

# Academic Policies and Procedures

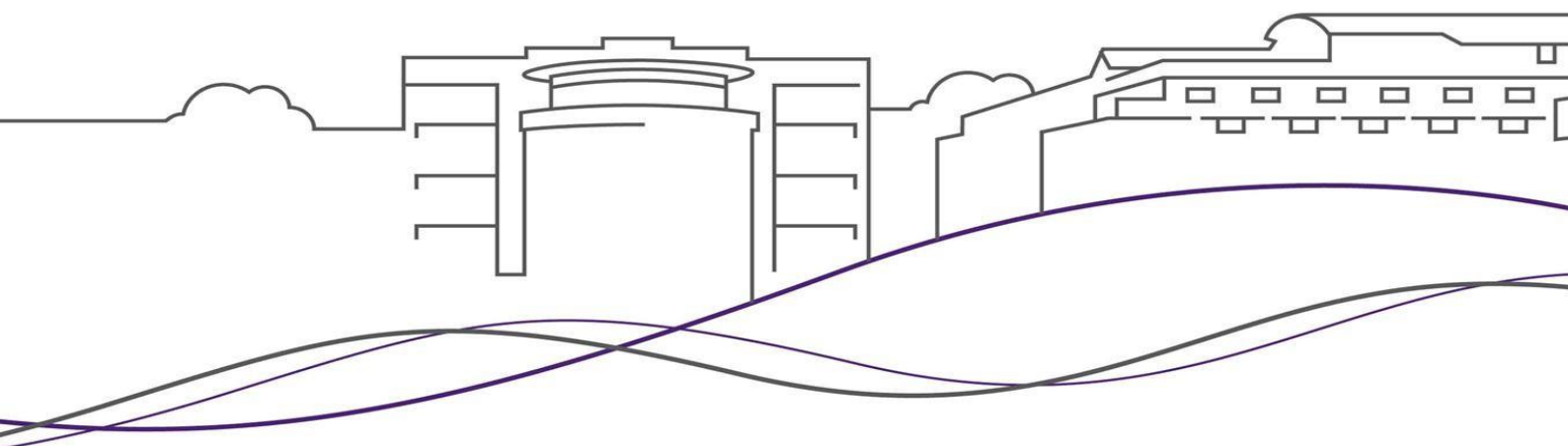


**HIGHER EDUCATION**

## **EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY AND PROCEDURES v7.0**

For SDC Awards

For UoP Awards follow this [link](#)



REVISION Revision History			
Ver	Date	Author	Description
1.0	May 17	A Wilson	Conception
2.0	May 19	A Wilson	Updated to make changes aligned to UoP ref 5 working days and fit to sit
3.1	Oct 19	A Wilson	Updated in line with NMC requirements on Jury Service
4.0	Feb 20	A Jaycock	Updated to reflect online submissions process, support services and links
5.0	June 22	A Wilson	Updated with valid and invalid examples
6.0	June 23	A Atkins	No changes required.
7.0	Aug 24	C McGowan	Change to timelines, number of self-certifications and exceptional work pressures are valid reasons.

Approval History			
Ver	Committee	Date Approved	Comments
1.0	CHEBOS	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	Approved
1.1	CHEBOS	24 <sup>th</sup> May 2018	Approved
2.0	CHEBOS	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	Approved
3.1	HEAB	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Approved
4.0	HEAB	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	Approved
5.0	HEAB	June 22	Approved
6.0	HEAB	June 23	Approved
7.0	HEAB	Aug 2024	Approved- Chairs actions

Document Approved by: HEAB	Date of Approval: Sept 2024
----------------------------	-----------------------------

Review by: HE TLA&EE Committee	Review Date: April 25
Date of Implementation: Sept 2024	CPD to support Implementation: September Briefings
Version: 7.0	Author: C McGowan

# Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	4
2	Scope of extenuating circumstances.....	6
2.1	What is an extenuating circumstance? .....	6
2.2	What might be considered valid extenuating circumstances? .....	6
2.3	What might be considered invalid extenuating circumstances? .....	7
2.4	Disability and long-term health conditions .....	9
2.4.3	Temporary, acute conditions .....	10
3	How to make a claim for extenuating circumstances .....	10
3.1	Timing and retrospective claims.....	10
3.2	Corroborating evidence and self-certification .....	11
4	Considering Extenuating Circumstance Claims.....	14
5	What will happen if you have valid extenuating circumstance .....	15
5.1	For submitting assessment slightly later than the published deadline .	15
5.2	for re-assessment of coursework at the next opportunity, without penalty.....	17
5.3	... for re-assessment of a time-specific assessment such as an examination, test, or performance, without penalty. ....	18
5.4	Referral to Study and Wellbeing Review policy and procedure .....	18
6	Relationship to other policies and sources of support .....	18
7	Appeal against an Extenuating Circumstances decision .....	19
8	Frequently asked questions .....	19
	Figure 1 Flowchart of Extenuating Circumstances process .....	21

# 1 Introduction

The aim of this extenuating circumstances policy is to ensure that no student is disadvantaged in academic assessments by circumstances beyond their control, whilst maintaining academic standards.

We encourage you to become a resilient and thriving individual and a competent and confident professional. This means that, while studying with us, we expect you to be able to deal with the inevitable ups and downs of life, including minor illnesses or personal issues, so that they don't affect your studies and, in particular, your ability to attend or complete assessments.

Sometimes, however, you'll face a serious situation which has a significant impact on your ability to attend or complete assessments. We call such situations 'extenuating circumstances', often shortened to 'ECs'. This extenuating circumstances policy describes how we can support you by taking such situations into account.

Extenuating Circumstances are circumstances which:

- have an impact on your ability to attend or complete your assessment(s) at the usual time, and
- are outside of your control or you could not reasonably have predicted.

If you are affected by extenuating circumstances, we want to support you and can take these circumstances into account by allowing you to, for example:

- submit your assessment slightly later than the published deadline, or
- not submit your assessment at the usual time, but have an opportunity to be assessed at a later date, or
- not attend a time specific assessment (such as an examination, test or presentation), but have an opportunity to be assessed at a later date

The exact outcome of a valid extenuating circumstances claim depends on whether your extenuating circumstances are self-certified or supported by evidence; the nature of the assessment to which the claim applies and, in some cases, the decision of your Award Assessment Board (which will take account of your whole academic profile). It is not possible, therefore, for this document to be definitive about your specific situation. Please note that opportunities for reassessment usually occur in the summer referral period or as an opportunity to undertake

modules in the following academic year. There is a limit to the amount of re-assessment allowed in the summer referral period; a module that is not achieved because of extenuating circumstances will count towards this limit.

University Centre South Devon (UCSD) operates a 'fit-to-sit policy' for time-specific assessments, such as examinations, tests, presentations or performances. If you think that your ability to attend or complete a time-specific assessment is being affected by extenuating circumstances, you

- must not sit or complete the time-specific assessment, and
- must submit an Extenuating Circumstances form. If you attempt a time-specific assessment, this is normally taken as your declaration that you consider yourself fit to do so.

Section 3 of this document tells you how to submit an extenuating circumstances claim and section 4 tells you what will happen if your circumstances are accepted as valid. If you think that your ability to complete coursework is being affected by extenuating circumstances, please pay particular attention to the guidance in section 5.1

### **1.1 Extenuating circumstances and groupwork**

You may need to prepare assessments as a group with students whose ability to fulfil their role in the group is affected by their own extenuating circumstances. We expect a group to have contingency plans to manage members' absence, but sometimes the impact means it is impossible for the group to attend or complete its group assessment task. In this case the member of the group affected by extenuating circumstances should submit an extenuating circumstances claim, as described in this document. Other members of the group should also each submit a claim, citing their group member's absence, through extenuating circumstances, on their own claim. Please discuss with the module leader or appropriate member of teaching staff, whether the group may be able to carry on in this situation, to avoid unnecessary re-assessment.

## 2 Scope of extenuating circumstances

### 2.1 What is an extenuating circumstance?

Extenuating Circumstances are circumstances which:

- affect your ability to attend or complete an assessment or a number of assessments,
- are exceptional, and
- are outside your control, and
- can be corroborated by independent evidence
- occurred during or shortly before the assessment in question.

### 2.2 What might be considered valid extenuating circumstances?

Examples of extenuating circumstances that are likely to be deemed valid:

#### Your own health problems

- mental health issues
- major accident or injury,
- acute conditions,
- hospitalisation (including for operations), or those affecting a significant period of study
- personal or psychological problems for which you are undergoing counselling or have been referred to a counsellor or other qualified practitioner
- cough/cold/sore throats or other minor illness, such as minor viral infection, only if it is incapacitating and at its peak at the time of the a time-specific assessment, such as an exam, test or presentation

#### Significant life events

- Pregnancy-related conditions and childbirth (including a partner or surrogate in labour) or adoption
- Bereavement causing significant impact
- Separation or divorce of yourself or your parents
- Weddings or civil partnership ceremonies of close family members
- Representing the College at national level or your country at international level, or participation in an event that is of benefit to the University Centre's national or international reputation.

#### Unexpected disruption or events

- Recent burglary, theft or serious car accident
- Jury service which cannot be deferred (if a student on a Health programme, please seek guidance from the Health Professions and Nursing team)

- For part-time students in full-time employment, exceptional pressure of work or permanent change of employment circumstances. You must submit corroborating documentary evidence (e.g. a letter from your employer) which confirms the particular circumstances, explains why they are exceptional and outside your control and formally supports your claim. If you are self-employed, you must provide independent evidence to support the claim that the pressures are exceptional and outside your control.
- Global/national events that impact you, such as terror attacks in your home city, or affecting family/friends
- Emergency or temporary measures enacted by the government such as lockdowns, limitations on movement or travel
- Serious accidents or illness affecting family/friends

#### **Assessment issues**

- Late diagnosis of, for example, dyslexia, resulting in no support or examination provision
- Unavailability of the VLE prior to the deadline for an assignment or examination where it has been confirmed by the module lead that this would have had a material effect on the preparation for an assessment
- Examination disruption (e.g. fire alarm going off; excessive noise from building works)

### **2.3 What might be considered invalid extenuating circumstances?**

It is not possible to lay down hard and fast rules of situations that will not be considered valid extenuating circumstances. The key issue is whether the claim meets the criteria at paragraph 2.1 of this document. For instance, we would not normally accept claims relating to travel delays which you might be expected to have planned for, but if the delay were exceptional, a claim would be considered.

Medical certification will not automatically be accepted in cases where it verifies a minor illness which within the regulations would not normally be deemed valid, or simply reports a claim that you felt unwell. This means that a claim supported by a medical note will be deemed invalid if it is for a minor ailment, as this would be considered not exceptional. Examples include unspecified short-term anxiety, examination stress, cough, cold, upper respiratory tract infection, sore throat, minor viral infection, unless the illness was at its peak at the time of an examination, end-of-module test or in-class test, was severe in its effect on your ability to engage with assessment, and the corroborating evidence refers to the impact on your performance.

**Examples of extenuating circumstances that are likely to be deemed invalid:**



### **Your own time management**

- You slept in or your alarm clock did not go off
- Your car broke down, or your train or bus (or equivalent) was delayed or cancelled, unless you can show that you'd made reasonable allowance for such disruption
- Misreading timetables of any kind, or time management problems, such as assessment deadlines close to each other

### **Life events**

- Family celebrations, pre-booked holidays, house moves, or similar events, in which you either have input to or control over the date, or may choose not to participate without significant negative effects
- Appointments of any kind, including legal or medical appointments, which could be rearranged
- Minor accidents or illness affecting relatives or friends, unless you are a sole carer
- Childcare problems, or problems with similar caring responsibilities which could have been anticipated
- Financial problems, including debt sanctions imposed by South Devon College. However, cases of exceptional hardship or significant sudden changes in financial circumstances since enrolment may be considered.
- Sporting, recreational or voluntary commitments, unless you are representing the College at national level or your country at international level, or participating in an event that is of benefit to the College's national or international reputation
- For full-time students, normal pressures of employment, because, by enrolling as a student, you have made a commitment to make time available to study.

### **Computer problems**

- Corrupt data or media
- Poor internet connectivity
- Printer failure
- E-Submissions of an assessment file in an incorrect format or of the wrong file by accident
- Re-submission of an assessment accidentally after the deadline
- Lack of access to IT facilities due to debt sanctions imposed by South Devon College

### **Other**

- Unspecified short-term anxiety from all sources, mild depression or examination stress
- Problems with postal or other third party delivery of work

## 2.4 Disability and long-term health conditions

### 2.4.1 Disability

If you have a disability or a long-term health condition, you should refer to HE Disability based in the Student Support Hub on the Ground Floor of the University Centre or via [HEdisability@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:HEdisability@southdevon.ac.uk).

HE Disability will normally be able to identify, provide or arrange reasonable adjustments for your situation, in the form of specific teaching and learning support. This is detailed in a Support Plan which is shared with you, the student, and can be shared with module leaders and also examination scheduling, if necessary. For the most part extenuating circumstance provision should not be required for conditions supported by HE Disability; however there may be occasions when issues arise, related to your condition, which mean you require additional consideration. On these occasions, and for circumstances unrelated to your condition, the extenuating circumstance policy will apply.

### 2.4.2 Long-term health conditions

A long-term health condition is a mental or physical condition that:

- is persistent, typically lasting for more than three months and is often lifelong
- cannot be resolved in a short time, or which will recur regardless of action, or which needs to be managed on a long-term basis
- may require you to seek help with some activities but is not otherwise disabling
- can be managed but can 'flare-up'.

If you have a long-term health condition, you should discuss any support needs with HE Disability before or soon after commencing your programme of study. It is hoped that the condition can be managed and / or you can be supported sufficiently by HE Disability.

You can tell us about your long-term health condition once a year, by completing a Long Term Health Condition Form and submitting it to the HE Faculty Office with evidence providing clear confirmation of the nature, severity, duration and effect of your condition.

If you subsequently experience a significant flare-up of your condition that affects your ability to attend or complete an assessment, you must submit an extenuating circumstances claim for the specific assessment(s), detailing how the flare-up is

affecting your ability to complete the assessment(s). However, we will additionally support you by not asking you to provide evidence, if normally required, for every claim.

Once the Long-Term Health Condition form is authorised by UCSD, you will still need to submit an extenuating circumstances claim for any assessment you cannot attend or complete because of a significant flare-up of your condition, but you will not need to resubmit evidence. You must inform HE Disability of any change in your condition, whether improvement or deterioration, so that your claim can be reassessed. The panel, which consider claims, may require further evidence from time to time and you will be contacted at the start of each academic year to review your case.

### **2.4.3 Temporary, acute conditions**

If you have a temporary, acute condition, such as a broken wrist, you should contact HE Disability as soon as possible, both in terms of providing additional support for study and to put in place an appropriate arrangement to address difficulties with assessment. Again, it is anticipated that the extenuating circumstance procedure will not be required unless other issues have arisen or the support in place did not sufficiently address the problem sufficiently, or other issues arise.

## **3 How to make a claim for extenuating circumstances**

If you wish to claim extenuating circumstances, you should complete the online application form available via the Extenuating Circumstances page on the [UCSD website](#). Figure 1 outlines the entire process.

It is important that you fill in the form accurately and completely - we can take your circumstances into account only if you give us the right information, including the dates that the circumstances occurred and of the assessments affected.

### **3.1 Timing and retrospective claims**

Extenuating circumstances claims should be submitted as soon as possible. In the case of assessed coursework, extenuating circumstances claims should be submitted as soon as possible, and normally no later than five working days after the deadline for the submission of the work, or the date of the presentation, performance, test or examination.

Claims submitted after the deadlines above will not normally be considered, unless you can demonstrate an exceptional reason why you were unable to submit your claim at the correct time, such as

- being in hospital or;
- unable to engage with the extenuating circumstances policy due to mental health issues affecting your judgement or;
- a late diagnosis of a condition which may have impacted your performance in an assessment, or your ability to engage with the extenuating circumstances at the correct time

Please note, the examples above are not an exhaustive list and you should contact [university@southdevon.ac.uk](mailto:university@southdevon.ac.uk) for further advice.

You can provide supporting evidence by attaching to your extenuating circumstances claim form or by handing to the HE Faculty Office in an envelope marked confidential. Not wanting to disclose personal information will not normally be considered as an exceptional reason for not submitting on time.

With this in mind, please note that unless there are exceptional circumstances as detailed above, late or retrospective claims for extenuating circumstance will be deemed to be invalid. Appeals against Award Assessment Board decisions based on retrospective extenuating circumstances will normally be rejected.

## **3.2 Corroborating evidence and self-certification**

### **3.2.1 Self-certification of short-lived circumstances, affecting you for five working days or fewer**

You may self-certify extenuating circumstances that affect you for five working days or fewer **once per academic year**. Self-certification would apply only to deadlines occurring within this 5 working day period, and you must submit a new claim for each assessment falling within this period. This timeframe means that you consider yourself 'fit-to-sit' and complete or attend assessments within five working days of the start of the circumstances. Self-certifying means that you must state what your extenuating circumstances are, but you do not need to provide further evidence of the circumstances themselves. As well as describing the circumstances, we will ask you to tell us, in your claim, how they have impacted your ability to attend and complete assessments.

Remember that, to be considered valid, extenuating circumstances must meet the definition that they:

- have a significant impact on your ability to attend or complete assessment(s), and
- are exceptional, and
- are outside your control, and
- occurred during or shortly before the assessment in question.

Claims that do not meet this definition (and described further in section 2 of this document) will be considered invalid.

If considered valid, your self-certified extenuating circumstances claim is likely to result in you having:

- an extension of no more than five working days for a coursework assessment in a taught module, or
- for any other type of assessment, an opportunity for re-assessment at the next opportunity, without penalty.

A self-certified extenuating circumstances claim will never let you avoid submitting any assessment, even if this accounts for a small proportion of a module's overall mark.

If you are not able to complete your coursework assessment in a taught module within the extended deadline of five working days, and you wish us to continue considering your extenuating circumstances claim, we will require supporting evidence - further details can be found in section 3.2.2 of this document.

We will refer you to the [Study and Wellbeing Review Procedure](#) if you submit three extenuating circumstances claims in a six-month period, or if the number or pattern of your extenuating circumstances claims causes concern at any time. If your programme has a 'Fitness to Practise' requirement, we will also refer you to the [Fitness to Practise procedure](#). The [academic offences procedure](#) will be invoked if an extenuating circumstances claim is thought to be fraudulent.

### **3.4.2 Extenuating circumstances that affect you for more than five working days**

Unless a Long-Term Health Condition form has been validated (see paragraph 2.4.2 above), all claims for extenuating circumstances that affect you for more than five working days must be supported by independent, reliable documentary evidence that confirms the nature and timing of the circumstances. We will also ask you to tell us, in your claim, how the circumstances have impacted your ability to attend or complete assessments.

UCSD reserves the right to take such steps as are deemed necessary to verify the evidence submitted without prior notification. Where we are unable to authenticate the material to its satisfaction, the claim may not be accepted. Evidence from family and/or friends will not be accepted. Independent evidence used to corroborate extenuating circumstances should meet the following standards. The evidence should:

- be written by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent to the student.
- be 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;
- confirming the nature and timing of the circumstances and that they were witnessed on the relevant date as opposed to being reported retrospectively;
- be in English. It is the student's responsibility to provide supporting documentation and any translation should be undertaken by an accredited translator (e.g. be a member of the Association of Translation Companies <http://www.atc.org.uk/index.html>);
- be original, if in hard copy - copies will be accepted only in exceptional circumstances.

You should scan your documents and attach them to your claim form. It is important that any evidence you submit must be unaltered. It will be deemed unacceptable if it has been amended for any reason. Please be aware, we may need to take steps to verify your evidence and may not notify you beforehand. If the evidence cannot be authenticated to our satisfaction, it may be deemed unacceptable.

Examples of corroborating evidence likely to be acceptable include:

- A medical note confirming a mental or physical health condition, provided at the time when you were suffering from that condition. Your note must be from a registered healthcare professional in good standing, such as a GP or consultant, a specialist nurse involved in your care, a psychologist, or any other recognised healthcare professional.
- A letter from a counsellor, such as the HE Counsellor or a qualified counsellor working outside of UCSD and the College, confirming a personal, psychological or emotional problem for which you have been receiving counselling. Please note that the HE Counsellor will only provide a letter of support if it has knowledge of your circumstances, and you were a client of the service during the relevant period. No student would be able to see a counsellor just in order to obtain an extenuating circumstances letter.
- An official document such as a police report including a police reference number, court summons or other legal document
- A letter from a solicitor, social worker or other official agency

- An insurance claim document supported by a letter from the insurance company.
- If you are making a claim based on exceptional pressures in your employment, a letter from your employer that confirms the particular circumstances, explains why they are exceptional and outside your control and formally supports your claim. If you are self-employed, you must provide independent evidence to support the claim that the pressures are exceptional and outside your control.
- We may also accept evidence provided by UCSD staff, such as your personal tutor, academic staff closely involved in your pastoral care, or member of the Student Support Hub. This may be for reasons which are difficult to obtain independent evidence for, such as a family bereavement.

Please be aware that if you provide evidence which simply verifies a report you made to the person providing the evidence that you were experiencing a situation which impacted you, it will not normally be accepted.

If considered valid, your extenuating circumstances, supported by independent corroborating evidence, claim is likely to result in you having:

- an extension of no more than ten working days for coursework assessment in a taught module, or
- for any other type of assessment, an opportunity for re-assessment at the next opportunity, without penalty

## 4 Considering Extenuating Circumstance Claims

Each extenuating circumstance claim will be considered individually and all students will be treated fairly and equitably. Decisions on whether to approve the claim will be based on whether:

- The claim was submitted on time and if not, whether evidence to demonstrate an exceptional reason for considering the claim late has been provided
- The circumstances meet the criteria of
  - Having an impact on your ability to attend or completed assessment(s) at the published/correct/usual time, and
  - Being outside of your control or you could not have reasonable predicted
- Any evidence (if required) is acceptable

Please be aware that this individual consideration of students' circumstances means that a claim approved for one student will not necessarily be approved, or lead to the same outcome, as that for another student.

Forms are considered as a matter of priority and the majority are considered soon after submission. You will be informed of the outcome by email (sent to your College email address). If the claim is deemed invalid you will receive an explanation for this decision.

## **5 What will happen if you have valid extenuating circumstance**

Valid extenuating circumstances do not normally change your grade, but allow you to complete or attend assessments at a time when you are not affected by the extenuating circumstances. Most often they allow you to, for example,

- submit assessment slightly later than the published deadline, or
- not submit an assessment now, but have an opportunity for re-assessment at the next opportunity, without penalty, or
- not attend a time specific assessment, such as an examination, test, presentation or performance, but have an opportunity for reassessment at the next opportunity, without penalty

Exactly what opportunities for re-assessment you have, following a claim for extenuating circumstances, depends on the extent of their impact on your academic profile, and your performance in other modules, and is decided by the Award Assessment Board. Please note that opportunities for re-assessment usually occur in the summer referral period or as an opportunity to undertake modules in the following academic year. There is a limit to the amount of reassessment allowed in the summer referral period; a module that is not achieved because of extenuating circumstances will count towards this limit.

### **5.1 For submitting assessment slightly later than the published deadline**

**If you are making an extenuating circumstances claim about coursework, do not wait for a decision on your claim before submitting your work. Please submit the final version of your work within 5 working days of the original deadline (for self-certified extenuating circumstances) or 10 working days of the original deadline (for all other extenuating circumstances).**



For valid, self-certified extenuating circumstances, you will normally be allowed a maximum of 5 days working days from the original deadline to submit your assessment.

For valid, evidenced extenuating circumstances for taught modules, you will normally be allowed a maximum of 10 working days from the original deadline to submit your assessment.

The extended deadline may vary with the period that academic staff teaching on the module allow for return of work and/or feedback to students, or because there is insufficient time to mark the work before a Subject Assessment Panel or Award Assessment Board. In particular, an extended deadline in the summer referral period will be no more than five days. You will be advised of the extended deadline by email. You can submit your coursework earlier than the date indicated by your extended submission deadline.

If you have already submitted work, a penalty for late submission may be waived, or you may submit another version of your work. The regulations on Late submission of Coursework are available from [this link](#) and the regulations should be read alongside with these procedures.

### **5.1.1...Working days, extended deadlines and vacation periods**

A working day is defined as a day on which the University Centre is open, so includes student vacation periods but excludes weekends, Bank Holidays and other times that the University Centre is closed, such as the period between Christmas and New Year. An extended deadline may, therefore, fall in the vacation period. Please check with the HE Faculty Office to find out exactly which days the University Centre is closed this year.

If the extended deadline is in term-time and you have been unable to meet the extended deadline due to Extenuating Circumstances, you must submit a further Extenuating Circumstances claim. As noted in section 3.2.1 above, if you have self-certified your claim for extenuating circumstances, and are not able to complete your assessment within the extended deadline of five working days and you wish us to continue considering your extenuating circumstances claim, we will require supporting evidence for your claim.

However, if the extended deadline is in the vacation period and you are unable to meet the extended deadline, for any reason, you do not need to submit further extenuating circumstances claims and your claim will be made valid for re-assessment, as described in section 5.2 below. The difference in treatment of

extended deadlines that fall in term-time and in vacation periods is because we do not require students to do academic work in vacations. This applies equally to claims that are self-certified and those that are supported by evidence. It is the only situation in which self-certified extenuating circumstances, for coursework submissions, will lead to a re-assessment opportunity without penalty. However, as described in section 5.2 below, deciding not to meet an extended deadline that falls in the vacation period may have implications for your progression or graduation and you should seek advice about this from your Faculty Office or partner institution.

## **5.2 for re-assessment of coursework at the next opportunity, without penalty**

If an extension is not possible, or if you are not able to submit work within the **extended** deadline, for valid extenuating circumstances or because the extended deadline falls in the vacation period and you are unable to meet it, your claim may be made valid for non-submission of work. In this case, a zero mark will be included in your profile and your extenuating circumstances will be forwarded to the Award Assessment Board which will make a decision on what action to take. Normally the Board will allow re-assessment at the next opportunity as the same attempt as the submission for which your extenuating circumstances are valid. This may be during the summer referral period or as a repeat of the whole module in the following academic year.

Where you are given a re-assessment opportunity as a result of valid extenuating circumstances, the re-assessment will include only the component which has not been submitted and for which you have a valid claim. Guidance on what constitutes a component of an assessment is available on the regulations section of [UCSD's website, under 'definition of terms'](#).

UCSD may waive the zero mark and re-calculate the module mark from the remainder of the assessment, provided that the assessment covered by extenuating circumstances contributes 25% or less of the overall module mark, and the module's learning outcomes can be met from the remainder of the assessment. This decision is at the discretion of the Module Leader. Due to the nature of some programmes, particularly those that involve professional practice, this option may not be allowed.

### **5.3 ... for re-assessment of a time-specific assessment such as an examination, test, or performance, without penalty.**

A zero mark will be included in your profile and your extenuating circumstances will be forwarded to the Award Assessment Board which will make a decision on what action to take. Normally the Board will allow re-assessment as the same attempt as the assessment for which your extenuating circumstances are valid. This may be during the summer referral period or as a repeat of the whole module in the following academic year.

In the particular situation that the examination, test or other time-specific assessment covered by extenuating circumstances contributes 25% or less of the overall module mark and the module's learning outcomes can be met from the remainder of the assessment, the module leader may waive a zero mark and recalculate the module mark from the remainder of the assessment. This decision is at the discretion of the Module Leader and is never applied for self-certified extenuating circumstances. Due to the nature of some programmes, particularly those that involve professional practice, this option may not be allowed.

### **5.4 Referral to Study and Wellbeing Review policy and procedure**

We will refer you to the [Study and Wellbeing Review Policy and Procedure](#) if you submit three extenuating circumstances claims in a six-month period, or if the number or pattern of your extenuating circumstances claims causes concern at any time. If your programme has a 'Fitness to Practise' requirement, we will also refer you to the [Fitness to Practise procedure](#). The [academic offences procedure](#) will be invoked if an extenuating circumstances claim is thought to be fraudulent. The Study and Wellbeing Review Policy and Procedure may lead to considering your support needs or recommending alternative forms of assessment and may include a Student Support meeting. If your extenuating circumstances or health problems prevent you from making academic progress, the Award Assessment Board may, subject to the Study and Wellbeing Review Procedure, require you to interrupt or withdraw from the programme of study.

## **6 Relationship to other policies and sources of support**

South Devon College has a range of other policies and procedures that may be relevant in a specific situation. Most are available from the University Centre South Devon's website: <https://www.ucsd.ac.uk/student-life/essential-information/academic-regulations-and-procedures-and-policies/>. The Study and Wellbeing Review Policy and Procedure on this page is particularly important.

## 7 Appeal against an Extenuating Circumstances decision

You have the right to appeal against UCSD'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 you and may be made only on the following grounds:

- A material and demonstrable procedural irregularity in the Extenuating Circumstances process.
- Evidence that UCSD did not consider all of the information available to it at the time of its consideration of the claim.

Appeals will not be considered on the following grounds:

- Dissatisfaction with the reasonable judgment of UCSD in its consideration of the Extenuating Circumstances claim,
- Late submission of an application for Extenuating Circumstances or late submission of evidence to support an application where there are no compelling grounds for why the application was made late.

Appeals against the College'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 College's appeals process, available at <https://www.ucsd.ac.uk/student-life/essential-information/academic-regulations-and-procedures-and-policies/>

The outcome of any appeal against the College's 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.

## 8 Frequently asked questions

**What do I do if I feel that my performance in coursework will be affected by extenuating circumstances?**

UCSD permits students to submit improved versions of coursework up to the submission deadline. If you do not submit the final version of your work, and your extenuating circumstances are not deemed valid, the version of your work

submitted most recently will be treated as the submission. If your extenuating circumstances are deemed valid, you will have an opportunity for resubmission or re-assessment, as described in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2.

**What do I do if I feel my performance in an exam, test or time-specific assessment will be affected by extenuating circumstances?**

The College operates a fit-to-sit policy. If you feel unwell or that your performance is likely to be affected because of medical or personal difficulties you should not sit an exam, test or time-specific assessment. If you take an exam knowing you are unwell, you will not normally be able to successfully claim extenuating circumstances.

**What do I do if I become unwell during an exam, test or time-specific assessment?**

If you are well and sit an exam but you unexpectedly become ill during the exam and are unable to continue, you will be able to submit an extenuating circumstance claim for non-attendance as above. You should report your illness to the invigilator before leaving the exam room, so that the invigilator's report can be used to corroborate any subsequent extenuating circumstances claim.

**What do I do if I am affected by extenuating circumstances during the Referral period?**

If you are required to undertake referred assessments during the summer period and are affected by extenuating circumstances during this time, you must submit a new claim form to cover this period. In this case you should be prepared for the Referred Award Assessment Board to decide that referred modules not achieved by the end of the academic year must be retaken during the next academic year. This may mean you do not progress to the next stage of your programme or graduate until the end of the next academic year. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

**Figure 1 Flowchart of Extenuating Circumstances process**

