Supporting Evidence Guidance

You should read this information if you are thinking about submitting:

a) evidence to support a claim for Extenuating Circumstances (ECs);

b) an Appeal against an outcome issued to you by the University;

c) mitigation for an Academic Misconduct offence.

Any evidence you wish to have considered should normally be included with your claim or appeal.

It is recommended that you make every effort to include the evidence when you first submit your claim or appeal as this will speed up the decision-making process. However if it is not available you must still submit the claim form within the regulation timeframe for the procedure and clearly note on the form that your evidence will follow.

If your case is highly sensitive and you are concerned about sharing personal information for example in the case of sexual assault or if you are giving evidence as part of an ongoing criminal investigation, we advise that you speak to your Personal Academic Tutor and/or the University Wellbeing and Disability Service. These people can review the evidence in confidence with you and may be able to make a supporting statement for you to include with your form, without you needing to submit the sensitive evidence.

Extenuating Circumstances (ECs)

ECs are circumstances which affect your ability to attend an exam or complete an assessment by the hand in date. The EC procedure is intended to support you if you experience exceptional, unforeseeable and short-term circumstances which affect your ability to study or take assessments.

All claims made under the EC Procedure must be supported by independent, reliable documentary evidence which clearly shows how you were impacted by your circumstances and the effect they had on your ability to comply with the assessment requirements.

The evidence should confirm the dates or timeframe during which your circumstances negatively impacted your ability to study, complete work or sit exams. If you have a long-term illness or a disability, the University can support you with the management of those conditions. These conditions do not generally fall under the EC procedure as other measures, such as reasonable adjustments via a Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP), may be more appropriate forms of support.

If you have a PLSP in place then you should note that submitting a copy of your PLSP is not enough evidence for an EC claim to be approved. Please refer to the section below relating to PLSP’s.

Results Appeal

If you are appealing about a published result on the basis of ECs that impacted on your performance in assessments earlier in the year then you must explain why they were not presented via an EC claim before your results were published.

The evidence you submit to support your results appeal must also support why you were not able to engage with the EC process from the time of the assessments to the time of results being published.
**Attendance Monitoring Appeal**

If you are appealing a decision to withdraw you from your course under the attendance monitoring regulations on the basis of ECs that impacted on your ability to attend classes you must also explain why you have not been able to engage with the attendance monitoring procedures.

The evidence you submit to support your appeal must support your lack of engagement with the attendance monitoring procedures throughout the period leading to your withdrawal as well as confirming why you were unable to attend.

**Academic Misconduct Mitigation**

If you are asking the University to take into consideration mitigation when considering the application of a penalty under the Academic Misconduct Regulations you must provide independent evidence as detailed in the table below. The University will not remove a penalty entirely for an upheld allegation of academic misconduct but may, if the evidence supports it, consider reducing the level of the penalty applied.

The evidence you provide must support how your circumstances impacted your ability to conduct yourself as expected by the University’s regulations on academic misconduct. The evidence must also detail the circumstances affecting you at the time and why you breached the Academic Misconduct Regulations rather than submitting a claim for extenuating circumstances or requesting an extension to a deadline.

**All Late Claims**

If you are submitting a claim or appeal under any of the above procedures outside of the regulatory timeframes, as defined by the associated procedure, then your evidence must also support why you were not able to engage with the procedures in a timely manner and within the timeframes set out in the regulations and procedures.

**Fit to Sit**

If you are making a case related to an examination that you sat, you should be aware that the University operates a ‘fit to sit’ policy. This means that by attending an exam, you have declared that you were fit to undertake it and will not normally be granted an EC. If you make a claim that you were not well enough to have sat your exam then you will need to provide independent evidence signed by a medical practitioner that explicitly states you were not able to have determined your fitness at the time when the exam was sat.

**Medical Evidence**

Any statements you make about your health must be directly supported by medical evidence if they are to be taken into account by the University when considering your claim.

The evidence should normally be provided on a University Medical Evidence Form, a sick note or a letter from a health care professional to confirm your illness. Other forms of medical evidence, such as patient summary documents may be accepted at the discretion of the University. For a list of example types of documents accepted, please see below.

**Copies of prescriptions, details of medical appointments, photographs of injuries, copies of evidence relating to a friend or family member or supporting letters from families or friends will not be accepted.**

The University Medical Evidence Form can be completed by any GP Practice not just the University Health Centre.
Copies of prescriptions or photocopies of medicine boxes will not be seen as confirmation that you were unable to complete your work to the best of your ability. These types of evidence only indicate that a certain medicine was prescribed - you would need medical evidence to confirm that the nature or impact of your illness was such that you could not have undertaken your work.

The evidence must be signed and dated by a medical practitioner (GP, healthcare professional or clinical specialist) and must include the dates when your circumstances affected you and how they affected or are likely to affect your ability to prepare, submit or attend an assessment.

Evidence must be provided in English or accompanied by a translation formally notarised by a solicitor. Evidence not translated will either result in claims or appeals not being accepted or delayed.

The evidence must relate directly to you, and detail the impact your circumstances have had on your studies.

If, for example, your studies have been disrupted by financial difficulties that have caused you stress, you will need to provide a medical note from your doctor confirming a diagnosis of stress. A claim that includes copies of bank statements or eviction notes will not be approved as these documents do not confirm what impact your situation had on you.

Similarly, if you are making a claim based on the illness of a family member or close friend, the evidence required is not confirmation of the illness of your friend or family member. Instead it must confirm the impact that the situation had on you which meant that you were unable to attend an exam, complete your assessments or perform to the best of your ability.

**Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP)**

A PLSP will not usually be acceptable as evidence to support a claim. A PLSP shows that reasonable adjustments have been identified and should have already been made.

If the circumstances relating to your PLSP have changed you should contact the University Wellbeing and Disability Service for support and further evidence. This evidence should confirm how your change in circumstances have impacted your ability to meet your assessment deadlines.

Where a long term condition has worsened then evidence such as Medical Evidence Form or GP’s letter reporting the specific deterioration or sudden change including the time period it applies to will be required. The evidence should describe how you have been affected by the change in your condition. Evidence simply confirming the long-term condition without mention of any changes is normally insufficient.

**Examples of ECs and Types of Evidence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Illness, accident or mental health crisis</th>
<th>Evidence should specify the negative affect on your ability to complete your assessment.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical evidence - should confirm your illness and confirm that the time period for which you were unwell corresponds to the assessment period in which you are claiming.</td>
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<td>Hospital admission and discharge letters - should confirm your time spent in hospital.</td>
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<td>Statutory Sick Notes/Fitness for work Notes – must be signed and stamped by your GP practice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Patient Summary Notices – must identify you as the patient and must confirm the impact of your illness/circumstances on your ability to complete assessments. A list of conditions, prescriptions, symptoms and appointments will not be enough.</td>
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<td><strong>Student wellbeing services</strong></td>
<td>mental health advisers and counselling staff can provide a letter if you have been accessing their service. Self-certification of your own circumstances is not acceptable.</td>
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<td><strong>Bereavement</strong></td>
<td>For the death of an immediate family member (such as spouse, partner, child, parent, grandparent, sibling) a death certificate will be acceptable for 3 weeks following the death. Your claim form should indicate the nature of your relationship to the deceased. A death certificate for a close friend or less immediate family member will be accepted for a period of 1 week following the death. For a longer period of time or when a death certificate is not available a medical note confirming the impact of the bereavement on ability to meet assessment deadlines will be required.</td>
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<td><strong>Pregnancy</strong></td>
<td>You should refer to the pregnant student policy <a href="#">link</a>. If assessment and exams cannot be completed due to illness or complications resulting from a pregnancy then evidence from your GP, nurse practitioner or midwife will be required. The evidence will need to confirm the impact of your circumstances on your ability to meet assessment deadlines, not just confirm a pregnancy and due date. For cases that require in excess of the standard allowances in the pregnant student policy the standard requirements for appropriate evidence will apply. Where a birth occurs at the time of an assessment deadline (or the deadline falls within 2 weeks following a birth) evidence in the form of a birth certificate will be accepted. For a period of longer than 2 weeks after the birth evidence from your GP, nurse practitioner or midwife will be required. The evidence will need to confirm the impact of your circumstances on your ability to meet assessment deadlines.</td>
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<td><strong>Paternal/partner leave</strong></td>
<td>New parents are entitled to two weeks parental leave. For assessment deadlines longer than 2 weeks after the birth evidence will be needed to confirm the impact of your circumstances on your ability to meet assessment deadlines.</td>
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<td><strong>Financial or domestic difficulties</strong></td>
<td>Evidence must confirm the impact of the circumstances on your ability to meet deadlines, for example a medical letter that confirms that the circumstances have caused stress that has impacted on ability to complete work.</td>
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<td><strong>Travel Disruption</strong></td>
<td>In cases where you have missed an exam or in class test due to travel/weather disruption you must provide independent evidence of the disruption unless the University has closed due to these unforeseen circumstances.</td>
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<td><strong>Placement delays</strong></td>
<td>In cases where you have not been able to complete an assessment due to delays in completing a placement through no fault of your own you should provide evidence from your module tutor that confirms that you have not been able to complete the assessment through no fault of your own.</td>
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<td><strong>Work commitments</strong></td>
<td>Part-time students: if you are registered as a part-time student and your work commitments have unexpectedly impacted on your studies you should provide a signed statement from your employer confirming these circumstances.</td>
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<td>Caring responsibilities/illness of a family member</td>
<td>The evidence must confirm the impact of the circumstances on you and your ability to complete assessments. A medical letter relating to the family member will not be considered acceptable evidence.</td>
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<td>Childcare Issues</td>
<td>If you miss an exam due to issues with childcare, your evidence must confirm that these were sudden, unexpected and unforeseen.</td>
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<td>Material Irregularity</td>
<td>If you are claiming that you missed an assessment deadline due to an irregularity or misinformation from a tutor your evidence would need to confirm that poor/wrong advice was given (such as a copy of an email) and the impact that this would have had.</td>
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Full time students: if you are registered as a full time student you studies are expected to take priority and you are unlikely to be granted an EC for work commitments.