

Extenuating Circumstances Policy

Document Summary

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The College: Extenuating Circumstances Policy

1: Introduction

1.1 The College seeks to respond in an equitable and consistent way to requests from students for extenuating circumstances to be taken into consideration for matters relating to assessments, for example, extensions to deadlines or progression and award decisions. As well as the needs of the student claiming extenuating circumstances, academic integrity and fairness to other students must also be considered.

1.2 Extenuating circumstances are usually personal or health problems that we define as: 'Exceptional, unexpected, short-term events which are outside of a student's control and have a negative and direct impact upon their ability to prepare for or submit an assignment for assessment by the deadline'.

1.3 It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Lead Assessment Administrator if any extenuating circumstances might have a bearing on their assessment performance. The student must complete and submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form, along with additional relevant documentary evidence where appropriate, in order to apply for extenuating circumstances to be taken-into-account. The Extenuating Circumstances Form can be found on SharePoint. The College will process the application and decide if the application may be accepted.

1.4 Late work is not accepted unless extenuating circumstances have been agreed through the Extenuating Circumstances Panel process and an extended due date has been given to a student in writing by the Panel using the official form. The extenuating circumstances form must be submitted by the student a minimum of five working days before the due date or examination date.

1.5 Where references are made to "working days" in this policy, these are considered to be Monday to Friday (inclusive).

2: What are extenuating circumstances?

2.1 Extenuating circumstances must meet the following criteria:

- Out of your control – you could not reasonably have done anything to prevent them from happening.
- Impact – the circumstances had a direct negative impact on your ability to prepare for assessment. (This must be recorded on your extenuating circumstances documentation).
- Relevant – occurred at the time of the assessment or in the period immediately leading up to the assessment.

Non-academic

Problems with the management of the programme or with academic staff should be dealt with via the Student Complaints Procedure.

3: Circumstances that might be accepted

3.1 The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances which are likely to be accepted as extenuating circumstances:

- Bereavement - death of close relative/ significant other.
- Serious short-term illness/ accident/ hospitalisation.
- Deterioration or fluctuation of a disability or long-term health condition.
- Deterioration of a mental health condition, including stress, anxiety, or depression, where there is appropriate evidence from a healthcare professional.
- Significant adverse personal/ family circumstances.

Other significant exceptional factors for which there is evidence of stress caused e.g. victim of crime. Evidence (police crime reference, letter from hospital/doctor treating condition, social worker letter etc) of any of these is likely to be required.

4: Circumstances unlikely to be accepted

4.1 The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances which are unlikely to be accepted as extenuating circumstances:

- Minor ailments and illnesses, such as colds, coughs, sprains, headache, on the day designated for final submission of an assignment.
- Medical circumstances without supporting medical documentation or retrospective medical evidence (e.g. a doctor's note stating that the student was seen after the illness occurred).
- Medical circumstances which do not relate to the assessment period in question.
- Personal disruptions or events which could have been anticipated for example; holidays, weddings, moving house or changing a job and religious holidays or festivals which are published in advance.
- Transport problems (e.g. car breaking down, delayed public transport, strikes or traffic jams (students are expected to be at their term-time home throughout the assessment period)).
- Late disclosure of circumstances without good cause.
- Study-related circumstances, such as computer failure, printing problems, unavailability of books, photocopying problems, as the possibility of encountering these problems should be factored into the organisation of a normal student work load.
- Misreading/ confusing/ forgetting the deadline.
- General pressure of work – this is not considered to be beyond a student's control.
- Excessive demands on time or pressure of employment or family.
- Financial issues.
- Oversleeping on the day of the deadline.
- Submitting the wrong work for assessment or draft version of the work.
- Any cause where there is a reasonable case that the circumstances were foreseeable and/ or preventable.

5: Acceptable documentary evidence - circumstances of a medical nature

5.1 In the case of circumstances of a medical nature, students should provide medical evidence in the form of a doctor's letter or a hospital letter covering the period of illness. If a request for extenuating circumstances results from a medical emergency, then it is evidence of the inability to complete and/or submit, rather than the nature and degree of the condition, which is relevant.

6: Acceptable documentary evidence - circumstances of a non-medical nature

6.1 Students are required to submit appropriate documentary evidence to support extenuating circumstances requests of a non-medical nature. The City College reserves the right to check the validity of any document submitted.

6.2 If a student suffers a close bereavement, for example an immediate family member (e.g. parent/ child/ spouse), then it is essential that students show documentary evidence of some kind – even if a death certificate is not available. By the time of the deadline, the majority of the student's written work should be completed and if a student needs to travel, then the student should submit work before leaving if possible.

7: False Claims

7.1 Any attempt to submit a false claim or false documentation would be regarded by The City College as academic malpractice i.e. as an attempt to gain unfair advantage. Submitting a false claim or fraudulent documentation is considered a serious breach of academic integrity and will be investigated under the College's Academic Misconduct Procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, falsifying medical notes, fabricating evidence of bereavement, or altering official documents. The City College reserves the right to check on the validity of any document submitted in support of a claim for extenuating circumstances by contacting the third party directly.

8: Privacy Policy and General Data Protection Regulation 2018

8.1 Any student submitting an extenuating circumstances form and evidence must agree to the College holding this personal data for the purpose of considering, processing, and deciding on the application. The City College will hold this data in accordance with the College's Privacy Notice, and the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

9: Right to an External Review

9.1 If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their extenuating circumstances application following the completion of the internal review and appeals process, they have the right to request an independent review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), provided they meet the OIA's scheme rules. Details on how to contact the OIA can be found on their website.