

Extenuating Circumstances – Guidance Leaflet

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the University's [Supporting Students to Succeed: Extenuating Circumstances and Support to Study Procedures](#) (new for the 21/22 Academic Year). If you require additional advice, please contact your Faculty [Student Support and Success Advisor](#) or the [Student Union Advice Centre](#).

What are Extenuating Circumstances (ECs)?

In accordance with 'Part 2 The Extenuating Circumstances Route' in the *Supporting Students to Succeed Procedures*, 'Extenuating Circumstances' are defined as being short term, unexpected and unavoidable circumstances. The panel considering your application will look to see that the circumstance you describe meets this definition and that the evidence you have provided is valid and supports the details in the form including covering the relevant assessment time frame.

As Extenuating Circumstances are defined as being 'short term', it is not appropriate to submit an Extenuating Circumstances form any earlier than 10 working days before the assessment deadline(s) being considered and no later than 5 working days following it.

Submitting an Extenuating Circumstances (EC) application for extensions and deferrals

If you are experiencing circumstances that are affecting your ability to complete academic work, you may request extensions to assessments or deferrals to practical assessments, exams, online assessments (such as online time constrained assessments) and/or vivas. You apply for ECs online using an electronic form. Your application is date and time stamped and you will get an on-screen acknowledgement of submission and, if you request it via a tick box, an email copy of it.

Extenuating Circumstances applications must have corroborating evidence in order to be considered. Please make every effort to submit your evidence, by attaching it as an upload file(s), when you complete the online form. If you are unable to submit your evidence at the same time as your application, please explain why you have been unable to submit and when you expect evidence to be supplied. You must submit late evidence **within 15 days** of your application by email **to your Faculty SSSA**.

Extenuating Circumstances applications will be considered by either a Faculty Evidence Panel or a Student Support and Success Evidence Panel – all panels are made up of three members of University staff. Faculty evidence panel dates will be communicated to students at the start of each semester.

For more information on getting support for an EC application speak with your Faculty SSSA (see [My Record](#)) or [Student Support and Success](#), you can [request an appointment online](#). Please contact them as early as possible to ensure you allow enough time for a meeting to take place and for you to submit your EC application, prior to the deadline. If you miss the EC submission deadline you will not be able to use a pending appointment as a reason for your Extenuating Circumstances application being late.

If approved how long will the extension be?

You may initially apply for a Stage 1 Extenuating Circumstance (EC1). If approved this will give you a **10-day extension from the original submission deadline**.

If you have an **increase in severity or different** extenuating circumstance which make it difficult for you to meet the EC1 submission deadline then, providing you can evidence them, you can apply a Stage 2 Extenuating Circumstances (EC2). If approved this will give you **an additional 10-day extension**.

Usually you should usually apply to Student Support and Success for Stage 2 extensions (see policy @ 2.4.3) however you do have the option to apply to your Faculty instead. Use the same form "EC Faculty Form – Application for Extenuating Circumstances" indicating that you are making a second application.

If at Stage 1 you consider the reasons / evidence to be very sensitive and you do not wish your Faculty evidence

panel to consider the application, then you can apply to Student Support and Success instead. Use the form, “EC SSS Form – Application for Extenuating Circumstances to Student Support and Success”. This will then be considered by a Student Services Evidence Panel.

EC1 and EC2 submission dates will be pre-set according to the original submission deadlines of that assignment (10 working days from the original deadline for an EC1 and 20 working days from the original deadline for EC2).

You must submit to the EC1/EC2 Canvas links, irrespective of when you submit your any EC application / supporting evidence. Do not wait to hear whether your application has been successful to submit your assignments to these Canvas links.

If your EC application is approved, your EC1 or EC2 assignment submission will receive a substantive mark, if it is declined you will receive a capped mark.

You should only submit your first attempt assignment to **one** Canvas link to avoid duplicate submissions/marking.

You can access all EC application forms from the Policies and Regulations page:

<https://winchester.ac.uk/about-us/leadership-and-governance/policies-and-regulations/>

Leave of absence

If you require a period of absence from the University (up to 10 working days), you should submit the Extenuating Circumstances form, providing details of the reason you need it and applicable dates.

If assessment deadlines fall within the time frame when you will be absent, these should be included so requests for extensions and deferrals can be considered alongside the request for a temporary leave of absence.

If you are on a Student Route visa and require a period of absence whilst continuing to engage with teaching and learning at a distance, you should complete the [Authorised Absence Form](#), rather than an Extenuating Circumstances form.

Outcome of your Extension/Deferral Request and/or leave of absence request

The outcome of your request or a request for further details/evidence will be emailed to your University email account, it is your responsibility to check your account regularly. If you are asked to provide further information/evidence please reply promptly.

Section 2.5 of the [Supporting Students to Succeed Procedures](#) provides detail about the length of extensions for coursework assessments and the approaches to exam deferrals, online assessments and deferrals to practical assessments and vivas. These extensions are for fixed periods of time to ensure that all students are treated equally.

Extensions and Deferrals

If you want an extension for coursework

- Submit Extenuating Circumstances to Faculty using the ‘EC Faculty Form’ with valid evidence OR if you consider reasons / evidence to be very sensitive apply to Student Support and Success using the ‘EC-SSS Form’
- Submit form no sooner than 10 days before or no later than 5 days after the assessment deadline

If you need to defer an exam / online timed assessment/ practical assessment/viva

- Submit Extenuating Circumstances to Faculty using the ‘EC Faculty Form’ with valid evidence OR if you consider reasons / evidence to be very sensitive apply to Student Support and Success using the EC-SSS form
- Submit form no sooner than 10 days before or no later than 5 days after the assessment deadline

If your Extenuating Circumstances affects a group assessment

- Discuss with the module tutor about whether you will be required to complete an alternative assessment or whether an alternative resolution will be required for the group as a whole
- Submit the Extenuating Circumstances using the EC Faculty Form with valid evidence or, if you consider reasons / evidence to be very sensitive apply to Student Support and Success using the EC-SSS Form. Give details of the group work Option (Option 1 or Option 2) agreed by the module tutor.
- Submit the form no sooner than 10 days before or no later than 5 days after assessment deadline

Leave of absence

If you require a leave of absence for up to 2 weeks

- Submit Extenuating Circumstances Form to your Faculty with valid evidence or, if you consider reasons/evidence sensitive apply to Student Support and Success using the EC-SSS Form.
- Complete question 6 of the form relating to the dates which you will be absent
- Submit form no later than 5 working days before required departure

If you require a leave of absence for more than 2 weeks

- Meet with your Programme Leader/SSSA to discuss your options including interrupting your studies

If you are a Tier 4 student and require a leave of absence

- Complete the Authorised Absence Form (available from Registry Intranet pages)

Summary of valid extenuating circumstances and evidence required

- The definition of what the University considers 'Extenuating Circumstances' can be found in the Supporting Students to Succeed Procedures. Also included is a list of valid Extenuating Circumstances and examples of acceptable evidence (2.3.6 page 9-10). These are summarized in the tables below.
- Even if your problem or the evidence type is not listed, you should still seek advice and help as we may deem it falls within the definition of extenuating circumstances and valid evidence.
- Sensitive issues that you do not wish to share with your Faculty EC Panel can be discussed confidentially with staff in Student Support and Success. Examples of these situations can also be found in the [Supporting Students to Succeed Procedures](#) (2.4.2 page 12-13).
- **Remember** if you don't tell the University that you are having problems, we won't be able help you.

- Death of a relative, person of significance or pet
- Accident
- Short term or acute unforeseen illness (including Covid 19)
- Participation in a national / international event
- Victim of crime
- Worsening of a diagnosed physical or mental health condition
- Complications relating to a diagnosed disability or pregnancy
- Serious adverse personal or family circumstances (including caring)
- Transport difficulties
- Problems affecting specialised hardware or software

Examples of valid Extenuating Circumstances



- Circumstances outside of the relevant assessment or learning period
- Physical or mental health condition supported by evidence which is not within a reasonable time frame of the assessment submission date
- Long term health condition for which the student is already receiving reasonable or appropriate adjustments
- Minor illness or ailment
- Transport problems which could have been avoided by the student
- Personal holidays
- Financial issues
- Computer/printer problems [with some exceptions relating to Covid 19]

Examples of invalid Extenuating Circumstances



- Doctor's note /Medical certificate
- Hospital admission/A&E record
- Student Services support form
- Death Certificate/Order of service/Vet Certificate
- Crime reference report
- Insurance claim documents
- Traffic report (website/newspaper)
- Official letter confirming participation in an event
- Letter from independent professional or organisation
- Covid 19 test result

Examples of valid Supporting evidence



- Letters from relatives or friends
- Letters from other students
- Please DO NOT send graphic images/photos of illness or injury

Examples of invalid supporting evidence



Frequently asked questions

It will not be possible to provide supporting evidence to support my circumstances. Can I still request an extension?

Extenuating Circumstances forms must be accompanied by supporting evidence or they will not be considered by a panel. You can [self-certify](#) for up to two assessments per year (once each semester), without submitting supporting evidence. Requests supported by self-certification will gain an extension of 5 working days. Alternatively, if the situation is of a personal and/or confidential nature, you may prefer to contact Student Support and Success to see whether they will be able to support your request.

I don't have my evidence yet, but I should have it soon. Should I wait until I have it, before sending my Extenuating Circumstances form to the Faculty (or equivalent) inbox?

No, you must submit your Extenuating Circumstances form no later than 5 days after the assignment deadline. If you are running out of time, you should submit the form, noting that the evidence will follow shortly. You have 15 further days from submitting your application to provide supporting evidence. Please note however that your application will not be considered by the panel until the evidence has been received.

Should I continue working on my coursework assessment and submit it while I am waiting for the outcome of the Extenuating Circumstances panel?

Yes, EC1 and EC2 submission dates will be pre-set according to the original submission deadlines of that assignment (10 working days from the original deadline for an EC1 and 20 working days from the original deadline for EC2). You must submit to the EC1/EC2 Canvas links, irrespective of when you submit your application or supporting evidence. Do not wait to hear whether your application has been successful to submit your assignments to these Canvas links. If your application is approved, your EC1 or EC2 assignment submission will receive a substantive mark, if it is declined you will receive a capped mark.

I have already self-certified for this assessment, but my circumstances have not improved. Can I now submit an Extenuating Circumstances form for the same assessment, in order to get a further extension?

Yes, so long as you can provide supporting evidence that the circumstances are still current and affecting your ability to complete academic work.

Can I request a second extension for the same assessment, if the 10 working days is not long enough?

Yes, if you have an increase in severity or a different extenuating circumstance making it difficult for you to meet the EC1 submission deadline, you can apply for an additional 10-day extension – this is known as a Stage 2 Extenuating Circumstance (EC2). For an EC2 to be considered, you would need to provide different or additional evidence or have your EC2 application approved by a Student Support and Success Evidence Panel. You may apply no sooner than 10 days before and no longer than 5 day after the EC1 extended deadline.

Can I appeal the decision, if my Extenuating Circumstances application is not approved?

Yes, you may appeal on the grounds of procedural irregularity or perversity of judgement. Full details of the appeal process can be found in section 2.6 (page 14-15) of the [Supporting Students to Succeed Procedures](#), including the time frame in which you are able to submit an appeal.