



# Extenuating Circumstances Policy 2020-21

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Extenuating Circumstances Policy is in place to address and support students who may suffer from a sudden illness, or other serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances, which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment, or the results they obtain for an assessment.
- 1.2 As a student, you should use the process in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy to address the following types of circumstances: absence from an assessment and/or non-submission of work; requests for extensions to deadlines for submission of written assignments; claims of adversely impacted performance during an assessment; cases where you have not had appropriate adjustment in the current academic session due to a late diagnosis of a disability or long-term medical condition.
- 1.3 You are responsible for ensuring that you inform NMITE of any circumstances that you consider are affecting your ability to study and/or undertake assessments as early as possible. With early warning of a problem, NMITE can provide appropriate support. Students should be aware that NMITE will be unable to respond to a student's circumstances if they remain unaware of relevant information.
- 1.4 In general terms, this procedure is intended to support you with exceptional, unforeseeable (in that you could not reasonably have been expected to avoid them), short-term circumstances affecting your ability to study or take



assessments, or if you have had a late diagnosis of a disability or long-term medical condition.

## **2. Eligibility**

- 2.1 For students to claim Extenuating Circumstances, all of the following criteria must apply:
  - i. the circumstances must be out of the student's control – the student could not have prevented them.
  - ii. the circumstances 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.
  - iii. the timing of the circumstances must be relevant to the claimed impact.
- 2.2 As general guidance an illness/ailment that does not require medical treatment or will not cause a significant risk to others will not normally be covered by this procedure.
- 2.3 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 and will not normally be covered by this procedure.
- 2.4 The typical symptoms associated with feeling 'stressed' about assessments (e.g. anxiety, sleeping disturbances, feeling nauseous etc) are not considered to be good reasons for missing or underperforming in an assessment and are not, therefore, normally grounds for an Extenuating Circumstances claim.

## **3. Ongoing circumstances**

- 3.1 Where a student has had extenuating circumstances accepted for one period but continues to be affected by or has a recurrence of the same circumstances, they should seek medical/other advice so that appropriate support for study or individual arrangements for assessments can be put in place and/or other options discussed (for example, a voluntary interruption of studies).
- 3.2 You may not normally re-submit the same extenuating circumstances covering more a different period of time except where you have accessed appropriate support to manage the circumstances but there is an unexpected acute episode at a particularly significant time.
- 3.3 Where the circumstances are external to the student and extend over more than one semester, (for example, 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 should contact their Personal Tutor or the Academic Registrar in the first instance for advice and support.



## 4. Disruption to assessment

- 4.1 In cases where the assessment process has in some way been disrupted (e.g. a problem with a piece of equipment or building issues) appropriate adjustments may be made to the outcomes for the affected cohort, including potentially to marks, via the Moderation process. In such circumstances you will not be required to submit a claim for Extenuating Circumstances.

## 5. Timescales for submitting a claim for Extenuating Circumstances

- 5.1 Students wishing to make a claim for Extenuating Circumstances must do so before the published deadline(s) for the affected piece(s) of assessment or within seven calendar days. If you cannot submit evidence by the published deadlines, you must submit details of the Extenuating Circumstances with an indication that evidence will be submitted within seven calendar days.
- 5.2 If you have not submitted an acceptable Extenuating Circumstances claim for a piece of written assessment that you do not submit by the given deadline date you will receive a mark of zero.
- 5.3 If you have not submitted an acceptable Extenuating Circumstances claim for a scheduled assessment that you do not attend you will receive a mark of zero.
- 5.4 The only exception to these timescales is where the student provides compelling evidence that circumstances or illness prevented them from submitting the form on time. Where such an exception is made, your claim will be considered under this policy without prejudice.

## 6. Submission of claims for Extenuating Circumstances

- 6.1 If you wish your circumstances to be considered under this procedure you should submit a fully completed [Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form](#) (Appendix 1) accompanied by appropriate evidence of impact, within the timescales provided. Third party submissions will not normally be accepted.
- 6.2 Claim forms, accompanied by appropriate evidence, should be submitted by email to [registrar@nmite.ac.uk](mailto:registrar@nmite.ac.uk) within the timescales given in 5.1 above.
- 6.3 All claims must be supported by evidence as detailed section 7 below.
- 6.4 You are encouraged to discuss your claim with their Personal Tutor, or other appropriate staff member, to get help and support prior to submission.
- 6.5 Claims submitted without evidence and without notification of intention to submit evidence at a specified later date will not be able to be processed.
- 6.6 Where the circumstances arise extremely close to the deadline/assessment (e.g. on the same or previous day), it may not be possible for NMITE to consider the claim before the relevant deadline or assessment, nor for the student to acquire the necessary evidence.



- 6.7 In the case of an assessment you must make their own decision as to whether to miss the assessment and/or submit any work that you have done by the time of the deadline. If the claim is approved, you will be provided with the opportunity to retake the assessment/resubmit the work and be marked without penalty. If the claim is not subsequently approved, you will receive a mark of zero for the relevant scheduled assessment(s)/submitted work.
- 6.8 Any claims for Extenuating Circumstances must be submitted before the relevant Assessment Board meets. It is not possible for a student to claim Extenuating Circumstances after an assessment decision has been made.
- 6.9 If you feel that valid grounds did exist, but it is after the relevant Assessment Board, you should follow the Academic Appeals Procedure (**insert hyperlink**). In such cases, the Academic Appeal submitted by the student will need to demonstrate that new evidence was not, and could not have been, made available to the Assessment Board at the time of its original decision. Any matters which could have been raised before the meeting of the Board, but, without good reason, were not raised, will not be considered in the event of an Appeal.
- 6.10 Although a key principle of Extenuating Circumstances is that they are unexpected and unforeseen, and longer-term conditions should be addressed via the making of reasonable adjustments, NMITE recognises that there may be situations where a student has not had appropriate adjustment at the beginning of their studies – for example, due to late diagnosis. In these circumstances you should submit a claim under the Extenuating Circumstances procedure as soon as the diagnosis is confirmed.

## 7. Supporting Evidence

- 7.1 All evidence must be independent, reliable, and verifiable documentary evidence – for example, a medical note from a qualified and practising professional or a Death Certificate.
- 7.2 It is your responsibility to provide appropriate evidence in support of your claim for Extenuating Circumstances.
- 7.3 All evidence presented by you must meet the following standards and must be:
- i. Written and signed by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent of the student.
  - ii. 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.
  - iii. Confirming specifically that the circumstances were witnessed on the relevant date as opposed to being reported retrospectively.



- iv. In English. It is your responsibility to provide supporting documentation and any translation should be undertaken by an accredited translator, with any associated costs to be met by you.
  - v. Unaltered by you in any way. Documentation that has been amended for any reason will be deemed inadmissible by NMITE.
- 7.4 All evidence which you wish to use to support the claim should 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 submission deadline or scheduled assessment. In circumstances where this will not be possible, you may request an extension of time in which to submit evidence. Any extension of the deadline will be confirmed to you in writing.
- 7.5 Where evidence is not available at the time of submission of the form, you will be provided with an 'in principle' decision as if the application were complete. Assuming the necessary evidence is subsequently received the outcome decision will stand; however, if the evidence is not subsequently provided the claim for Extenuating Circumstances will be considered null and void and the relevant assessment mark(s) corrected to be zero.

## **8. Extenuating Circumstances Panel**

- 8.1 Extenuating Circumstances claims are initially considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel, which makes specific recommendations to the relevant Assessment Board based on the evidence before them.
- 8.2 Terms of Reference of Extenuating Circumstances Panels
- i. An Extenuating Circumstances Panel is a sub-Committee of NMITE's Assessment Board.
  - ii. In addition to the terms of reference outlined here, Extenuating Circumstances Panels will take due account of any requirements from relevant professional or regulatory bodies (PSRBs).
  - iii. Each Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall comprise a minimum of 3 members of NMITE staff. The Panels will be Chaired by the Academic Registrar and will include the relevant Module leads and other co-opted members as deemed necessary by the Chair.
  - iv. The Panel will be deemed to be quorate provided the Chair and at least 2 other members are present.
  - v. The Panel will be supported by a note-taker who is not part of the Panel.
  - vi. Decisions of each Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall be made in accordance with the Academic Regulations.
- 8.3 For the consideration of requests for an extension to a submission deadline(s) it is not necessary for a full Panel to be convened. The case may be reviewed by a Panel member or members in order that the decision is made promptly. The recommendations made by Panel members should be reported at the



next meeting of the full Panel. Other time-critical decisions may be made by Chair's action and reported to the next meeting of the full Panel.

- 8.4 Members of Extenuating Circumstances Panels who are also the Personal Tutor of a student making a claim should refrain from making a decision in connection with that request. They may, however, provide the student with a supporting statement to be included as evidence, if appropriate.
- 8.5 All Extenuating Circumstances Panels are required to keep formal records of their proceedings. The purpose of the appropriately anonymised records is to document decisions, to summarise any discussion relevant to those decisions (where this is required to give a context or rationale for the decision, or to establish precedents), and to capture for further consideration any areas of discussion or requirements for future action.

## **9. The Assessment Board**

- 9.1 The Assessment Board shall consider recommendations from Extenuating Circumstances Panels before making a final determination of the student's classification or progression decision arising from the result, subject to the provisions of the Academic Regulations.
- 9.2 In all cases the Assessment Board must be assured that overall programme learning outcomes have been met before implementing a recommendation by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
- 9.3 Upon receipt of recommendations from the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, the Assessment Board will decide whether to:
  - i. provide a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time, allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the submitted work and/or assessment, rather than imposing a cap;
  - ii. waive late submission penalties.
  - iii. determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived.
  - iv. note the accepted extenuation for the module(s) and recommend that it is taken into account at the point of award and classification.
- 9.4 The Assessment Board, depending on the circumstances, may exercise discretion in deciding on the particular form any reassessment should take. Options are a viva voce examination, additional assessment tasks designed to show whether the student has satisfied the programme learning outcomes, review of previous work, or normal assessment at the next available opportunity. The student will not be put in a position of unfair advantage or disadvantage: the aim will be to enable the student to be assessed on equal terms with their cohort.



## **10. Notification of the Outcome of the Claim for Extenuating Circumstances**

- 10.1 The Academic Registrar will inform you of the outcome of claims in writing and via mail to your NMITE student email address within 10 working days of the decision of the Panel.

## **11. Appealing the Decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel**

- 11.1 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of an Extenuating Circumstances you may appeal the decision via the Academic Appeals Procedures (insert hyperlink), so long as they met the relevant criteria – specifically that new evidence exists which it was not possible for the student to submit at the time of submitting their claim for Extenuating Circumstances.



## Appendix 1 – Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form

Name:

Student ID Number:

Personal Tutor:

Programme of Study:

Year of Study: (e.g. year 3)

Email address (for confirmation of status change):

Although it is not mandatory for you to speak to someone before you submit a claim, staff members can provide helpful advice, if needed. If you have been speaking to someone about the circumstances affecting your study, it can be helpful for the Panel to know this – please tick all that apply

Yes, my Personal Tutor	
Yes, a member of the Student Support Services team	
Yes, another staff member	
No, I have not spoken to anyone	

Please provide the name of the staff member(s) you have spoken to, if applicable.

Does this EC claim relate to a disability (or long-term condition) already covered by a Support Plan? YES/NO (please delete as appropriate)

Please indicate why the form is being completed (tick all that apply)

Absence from an assessment or non-submission of coursework	
Request for extension(s) to deadlines for submission of written assignment(s)	
Claim of adversely impacted performance in an assessment	
Late diagnosis of a disability or long-term medical condition	

When were you affected e.g. from 02 May 2019 to 09 May 2019. The evidence you provide should cover these dates.

Date from:

To:





What work or assessment was affected?

If there are multiple elements of assessment in the module that you are claiming for, please specify in the Module title which part your claim relates to. For example, by giving the assignment name.

Module title\*

Type of assessment affected\*

Date(s) of exam/placement/coursework deadline affected:

From:\*

To:

Explanation of the situation. Please tell us: what happened? How serious was it? How did it impact upon your studies or assessment?

What evidence are you providing in support of your claim? Please tick all that apply

Evidence from medical practitioner	
Letter from counsellor	
Supporting statement from a member of staff	
Police incident report	
Letter from Court	
Death Certificate	
Other – please specify	

Will supporting documentary evidence be submitted separately?

YES/NO (please delete as appropriate)



## Your supporting evidence

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), you should only submit evidence (data) relating to living third parties if it is strictly necessary for the consideration of your claim e.g. details of a relative's hospital admission, a police report concerning a family member or partner. NMITE may be unable to contact people named in your claim to advise them that their data is being held. You should make anyone whose data you are including in your claim aware that you are doing so in order that, if they wish to do so, they can contact NMITE to object to that data being held.

## Outcome

In order to support you in making this claim, we need you to tell us what outcome you are expecting for every affected assessment. There are a number of potential outcomes (for example, to waive late submission penalties, to provide an extension to submission deadline) but any decision will be taken in your best interests, to minimise any adverse impact on your on-going studies and subsequent assessment load. Please indicate what outcome are you seeking from this claim:

## Student signature and consent

The information I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. In submitting this form, I given my consent for this information to be disclosed to relevant NMITE staff responsible for considering my claim. I understand that the claim will be kept on my student record.

Please note, whilst all applications will be treated with appropriate confidentiality, details may be shared with Student Support Services, who may need to contact you directly to offer advice and support if the information disclosed is of significant concern.

I confirm and agree to the above statement:

Signature:

Date: