

Extenuating Circumstances

What are Extenuating Circumstances?

There may be difficult circumstances in your life that affect your ability to meet an assessment deadline or affect your performance in assessment. These are known as Extenuating Circumstances or 'ECs'. Extenuating Circumstances are defined as unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond your control.

As a student, it is your responsibility to make known any special circumstances which have affected the production of your work. Where appropriate, these circumstances can be taken into account by the Exam Board when making its decision.

Extenuating Circumstances Categories

The University has two categories of EC claims:

- A: **Acceptable** reasons for claim with appropriate evidence
- B: Reasons that the University would normally consider **unacceptable**

How to make a claim

EC Claim Form

You can find the Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form on the College Website:

<http://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/higher-education-policies>

You must make known any special circumstances affecting your assessment by completing the Extenuating Circumstances Claim Form and submitting it to HEextcircs@southessex.ac.uk. You will also need to submit supporting evidence, such as medical certificates, with your form - the table on pages 5-6 of this guide tells you what evidence we need to process your claim. **Applications without acceptable evidence will always be rejected.**

Handing in your work

If you are intending to apply for Extenuating Circumstances, you should submit your work as close to the agreed deadline as possible. If you feel you would benefit from additional time to complete work to compensate for your recognised ECs, an approved EC can permit a late submission of up to 14 calendar days to be accepted and marked without penalty.

Deadline for making a claim

Your claim and evidence should be submitted to HE Extenuating Team as soon as possible (at the very latest: two weeks before your Exam Board meeting). The later an EC is submitted, the less time there is for it to be processed and approved. It is generally far easier to gather appropriate evidence at the time of the Circumstances, than it is at a later date.

Supporting Evidence

The Extenuating Circumstances table on pages 5 and 6 tells you what evidence is required to support your claim. If you have not provided the appropriate evidence the College will contact you and give you a deadline date to provide the evidence required. **Please note that claims that do not have the required evidence by the deadline date will be rejected.**

If you are providing evidence from a medical practitioner the evidence must clearly relate to the period of assessment for which you are claiming. Medical practitioners should be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and a list is available at <http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/register/LRMP.asp>. The University has produced a guidance document (available on the EC website via the above link) which you can take to a registered medical practitioner to explain the evidence requirements.

Help and Support

You can find the full Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and Guidance on the website <http://www.southessex.ac.uk/higher-education/higher-education-policies>

The College offers advice and support in completing your application:

HE Student Services
HE Support Office
01702 220475/220696
hesupport@southessex.ac.uk
3rd Floor, The Forum,
Southend Campus

Higher Education Student Services Team can help if you have any questions regarding your request for Extenuating Circumstances. HE Student Services can provide advice, guidance and support in completing the form and planning your time out. A counselling service is also available for you to discuss and reflect on concerns that are affecting you.

What Happens Next?

There are two stages to the acceptance process. The first stage is to establish whether the Extenuating Circumstances claim meets the University criteria. This is carried out by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. Students will receive notification of whether the claim has been validated or rejected. This will usually be within 24 calendar days of handing your claim form in. If the claim has been validated, the Exam Board will then consider how the circumstances may have affected your performance.

Exam Board Decisions for Extenuating Circumstances

If the claim has been validated, the Exam Board will consider how the circumstances may have affected your performance. If the Board feels that there has been a material impact on your performance, they can choose from the following options:

Confirm original grade

If the Exam Board feels that there has been no material impact on your performance, the Exam Board will normally confirm the original unit Letter Grade awarded by the examiners.

Deferral

The Exam Board may offer you a 'deferral' i.e. another opportunity to submit the work as if for the first time. The Board disregards the original result and can choose from the full range of exam board decisions and the result will not be 'capped' in any way.

Deferrals might include a **resubmission** (without tuition) or a **repeat** (with attendance and tuition) depending on the amount of the programme that you have missed. The grade for the unit will be marked 'as if for the first time' and without any penalty.

Uncapped late submissions

If you have submitted the work after the published deadline for valid reasons, the Exam Board may decide to condone the late submission and the work will be marked as normal. The Exam Board will confirm the unit Letter Grade achieved by the piece of work, without any cap on the mark.

Adjust unit grade by 1 increment

If assessment has been submitted within the deadline then and the Exam Board identifies a significant, material difference between the grade awarded in the unit concerned and the grades achieved in other units, they may decide to adjust the unit Letter Grade by a **maximum of 1 increment** i.e. B to B+ or C+ to B-.

**Performance
affected by
more than 1
increment**

If assessment has been submitted within the deadline and In exceptional circumstances, the Board may feel that your performance has been affected to a greater degree. If this is the case, the Board may adjust the unit letter grade by one increment and also offer you a deferral opportunity i.e. the chance to resubmit the work to a later deadline as if for the first time and without penalty. You have the right to refuse the deferral opportunity and accept the unit adjustment of one increment. In this case you do not need to notify the College of your decision and the original exam board decision will stand.

If you do decide to accept the deferral opportunity, you must notify the College within 2 weeks of the publication of results. The Programme Team will then set you a deferral brief and a deadline for submission. Where you pass the deferral, you will receive the full, uncapped grade. If you fail or fail to submit the deferral work, the grade from your first attempt will be used to calculate your progression/ classification.

Extenuating Circumstances Guidance

Please note that, if you are providing evidence from a medical practitioner, the evidence must clearly relate to the period of assessment for which you are claiming. Medical practitioners should be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and a list is available at <http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/register/LRMP.asp> The University has produced a guidance document which you can take to a registered medical practitioner to explain the evidence requirements <http://www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/academic-regulations/course-regulations/6-extenuating-circumstances/>

Reason for Claiming	Category A: Acceptable Grounds	Evidence Required	Category B: Unacceptable Grounds
Serious medical condition	Serious personal injury, medical condition or mental health condition preventing attendance, completion of assessment or submission of work	Written evidence from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	Ongoing conditions (including disabilities, learning difficulties or mental health conditions) Please contact the Disability Service for advice if you have an ongoing condition. Minor illnesses or injuries (such as colds, headaches, hayfever)
	Serious injury or illness to child, partner or close relative	Written evidence from patient's registered medical practitioner with evidence of relationship to student. AND/OR Written evidence of impact on claimant from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	
	Serious worsening or acute episode of an ongoing medical condition, mental health condition or disability	Written evidence from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service which clearly demonstrates a serious worsening or acute episode of an ongoing condition	
Bereavement	Death of parent, (including step-parents and legal guardian) child, siblings, partner	Death Certificate or written evidence from a professional such as Undertaker, Coroner or Registrar OR Written evidence of impact on claimant from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	
	Death of close relative or friend	Written evidence of impact to claimant from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	
Trauma	Victim of a violent crime (e.g. rape, assault, domestic violence)	Written evidence from the Police OR	Minor crime

		Written evidence of impact on claimant from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	Financial problems or employment difficulties Accommodation problems or house moves
	Victim of theft or burglary (including theft of work required for assessment)	Written evidence from Police or other investigating authority, Fire Service or University Department (e.g Estates)	General domestic / family problems Assessment / Exam stress
	Direct experience of terrorist incident or natural disaster		
	Major fire in residence		
	Family breakdown (such as divorce)	Written evidence of impact on claimant from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	
Caring responsibilities	Unexpected caring responsibilities caused by sudden serious illness or worsening of ongoing medical condition to child, partner or close relative	Written evidence from patient's registered medical practitioner with evidence of relationship to student. AND/OR Written evidence of impact on claimant from a registered medical practitioner or the University Counselling and Health Advice Service	Ongoing caring responsibilities Caring responsibilities for minor illnesses, accidents or injuries
Court attendance	Jury Service or attendance at court or tribunal as a witness, defendant or plaintiff	Official correspondence from Court or Tribunal Authority	Supporting friend or relative at Court or Tribunal
Miscellaneous	Serious disruption caused by terrorist incident or natural disaster	Evidence of serious disruption to travel or other plans preventing attendance at or completion of assessment or submission of work	Any circumstances which have not clearly impacted on academic performance or do not clearly relate to the timing of the assessment Visa problems Failing of IT or technical equipment Minor private or public transport failure, holidays or booked travel arrangements