



## **Extenuating Circumstances Procedure**

**Approved**

**27<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

**Approved by**

**Senior Leadership Team**

<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Extenuating Circumstances</b>
<b>Document Owner</b>	<b>Director of HE</b>

<b>Directorates and Departments affected by this Procedure</b>	<b>All Higher Education Curriculum Staff</b>
<b>Procedure Effective From</b>	<b>November 2025</b>
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New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact [records@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:records@newdur.ac.uk)

We review our procedures regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All procedures are subject to equality impact assessments which are carried out to determine whether the procedure has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

**Director of Higher Education**

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## 1. Scope

Students are expected to demonstrate their achievement of learning through the successful completion of module assessments. However, the College recognises that sometimes, through unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, students are unable to submit assessments or perform in an examination to the full extent of their abilities. These are referred to as Extenuating Circumstances. The College operates procedures to apply for an extension and/or mitigation, in line with the Academic Regulations of New College Durham, The Open University, Pearson and other Higher Education awarding bodies.

## Relationship with Existing Policies and Regulations

This procedure should be read in the context of the following College documents:

- Extenuating Circumstances Policy;
- A Student Guide to Extenuating Circumstances;
- A Staff Guide to Extenuating Circumstances Mitigation Panel Agenda;
- Appeals policy and procedure.

## 2. Section 1 Procedure for Applying for an Extension

It is advised that the Programme Leader/Module Tutor and student discuss the extension request verbally by telephone or in-person.

- a) The request for an extension must be made at least 24 hours before the assessment submission date;
- b) The extension request must be made in writing by the student (generally email) to the Programme Leader/Module Tutor informing them of the reason;
- c) A redacted copy of the extension request will be stored in the programme file;
- d) The Programme Leader has the authority to approve/reject the request based on the student's rationale.;
- e) Students whose extension requests are approved will be entered into the extension report, a copy of which will be stored in the programme file and which will be presented at Mitigation Panel or the next convenient Assessment Board.

## 3. Section 2 Procedure for Applying for Mitigation

Students and staff will be informed of the deadline for submissions to the Mitigation Panels. Only under exceptional circumstances will an application submitted late be considered by the Mitigation Panel.

The Programme Leader/Tutor will:

- a) Ensure students have access to the validating/awarding body regulations and guidance;
- b) Ensure students are made aware of the designated member of staff to whom they should discuss their circumstances which may give rise to an application for mitigation;
- c) Ensure students are made aware of the location and method by which they should submit requests for mitigation;
- d) Provide students with the scheduled dates of the mitigation panel meetings and the deadlines by which requests for mitigation should be submitted;
- e) Ensure confidentiality at all stages of the process;
- f) Provide the Mitigation Panel, for note, a list of all assessment extensions applied for and granted at the point of assessment;
- g) Where appropriate complete Section 2 of the application form.

The student should:

- a) In the first instance, the student seeking mitigation is advised to discuss with their Programme Leader/Tutor their reasons for applying for mitigation. This is to enable the student to receive advice and support;
- b) Complete the mitigation application form which is available on the College website and Student Intranet;
- c) When completing the form:
  - i. ensure **all** details are accurate e.g. personal contact details, programme, module title, module code, assessment method etc;
  - ii. include their supporting statement request for mitigation, which is clear and detailed;
  - iii. obtain a statement and signature from Programme Leader/Tutor prior to submission;
  - iv. attach appropriate, independent evidence which relates directly to their reason for requesting mitigation and which is time specific to the assessment date the mitigation is requested for;
  - v. ensure any late evidence is submitted no later than 4 College days before the Mitigation Panel takes place.

Insufficient evidence or inaccuracies will result in the application being rejected.

Completed mitigation application forms and supporting evidence can be emailed to [mitigation@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:mitigation@newdur.ac.uk). An email will be sent to the student's inbox as proof of receipt.

Unless the extenuating circumstances prevent the student completing the work, or the assessment is an exam, the student should continue working on their assignment and submit it as soon as possible. They shouldn't wait for a Mitigation Panel decision. When submitting the Extenuating Circumstances application, the student must indicate whether they've already submitted their work.

**Work submitted before the panel, but after the original hand in date**

If the Mitigation Panel approves the application for extenuating circumstances, they will decide the outcome for the submitted work (see appendix). If the application is not approved, the submitted work will be treated as a late submission in line with academic regulations.

### **Work not submitted before the panel**

If the extenuating circumstances prevent the student from submitting their work before the Mitigation Panel meets, and the evidence supports this, the application will be approved, and the panel will decide the outcome (see appendix). However, if the application is not approved, the assessment will be marked as a non-submission in line with academic regulations.

Example reasons of appropriate mitigation and evidence can be found in the Student Guide to Mitigation.

## **4. Procedure for the Mitigation Panel**

The Mitigation Panel Meeting:

Once convened, the meeting will be conducted in the following format:

- a) The Chair will set out the Terms of Reference and remind the members of the meeting of their roles, responsibilities, and the confidentiality of the proceedings;
- b) The Chair will ensure the agenda is followed;
- c) The Chair will introduce each application and invite comments and discussions by panel members;
- d) The panel will arrive at their decision for each application and each element of the assessment(s) and apply the appropriate outcome code(s);
- e) The Panel Secretary will minute the outcome of the discussion, ensuring each application and each element under consideration is clearly recorded. This is to be able to provide detailed feedback to students where they have requested information on the decision reached;
- f) Panel members will attend the entirety of the meeting. Where early departure is unavoidable, the minutes will indicate precisely the point at which the member left.

Due to the confidential nature of the panel proceedings, panel members are not permitted to discuss any aspects of the business of the meeting, outside of the meeting. If a request for information is made to them, the requestor must be directed to the Chair.

## **5. Procedure for the Dissemination of Outcomes**

Students will be informed of the outcome of the Mitigation Panel by the Panel Secretary using a standard template letter which will be sent normally within 5 College days of the meeting.

Following the meeting, the Panel Secretary will:

- a) Produce the panel outcomes letters which set out the panel decision and outcome code and the subsequent actions which may be required. These will be sent to students and copied to the Programme Leader by email within 5 College days of the meeting;
- b) Update the outcomes spreadsheet within 5 College days and provide access to:
  - i. Academic Registry for uploading against the student assessment record on Mark Book;
  - ii. the Chair of relevant Assessment Board meetings;
  - iii. HE Quality Enhancement Manager, for note.
- c) Ensure the confirmed minutes and outcomes report are saved to the HEDU Sharepoint site, with controlled access.

## **6. Further Evidence Request**

It may state in the letter of the decision that the Mitigation Panel will re-consider a decision if the student is able to submit additional evidence within 7 calendar days of the decision letter being received and which fully supports the mitigation request. Any submissions received after the 7-day deadline will only be considered at the Mitigation Panel's discretion.

## **7. Appeal**

Where an Extenuating Circumstances Application is rejected, the student has the opportunity to lodge an appeal via the Academic Appeals Procedure within 10 College days of the date on the outcome letter.

## **8. Evaluation and Review**

The effectiveness of this procedure will be monitored, alongside the review of the relevant policy.

## Appendix

### Mitigation Outcomes

#### a. Mitigation A (MA)

Very serious extenuating circumstances such as to make appropriate, if the Assessment Board or Committee so considers, the provisions of the following:

- i. Permit the student to be assessed in a form agreed by the Assessment Board.
- ii. Judge the student to have passed the assessment.
- iii. acknowledge the mitigation for the module(s) and ensure it is considered during the award and classification process

#### b. Mitigation B (MB)

Extenuating circumstances sufficiently serious to make appropriate a decision to defer an assessment.

#### c. Mitigation C (MC)

Extenuating circumstances not deemed sufficiently serious to make a deferral of assessment appropriate.

### Outcome Code and Action Description

- Outcome 1 – Submit assessment by the required date **without** penalty\*
- Outcome 2 – Submit assessment by the required date **with** penalty
- Outcome 3 – Sit the examination at the next available opportunity **without** penalty – see Programme Leader for details
- Outcome 4 - Re-sit the examination at the next available opportunity **with** penalty – see Programme Leader for details
- Outcome 5 – Insufficient evidence to support the application/Date(s) of the supporting evidence do not align with the date(s) of assessment
- Outcome 6 – Application form is incomplete or missing key information
- Outcome 7 – Ongoing extenuating circumstances likely to impact progression. Recommend Suspension of Studies be considered.
- Outcome 8 - Other this will be stated on the letter received by students

\*Penalty – is a grade which is restricted to a minimum level of pass mark