Extenuating Circumstances - All You Need To Know

You may experience personal circumstances such as illness; the death of close family or friends; worsening of a long-term condition; or other factors which seriously affect your performance in an assessment. We call these extenuating circumstances, this leaflet contains the following information:

• what are extenuating circumstances;
• how can you report extenuating circumstances;
• where to go in the University for advice.

Find the Extenuating Circumstances Form and guidance at the website: www.cardiff.ac.uk/ec

You must report any circumstances at the time they occur and before your School deadline.

1. What are extenuating circumstances?
• Circumstances that have prevented you from performing at your usual level in an assessment or examination; and
• are severe and exceptional; and
• are unforeseen or unavoidable; and
• are close in time to the affected assessment or examination.

2. What circumstances are likely to be accepted?
• serious short-term illness or accident;
• the death of close family or friends;
• a long-term health condition or disability that has worsened or is fluctuating and adjustments have not or cannot be put in place;
• significant severe personal/family circumstances;
• being a victim of a serious crime;

The University will always consider other circumstances where you can show significant impact on your performance:

Help and advice
• For independent advice on any University procedure contact Student Advice in the Students' Union. They are located on the 3rd floor of the Students’ Union and you can contact them on 029 2078 1410 or at advice@cardiff.ac.uk.

• If you have a disability or long-term medical condition and want confidential advice on available support, contact the Disability and Dyslexia Service on 029 20874844 or disability@cardiff.ac.uk.

• Student Support can provide advice and guidance during your time at University, you can contact them on 029 2087 4844 or studentsupport@cardiff.ac.uk.

• If you would like further information about your School deadline then contact your School Office.

This leaflet is available in an alternative format at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/ec

8. What remedies are available?
If your circumstances are accepted, the remedy is either an extension or an Examining Board remedy; another attempt at the assessment if you failed; or if you passed, the module affected may be eligible to be discounted from your classification calculation.

9. Protected Characteristics
Some extenuating circumstances relate to Protected Characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010; in these cases other remedies may be available. Find out more information at www.cardiff.ac.uk/ecpc. You must complete section 4b on the form if you think your circumstances are linked to a Protected Characteristic and you want this information to be considered.

10. What happens if I have not reported by the School deadline?
If you have not reported your circumstances by the School deadline and you would like them to considered then you must submit an academic appeal under the University’s Verification and Appeals Procedure. You must submit your appeal within ten days of your results letter on SIMS. You can find more information at www.cardiff.ac.uk/appeals.

Please note, you will need to explain why you did not report circumstances before the School deadline in your appeal form. If you cannot provide good reason for your late disclosure, your appeal is likely to be rejected.

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3. What kinds of circumstances are unlikely to be accepted?
- Circumstances where adjustments have already been made i.e. an extension, or specific provision;
- a long-term health condition or disability where reasonable adjustments have already been put in place;
- minor illness;
- poor organisation, computer or printer problems;
- holidays;
- financial difficulties, unless other factors make them particularly severe;
- being unaware of the dates or times of coursework deadlines or exams.

If your circumstances appear in this list, but you feel they have seriously affected your academic performance then you can still report them to your School.

4. What can I do if I experience extenuating circumstances?
   a) An extension to the assessment deadline – you will need to complete an Extenuating Circumstances Form and send it to your School. Your School Office will be able to advise you on how you do this.
   b) An Examining Board remedy for your extenuating circumstances — if you believe that your performance in your assessment has been affected by your circumstances. You must report this to your School on the Extenuating Circumstances Form at the time they occur and before the School deadline.
   c) An Interruption of Study – if your circumstances are likely to affect your studies for a significant period of time (normally over two weeks), you can apply for an Interruption of Study. You are advised to discuss any possible application with your Personal Tutor. You can find more information at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/absence.

5. When should I report my extenuating circumstances?
   You must report your circumstances using the form as soon as they begin to affect your performance in assessments. Don’t wait for your results before reporting your circumstances, this is likely be too late!

   If you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable about reporting your extenuating circumstances, please don’t worry. Your circumstances will be treated sensitively, in confidence and will only be made available to School staff directly involved in considering extenuating circumstances.

6. How do I report my extenuating circumstances?
   You must complete the Extenuating Circumstances Form which can be found at: www.cardiff.ac.uk/ec or in your School Office and either email, post or hand it into your School Office, you must include:
   - Full details of the extenuating circumstances, including dates;
   - How the circumstances have affected your performance;
   - The assessments and/or examinations which have been affected (including module codes).
   - Supporting evidence to show the existence of the circumstances, the dates affected and the impact.

   Examples of commonly accepted evidence:
   - Doctor’s letter which confirms illness and the period it affected you;
   - Photocopy of a death certificate;
   - Letter of support/explanation from a support service at the University i.e. the Disability and Dyslexia Service or Counselling
   - Letter of support/explanation from a third party (such as a police report, local authority report or counsellor’s letter, etc).

   Examples of evidence unlikely to be accepted:
   - evidence of a medical condition for which the doctor did not see/diagnose;
   - a letter from a parent, partner or family member verifying circumstances where there is no other independent supporting evidence.

   Your School may ask for more evidence to support or clarify your case. If you do not have the evidence, you must report your circumstances and include on the form when you will be able to provide the evidence.

7. What happens after I have reported?
   Each application is considered individually by the Extenuating Circumstances Group, on the basis of:
   - the circumstances you have outlined on the form;
   - the supporting evidence you have provided;
   - any specific programme or professional body requirements.

   The Group makes the decision to accept or reject your application and informs the Examining Board, who will then apply a remedy where appropriate.