**Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub**

**Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure**

Extenuating Circumstances are defined as serious and acute problems or events which are beyond a student’s control or ability to foresee which may have affected a student’s performance and/or may have impeded a student’s ability to attend, complete, or submit an assessment on time.

**Underlying Principles**

Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub’s Policy on Extenuating Circumstances is based on the following principles:

1. The object of any assessment is to measure achievement, not potential (i.e. what a student has done, not what they might have the potential to do).
2. Each student has individual responsibility for submitting coursework on time, for presenting him/herself for scheduled assessments (to include written examinations, demonstrations, presentations and practical examinations or assessments) at the appropriate time and place and for informing us of any extenuating circumstances by submitting information and documentation on such circumstances.  
   It is the student’s responsibility to declare any circumstances in a timely manner (normally BEFORE the deadline/examination) to allow the us an opportunity to respond appropriately to those circumstances.
3. We will respond in a fair and equitable way to any extenuating circumstance which cannot adequately be resolved prior to the assessment in question.
4. Extenuating circumstances will not be considered as grounds for adjusting marks awarded for assessments already completed.

**Presumptions**

It is the policy of Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub to adopt a presumption that a student who sits an examination or assessment or submits an assessment is fit to do so. The outcome of the assessment will be an accurate reflection of performance and will not be altered subsequently on the basis of extenuating circumstances. A student who is unable to sit an examination or complete an assessment because of extenuating circumstances may (subject to the provision of appropriate evidence) be given a further opportunity to undertake the assessment potentially as an uncapped opportunity. This may incur additional charges and be subject to the policies of The Counselling and Psychotherapy Central Awarding Body (CPCAB)

**Extenuating Circumstances**

The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances **unlikely** to be accepted by Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub as valid extenuating circumstances:

* Minor illness or ailment (which in a work situation would be unlikely to lead to absence from work) affecting the student’s preparatory work for an assessment. Examples could include colds, headaches, minor accidents or injuries.
* Alleged medical condition without reasonable evidence (medical or otherwise) to support it.
* Financial problems, including the effect of paid employment.
* Long-term ill-health, specific requirements, disabilities which have been disclosed and assessed by Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub.
* Poor time-management.
* Social obligations and similar avoidable commitments such as: holidays, weddings, parties, routine medical appointments.
* Avoidable study-related factors such as: computer failure, printer malfunction, deadline congestion, lost notes.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances which Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub would commonly regard as extenuating circumstances which might affect performance:

* Serious illness, accident or well-being issue that is incapacitating or an unexpected deterioration in a long-term condition. Medical certification is expected to be provided and should clearly apply to the period immediately prior to an assessment date.
* Minor illness or ailment affecting the student on the day of or immediately preceding an examination. Examples could include minor accidents or injuries, examination anxiety and stress. Medical certification is expected to be provided and should clearly apply to the assessment date or a short period immediately prior to an assessment date.
* Death or serious illness of a close relative or friend. Supporting independent evidence must be provided.
* Significant adverse personal/family circumstances – such as divorce, burglary, fire, major court proceedings, financial difficulties beyond the control of the student. Supporting independent evidence must be provided.
* Other significant exceptional factors which have had a significant impact on the student. Supporting independent evidence must be provided.

Full documentation to substantiate any extenuating circumstances claims must be provided. Such evidence provided must be dated to within a month of the affected assessment/exam, must indicate how the circumstances affected a student’s performance and/or may have impeded a student’s ability to attend, complete, or submit an assessment on time.  The absence of such documentation will result in the application being rejected.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of appropriate evidence:

* Doctor\*/Health Professional’s letter/certificate which confirms the illness, indicates the likely impact of the illness and clearly identifies that the time period of illness corresponds to the assessment period in which the claim is being made. (\* Doctor should be GMC registered or have equivalent standing. Where the doctor is not GMC registered or does not have equivalent standing, further evidence may be requested, as appropriate).
* In the case of a student taken ill during an examination, a copy of the invigilator’s report.  (This should be accompanied by medical evidence wherever possible).
* Hospital admission and discharge letter, to confirm time spent in hospital
* Death certificate / Order or Service / Funeral Director's Letter
* Police report, a crime reference number on its own will not be sufficient
* News report to confirm unforeseen transport difficulties

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of evidence which is not considered appropriate and unlikely to be accepted:

* Self-certification of circumstances
* Evidence which is not supplied by an independent party
* Medical condition supported by retrospective evidence
* A letter from a parent, partner, family member or fellow student verifying circumstances where there is no other independent supporting evidence
* Evidence in a language other than English which is not accompanied by a certified translation
* Crime reference number without a supplementary Police report
* Screenshots from mobile devices showing restricted information
* Illegible evidence i.e. faded wording, cropped, missing information, undated, poorly scanned evidence

**Extenuating Circumstances Procedure**

Please note that only the most serious extenuating circumstances are likely to be considered and rarely will retrospective claims be allowed as we expect students to notify us in advance of any difficulty, they may have regarding meeting deadlines and attending assessments and examinations. Students should refer to the lists above for examples of the kind of situations that will be considered and the documentation we require to accompany the claim.

1. Complete the attached extenuating circumstances form and hand to your course tutor at least 28 days before the assessment deadline or date of the external assessment. This needs to be submitted with supporting documentation.
2. In situations where the extenuating circumstances were unforeseen or arise as a result of situations beyond the control of the student, such as emergency situations or serious illness, on the day of an external assessment, then the attached form must be submitted to the course tutor within 7 days of the assessment due date.
3. The course tutor will consult with the course director who will consider the application in line with the above guidelines.
4. If an extension is granted a date will be set for the completion of the assessment or external assessment.
5. Failure to meet the new deadline or external assessment date will result in you being assessed as not proficient internally (external assessment dates are set by CPCAB not ourselves and so may involve a delay in being rearranged).
6. Where necessary, it is the student’s responsibility (and at their own cost and at a mutually suitable time) to travel to our premises to submit any work submitted on an extended date or to sit an external assessment.
7. In the event that a student has missed an external assessment, the student will be responsible for all costs associated with rearranging the examination (costs will include things like room hire, admin costs, invigilator costs, awarding body fees, postage etc.)
8. Any false claim or fraudulent documentation being submitted will be considered a breach of ethical practice and an internal assessment of not proficient will be awarded.

Reviewed July 2019

**Devon and Cornwall Counselling Hub**

**Extenuating Circumstances Form**

**Name:**

**Course:**

**Tutors:**

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**Coursework or**

**Assessment affected**

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**Details of extenuating**

**circumstances and how**

**you consider they have**

**affected your work.**

**------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**List of supporting**

**documentation (any forms**

**submitted without documentation**

**will not be considered)**

**------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**Student Signature Date**

**------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

**Office Use**

**Extenuating Circs Accepted Yes [ ] No [ ]**

**Extension or re-sit date -----------------------------------------**

**Course Director Signature ---------------------------------------------------- Date ------------------**