


<b>Hull College Group: Procedure</b> <b>Agenda item 9.2 – SE20/05/08</b>	<b>Procedure Status:</b> <b>Approved</b>	
<b>Title: Procedure for Requesting Extenuating Circumstances/Mitigation</b>	<b>Ref: HE1.23</b>	
<b>Key Policy supporting student assessment</b>		

## 1. Procedure introduction

This procedure applies to any student who may have experienced exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond their control which may have had a serious and adverse effect upon their assessed work. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Hull College Group Higher Academic Regulations and relevant awarding body regulations.

## 2. Responsibility and implementation

Requests for consideration of extenuating circumstances/mitigation can be considered in respect of:

- Inability to submit assessed work by the required submission date;
- Failure to submit assessed work;
- Absence from examinations or other scheduled assessments;
- Poor performance affected by circumstances outside the student's control.

### Role of the student


It is the student's responsibility to:

- Submit his/her application using the on-line application process within the required timescales;
- Provide relevant information (e.g. modules affected; submission dates; explanation of the circumstances)
- Provide supporting independent, documentary medical or other relevant evidence within 10 working days from the date of application.
- Provide a full and detailed account of the reasons why mitigation could be granted.

### Role of the Programme Leader

It is the Programme Leader's responsibility to:

- Ensure students receive accurate guidance and information from regarding submission deadlines and associated processes relating to assessment and mitigation and that these are incorporated within relevant programme documentation including the Student Handbook.
- Ensure students are made aware of the on-line application process for extenuating circumstances/mitigation;
- Ensure students are made aware of the location to which they should submit mitigation evidence;
- Provide students with advance notice of the dates by which requests for extenuating circumstances should be submitted to HE Quality & Registry;
- Ensure confidentiality.

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#### HE Quality & Registry

- It is the HE Quality & Registry responsibility to:
- Schedule and inform the Programme Team of the dates of Mitigation Panels and submission dates for extenuating circumstances.
- Ensure that information on the regulations, procedures and guidance are available and accessible to students and updated on a regular basis.
- Inform the Programme Teams of the location to which mitigation evidence should be submitted.
- Maintain confidentiality;
- Inform the student of the outcome of the Mitigation Panel and relevant submission dates.
- Store documentary records of the requests for Mitigation/extenuating circumstances.

### 3. Procedure details

#### 3.1 Programme Extension

It is the responsibility of a student to attend examinations and submit coursework by the required deadline and to submit any request for an extension or application for Mitigation within the required deadline.

A student can request an initial extension for coursework submissions or scheduled assessments from their Programme Leader. The Programme Leader may grant an initial extension which varies from 5-10 working days depending on the requirements of the relevant body. **N.B. This period has been extended to 15 working days' initial extension during COVID-19 lockdown.** The College considers that weekdays and holidays are normal working days but not Saturdays, Sundays or Bank Holidays.


Any student who is unable to submit coursework within the required deadline should initially apply for an extension. Such extensions should be submitted for consideration by the relevant Programme Leader who is empowered to grant an extension up to 10 working days, providing there is sufficient and supported evidence for an extension. **N.B. This extension is up to 15 working days during COVID-19 lockdown.**

Any student who fails to submit their assessment by the original submission date or the extended deadline authorised by the Programme Leader will be subject to the imposition of a penalty/non-submission.

#### 3.2 Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances by the Mitigation Panel

HE Quality & Registry will schedule Mitigation Panels to take place prior to the relevant meeting of the Board of Examiners.

The Mitigation Panel will consider the application based on the supporting evidence and

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circumstances cited for the purpose of making a recommendation to the Board of Examiners.

The Mitigation Panel may only accept supporting documentary evidence from an independent practitioner qualified to make an appropriate judgment in support of the claim. For example, a letter or Medical Certificate from the relevant medical practitioner responsible for the diagnosis and/or who is providing supervision or treatment would provide the required level of evidence. In the case of bereavement, a copy of the death certificate is normally required as evidence.


The Mitigation Panel may accept the following circumstances in support of a claim for mitigation:

- i) A diagnosed medical illness or condition that prevented the student from submitting an assessment or presenting him/herself for examination at the required time.
- ii) A diagnosed medical illness or condition that would have impaired the student's performance or preparation for an examination and/or submission for assessment.
- iii) Being the victim of a crime involving personal injury or where any consequent distress would have prevented the student from submitting an assignment or presenting him/herself for examination at the required time.
- iv) The death of a partner or close personal relative.
- v) Any other circumstances of a serious personal or emotional nature that would have prevented a student from submitting an assessment or presenting themselves for examination or submission at the required time.
- vi) Force majeure or other unforeseeable event.

In undertaking the above, the Mitigation Panel's recommendation will be based on the basis of the evidence presented; it is satisfied that a student's absence, failure to submit work or poor performance was due to illness or other mitigating cause.

The Mitigation Panel may determine one of the following:

- i) The circumstances cited would have adversely affected a student's performance or submission for assessment or presentation at examination and recommends that the application for mitigation is upheld.

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- ii) The circumstances cited would appear to be likely to have affected a student's performance or submission for assessment or presentation at examination but where there is insufficient evidence or additional information is required regarding the severity, timing or duration of illness or other form of incapacity and the Panel should 'defer' a recommendation pending further clarification or further supporting evidence to substantiate the claim;
- iii) Reject the claim on the basis that there are insufficient grounds to substantiate the application.

***Mitigating Circumstances claims should only apply to the current academic year. In general, the board will not assess mitigating circumstances cases relating to previous academic years.***


HE Quality & Registry will prepare a report of the outcomes of the Mitigation Panel which will be submitted to the relevant Board of Examiners. Where a case is deferred, the Mitigation Panel will attempt to deal with the matter as expeditiously as possible and preferably prior to the next suitable meeting of the Board of Examiners.

All recommendations of the Mitigation Panel will be submitted to the next available meeting of the Board of Examiners. The recommendations will identify the module(s) for which mitigation has been upheld.

Where a student has been granted mitigation regarding absence from an examination or submission of an assignment the Board of Examiners will be asked to recommend resubmission or representation for examination at the next available opportunity. Where the Mitigation has been upheld the opportunity for resubmission or representation will be as if for the first time without any form of academic penalty.

Where the Mitigation Panel upholds an application at the award stage where there is demonstrable evidence that the circumstances cited have significantly and adversely affected the student's performance, the Mitigation Panel may recommend the Board of Examiners consider the award of an Aegrotat. Such awards will be rare and the Board of Examiners must be satisfied that in the absence of mitigation the student would have fulfilled the academic requirements of the award and where it would be impractical to offer a resit opportunity and/or suspend study.

To recommend the award of an Aegrotat a student will not normally be eligible for an award or fulfil the progression requirements for the next stage of the award in the absence of having satisfied the assessment requirements for the programme.

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### **3.3 Late Submission of a Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances**

Where a request for consideration of extenuating circumstances is received too late to be considered by the Mitigation Panel, it may only be considered if the student can demonstrate that there was good reason for the late application. The deadline for receipt of late requests for consideration of extenuating circumstances is 10 working days following the publication of results. This still requires a full and detailed explanation to the reasons why mitigation should be granted.

### **4. Composition of the Mitigation Panel**

The following members are required for a Mitigation Panel:

- HE Quality Manager (Chair)
- Directors of Faculty
- HE Quality & Registry Officer
- Secretary
- Student Engagement Officer (SEO)

The Programme leader may not participate in the consideration of the proceedings of the relevant Mitigation Panel that considers an application regarding one of their students. The members of the Mitigation Panel may not include anyone with a close personal or family connection with the individual under consideration.

### **5. Confidentiality**


All submissions giving details of extenuating circumstances will be confidential to the Programme Team and the HE Quality & Registry staff authorised to receive them. Discussion of the extenuating circumstances by the Mitigation Panel will be confidential to those members of staff in attendance.

In exceptionally serious/personal cases the student may submit a request for consideration of extenuating circumstances which will only be made available to the Chair for a decision to be made so as not to discourage students from applying.

Copies of the personal supporting evidence (particularly medical/statements) should not be kept within the Programme Teams or within student files.

The following exceptions to confidentiality apply:

- Where the written requirements of a programme of study accredited by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body, and accepted at the validation of the programme require a wider disclosure.
- Where a student subsequently requests, and is granted an Appeal Hearing.

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## 6. Procedure Checklist

Senior manager responsible	HE Quality Manager
College Committee	HE Academic Quality and Standards Committee
Date of next procedure review	March 2021
Date Equality Analysis agreed	30 March 2014