

# EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY



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<b>Summary:</b> This document defines the procedures for students to inform the University whenever they are experiencing difficulties and, where appropriate, to request and receive a concession to mitigate any impact on their academic studies.	

# EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY

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# EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 All undergraduate, postgraduate and postgraduate research students have a responsibility to manage their learning during their registration at the University and may be required to complete and submit, or sit, a wide range of assessments. This requires students to balance their workload and use time management skills to ensure that assessments are submitted, or sat, to stated deadlines. It is therefore essential that students manage their workload efficiently, so as not to struggle to meet deadlines or miss them. Difficulties and pressures are a part of everyday life and it is expected that students shall manage their work accordingly.
- 1.2 However, the University recognises that there may be times when serious adverse circumstances, beyond their direct control, prevent students from completing work to a deadline, or to their customary standard of achievement.
- 1.3 For this reason, the University encourages students to inform the University whenever they are experiencing difficulties and, where appropriate, to request an extension to the deadline for submission of a piece of work, to defer a formal exam, practical assessment or viva and/or to request a temporary leave of absence.
- 1.4 In cases of long-term extenuating circumstances, students also have the option to apply to interrupt their studies, details of which are outlined in the *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes* and the *Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes*.
- 1.5 Students, who are studying programmes with additional attendance rules, may also use self-certification to account for absence due to extenuating circumstances. Please refer to the Programme's own Attendance Rules for details.
- 1.6 The *Academic Appeals Regulations* also allow students to advise an Examination Board that they were not in a position to perform at their customary standard of achievement when completing one or more assessments, although the student must then submit compelling reasons why they did not follow the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy* at the time of the assessment(s).
- 1.7 This Policy applies to all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and postgraduate research students. This Policy is also supported by a '*Guidance Leaflet for Extenuating Circumstances*' for students.

## 2. Aims

This Policy is designed to support students whose learning has been adversely affected by extenuating circumstances and its aims are to:

- a) make clear the types of serious adverse factors that the University shall consider as extenuating circumstances;
- b) detail the procedures for submitting an Extenuating Circumstances Form and, where appropriate, requesting an extension/deferral for coursework/exams/practical assessments/vivas or other assessment;
- c) ensure fair and equal treatment of all students when considering their extenuating circumstances and determining how best to support them.

### 3. Definition of Extenuating Circumstances and Valid and Invalid Evidence

#### Definition of Extenuating Circumstances

- 3.1 'Circumstances, normally exceptional and outside the control of the student, which prevent him/her from performing an assessment at the expected or required level.'
- 3.2 These are normally circumstances relating to the health and/or personal life of a student which are of a sufficiently serious and significant nature to result in them being unable to attend, complete or submit an assessment on time. They are also expected to be either:
- a) unforeseeable, in that the student could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned; and/or
  - b) unavoidable, in that the student could have done nothing reasonably in their power to prevent or avoid such an event

#### Examples of Valid Extenuating Circumstances

- 3.3 Listed below are examples that the University would normally regard as extenuating circumstances that could have seriously affected performance and/or attendance and could not have been remedied in the time available but this list is not exhaustive and where the University deems that a student's application falls within the above definition, it shall be treated under this Policy:
- a) Bereavement – death of close relative/significant other (of a nature which, in an employment context, would have led to an absence in accordance with the compassionate leave regulations)
  - b) Serious short term illness or accident \*
  - c) Participation in a national/international sporting event or related activity as a competitor, coach, referee or in an equivalent support role
  - d) Victim of crime
  - e) Evidence of a long term physical or mental health condition worsening or complication/aggravation of an existing condition #
  - f) Serious adverse personal, family or work circumstances, where not known at the start of the module \*
  - g) Additional impact of a disability \*
  - h) Complications in pregnancy eg premature labour \*
  - i) Serious transport difficulties which could not have been avoided
  - j) University technical difficulties of an ephemeral nature eg such as an unscheduled disruption unusual to the University's intranet provision
  - k) Religious observances ~
  - l) Problems affecting specialised hardware or software supplied via a Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) or equivalent to support the student's learning as documented in the student's Learning Agreement
  - m) Unexpected childcare or caring crisis

\* *This would include cases where a student's partner/ parent/ child is affected and which, in an employment context, would have led to an absence on sick leave or compassionate leave*

# *Students with an underlying disability, condition or chronic illness shall normally have agreed a formal Learning Agreement with Student Services and academic staff to provide additional support for learning and assessment, as required. However, where such an underlying disability, condition or chronic illness suddenly flares up, or is exacerbated, this would fall within the above definition of extenuating circumstances.*

~ Where a commitment for a religious observance may affect a centrally-organised exam, please contact the Exams Officer in Registry directly in the first instance and no later than week 4 of semester 2. For all other forms of assessment, please submit the Extenuating Circumstances Form in the usual way.

### Invalid Extenuating Circumstances

- 3.4 The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances unlikely to be regarded as falling within the relevant definition and is unlikely to be accepted as extenuating circumstances:
- a) Statement of a medical condition without reasonable evidence (medical or otherwise) to support it
  - b) Medical circumstances outside the relevant assessment or learning period for which appropriate adjustments for extenuating circumstances have already been made
  - c) Medical condition supported by 'retrospective' medical evidence – that is, evidence that is not in existence at the same time as the illness, eg a doctor's note which states that the student was seen (after the illness occurred) and declared they had been ill previously
  - d) Foreseeable or preventable circumstances
  - e) Long term health condition for which the student is already receiving reasonable or appropriate adjustments
  - f) Minor illness or ailment, which in a work situation, would be unlikely to lead to absence from work
  - g) Paid employment, although exceptions may be made where an employer makes additional and unforeseen demands on an employee eg sending an employee overseas at short notice
  - h) Transport problems eg missed bus or train, lateness of lift
  - i) Holidays
  - j) Financial issues
  - k) Personal computer/printer problems, unless these relate to specialised hardware or software supplied via a DSA or equivalent to support learning.
  - l) Poor working practices, eg failure to back up of electronic documents regularly and securely,
  - m) Claims that students were unaware of the dates, times, format of submission for coursework and venues for exams or practical assessments
  - n) Poor time management – for example, the magnitude of the assessment task, or failure on the part of the student to perceive or act upon the magnitude of the assessment task
  - o) Complaints against staff or in relation to delivery of the module/programme. These are managed through the University's *Complaints Policy*
  - p) Any claimed circumstances for which appropriate adjustments have already been made by the University and where there is no evidence of a worsening of the condition which requires further consideration
  - q) Stress and panic attacks caused by exams that are not diagnosed as an illness or documented in the Learning Agreement
  - r) Pregnancy unless there are unforeseen complications relating to the pregnancy which medical evidence can substantiate (see the Pregnancy, Adoption and Becoming a Parent While Studying - Approved Procedures for more information about support available)

### Jury Service

- 3.5 Students who receive a summons to attend Jury Service during the academic year are strongly advised to seek a deferral. Courts understand the issues for students missing key teaching/assessment activities and deferrals are generally approved. Please contact Registry for a supporting letter.
- 3.6 While the University supports anyone undertaking civic duties, there is a particular problem for students who may miss critical teaching/assessment activities while undertaking jury service because they may need to complete additional work during the vacation periods or repeat a significant period of study.

While the Courts may provide some remuneration for loss of earnings, childcare costs etc, this amount would not cover 'lost' tuition fees or loans for living costs that may be incurred if a student is required to repeat a period of study as a result of prolonged absence for lengthy court cases. There is also the potential for adverse impact on other students if a student attending Jury Service will miss group activities and assessments.

- 3.7 Students who do not wish to request a deferral from Jury Service or their request for a deferral is turned down, should apply for a temporary Authorised Leave of Absence (see section 7 below) and, if the case takes longer than 3 weeks, they must contact their Programme Leader(s)/Director of Studies to discuss whether it would be helpful to interrupt their studies for a semester or a year (see section 7 below).

#### **4. Commitment to Religious Observances**

The University will consider application for extenuating circumstances based on a religious observance or commitment. For example, with regard to Ramadan the University has been advised that there is no requirement to defer exams. However, to help students to perform at their best while fasting, Registry shall endeavour to schedule centrally-organised exams in the morning for participating students who have informed the Registry Exams Officer by week 4 of semester 2.

#### **5. Evidence Required for Extenuating Circumstances**

- 5.1 Applications for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account must be accompanied by valid evidence of those circumstances. Such evidence should normally be independent third party evidence (for example a medical professional, counsellors, the police, lawyers and named Student Services staff) and the student should submit the original documentation.
- 5.2 Supporting evidence from relatives or other students shall not be deemed as valid. A statement from a personal tutor shall be helpful, but it shall not be considered as sole evidence in itself.
- 5.3 Listed below are examples of the types of evidence that the University would normally accept as valid but this list is not exhaustive so students are advised to seek advice from their Faculty/ RKE Centre before submission if they are unsure whether their evidence is valid.
- 5.4 Where students feel their extenuating circumstances are too sensitive to share, they are strongly advised to seek support from the Student Services Advice Team who are qualified to help.

Examples of valid extenuating circumstances	Suggested sources of evidence <sup>1</sup>
Bereavement – death of close relative/significant other which, in an employment context, would have led to an authorised absence for compassionate leave	Order of service Death certificate (where available) Obituary/Notification of death (website / newspaper)
Serious short term illness or accident * Evidence of a long term health condition worsening or complication of existing condition * Additional impact of a disability * Complications in pregnancy eg premature labour *  * This would include cases where a student’s partner/ parent/ child is affected and which, in an employment context, would have led to an absence on sick leave	Medical certificate, hospital admission notice, A & E record Letter (or similar) from medical professional or other relevant independent professional (eg therapist or counsellor)
Flare-up of existing physical/mental health condition documented in Learning Agreement	Learning Agreement
Participation in a national/international sporting event or related activity as a competitor, coach, referee or in an equivalent support role	Official letter of registration for event or equivalent
Victim of crime	Crime reference report including the name/number of police officer and station In case of sexual assault or similar, Student Services support would be an acceptable alternative
Serious adverse personal/family/work circumstance * * This would include cases where a student’s partner/ parent/ child is affected and which, in an employment context, would have led to an authorised absence of leave	Letter (or similar) from employer or other independent professional Medical certificate, hospital admission notice, A & E record
Other significant exceptional factors for which there is evidence of stress caused	Letter (or similar) from counsellor, therapist, medical professional or other independent professional
Serious transport difficulties which could not have been avoided	Traffic report (website or newspaper) Official report of traffic accident
University technical difficulties of an ephemeral nature eg such as an unscheduled disruption unusual to the University’s intranet provision	Intranet message board notice confirming disruption to services Letter (or similar) from ITS Helpdesk
Problems affecting specialised hardware or software supplied via a Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) or equivalent to support the student’s learning as documented in the student’s Learning Agreement	Learning Agreement
Commitment to a religious observance, eg Ramadan	Letter from student’s local faith leader

1 Where no other form of evidence is available, students may seek support from Student Services, see section 5 below.



Examples of valid extenuating circumstances	Suggested sources of evidence <sup>1</sup>
Unexpected caring crisis	Letter from registered childcare or other caring provider confirming why care cannot be provided Where childcare or other form of caring is provided within the family, a letter from the employer of the carer or a relevant independent professional confirming why the family member is unexpectedly unavailable.

## 6. Supporting Evidence Provided by Student Services

Students shall only seek support from Student Services in cases where the extenuating circumstances meet the criteria listed in section 3 of this Policy and either:

- a) the extenuating circumstances relate to significant personal issues or confidential medical issues that the students does not wish to disclose to the Faculty; or
- b) there is no other form of evidence available as recommended in section 5 of the Policy (ie students shall **not** ask Student Services to certify medical conditions or injuries)

Evidence provided by Student Services in support of a student's application shall always be deemed valid. However, the duration of any extension or deferral is at the discretion of Faculty or RKE Centre staff and, for this reason, the duration may be longer or shorter than the (predicted) duration of the extenuating circumstances.

Student Services staff may decline to support an application if they believe that the extenuating circumstances described by the student do not meet the criteria listed in section 3 of this Policy. If the student still wishes to submit an application, they may do so but they shall need to provide alternative evidence.

Only Student Advice Team in Student Services, Senior Disability Adviser, Disability Adviser and Senior Wellbeing Adviser, Head of Wellbeing or the Director of Student Services may complete a '*Student Services Support for Extenuating Circumstances Application Form*'.

## 7. Process for Reporting Extenuating Circumstances and Submitting Extension/Deferral Requests

- 7.1 It is a student's responsibility to inform their programme/subject, at the earliest opportunity, of any circumstance which may affect their ability to meet their programme commitments by completing an *Extenuating Circumstances Form* (available from the [University website](#)) together with valid evidence and submitting this to their Department/Faculty Office or the RKE Centre (for Postgraduate Research students only).
- 7.2 Students should note that they must specifically request an extension (for coursework) and/or deferral (for an exam/practical assessment): simply submitting the *Extenuating Circumstances Form* stating their problems shall not automatically result in a rearrangement of their assessment deadlines.

### Submitting an Extension/Deferral Request

- 7.3 Students must complete Section B of the Extenuating Circumstances Form if they wish to apply:
  - a) for an extension of the submission deadline for coursework; and/or
  - b) to defer an exam, practical assessment or viva.
- 7.4 An extension/deferral request must be submitted as early as possible in advance of the submission deadline of the assessment or date of the exam, practical assessment or viva.

- 7.5 If a student is unable to gather the evidence to support their claim, they should still submit the *Extenuating Circumstances Form*, stating the basis for the claim and stating clearly on the form why they could not provide the evidence at that time and provide an indication of when the evidence is likely to become available. The Faculty/ RKE Centre shall normally only extend the deadline to submit supporting evidence within ten working days of the submission deadline for the assessment or date of the exam, practical assessment or viva.
- 7.6 If work is submitted late or a student fails to sit/attend an exam, practical assessment or viva and an extension/deferral request is either not applied for by the above deadline or is rejected by the Faculty, then the Late Submission Rule shall normally apply (see Section B5 of the *Assessment Regulations*).

### **Limits of Use for Extenuating Circumstances Form**

- 7.7 There is no fixed limit for the number of extensions/deferrals that may be requested either for a single assessment or multiple assessments as the nature of the extenuating circumstances may vary and/or coincide with a heavy assessment load. In most cases, extenuating circumstances have a fixed duration, for example an injury or illness or a crisis at work and a single extension or deferral is enough to ensure a student is able to complete the assessment. But in some cases, the initial extenuating circumstance may have ended but a secondary issue then arises, for example the recovery from an operation may not proceed as smoothly as usual, bereavement of a close family member may lead to depression. In other cases, an entirely new extenuating circumstance may arise. If one issue follows on quickly from another, this may require a second or subsequent extension request for the same assessment or may require an extension request for a different assessment. New evidence may or may not be required, depending on the circumstances. If students are unsure what is best in their situation, they should seek advice from their Faculty.
- 7.8 However, Faculty or RKE Centre staff are unlikely to grant more than two extensions/deferrals for an individual assessment within one semester on the grounds of one type of extenuating circumstance or allow more than five assessments to be deferred at any one time (normally where the Faculty is concerned that the burden of work has become unsustainable). Where possible, staff shall warn students when they deem a limit has been reached and advise them that a further request is unlikely to be accepted and why. In these circumstances, staff may wish to consider advising the student to seek further advice and help to resolve their problems as a matter of urgency, 'leave of absence' or an interruption to their studies.
- 7.9 An initial or subsequent request for an extension/deferral may also be rejected if submitted close to the end of a year of study, or the end of the programme or period of registration. In these cases, the matter may be referred to the Exam Board.

### **Late Submission of Extenuating Circumstances Form**

- 7.10 Where the extenuating circumstances occur unexpectedly at the point of submission/attendance, the Extenuating Circumstances Form requesting an extension/deferral may be submitted up to five working days after the submission deadline of the assessment or date of the exam, practical assessment or viva.
- 7.11 In these circumstances, a Faculty or Research Degree Quality Committee may request students to submit a draft of the work they have managed to complete to date before they will approve an extension.

### **Exceptional Late Submission of Late Extenuating Circumstances Form**

- 7.12 The University recognises that there may be certain exceptional circumstances, when a student may not be physically able to submit a claim within five working days of the published deadline/date. Examples of such exceptional circumstances might include:

- a) Following a serious physical assault (physical or emotional incapacitation without recourse to intermediaries)
  - b) Clinically diagnosed, sudden onset of short term mental or physical illness
- 7.13 In such cases, if the deadline for submitting an Extenuating Circumstances Form has been missed, a student is advised to submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form at the earliest opportunity, stating the reasons for the late submission of their claim rather than waiting until the end of the academic year and submitting an Academic Appeal.
- 7.14 While the Academic Appeals Regulations do allow a student to appeal against the decision of the Exam Board, where they have a compelling reason for not following this Policy as well as valid evidence of extenuating circumstances, this should be avoided wherever possible. This is because the outcome will not result in a change of marks. At best, where an appeal is upheld, a student may be permitted to repeat one or more assessments some months after the end of the academic year. Whereas a valid extenuating circumstances application, submitted and approved during the academic year, may enable a student to defer and complete one or more assessments before the Exam Board and hopefully enable the student to process or graduate as originally intended.

## **8. Process for Requesting Authorised Leave of Absence or Interrupting Studies**

- 8.1 Students experiencing problems that require them to be absent for up to three weeks, may apply for an authorised temporary leave of absence during scheduled teaching and assessment periods. In these cases, students should submit an email to Faculty/RKE Centre staff detailing their request with supporting evidence as described in Section 6 above (with the exception of Tier 4 students<sup>2</sup>). As for applications for extensions/deferrals, approval is at the discretion of the Faculty/RKE Centre.
- 8.2 Where the absence shall mean that one or more submission deadlines for coursework, exams, practical assessments or vivas shall be missed, a formal Extension/Deferral Request must also be submitted.
- 8.3 The email requesting leave of absence must be submitted as early as possible in advance of the date of departure and no later than five working days before that date except in the case of unexpected emergencies.
- 8.4 Students who believe their extenuating circumstances require a longer leave of absence (eg more than 15 working days) should discuss their circumstances with their Programme Leader or Director of Studies (as appropriate) and consider interrupting their studies(see *Section D1 of the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes* or *Section C2 of the Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes*).

## **9. Consideration of Claims for Extenuating Circumstances and Authorised Absence**

- 9.1. Faculty Academic Development Committees and the Research Degrees Quality Committee are responsible for devising a procedure to manage applications for extenuating circumstances and authorised absence submitted by their students. The procedures shall be approved by the Senate Academic Development Committee.
- 9.2. Each procedure shall specify who is responsible for managing and administering the process together with details of their specific role and responsibilities. Where only one person is normally responsible for managing the whole process, there shall be at least two other suitably qualified named members of staff available for consultation and to take over during any temporary absence.

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<sup>2</sup> **Tier 4 students** who wish to apply for leave of absence while continuing their teaching and learning should complete the Authorised Absence Form in accordance with the UKBA Guidance available from the Registry Intranet page.

- 9.3. Where there is more than one procedure operating within a Faculty, a list of the programmes managed by each procedure shall be included in the document submitted to the Senate Academic Development Committee.
- 9.4. Staff delegated to manage the procedure for their students shall:
- a) consider requests and confirm whether they meet the conditions of the Policy in terms of timeliness of submission, whether they meet the definition of 'Extenuating Circumstances' and whether the evidence is valid;
  - b) consult with the Programme Administrator in cases where requests for Extenuating Circumstances or a leave of absence also apply to failure to attend teaching sessions which are governed by programme-specific attendance rules before making a decision;
  - c) consult with Programme Leader(s)/Director of Studies, Student Services or other colleagues, on any other issues or concerns, as appropriate;
  - d) ensure that applications, which are accompanied by supporting evidence, shall normally be resolved and the decision communicated to the student by University email address within three working days;
  - e) confirm the outcome of the decision to all relevant members of staff eg Personal Tutor, Module Tutor(s), Programme Leader(s), Programme Administrator(s), Director of Studies, as appropriate;
  - f) maintain accurate records on SITS and, if appropriate, on hard copy student files.

## Outcomes

- 9.5. Staff responsible for considering applications shall come to one of the following decisions and inform the student accordingly:
- a) **Extenuating circumstances confirmed:**  
Where students have simply alerted the University to their extenuating circumstances, staff shall confirm that these have been recognised and advise whether further action should be taken. This might include suggesting that the student request extension(s)/deferrals(s), leave of absence, interrupt their studies and/or seek advice from Student Services about establishing a Learning Agreement or other support.
  - b) **Exemption from required attendance approved:**  
The programme attendance rules have not been breached and no penalty shall be imposed for missed attendance.
  - c) **Extension approved for coursework:**  
The period of extension shall cover the period affected plus the time taken to confirm the decision and communicate it to the student, normally up to a maximum of 10 working days for short-term problems.
  - d) **Deferral approved for a formal exam:**  
If a deferral is sought for the first sitting of a formal exam, the student shall normally be required to attend the scheduled resit as a first attempt. If deferral is sought for a resit exam, the Programme Leader shall normally confirm when the resit shall be rescheduled or whether an alternative assessment shall be set and the submission date.
  - e) **Deferral approved for a practical assessment:**  
In the case of a practical assessment, the Programme Leader shall normally confirm when it shall be rescheduled or whether an alternative assessment shall be set and the submission date.

- f) **Temporary leave of absence approved:**  
 Authorised absence approved for defined period, normally up to a maximum of 15 working days. Details of any extensions/deferrals shall also be confirmed at the same time.
- g) **Claim acknowledged (evidence to follow):**  
 The deadline, by which the supporting evidence is to be supplied and, where appropriate, the nature of the evidence required, shall be specified.
- h) **Claim rejected (non-submission of evidence):**  
 The grounds for rejection of non-submission of evidence submitted for an extension, deferral, temporary leave of absence and/or exemption from programme attendance rules shall be specified.
- i) **Claim rejected (grounds not established or insufficient evidence):**  
 The grounds for rejection of an extension, deferral, temporary leave of absence and/or exemption from programme attendance rules request shall be specified.
- j) **Claim rejected (deadline for submission of claim not met):**  
 The grounds for rejection of the late submission and/or evidence to support the late submission, (eg where claim form is not submitted by the date set in this Policy or where a student is given an extended deadline to submit supporting evidence, fails to do so and is not granted a further extension of time) shall be specified.

## Notification to students

9.6. Following the decision, the student shall be informed whether their claim was accepted or rejected and details of new dates and arrangements for submission of coursework or attendance at exams/practical assessments, where appropriate. If rejected, the email shall also contain a brief statement confirming whether the rejection was due to non-submission of evidence, lack of sufficient evidence, grounds not established or failure to meet the deadline(s) set or the terms of the Policy. This shall be sent by email to the student's University email account normally within three working days of submission.

## 10. Appeal Against the Outcome

10.1. Students have the right to appeal a rejected claim for an extension, deferral, or leave of absence request on the following grounds:

- a) procedural irregularity: the Faculty/Research Degree Quality Committee failed to follow the requirements of this Policy and their own procedures in such a way that the legitimacy of the decision reached is called into question;
- b) perversity of judgement: the Faculty/Research Degree Quality Committee decision does not, in the student's opinion, appropriately reflect the weight of evidence presented.

10.2. Students may not appeal:

- a) on the grounds that they did not understand, or were not aware of, the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy* or related Faculty/RKE Centre Procedures.
- b) in relation to the same submission of an assessment more than once by means of this process.

10.3. The appeal must be submitted, in writing, to the Academic Registrar within ten working days of the date of the email notifying the student of the outcome of their original application.

10.4. The format of the Appeal is a letter or email, fully detailing the grounds for appeal, a copy of the application and outcome correspondence. Where the grounds of the appeal relate to a) above, the appellant must specify precisely what aspect of the procedure was not followed and how this affected

the outcome. Where the grounds for the appeal relate to b) above, the appellant must specify how and why the decision was unreasonable or disproportionate in the light of the available evidence.

- 10.5. Appeals shall be considered by the Academic Registrar (or nominee) and a Chair of a Faculty Academic Development Committee or Dean from a Faculty not associated with the appellant's programme.
- 10.6. They shall review the statement and any supporting evidence supplied by the appellant and may request further evidence or information from those involved in the process before reaching a decision. Those from whom responses are sought shall be provided with the letter of appeal and accompanying documents where appropriate. In accordance with the principles of openness and best practice the University shall disclose to appellants any relevant case documentation at an early and appropriate stage and, in particular, in advance of any determination of the outcome.
- 10.7. If they do not uphold the appeal, the student shall be informed in writing and a Completion of Procedures Letter shall be issued.
- 10.8. If the appeal is upheld, then they shall confirm what action shall be taken to rectify the matter. As internal processes shall be at an end, the appellant shall be notified of the option to request a Completion of Procedures letter if they are dissatisfied with the resolution.
- 10.9. There is no further appeal within the University. Provision for independent external review is made through the existence of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The Independent Adjudicator's role is to review the application by the University of its own internal procedures. Further information about the OIA's role is available from <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>

## **11. Submission of Fraudulent Claim for Extenuating Circumstances**

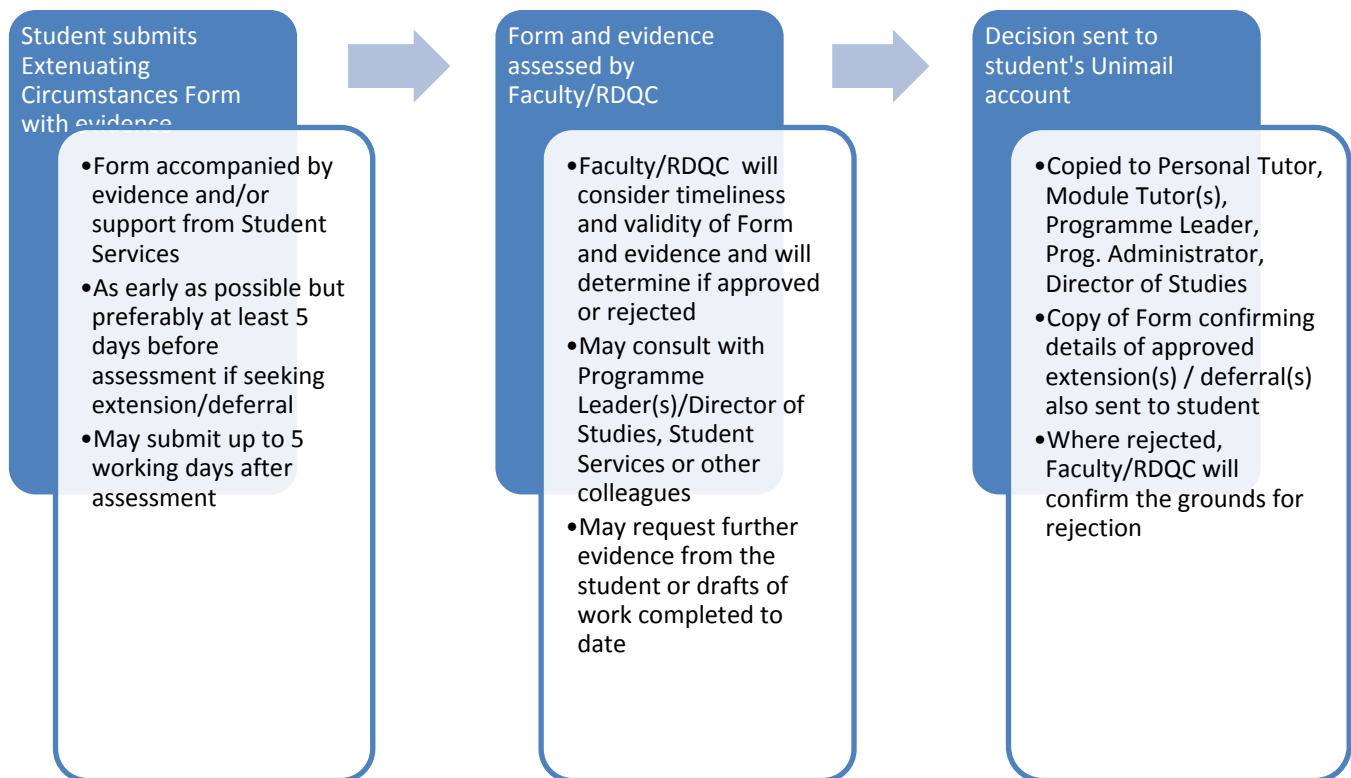
The University considers the submission of a fraudulent request for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account as an attempt to gain unfair advantage and, therefore, claims, which are deemed to be fraudulent, shall be referred to an Academic Conduct Officer for consideration and, where appropriate, investigation in accordance with the University's *Academic Misconduct Policy*.

## **12. Quality Assurance and Monitoring of Extenuating Circumstances Procedures**

- 12.1 Faculty Academic Development Committees and the Research Degree Quality Committee shall be responsible, on behalf of the Senate Academic Development Committee, for the assurance of quality and standards in the management of applications for Extenuating Circumstances.
- 12.2 In particular, Faculty Academic Development Committees and the Research Degree Quality Committee are responsible for:
  - a) devising, in consultation with their students, a procedure to manage applications for Extenuating Circumstances submitted to be approved by the Senate Academic Development Committee;
  - b) ensuring that all staff involved are suitably trained, supported and monitored so that consistency and fairness is maintained;
  - c) ensuring that the procedure is published clearly to students and staff;
  - d) ensuring that all applications are resolved promptly, consistently and effectively;
  - e) ensuring that accurate records of all applications and the outcomes are maintained and all paperwork should be available for internal or external scrutiny, as required;
  - f) reviewing the procedure annually to ensure that it is fit for purpose and, where necessary, recommending changes, as required, to be approved by the Senate Academic Development Committee;

- g) monitoring the consistency of decisions and submitting an annual report to the Senate Academic Development Committee detailing the number of Extenuating Circumstances applications submitted and their outcomes, the number of appeals received and the outcomes and any other issues relating to the principles or procedures.

### 13. Process for Submitting an Extenuating Circumstances Form



Further diagrammatic summaries are contained in the *'Guidance Leaflet for Extenuating Circumstances'*.