

Higher Education within Loughborough College

Policy and Procedure Title	Higher Education Extenuating Circumstances Policy
Date Approved	January 2018
Approved by	Higher Education Academic Board
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	January 2018
Next Review Date	January 2021
Executive Lead	Vice Principal – Curriculum, Quality and Learner Experience
Applicable to:	Staff & Learners
Accessible to:	Staff/Learners/Governors/Public

1.0 Purpose:

1.1 To define the rights of students to claim Extenuating Circumstances in respect of their academic studies and assessments.

1.2 To detail the procedure as to how Extenuating Circumstances can be claimed by students.

2.0 Scope & Responsibility:

2.1 This procedure is applicable to students on designated Higher Education courses.

2.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the procedure is adhered to within the stages and procedures outlined.

3.0 Definition:

The College uses the following definitions specific to this procedure:

Extenuating Circumstances, which can also be known as **Impaired Performance** or **Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances** is a process designed to ensure that matters that may impact on a student's performance, such as illness, mental health problems, bereavement or family problems, can be taken into account when marks are allocated for an exam or assignment.

While Loughborough College policies and procedures have been approved by our validating University partners. Please note that for courses which have been validated by the University of Derby and Warwick University, the procedures will differ. Students should refer to the relevant pages on HE Learn zone for individual course requirements.

The Extenuating Circumstances policy is separate from the existing system of reasonable adjustments and assessment of exam concessions regarding learner's needs and disabilities.

4.0 Procedure:

Extenuating Circumstances claims are considered by the Higher Education Extenuating Circumstances Committee (HEEC twice per a semester and before the August Reassessment Board. Extenuating

Circumstances claims must be submitted before the assessment/ exam is due, unless it is demonstrably impossible for the student to do so. In cases such as this, the claim must be submitted 5 days prior to an EC Committee in order for it to be considered at that Committee. In these circumstances students will be additionally required to provide evidence as to why they were unable to submit their claim on time, which must account for the entire delay.

The committee shall consist of Curriculum Managers from all academic departments plus Academic Tutors and a minimum of one other member of academic staff. The Committee will be chaired by the Head/ Deputy Head of Higher Education. The secretary to the College Extenuating Circumstances Committee shall be the Higher Education Registrar (or identified replacement).

A student and/or their tutor may feel that a seven day 'Late Submission' is more appropriate to meet students' needs (see footnote for guidance).¹

Extenuating Circumstances can be considered for:

- Performance in an element(s) of assessment(s) and/or an examination(s) in module(s).

Students are encouraged to submit an Extenuating Circumstances Claim if there is any possibility that their performance may be affected. Please note that Extenuating Circumstances cannot be considered retrospectively and that once marks have been considered by an Exam Board they are final and any claims will not be considered.

5.0: What Constitutes Extenuating Circumstances?

Students will be entitled to use the Extenuating Circumstances process if something happens to them that:

- Occurs in an unforeseen manner, disrupts your studies and is beyond your control.
- Relates to a specific piece of coursework or examination.
- Seriously disrupts your performance, including non-submission of assignments or the taking of examinations.

5.1: What is considered to be an Extenuating Circumstances?

- Illness and absence from study
- Injury, for example, sporting

¹ Where a student has good reason for a late submission which does not meet the guidance for Extenuating Circumstances, the relevant HE Curriculum Manager can authorise a request for a delayed submission of no more than 7days with no grade penalty.

HE Curriculum Manager will expect to be provided with compelling evidence. It in the best interest of students' to submit all assessments on time.

Please note that this discretion does not apply to examinations. A record of the decision must be kept and agreed by the student. No further discretionary extensions can then be granted against an assessment once one has already been agreed. If a student submit later than the extended date, the work will not be graded and recorded at the Exam Board as a non-submission.

- Family issues such as bereavement
- Counselling / Mental health issues
- Work-related pressures and problems

5.2: What Type of Evidence is Acceptable?

- A medical certificate
- A copy of a death certificate
- A police incident number notification
- A letter of confirmation from your Tutor or other appropriate third party
- A letter of confirmation from the Counselling Service etc.

Claims without such evidence will **NOT** be considered. Students are allowed to submit the form first and the supporting evidence later if this is delayed, but the evidence must be received before the Extenuating Circumstances Committee meets. Students are solely responsible for completing the application and obtaining the supporting evidence.

You are **NOT LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN YOUR CLAIM** if it is based upon:

- Computer problems.
- 'Bunching' of examinations or coursework deadlines.
- Problems caused by English being an additional language. You should seek advice in good time from the International Department.
- Poor time management or personal organisation.
- Minor ailments.
- A long term illness or disability or already in receipt of a support plan, where the team has already made special arrangements for the administration of assessments.
- Circumstances which were known to you prior to the date of your registration as a student.
- Circumstances where students have had good opportunities to plan.
- The demands of your sport training/competition where you have not taken this into account and informed tutors beforehand.
- Students own negligence or careless.

6.0: How to Claim Extenuating Circumstances:

Extenuating Circumstances claims must be submitted before your assessment/ exam is due, unless it is demonstrably impossible for you to do so. In cases such as this, the claim must be submitted 5 days prior to an EC Committee in order for it to be considered at that Committee. In these circumstances

you will be also be required to provide evidence as to why you were unable to submit their claim on time, which must account for the entire delay.

6.1 Stage 1:

Submit EC form online, this can be found on the Student Registry page on HE LearnZone. Normally no later than 5 days before the published date of the College Extenuating Circumstances Committee.

Ensure you express clearly what the circumstances are and exactly why they have impacted on your study and /or assessment.

Evidence will need to be submitted to the Student Registry in the following ways:

- Via email on student.registry@loucoll.ac.uk
- In person to the Student Registry, Room F001, Higher Education Building
- By Post

6.2 Stage 2:

The College Extenuating Circumstances Committee receives the application at least 5 days before it meets. These papers are confidential and will be considered on the day of the committee. All evidence must be submitted with the form. Should the panel meet and there is no evidence, the application will be deferred to be considered at the next committee. After this, if evidence is still not submitted, the application will be rejected.

6.3 Stage 3:

Ensure you hand in your coursework (this includes any incomplete work) using the normal submission methods for said assessment.

Failure to hand in any assessed work could lead to a judgement of non-submission at the exam board, irrespective of your Extenuating Circumstances Application. The only exception to this requirement is where it is demonstrably impossible for you to hand in any evidence of having worked towards or completed the assessment requirements.

6.4 Stage 4:

Committee meets and the decision will be communicated to you electronically by the Student Registry. There are 3 outcomes:

Application Granted:

Normally you will be offered to re-sit a new assessment without penalty at the next assessment period.

You will need to formally accept the EC offer prior to the Final Exam Board. Once the EC offer is accepted any previous grade will be removed and your submission will be without penalty. Failure to accept the EC Offer will result in your grade standing and should you need to re-sit, your grade will be capped in line with programme regulations. Seek advice and tutor support if you are unclear.

Submit your work as per college/course regulations and you will receive a new grade when confirmed by the Exam Board.

Application Declined:

You will be informed that your application has been unsuccessful.

The original grade will stand for any work submitted. If no work was submitted, you will be graded as non-submission. Where applicable you will be offered a resit of the assessment at second attempt which will be capped at 40% or pass mark in line with programme regulations. Seek tutor advice if you are unclear.

Application Deferred.

You will be advised that the committee requires further professional evidence to be submitted by the next committee meeting.

7.0 Confidentiality:

We appreciate that Extenuating Circumstances Claims often relate to sensitive matters and we would like to assure students that all matters are kept completely confidential. Evidence will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and the only people to see the evidence and the claim are the Extenuating Circumstances Committee.

NB. This procedure does not affect the rights of a student under the **HE Academic Appeals Procedure**.

8.0 Linked Procedures:

- Complaints Procedure
- Higher Education Academic Appeals procedure

9.0 Performance Management (completed as relevant):

- Responsibility for the procedure designated to the Head of Higher Education
- The administration and monitoring of the procedure is carried out by the Student Registry.

10.0 Documentation:

- Extenuating Circumstances Claims form (HE LearnZone)
- Extenuating Circumstances Policy