

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING VALIDITY OF CLAIMS OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

The University distinguishes between two kinds of extenuating circumstances that might impair a student's demonstration of their ability in an assessment.

The first kind of circumstance is an acute event that typically prevents a student being in a particular place at a particular time, e.g. to attend an examination or to submit on the due date coursework that the student has already completed. This would include something that briefly impaired performance, e.g. the onset of a migraine during an examination. In the following tables this type of circumstance is called type **A (Acute)**.

The second kind of circumstance is a chronic circumstance that typically prevents a student from producing an assessment artefact over a period of time. This is most likely to affect assessment artefacts in which individual students decide exactly how much time they will devote to completion of the artefact and exactly when that will be, although the deadline date for completion will normally be fixed, e.g. a coursework essay. However, it would include, for example, an illness that prevented a student from devoting any time to revision for examinations. In the following tables this type of circumstance is called type **C (Chronic)**. Where a student feels that their extenuating circumstances have prevented them from producing the relevant coursework or revising for an examination, the student should not sit the examination or submit the coursework on time. If the student does sit the examination or submit the coursework on time, they are stating that they are well enough to do so and cannot submit an extenuating circumstances form after doing so.

Both these types of circumstance relate to assessment. If a student's circumstances have impaired their learning so they are unable to demonstrate their capabilities, then they should request a suspension of studies as described in the Guidelines for Students and resume when they are able to do so. These guidelines are available separately on the registry web site and as **Appendix 1** to the Examination and Assessment Regulations.

In Table 1, the first column describes the kind of circumstance that an Extenuating Circumstances Officer could consider. The second column defines the type of circumstance and the third column states the type of evidence an Extenuating Circumstances Officer will accept in support of such a claim. **In the absence of appropriate evidence, as described in this Appendix, the Officer will find the circumstances to be Not Valid.**

The key to the letters assigned to types of evidence in Table 1 can be found in Table 2.

Where codes are included within brackets it means that any one of the types of evidence listed within the brackets is acceptable.

TABLE 1 – EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND APPROPRIATE EVIDENCE

Criteria		Type	Appropriate Evidence
1	<p>Acute illness or injury (less than five working days)</p> <p>Acute illness likely to have incapacitated the student on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted OR</p> <p>Acute incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition which was likely to have incapacitated the student to a greater extent than that to which she/he is normally accustomed on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted OR</p> <p>A personal injury to the student likely to have incapacitated the student on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted.</p>	A	A + (B or D or F)
2	<p>Extended illness or injury (more than 5 working days)</p> <p>Illness likely to have incapacitated the student during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact OR</p> <p>Brief incident or exacerbation of a long term or chronic condition which was likely to have incapacitated the student to a greater extent than that to which she/he is normally accustomed during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact OR</p> <p>A personal injury to the student likely to have incapacitated the student during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	C	A + B
3	<p>Illness of another person</p> <p>Acute illness, injury, or incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition, affecting a person or persons which required the close and frequent attention of the student on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, and where no other person might reasonably be expected to have supplied that attention OR</p> <p>Acute illness, injury, or incident or exacerbation of long term or chronic condition, affecting a person or persons who require the close and frequent attention of the student, and where no other person might reasonably be expected to have supplied that attention, during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	<p>A</p> <p>C</p>	<p>A + (C or F) or A only</p> <p>If only A, this will be cross-referenced to the student's history in this regard, and the validity of such evidence will lessen if used more than once.</p> <p>A + (C or F)</p>

Criteria		Type	Appropriate Evidence
4	<p>Bereavement</p> <p>Death of member of family, partner, or close friend on or close to the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted or during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	A or C	A + (E or F or G)
5	<p>Domestic and/or Personal Problems</p> <p>Significant problems in the student's domestic or personal circumstances of a nature likely to have prevented the student's attendance on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or to have affected his or her performance during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	A or C	A + (F or G)
6	<p>Court Attendance</p> <p>Jury Service, or attendance at Court or a Tribunal as a witness, defendant or plaintiff, on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	A or C	A + H
7	<p>Work Commitment</p> <p>Student must be studying part-time, by distance learning or be a postgraduate student who has completed the taught element of the course and is writing up their dissertation AND there must be unanticipated and/or non-negotiable work commitment as a result of which, either the student was unable to attend on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or the student was unable to give time to the production of the assessment artefact during the relevant period.</p>	A or C	A + J
8	<p>Representing County or Country at Sport</p> <p>Student selected to represent country or county at sporting event which required absence from the University on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or for at least five consecutive working days during the period she/he might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.</p>	A or C	A + L
9	<p>Religious Observance</p> <p>Observance of the student's religion as a result of which she/he is unable to attend the University at the date and time the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, and no alternative and reasonable arrangements had been agreed by the University.</p>	A	A + M

Criteria		Type	Appropriate Evidence
10	Active Exercise of Citizenship An unanticipated and/or non-negotiable commitment to duties associated with an elected office, membership of a voluntary organisation, or service with Reserve Forces, as a result of which, either the student was unable to attend on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or the student was unable to give time to the production of the assessment artefact during the relevant period.	A or C	A + J
11	Holidays A holiday that had been booked before the initial offer of a place on the course was accepted and which caused the student to be absent from the University on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, or for at least five consecutive working days during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.	A or C	A + P
12	Transport Difficulties Difficulties with public or personal transport which prevented attendance on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken or submitted, that could not reasonably have been anticipated, and such that sufficient time was not available to allow for alternative arrangements reasonably to be made.	A	R + S
13	Criminal Activity The student was the victim of a crime that has been reported to the appropriate authority for investigation and that crime was likely <u>either</u> to have prevented the student's attendance on the date the assessment artefact was due to be undertaken, <u>or</u> to have prevented the student from submitting the assessment artefact on the due date, <u>or</u> to have affected his or her performance during the period the student might reasonably have been expected to give time to the production of the assessment artefact.	A or C	A + N
14	Unplanned absence arising from maternity, paternity or adoption leave.	A or C	A + (B or D or F) or A only
15	Computing Difficulties Normally there are no valid extenuating circumstances under this category. Should the University computer network or specialist software that is only available through the University become unavailable for a substantial period of time, guidance will be given to all affected students as to what measures will be put in place.		



Criteria		Type	Appropriate Evidence
16	Financial Difficulties No extenuating circumstance that might fall under this category can be accepted as valid.		
17	Other Exceptional extenuating circumstances that do not fall under any of the criteria defined above.	A or C	A + Q

Table 2 – Types of Evidence	
A	The student's statement of case.
B	Medical Certificate signed while the illness or incident was affecting the student, or other medical evidence such as copies of prescriptions, certificates of attendance at surgery or hospital, a doctor's opinion given after receiving the student's permission to release information.
C	Medical Certificate signed while the illness or incident was affecting the other person, or other medical evidence, together with a statement by the student about the nature of the relationship, explaining why their personal attention was necessary and why no other person could reasonably be expected to have provided attention.
D	The student's self-certification of illness or incapacity. This type of evidence may be provided on Self-Certification stationery or may take the form of a signed and dated statement by the student. It must be submitted as soon as possible after the affected assessment date. Repeat use of self-certification will mean the University will ask your permission to speak to your doctor for more information about your health and may mean that the evidence is not found to be acceptable.
E	Death Certificate.
F	Corroboration from a person with whom the student has a professional, not a personal, relationship. This may include the student's personal tutor.
G	Corroboration by a member of the student's family.
H	Official correspondence from the Court or Tribunal Authority.
J	Letter of corroboration (that must explain why the commitment was non-negotiable and/or unanticipated) signed by the student's line manager or supervisor, or by an appropriately senior and authorised representative of the relevant organisation.
L	Letter from the appropriate sporting association or authority that explained why the absence was necessary.
M	Confirmation from the University Chaplains that the religious observance is a reasonable one for a member of the faith AND a statement from the student explaining why the observance in question prevented their attendance and explaining what attempts had been made to agree a reasonable alternative arrangement.
N	Corroboration of the reported crime from the Police or other investigating authority.
P	Appropriate documentary evidence that corroborated both the timing of the booking of the holiday and its duration.
Q	The Extenuating Circumstances Officer shall seek advice from the Academic Registrar. Such advice shall include questions of what evidence would be appropriate to support the exercise of Chair's action in determining whether such extenuating circumstances can be valid.
R	Statement from the student that explains the nature of the difficulty and why the difficulty could not reasonably have been anticipated and why alternative arrangements could not reasonably have been made.
S	Corroboration from a relevant and appropriate source.