

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND ASSESSMENT DEFERRAL

1. INTRODUCTION

The College's policy on assessment submission on or before published hand-in dates is strictly applied. However, from time to time unforeseen events, such as illness, may arise which prevent students from completing assessments within the time allowed or impact adversely on the quality of the assessment submitted. Such events are referred to as extenuating circumstances. This Policy encompasses the processes of application for extenuating circumstances and assessment deferral.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to students undertaking HE qualifications at Grantham College, except where the regulations of the awarding body or validating institution take precedence.

3. PROCESS

There may be occasion during a student's academic journey when circumstances arise that prevent timely submission of assessed work, attendance of examinations or impact on assessment performance. Such extenuating circumstances are defined as serious adverse circumstances of limited duration which could not reasonably have been foreseen. The criteria are defined as:

1. *Serious adverse circumstance.* The events described should be sufficiently serious to mean that it would not be reasonable to expect a student to complete an assignment by the published hand-in date. Minor ailments and normal work commitments are not likely to meet this criterion.
2. *Limited duration.* There is an expectation that the usual pattern of study will be resumed after a relatively short period. In more serious cases, where there is likely to be prolonged interruption of normal activity, suspension of studies (intercalation) may be appropriate until the circumstances have been resolved. Chronic illness and disability, which are long term conditions, are not to be treated as extenuating circumstances, unless newly diagnosed or in an acute phase.
3. *Not reasonably have been foreseen.* Assignment submission dates are normally published well in advance and there is, therefore, an expectation that students exercise due foresight in organising workload.

If such extenuating circumstances arise students may apply for consideration, mitigation or for assessment to be deferred, the process and procedure of which is provided within this Policy Statement.

Providing False or Misleading Information

Seeking to gain an advantage or benefit through application for consideration of extenuating circumstance, mitigation or assessment deferral through providing false or misleading information is liable to result in action being taken against the student concerned under the College Policy on Academic Misconduct.

4. PANEL CONSTITUTION AND AUTHORITY

All applications are considered by a Panel which will normally comprise of:

1. The Assistant Principal: HE, who will normally chair the Panel;
2. Academic representative(s), not exceeding two, who do not have a direct connection to cases under consideration;
3. The Curriculum Manager for the qualification, or nominated representative.

The Panel has the authority to make one of the following decisions on each case presented, to:

1. Support the application, and make recommendation to the Board of Examiners;
2. Reject the application;
3. Defer decision pending further evidence.

Where a unanimous decision cannot be reached then a majority decision can be taken, the Chair in this instance would hold the casting vote.

5. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES & MITIGATION

Application for Extenuating Circumstances & Mitigation

1. Students who wish to inform the College of circumstances which they feel may have affected their performance in assessment or led to them being absent from an examination should make an application for consideration of extenuating circumstances;
2. Exceptionally, where a student has been unable to submit an assignment on time and was unable to request an extension in advance they may request mitigation;
3. Applications must be submitted on the appropriate College form and must be supported by corroborating evidence which can include:
 - I. Medical evidence e.g. letter from a doctor, nurse or other professional practitioner, confirmation of appointment, prescription, a completed Medical/Professional Practitioner Support Note, etc.
 - II. Supporting statement(s) from Course Leader and/or tutor.
 - III. Other verifiable evidence e.g. police incident/crime number.
4. Application for consideration of extenuating circumstances, **or a request for mitigation, should normally be made before the date of the assessment or submission and no later than 7 days after the assessment hand-in date.**
5. On application students may request one of, or a combination of, the following outcomes:
 - I. The existing grade for an assignment is set aside and a fresh attempt is allowed;
 - II. A failing grade for the module is disregarded and a fresh attempt for all or part of the overall assessment strategy is allowed;
 - III. Consideration of the circumstances is taken into account together with the student's overall mark profile in determining his/her qualification classification (**final year students only**).

6. Applications must be submitted to the Curriculum Manager who must inform the Assistant Principal: HE of its receipt.
7. All applications must be treated in strict confidence.

Notification of Outcome

1. The student and appropriate Course Leader will normally be notified in writing within 4 working days of the Panel decision.
2. Where the Panel supports the application the decision of outcome and recommendation will be passed to the Board of Examiners who will:
 - I. Apply the recommendation (*unless the Board is satisfied that there is a compelling reason to make an alternative decision in which case the reason for that decision must be minuted*);
 - II. Decide that no action is required;
 - III. Pass the decision to the Board of Examiners for consideration later.
3. Where applications are deferred pending further evidence the student will be given a date of submission for further evidence. If no further evidence is provided by the given date the case will be returned to the next available Panel where a default decision of “reject” will be recorded.
4. Where applications are rejected the original mark for the assignment(s) will stand or a mark of zero will be recorded for non-attendance of an exam or non-submission of the assignment(s).

6. ASSESSMENT DEFERRAL

In order to ensure that all students have the same period of time in which to complete assessed work a submission date is set for all assignments. This date is strictly enforced. Work submitted late will normally receive a mark of zero and will be *referred* by the **Subject Assessment Board (SAB)**. In exceptional cases students may request an extension from the Curriculum Manager of no longer than 10 days; however if, through circumstances that could not reasonably have been foreseen, a longer period of extension is required the student must apply for an Assessment Deferral.

Application for Assessment Deferral

1. Applications must be made on the appropriate College form and must be supported by corroborating evidence which can include:
 - I. Medical evidence e.g. letter from a doctor, nurse or other professional practitioner, confirmation of appointment, prescription, a completed Medical/Professional Practitioner Support Note, etc;
 - II. Supporting statement(s) from Curriculum Manager, Course Leader and/or Tutor;
 - III. Other verifiable evidence e.g. police incident/crime number.
2. Applications must be made **prior** to the published hand-in date.

3. A proposed submission date must be included in the application for each assignment for which a deferral is requested.
4. Applications must be submitted to the Curriculum Manager who will notify the Assistant Principal: HE.
5. All applications must be treated in strict confidence.

Panel Outcome Notification

1. The student and appropriate Curriculum Manager will normally be notified in writing within 2 working days of the Panel decision.
2. Where the Panel supports the application the decision of outcome and recommendation will be passed to the **Subject Assessment Board (SAB)** who will:
 - I. Apply the recommendation (unless the Board is satisfied that there is a compelling reason to make an alternative decision in which case the reason for that decision must be minuted);
 - II. Decide that no action is required.
3. Where applications are deferred pending further evidence the student will be given a date of submission for further evidence. If no further evidence is provided by the given date the case will be returned to the next available Panel where a default decision of “reject” will be recorded.
4. Where applications are rejected it is expected that the assignment(s) will be submitted on or before the original published deadline.

Quality Assurance – Version Control			
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