

## **PLYMOUTH UNIVERSITY**

### **Extenuating Circumstances regulations**

#### **1. Scope and definitions**

- 1.1 This document outlines the University's regulation for instances in which a student believes there to be extenuating circumstances relating to summative assessment activity, including late submission of work, non- submission of work or non-attendance at a time specific assessment.
- 1.2 This document should be read alongside the *Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes* document, which provides detailed guidance for students on what does and does not constitute extenuating circumstances. The document also sets out the procedures that should be followed when a student believes there to be extenuating circumstances relating to assessment.
- 1.3 Extenuating circumstances may be defined as circumstances which:
  - affect a student's ability to attend or complete an assessment or a number of assessments
  - are exceptional
  - are outside a student's control
  - can be corroborated by independent evidence
  - occurred during or shortly before the assessment in question

#### **2. Policy**

- 2.1 The aim of the policy is to ensure no student is disadvantaged by circumstances beyond their control, while also maintaining academic standards.
- 2.2 All claims of extenuating circumstance will be treated with due diligence and confidentiality.
- 2.3 The University operates a 'fit-to-sit policy'. If a student believes that their academic performance will be affected by personal or health circumstances, they must submit an extenuating circumstances form, and must not sit the exam or complete / submit the assessment. If a student sits an exam or completes / submits an assessment, this will normally be taken as a declaration that they consider themselves fit to do so, and will normally count as an attempt.
- 2.4 If a student believes that their academic performance will be affected by personal or health circumstances, they must submit details to the Faculty or partner institution on the appropriate form and provide relevant corroborative evidence as soon as possible, and no later than ten working days after the assessment deadline. Claims submitted outside published deadlines will not normally be validated.
- 2.5 All claims, other than those that are self-certified, as described at para 2.6, must be accompanied by independent corroborating evidence indicating nature, timing and evidence of the problem and the effect on student's performance. Corroborating evidence should not normally be obtained retrospectively. Information on what

constitutes acceptable corroborating evidence is available in the *Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes* document.

- 2.6 Students may, exceptionally, self-certify illness for which medical advice would not normally be sought, that has a duration of 5 days or less, but is severe in its effects, preventing their engagement with assessment activity. Self-certification is allowed only once in each academic year. *The extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes* document provides further details on the circumstances in which self-certification can be accepted.
- 2.7 Valid extenuating circumstances will not result in an adjustment to a mark. Improvement to marks can only be achieved by reassessment. Details of how extenuating circumstances may be taken into account are set out in the *Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes* document.
- 2.8 The procedure for considering extenuating circumstances claims is set out in the *Extenuating circumstances policy and procedures for students on taught programmes* document.
- 2.9 Valid extenuating circumstances claims will not be carried forward to cover future assessments automatically. A student must normally submit a separate claim for each assessment affected.

### **3. Appeal against an Extenuating Circumstances decision**

- 3.1 Students have the right to appeal against the Faculty or partner institution's decision whether or not to accept an Extenuating Circumstances claim. Such appeals must be submitted within ten working days of the outcome of the extenuating circumstances claim being communicated to the student and may be made only on the following grounds:
  - a A material and demonstrable procedural irregularity in the Extenuating Circumstances process.
  - b Evidence that the Faculty or partner institution did not consider all of the information available to it at the time of its consideration of the claim.
- 3.2 Appeals will not be considered on the following grounds:
  - a Dissatisfaction with the reasonable judgment of the Faculty or partner institution in its consideration of the Extenuating Circumstances claim,
  - b. Late submission of an application for Extenuating Circumstances or late submission of evidence to support an application where there are no compelling grounds why the application was made late.
- 3.3 Appeals against the Faculty or partner institution's decision on whether or not to accept an Extenuating Circumstances claim must be made within ten working days of the decision as set out above, and will not normally be accepted during the main summer or referral appeal periods.

Appeals will be considered through the University's appeals process, available at <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/student-life/academic-regulations> .

The outcome of any appeal against a Faculty or partner institution decision in relation to Extenuating Circumstances is final and will not be considered subsequently as an appeal against the decision of the Award Assessment Board.

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