the relationship between you and the deceased and how your ability to study has been affected. This is particularly necessary where the relationship is not within the immediate family (e.g. a step-grandparent, a cousin) or the relationship is not one of kinship (e.g. death of a friend, death of a friend's parent). Successful claims relating to bereavement will normally be accepted for the term in which the bereavement occurred, however if you consider that you have been affected for longer, additional evidence of how you have been affected will be required (e.g. letter from GP or counsellor).</p>
Pregnancy, Maternity and Paternity: including a difficult or unplanned pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A medical letter/certificate from an appropriate medical professional. 	
Crime: including being the victim of violent crime, theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A written statement of events which is supported by written evidence 	
or being investigated by the police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ from the Police (including a crime reference number). ▪ Solicitor letter ▪ A medical letter/certificate from an appropriate medical professional. 	
Domestic disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A letter from an appropriate independent individual/authority detailing the relevant circumstances and an indication of the likely impact with their contact details provided relating to a significant and unforeseen domestic disruption. 	<p>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.</p>
Relationship problems/breakdown: including relationship with a partner or parental relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A change of address/bank account/tenancy agreement ▪ Letter from a third party e.g. a family friend, relative, a counsellor or a solicitor 	<p>The Board of Examiners will need to have sufficient evidence to take into consideration the timing of the break-up and the duration of the relationship and any associated circumstances (e.g. change of accommodation) which may also have impacted on your performance.</p> <p>Details of the nature of the relationship (i.e. whether it is the break-up of your own relationship or of a relationship which has a significant impact on them (e.g. parental separation/divorce), a statement of the extent to which you consider it has impacted on you and any evidence which can be provided, preferably by a third party.</p>

<p>Exceptional financial difficulties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letters (bank, Student Finance, Council, employer etc.) ▪ Bank statements ▪ A medical letter/certificate from an appropriate medical professional. 	<p>The Board of Examiners will only consider cases where there is clear evidence that the situation is serious, unexpected and not of your own making as financial difficulties commonly experienced by students are not extenuating.</p>
<p>Major and exceptional travel disruption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weather, traffic or other incident report ▪ Correspondence from the travel provider ▪ Tickets 	<p>You will need to include a clear statement of what has occurred and how you consider it has affected your performance. The Board of Examiners may consider whether you allowed enough time for travel.</p>
<p>Serious or significant personal incidents: including house fire, homelessness, direct experience of natural disaster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Insurance documentation ▪ Letter (Solicitor, Council, employer, etc.) ▪ Documentation from the Citizen's Advice Bureau ▪ A medical letter/certificate from an appropriate medical professional. 	
<p>Jury Service (UK)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A letter from the Court together, where appropriate, with proof that a deferral has been requested and rejected or proof that a previous request for deferral has been accepted. 	<p>If you are asked to undertake jury service that would affect your ability to meet any of the requirements of your programme, you should normally make a request to the Court for the Jury Service to be deferred. You should discuss the impact of jury service with your department and whether you should make a deferral request.</p>
<p>Unusual extreme pressures of work/incident in placement (placements only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A letter from your line manager or placement supervisor detailing the relevant circumstances and their impact 	<p>The Board of Examiners will have to be satisfied that the pressures referred to were substantially greater than the normal pressures associated with such activities.</p>

Extenuating Circumstances Form

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM**CONFIDENTIAL**

Student ID Number		Full Name	
Correspondence address for this claim			
Course Title			

It is essential you inform the Board of Examiners of any extenuating circumstances before it meets as you cannot subsequently appeal against any decision of the Board of Examiners on the grounds of extenuating circumstances if you could reasonably have been expected to inform the Board in advance.

Please take time to assess your situation carefully and only submit details of extenuating circumstances if you are sure that they have significantly affected the quality of your work

Please confirm the period affected by your circumstances (e.g. 1 March – 13 April)

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If you believe your coursework during the year was significantly impaired or you were unable to submit the work, please list the affected modules and describe clearly how it was affected - including dates of the period covered.

Module Title	Assessment Type	Published Deadline	Submission Date
Nature of claim			
Module Title	Assessment Type	Published Deadline	Submission Date
Nature of claim			
Module Title	Assessment Type	Published Deadline	Submission Date
Nature of claim			

List below the documentation which you have attached/enclosed in support of your statement. **Please note that University Centre Colchester will NOT seek evidence on your behalf** – it is your responsibility to do this. The University reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) you submit by contacting the third party directly. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel reserves the right to reject cases where evidence is not provided.

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DECLARATION

Submitting a false claim or fraudulent documentation is a serious matter and is a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy. We reserve the right to check on the validity of document(s) submitted by contacting the third party directly.

By submitting a late submission of coursework form I am agreeing to University Centre Colchester holding and processing the information provided above and any documentation I provide to support my claim. Although the information provided will be used primarily for the purposes of this request, University Centre Colchester reserves the right to utilise the information for any relevant purpose linked to my studies as a UCC student. This information will be retained in line with the UCC's retention policy which can be found at www.colchester.ac.uk and may be shared with external bodies such as, but not limited to, the Office for Students (OFS), Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

I confirm the circumstances listed within this Extenuating Circumstances claim

Signed:	
Date:	

**PLEASE SUBMIT COMPLETED FORMS TO ROOM HE102 OR BY EMAIL TO:
UCCEC@colchester.ac.uk**

Circumstances not taken into account or accepted by a Board of Examiners

It is not possible to list every circumstance that the Board of Examiners would not accept or take into account.

However some of the more obvious examples are listed below:

- General pressure of work – students are expected to plan their work schedules
- A short-term problem or illness which has occurred during the year and which is not deemed to have had an overall effect on performance
- Personal disruptions or events which could have been anticipated; such as holidays, weddings, changing address or employment, religious holidays or festivals which are usually known in advance
- Excessive demands on time or pressure of one's employment (except for full-time employees who are registered for a part-time degree)
- Financial constraints commonly experienced by students
- Missing an examination because of misreading the timetable or oversleeping
- Having more than one examination on the same day or on consecutive days (unless the student was already suffering from illness or injury)

Where extenuating circumstances have affected a student throughout his/her time at University Centre Colchester, it is difficult to determine what the student's marks might have been like otherwise. In such cases, the Board of Examiners is unlikely to take any action.

ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED FOR THIS FORM TO BE CONSIDERED

PERSONAL DETAILS (block caps)

Full Name:	
Student ID Number:	
Course Title:	

Do you believe that the reason for your late submission only applies to this/these assessment(s)?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If no, please complete an Extenuating Circumstances form instead.

AFFECTED ASSESSMENTS

Module Title	Assessment Type	Published Deadline	Submission Date:
Nature of claim			
Module Title	Assessment Type	Published Deadline	Submission Date:
Nature of claim			

Do you believe that your circumstances have now been resolved and that you are fit to continue with the remainder of your programme?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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SUPPORT SERVICES

If you have spoken to a member of the course team or support staff about your situation, please fill in the details below. Although we do not routinely contact staff, we may need to contact them for further information.

Name of staff member or service:	
Date contacted:	
Please give brief details:	

EVIDENCE

Evidence to back your application must be included with this form? Failure to provide evidence may result in your application being declined.

Please list documentation submitted in support of your request:

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DECLARATION

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By submitting a late submission of coursework form I am agreeing to University Centre Colchester holding and processing the information provided above and any documentation I provide to support my claim. Although the information provided will be used primarily for the purposes of this request, University Centre Colchester reserves the right to utilise the information for any relevant purpose linked to my studies as a UCC student. This information will be retained in line with the UCC's retention policy which can be found at www.colchester.ac.uk and may be shared with external bodies such as, but not limited to, the Office for Students (OFS), Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

I confirm that the circumstances and the late submission of coursework are accurate and truthful.

Signed:	
Date:	

Once completed this form should be returned to HE102 or emailed to UCCEC@colchester.ac.uk