

HE Policy on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances

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Revision History

Version	Purpose/Change	Date
4.0	Inclusion of details on mitigating circumstances panel. Restructure of policy to clarify the two options for consideration of a student's personal circumstances.	September 2021
4.1.	3.7. and 3.14. amended to clarify the requirement to submit evidence for mitigation and timeframe for this.	June 2022
5.0	3.11. Additional details about the outcomes of a request for mitigating circumstances have been clarified. Section 5: Reasons and evidence have been reviewed and clarified in line with the OIA HE Good Practice Guidance, including evidence of bereavement. Appendix 1 and Appendix 2: now include hyperlink to this policy. Appendix 2 includes breakdown of reasons a student may make a mitigation request. Appendix 3: Template for GP/Healthcare Provider provided in line with OIA HE Guidance. Hyperlinks updated throughout policy.	September 2022

Please contact HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk or the College Reception if you would like this document in an alternative form.

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The Policy is written in line with the Expectations and Core practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code), which are a key reference point for higher education providers in all parts of the UK.

The Policy should be considered in conjunction with other regulatory requirements, including professional, standards and regulatory bodies' (PSRB) rules and regulations.

1. Introduction

1.1. The University Centre understands that sometime personal circumstances outside of a student's control may have an impact on their ability to meet a deadline or overall performance in a module/unit or assessment. Students who are concerned that their personal circumstances could affect their assessments should tell their Programme Leader or Module Tutor as soon as possible, rather than waiting for their results.

1.2. This *Policy on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances* allows students to request additional consideration for their personal circumstances in two ways:

- An application for a short extension
- An application for mitigating circumstances

An overview of the difference between these two requests for additional consideration of personal circumstances is set out in the table below, and detailed in Section 2 and Section 3.

Type of Consideration	When can I apply?	Deadline to Complete Work	Description
Short Extension	Before the assessment deadline.	Up to five additional working days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted via <i>Request for Short Extension Form</i>
Mitigating Circumstances	Up to five working days after the deadline has passed.	Extension to deadline/ Deferral to the next assessment opportunity / Leave of absence / Deferral of studies to next academic year / Adjusted assessment type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted via <i>Mitigating Circumstances Application</i> • Requires independent evidence (e.g. medical note, death certificate)

1.3. When work is submitted late without an authorised extension or mitigation in place, or after the extended deadline, the penalties outlined in the [HE Policy on Late Submission of Assessments](#) will apply.

2. Short Extensions

- 2.1. A short extension is a request for up to five working days of additional time to complete an assessment due to the impact of a student's personal circumstances. If approved, the student will be given a new submission deadline by which to submit the assessment.
- 2.2. Supporting evidence of the reason for the request is not required but the student **must** submit a *Short Extension Request Form* (Appendix 1) for approval by their module tutor or Programme Leader as official proof that the extension has been granted. The approved *Short Extension Request* form should be submitted by the student with the assessment by the extended submission deadline.
- 2.3. Applications for a short extension can only be made by completing the *Short Extension Request Form* (Appendix 1), which is available to all HE students on the [VLE HE Student Handbook](#) page. The form may be requested in an alternative format from HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk or the student's Programme Leader.
- 2.4. Applications for a short extension (via the *Short Extension Request Form*) must be submitted to the student's module tutor or Programme Leader at the earliest opportunity **before** the coursework deadline.
- 2.5. It is the student's responsibility to submit the application for a short extension to their module tutor or Programme Leader. On receipt of the appropriate form, the Programme Leader and module tutor may agree to extend the deadline up to a **maximum of five working days** (this means weekends and bank holidays are not included in the extended deadline).
- 2.6. If a short extension is granted and the assessment is submitted by the extended deadline, it will be marked without a late penalty being applied.
- 2.7. Retrospective extensions will **not** be granted. Students who have been experienced sudden, unexpected and severe circumstances that have affected their ability to submit an assessment on time must submit an application for mitigating circumstances, along with supporting written evidence (medical or otherwise) as set out in Section 3, below.
- 2.8. Assessment submission deadlines are not automatically extended according to the number of days lost due to illness or personal circumstances. The length of any extension is decided by the Programme Leader based on how long it should take a student to complete the assessment, up to a maximum of five working days.
- 2.9. It is the student's responsibility to decide in advance of the assessment deadline whether they are well enough to submit the assessment or attend the live assessment event. By submitting an assessment or attending a live assessment event, students are confirming that they are well enough to complete the assessment and will not usually be able to claim that their performance in the assessment was affected by illness or other verifiable cause.

3. Mitigating Circumstances

- 3.1. If a student is aware that a short extension of five working days will not be sufficient for them to complete the work due to the severity or likely duration of their circumstances, they

should not apply for a short extension but should apply instead for consideration of mitigating circumstances.

- 3.2. A claim for mitigating circumstances cannot usually be considered for an assessment for which the student has already had the submission deadline extended.
- 3.3. Students should complete an application for mitigating circumstances when unexpected, severe and/or longer-term issues mean that they are unable to meet a deadline or attend a live assessment event or where performance in an assessment has been impaired due to the impact of their personal circumstances.
- 3.4. Applications for mitigating circumstances can only be made by completing the *Mitigating Circumstances Application Form* Appendix 2), which is available to all HE students on the [VLE HE Student Handbook](#) page. The form may be requested in an alternative format from HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk or the student's Programme Leader.
- 3.5. Students **must** provide supporting evidence confirming that their circumstances: are unforeseeable and could not have been prevented, will have or had a significant impact on their ability to study or take an assessment, and happened at the time of the assessment. Examples of the types of evidence required are set out in Section 5, below.
- 3.6. Students are strongly advised to discuss any application for mitigating circumstances with their Programme Leader or tutor **before** submitting it. This will help ensure that valid claims are accepted by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.
- 3.7. It is the student's responsibility to submit the application and supporting evidence **no later than 5 working days after the deadline or event**. If no evidence is included, the student's request will not be accepted. Students unable to submit evidence in this timeframe should refer to 3.14., below.
- 3.8. All applications for mitigating circumstances will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. The Panel members are: Dean of University Centre, HE Quality and Registrar Officer, and Programme Leader or Head of School.
- 3.9. The decision of the Panel will be communicated to the student by the HE Office (HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk) in writing within 5 working days of the receipt of the application and be reported at the Assessment Board.
- 3.10. Where the Mitigating Circumstances Panel do not accept that the student has experienced timely, severe, acute and unexpected circumstances, this ends consideration of the mitigating circumstances application. Students may request an appeal through the [HE Appeals Against Assessment Decisions Policy](#).
- 3.11. Applications for mitigating circumstances that are approved by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel will typically allow one of the following outcomes:
 - a) An extension to an assessment deadline.
 - b) Deferral of an assessment to the next appropriate opportunity.
 - c) Adjustment to the type of assessment (in line with awarding body/partner university regulations)

Where an approved mitigation request is in place, penalties for late submission of work will not apply unless the student fails to meet the extended deadline or complete on the date/in the time period specified in the mitigating circumstances decision letter.

3.12. The extended deadline, deferral or adjustment of an assessment will only take place when a pass mark or grade for the module overall has **not** been achieved. Where the student achieves a pass mark or grade for the module, then the mark will stand and the consideration of the mitigating circumstances application is ended.

3.13. An assessment may be extended, deferred or adjusted following an approved mitigating circumstances application only once per assessment attempt, except in extraordinary circumstances when the Assessment Board may exercise a reserve power to award a subsequent request provided there is suitable evidence and justification for such exceptional action.

3.14. Exceptionally, students may be unable to make a mitigating circumstances application within the given time frame referred to in 3.7. All applications made after this deadline are deemed to be late. Students must submit late applications for mitigating circumstances to the Programme Leader with a justification for their inability to submit within the established timeframe. The Panel will determine whether the justification for late submission is valid or not. If the reason for late submission is accepted as valid, then the standard mitigating circumstances process will apply. Where the Panel does not accept the justification for late submission this ends consideration of the application.

4. Deferral of Studies / Leave of Absence

4.1. Students may request a period of absence or to defer their studies through the mitigating circumstances application. They must provide independent written evidence (see Section 3.6. for examples) confirming that their circumstances require them to defer their studies.

4.2. Students must submit requests for the period of absence or deferral of studies to their Programme Leader or HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk. The request will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel as outlined in Section 3.

4.3. Requests for deferral of studies must be authorised in advance of the student's deferral or period of absence.

4.4. An approved deferral period or leave of absence will mean the student is not in attendance for the approved period of time. The amount of leave that can be approved will depend on the student's circumstances and programme of study and will follow the awarding body or partner university regulations.

5. Examples of Reasons and Evidence for Mitigating Circumstances

5.1. Examples of what may constitute circumstances leading to an application for mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Serious illness before or during a live assessment or submission deadline
- Serious accident or serious incident that prevents the student from attending a live event or submitting an assessment on time
- Bereavement or serious family illness
- Significant personal or family crises leading to acute stress

- Unexpected caring responsibilities for a family member or dependant
- Witnessing or experiencing a traumatic incident
- A crime that has had a substantial impact on the student
- Accommodation crisis, such as home becoming uninhabitable
- Serious safeguarding incident
- Worsening of an ongoing illness or disability, including mental health conditions

5.2. Examples of the types of evidence that may be submitted in support of the student's account of the reasons for their application for consideration of mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Doctor's letter or fit note (see healthcare provider/GP template in Appendix 3) covering the period in which the assessment was due to be completed or an assessment event took place. Where possible, students are encouraged to request this evidence from their healthcare professional at the time of the illness.
- Statement from a counsellor
- Hospital appointment letter
- Crime reference number
- Eviction notice
- Death certificate, *or* evidence relating to a bereavement from other sources (e.g. order of service from funeral, obituary, supporting letter from personal tutor)
- Other, usually independent, evidence

5.3. Not all personal circumstances are considered valid reasons to approve mitigating circumstances. Examples of reasons that are not valid for an application for mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Sleep in and miss a live assessment or deadline
- Holidays, house moves or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected
- Turn up at the wrong time or venue for a live event
- Poor time management
- A minor illness, such as common colds or hay fever, unless the symptoms are particularly severe
- Lost work on laptops, PCs and USB drives. This is because all work should be backed up on the College's OneDrive, which all students have access to.

6. Support Information

6.1. Students who are experiencing challenging personal or health-related circumstances at any time during their studies can access a range of support services at the College. These services are shared with students on induction and can be found on the [HE Student Handbook](#) pages of the Virtual Learning Environment.

6.2. Where students experience long-standing conditions and/or circumstances that impact their studies, they should make full use of the advice and support available from the College's support, welfare and well-being services. Disclosure of these circumstances means that the College may be able to make reasonable adjustments to support during the student's studies.

6.3. Students with an agreed support plan or those in receipt of disabled students' allowance, may submit or reference their plan to support an extension or mitigation request in accordance with its recommendations.

7. Related Policies

Relevant policies and procedures are available on the College's website here: <https://www.liv-coll.ac.uk/study-at-the-college/higher-education/he-policies-and-procedures/> and, internally, on the HE Student Handbook VLE page here: <https://my.liv-stu.co.uk/vle/course/view.php?id=309>

- HE Policy on Late Submission of Assessment
- HE Appeals against Assessment Decisions Policy

Appendix 1

SHORT EXTENSION APPLICATION FORM

Students can apply for a short extension of up to five working days. Applications can be submitted to the Programme Leader or Module Tutor up to the assessment deadline in line with the regulations set out in the [HE Policy on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances](#).

- This form is to be fully completed **prior to the formal assessment deadline and sent electronically, via your student email, to your programme leader or module tutor**. It is not possible to ask for a short extension once an assignment deadline has passed.
- Please note that a short extension may be granted only in cases of unforeseen circumstances (see [HE Policy on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances](#))
- Please use the **Mitigating Circumstances Application Form** or speak to your Programme Leader, personal tutor or email HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk if you are aware the five working days will not be sufficient or are unsure of which procedure to follow.
- If your work is late and an extension has not been granted, a penalty may be applied to the grade for your work, as specified in the [HE Policy on Late Submission of Assessment](#).

Your Person Code:		Your full name:	
Your programme title:			
Programme Leader / Module Tutor:			
The module / unit title to which the extension relates:			
Assessment title:			
Assessment due date:			
Reason for Short Extension:			
Your signature:		Date form submitted:	
For completion by Programme Leader or Module Tutor:			
Extension granted:	Y / N		
New submission date:			
Comment:			
Name:		Signature:	
Role:		Date:	

Appendix 2

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES APPLICATION FORM

***Students studying with LJMU and University of Huddersfield should use the processes approved by these universities. Check your Programme/Course handbook for full information.*

Students making a request for the consideration of mitigating circumstances must refer to the [HE Policy on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances](#).

- All students studying on Pearson (HNC/HND) and Open University (BA/BSc/FD) awarded programs will use this form. You can speak to your Programme Leader or email HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk to seek advice or for additional clarification prior to submitting the application.
- Mitigating circumstances relate to unforeseen, unexpected and unavoidable situations such as serious illness or close family bereavement, which **must** be supported by documented evidence. Examples of supporting evidence are available in the [HE Policy on Assessment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances](#).
- This form should be submitted electronically via email to your Programme Leader or directly to HEoffice@liv-coll.ac.uk, along with supporting evidence. You will receive a response from the recipient via email that will acknowledge your application. In case of any delay please inform the Head of School responsible for your programme.
- The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will decide on the approval and inform you of the outcome, usually within writing within 5 working days of receipt of application.

Your Person Code:	Your full name:
Your programme title:	
Programme Leader / Module Leader:	
The module / unit title to which the extension relates:	
This application relates to a request for: <input type="checkbox"/> An extension to an assessment submission of more than five working days <input type="checkbox"/> Absence from an assessment event (e.g. an exam or performance) <input type="checkbox"/> Deferral of studies until the next academic year <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary leave of absence during the current academic year <input type="checkbox"/> Adjustment to an assessment type <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
Assessment title:	
Assessment due date:	

Reason for mitigation request (explain why the request is being made):			
Evidence for mitigation (list the supporting evidence you are submitting and include the evidence with this application):			
Student Signature:		Date form submitted:	
For completion by Programme Leader (complete relevant information, in relation to the request):			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEW submission deadline (if applicable): • NEW exam date/time (if applicable): • Date of Deferral (if applicable): • Dates of temporary leave of absence (departure and return dates) (if applicable): • Details of recommended adjustment to assessment and awarding body approval (if applicable): • Details about 'other' requests (if applicable): 			
Signature:		Date form submitted:	
For completion by Dean of University Centre / HE Quality and Registrar Officer (on behalf of mitigating circumstances panel):			
Mitigation approved:		Y / N	
Agreed outcome and comment:			
Name:		Signature:	
Role:		Date:	

Appendix 3 – Template for Healthcare Professional/ GP

ON LETTER HEADED PAPER FROM GP / HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONER

[Date]

To Whom It May Concern,

REF – patient name / D.O.B. / address

I am writing on behalf of my patient, **[name]**, who is a student at The City of Liverpool College University Centre.

I am writing to confirm that **[name]** has consulted with me regarding **[details of ill health, symptoms and impact upon the student]**.

The circumstances affecting the student are likely to have had an impact on their ability to complete assessments during the time period from **[DATE]** to **[DATE]**.

Please could you take this into consideration with regards to this individual's ongoing studies.

Your sincerely,

[Signature of GP]