

Part 6

Extenuating Circumstances

The new academic framework refers to the provision of procedures governing extenuating circumstances affecting student assessment. This policy should be read in conjunction with the accompanying guidance notes.

1. What are Extenuating Circumstances?

Extenuating Circumstances are circumstances which

- impair the performance of a student in assessment or reassessment
- prevent a student from attending for assessment or reassessment
- prevent a student from submitting assessed or reassessed work by the scheduled date

Such circumstances would normally be

- unforeseeable - in that the student could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned
- unpreventable - in that the student could do nothing reasonably in their power to prevent such an event
- expected to have a serious impact

Students are expected to make reasonable plans to take into account commonly occurring circumstances, even those which, on occasion, may have been unforeseeable and unpreventable. Further details, including examples of circumstances of what would or would not normally constitute grounds for extenuation, can be found in the supplementary guidance notes:

<https://www.uel.ac.uk/Discover/Governance/Policies-Regulations-Corporate-documents/Student-Policies/Extenuation-Procedures>)

For students engaging in a sport at an elite level, the provisions of the *Policy on Supporting Elite Athletes' Academic Study* will apply –

<https://www.uel.ac.uk/Discover/Governance/Policies-Regulations-Corporate-documents/Student-Policies/Supporting-Elite-Athletes-Academic-Study-Policy>

Where relevant, students should also consult the *UEL Student Maternity, Paternity & Adoption Policy* –

<https://www.uel.ac.uk/Discover/Governance/Policies-Regulations-Corporate-documents/Student-Policies>

2. Procedures for the Submission of Claims for Extenuating Circumstances

For an extenuation claim to be considered, it is the student's responsibility to inform us as early as possible of any difficulties they have encountered which will affect their ability to submit coursework or attend exams and ensure that for each component affected

- they submit details of the circumstances via the relevant Student Hub on the standard University proforma
- details are submitted as soon as possible but, in any event, by the designated date and time
- details are submitted with accompanying documents and evidence
- all relevant sections of the form have been completed

Claims can be submitted before the scheduled date and time for the submission of the assessed work. The designated deadlines for submission of claims for extenuation are:

for assessment by examination: 5pm on the Tuesday after the final week of examinations.

for assessment by submission of assessed work: no later than the Student Hub closure time one calendar week after the scheduled date and time for the submission of the assessed work.

However, it is recognised that there may be cases where a student is unable to submit a claim for extenuation within the above time period (e.g. emergency in-patient hospital treatment occurring during the examination period). In this case, submission of the claim at the earliest opportunity, should be made. There will be a published deadline for each term by which all claims must be submitted. Beyond this date claims for extenuation can no longer be considered in order for a decision on the claim to be made and communicated to the relevant Department Progression and Award Boards. If students have a valid reason for not having claimed extenuating circumstances by the published deadline, they can appeal using the academic appeal process.

Claims must be complete and accompanied by evidence at the time of submission. Incomplete claims including those without evidence cannot be submitted and students will be advised to submit the form once it is complete. Claims will not be considered unless submitted on the standard University pro-forma by the designated date and time with accompanying evidence.

Any claim for extenuation which is found to be in any part fraudulent will be considered as a matter of misconduct and dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure.

3. Procedures for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances

Claims for extenuation will be considered by a panel consisting of a Chair nominated by the Vice Chancellor and appropriate staff (to be nominated by the Chair) who have the necessary expertise to make an informed decision on claims. The panel is quorate with a minimum of 3 staff members.

Where extenuation for more than one component is sought by a student, extenuation will be considered on a component by component basis.

The Extenuation Panel will normally meet monthly but can convene more frequently as necessary to deal with the volume of claims in a timely manner.

Students will be informed of the outcome of their claim via feedback through UEL Direct.

The decision of the Extenuation Panel is binding on Department and Award boards. If claims raise sufficient concerns about a student's ability to manage their studies we reserve the right to refer the student to the Fitness to Study process.

4. Extenuation Outcomes for assessed tasks (examinations or coursework)

i) Outcomes for examinations and other tasks at which attendance is required:

If extenuation is granted by the Extenuation Panel at the first assessment opportunity (including those students repeating a full year of study at undergraduate level);

(a) If the student does not attend the assessment or fails they will be allowed to go to resit and any mark achieved for the relevant extenuated component(s) at resit, will be awarded.

(b) If the student has passed the assessment and submitted extenuation the passed component mark will stand and the extenuation outcome ignored.

ii) Assessed tasks (e.g. coursework) to be submitted by a scheduled date:

a) Work submitted by the published deadline:

Claim for extenuation may be submitted. If the assessment is passed then the pass component mark is retained and the extenuation submission ignored. If the assessment is failed then the extenuation decision is upheld (accepted or rejected).

b) Work submitted up to one working day after the published deadline:

Claim for extenuation may be submitted. If the assessment is passed then the pass component mark is retained and the extenuation submission ignored, the component mark will be subject to a deduction of 5% of the total marks available. If the assessment is failed after the 5% deduction then the extenuation decision is upheld (accepted or rejected).

c) Work submitted late, but within one calendar week of the published deadline: A claim for extenuation may be submitted, the submitted work will be marked;

d) Work submitted later than one calendar week after the published deadline, or not submitted:

A claim for extenuation may be submitted. The submitted work will not be assessed and the mark awarded will be zero;

If the Extenuation Panel grants extenuation at first attempt (including those students repeating a full year of study at undergraduate level and assuming students have not passed the module before extenuation is considered as per points (a) and (b) above);

- and work is submitted within one calendar week of the submission deadline, then the mark achieved for the work will be awarded
- and no work is submitted within one calendar week of the submission deadline or work is submitted later than one calendar week after the submission deadline, the student will be allowed to go to resit and the component mark achieved at resit will be awarded. For undergraduate students see section 6.6.1 of the academic regulations, for post graduate students see section 11.1.5.2 of the academic regulations.

If the Extenuation Panel grants extenuation at second attempt, it should be noted that for undergraduate students progression decisions will be made at the relevant Department Assessment Board. Boards will ratify the decision of the Extenuation Panel, however, for undergraduate students where extenuation is granted for the component mark a student may not be allowed to attempt that assessment again due to the overall progression decision and not achieving sufficient credit to progress. In regards to marks at second attempt the outcome may be that;

If extenuation was granted at first sit and second sit (assuming students have not passed the module before extenuation is considered as per points (a) and (b) above);

- For undergraduate students the extenuation is noted and relevant progression decision made on the student profile. Please note that the progression decision may be to allow a student to continue their studies, or to not continue and therefore be withdrawn from their course
- if work is submitted within one calendar week of the submission deadline, then if passed the mark achieved for the work will be awarded. If the assessment is failed and presuming that the overall student profile allows it, the student may be given another opportunity to engage with the assessment before the start of the next academic year, and the mark for this third opportunity will be uncapped
- if no work is submitted within one calendar week of the submission deadline or work is submitted later than one calendar week of the submission deadline, presuming that the overall student profile allows it, the student may be given another opportunity to engage with the assessment before the start of the next academic year, and the mark for this third opportunity will be uncapped,
 - For undergraduate students please note that a progression decision may supersede any opportunity to retake the assessment post resit and before the next academic year starts (as per the above).
 - If the student has failed the assessment on the third opportunity, the student will retake the module again, with attendance, at the next available opportunity.
- If extenuation was granted at resit, presuming that the overall student profile allows it, the decision may be to allow the student to retake the module again the following academic year, with attendance. If the component of assessment at first sit had extenuation granted (as well as the second sit), the mark on the re-registered module the following academic year for that component will be uncapped. If a student has also passed another

component(s) at first sit and component(s) had extenuation granted at first and second sit for the module, these marks will be carried forward. If the granted extenuation was only submitted at resit the component assessments for re-registered module, the following academic year, will be capped. The registration of the module may incur tuition fee costs (please refer to the fees policy).

If extenuation was granted at second sit only (not first sit and assuming students have not passed the module before extenuation is considered as per points 4.i (b) and ii (a) and (b) above);

- and work is submitted within one calendar week of the submission deadline, then the mark achieved for the work will be awarded and capped
- For undergraduate students the extenuation is noted and relevant progression decision made on the student profile. Please note that the progression decision may be to allow a student to continue their studies, or to not continue and so therefore be withdrawn from their course
- presuming that the overall student profile allows it, the student may be given another opportunity to engage with the assessment before the start of the next academic year, and the mark for this third opportunity will be capped,
 - For undergraduate students please note that a progression decision may supersede any opportunity to retake the assessment post resit and before the next academic year starts (as per the above).
 - If the student has failed the assessment on the third opportunity, the student will retake the module again, with attendance, at the next available opportunity. The registration of the module the following academic year may incur tuition fee costs (please refer to the fees policy).
- If extenuation was granted at resit, presuming that the overall student profile allows it, the decision may be to allow the student to retake the module again the following academic year, with attendance. The component assessments for the re-registered module the following academic year will be capped. The registration of the module the following academic year may incur tuition fee costs (please refer to the fees policy).

If the Extenuation Panel does not grant extenuation, the student will receive the mark achieved; the mark achieved will not be notified to the student until the relevant Assessment Board results are published.

There is **no** provision for giving extensions to coursework deadlines and therefore **extensions may never be given**.

5. Additional key information

a) Where a student submits an application for extenuation that has been considered by the Extenuation Panel the application cannot be withdrawn at a later date.

b) Where extenuation is sought, this will be recorded on the student record (so that the student is aware that the extenuation claim was considered).

c) Once a module has been capped, extenuation does not uncapped the module (see Academic Framework Regulations 6.8.3)

d) Where a component consists of more than one element, and the circumstances of extenuation apply to one element, the extenuation granted is for the whole component in its entirety.

6. Appeals against the decisions of the Extenuation Panel

There will be no appeal against the decision of the Extenuation Panel other than on the grounds that an administrative or procedural error has occurred. Appeal will be by the normal academic appeal procedures.

7. Distance learning courses

Provision will be made for the submission of pro-formas and evidence electronically or by fax, with confirmation hard copy submitted through the postal system.

8. Collaborative courses

Courses run at collaborative partner institutions will be subject to equivalent procedures, with the process being administered by, and the panel being held within, the partner institution. Appeals against the decision of their extenuation panel will be handled by the normal academic appeal procedures.