Guidance for Mitigating Circumstances, Extensions, and Extenuating Circumstances

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BLOOMSBURY INSTITUTE LONDON

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1. Purpose and Scope

Occasionally, circumstances beyond students' control may affect their ability to submit work on time. In these cases, students have the option to submit a request for Mitigating Circumstances (MC), Extensions, or Extenuating Circumstances (EC).

Students enrolled on courses awarded by Birkbeck, University of London, can submit an MC request for 'no penalty for a submission made during the two-week late submission period', or for 'deferral to a later submission beyond the two-week late period'.

Students enrolled on courses awarded by Wrexham University can submit an Extension request for a one-week extension, or for Extenuating Circumstances for deferral to a later submission point.

'No penalty' MC requests and Extensions are **not available** for exams, presentations or time-constrained assessments.

Presentations may only be rescheduled at the discretion and availability of the Module Leader, within the **same week of the original presentation date**. Please note that there is no guarantee presentations can be rescheduled, as it is dependent on the availability of the Module Leader. For this reason, students should plan to attend their original presentation slot.

Students must contact Module Leaders with sufficient notice and receive the final confirmation of the rescheduled date.

For students with approved MC/ EC deferrals at resit, a third opportunity within the same academic year will be available. Please note this is not available for exams or presentations, which will be scheduled for the next time the module is due to run. Progression and graduation timelines may be impacted for students that are unable to meet the third sit deadline.

This document provides guidance to staff and students on:

- The grounds for MC, extension, and EC requests
- The request and consideration process
- Implications for the student's course and progression

2. Definitions and key principles

Students experiencing short-term serious problems beyond their control or ability to foresee, may be eligible to request a short extension of one or two weeks, or to report mitigating/extenuating circumstances, deferring the assessment to the next opportunity. Both options allow the student to submit at a later date for the full range of marks.

A student who submits an assessment or attends an examination is normally considered to have declared themselves **'fit to sit'**. Any subsequent claim that performance in that examination or in-class test was affected by illness will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances. A medical note should be submitted in support of a formal claim.

Situations that may be considered valid circumstances for MCs, extensions, or ECs:

- Acute and unexpected illness
- Bereavement
- Illness of a close family member
- Unexpected caring responsibilities
- Major family crisis
- Severe disruption of personal life
- Jury service
- Long-term health conditions or disabilities

Situations that would NOT normally be considered valid circumstances for MCs, extensions, or ECs:

- Common cold symptoms lasting less than one week
- Clashing deadlines
- 'Normal' (i.e. not unexpected) work commitments
- Travel issues, e.g. traffic, cancelled trains, etc.
- Planned holidays or events
- Misreading or being unaware of timetables, submission information or deadlines
- Late enrolment
- IT issues, e.g. losing work that was not backed up elsewhere, frozen laptop, etc.
- Needing more time to improve the assignment
- Voluntary participation in an event
- Submitting in the wrong submission area

3. Submitting a request

3.1 Birkbeck, University of London

There are two types of Mitigating Circumstances (MC) claims that students enrolled on courses validated by Birkbeck, University of London, can request:

No penalty for a submission made during the two-week late submission period: for students that have missed the original deadline but can still submit within the two-week late period.

- In this instance, the student will submit using the same first-sit assessment brief.
- Requests are reviewed by academic staff members and the Academic Administration team. The outcome of the MC request will be confirmed within 5 working days upon receipt of the request to the student's institutional email address.
- **No MC 'no penalty' requests can be granted for resits/resubmissions** following failure at the first attempt (without deferrals approved for all previous opportunities).

Deferral to a later submission beyond the two-week late period: for students that have missed an examination, or the original assessment deadline, and are unable to submit within the two-week late period.

- In this instance, the student will submit at a later date using a new resubmission assessment brief. The brief and resubmission deadline will be both available on Canvas. A holding grade of 3% will be added to reflect the approved deferral.
- Approved deferral MCs for **first sits** allow students to submit an assessment or sit an exam for the first time at a later date and receive an **uncapped grade**. The new deadline for this first-sit will be scheduled at the same time as the resit deadline for that module.
- Approved deferral MCs for **resits** allow students to submit an assessment or sit an exam for the resit at a later date. **The resit grade will still be capped**. The new deadline will be confirmed by the Assessments team.
- **An approved deferral will only be applied to a whole assessment item**, not to individual sub-component parts (i.e., presentation and submission). Any existing marks for sub-components will be overwritten by an approved MC deferral, and **all sub-components will need to be submitted again** at the next assessment opportunity.
- Deferral requests are reviewed by the MC Panel, which will consider the student's circumstances, provided evidence, number of previous requests, and current grades. The outcome of the MC request will be confirmed within 5 working days of the Panel meeting to the student's institutional email address.

- **Progression and date of award may be impacted for students that have been granted MCs in more than one module, or the final modules.** Such cases are reviewed by the Registry team, and the outcome is communicated to the student as necessary.

Students can **make a claim for MCs by completing the online MC Form**. Students must fill in one form for each item of assessment. When submitting the request, students must please provide **full details** as to why the request is being made.

The claim must be submitted no earlier than 14 calendar days before the original date of an assessment and **no later than 14 calendar days** afterwards. If there is a valid reason for applying outside this window, the student must include this information as a support statement, otherwise the claim will be automatically rejected. Students who have an existing 'no penalty' MC, who are unable to submit within the two-week late period, **must submit a new MC deferral request** no later than 14 calendar days from the initial submission deadline. (e.g. if the initial submission deadline is 1 May, all MC requests (for 'no penalty' or 'deferral') must be submitted by 15 May).

3.2 Wrexham University

There are two types of requests that students enrolled on courses validated by Wrexham University can submit:

Extensions: for students that have missed the original deadline but can still submit within the one-week late period.

- In this instance, the student will submit using the same first-sit assessment brief.

- Students can request a one-week extension by **completing the Assessment Extension Request Form**[1] **before the assessment deadline**. Students must fill in one form for each item of assessment. When submitting the request, students must please provide **full details** as to why the request is being made.

- Extension requests are reviewed by the Academic Admin team. The outcome of the request will be confirmed within 5 working days upon receipt of the request to the student's institutional email address.

- No extensions can be granted for resits/resubmissions following failure at the first attempt (i.e. without ECs approved for all previous opportunities).

Extenuating Circumstances (EC): for students that have missed an examination, or the original assessment deadline, and are unable to submit within the one-week late period.

- In this instance, the student will submit at a later date using a new resubmission assessment brief. The brief and resubmission deadline will be both available on Canvas. A holding grade of 3% will be added to reflect the approved deferral.

- Students **submit claims in the Wrexham University student portal (eVision) within 15 working days of the date of assessment**. If the claim or supporting evidence is submitted outside the 15 working day window, the student must show good reason for the lateness of the request. When submitting the request, students must please provide **full details** as to why the request is being made. Bloomsbury Institute is not directly involved in the process. The Academic Administration team is informed by the University when students have applied and of the EC outcome.

- Approved ECs for **first sits** allow students to submit an assessment or sit an exam for the first time at a later date and receive an **uncapped grade**. The new deadline

[1] https://www.bil.ac.uk/student-services/forms/

for this first-sit will be scheduled at the same time as the resit deadline for that module.

- Approved ECs for **resits** allow students to submit an assessment or sit an exam for the resit at a later date. **The resit grade will still be capped**. The new deadline will be confirmed by the Assessments team.

- **An approved deferral will only be applied to a whole assessment item**, not to individual sub-component parts (i.e., presentation and submission). Any existing marks for sub-components will be overwritten by an approved EC deferral, and **all sub-components will need to be submitted again** at the next assessment opportunity.

- **Progression and date of award may be impacted for students that have been granted ECs in more than one module, or the final modules.** Such cases are reviewed by the Registry team, and the outcome is communicated to the student as necessary.

3.3 Reasonable adjustments

Students registered with the Disability and Wellbeing Team have access to late submissions as part of the Reasonable Adjustment (RA) agreements.

- In this instance, the student will submit using the same first-sit assessment brief.

- Students must **submit requests on SSP** for a two-week extension (Birkbeck, University of London), or one-week extension (Wrexham University).

    - **Wrexham University students may request an additional one-week extension** following the process in section 3.2. Students are advised to contact the Academic Administration Team and their Course Leader to discuss the reason for the additional extension. **No additional time can be approved for Birkbeck students**.

    - Extensions of more than one week are approved only in **exceptional cases**. They are not provided as reasonable adjustments, but rather in the case that complications appear in a pre-existing condition. **Supporting evidence is required.**

- Extension requests are reviewed by the Academic Admin team and the Disability and Wellbeing team. The outcome of the request will be confirmed within 5 working days upon receipt of the request to the student's institutional email address.

- It may not be possible to offer late submission for some assessments or for exams. In these instances, the student will be advised on the MC/ EC process instead.

- **No RA submissions can be granted for resits/resubmissions following failure at the first attempt** (i.e. without MCs/ ECs approved for all previous opportunities).

Documentary evidence is not required for a short-term, self-managed exacerbation of a long-term condition that is already registered with Bloomsbury Institute, unless this occurs repeatedly, in which case students may be asked for additional evidence of engagement with appropriate services to manage the condition. The same evidence can be used more than once but must be attached to each request.

3.4 Supporting evidence

Evidence requirements – Birkbeck, University of London:

- **First MC claim** of the academic year: Students are not required to upload evidence. A supporting statement should be provided, explaining how the student's circumstances affected their work or studies.

- **Second MC claim** of the academic year: Students should upload supporting evidence. If there are valid reasons for not doing so, the student should explain these in the statement. The panel will use their discretion to determine whether to accept the claim without evidence and may request more information before making a final decision.

- **Third MC claim** of the academic year: Supporting evidence must be provided. Students making multiple claims within the same academic year should speak to their Course Leader and to the Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Success team, as other processes or forms of support may be more beneficial.

Evidence requirements – Wrexham University:

- **Supporting evidence is required.** Students are advised to contact their Module or Course Leader to discuss their circumstances before applying for an extension or ECs.

The following evidence can be provided in support of an extension, EC/MC request:
- Medical certificate or letter
- Legal or official documents
- Prescriptions
- Crime reference numbers
- Supporting statement from an academic tutor or member of Student Engagement Wellbeing and Success Team (SEWS)

The following evidence will **not** be accepted:
- Transport tickets or booking confirmations
- Private messages (e.g. WhatsApp)
- Photos or videos of injuries, medication without names or dates, COVID Lateral Flow tests
- Photos or videos of the student and/or friends and family in the hospital/at funerals

4. Late submission

4.1 Birkbeck, University of London

Work submitted up to 7 calendar days late will have 10% deducted from the original mark awarded. Where the original mark awarded was above the pass mark (40% for undergraduate level; 50% for postgraduate level), the deduction will reduce the mark to no less than the pass mark. No penalty should be applied if the original mark for the late work was at or below a pass.

Work submitted more than 7 calendar days late will receive a late capped penalty mark according to the respective pass threshold (40% for undergraduate modules and 50% for postgraduate modules). The absolute cut-off deadline for late submission and accompanying documentation across Bloomsbury Institute is two weeks. Work from this point on will be treated as a non-submission.

At resit, **late submissions and extensions** (including for reasonable adjustments) **will not be accepted** unless the first sit attempt was previously approved a deferral due to mitigating circumstances. All standard resubmission work must therefore be submitted by the deadline.

4.2 Wrexham University

Work can be submitted up to 5 working days late at both the first and second opportunity. The mark for the assessment will be capped at 40.

At resit, **extensions** (including for reasonable adjustments) **will not be accepted** unless the first sit attempt was previously approved a deferral due to extenuating circumstances. The late submission window is only open for one week from the original assessment deadline. It is not possible to submit late following an extended deadline; these submissions would not be accepted.

5. Process flowchart



6. Relevant policies and guidance

Academic Regulations (Birkbeck, University of London)
Assessment Procedures – Birkbeck University Validated Degrees
Assessment Procedures – Wrexham University Validated Degrees
Extenuating Circumstances Procedure (Wrexham University)
Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedures (Birkbeck, University of London)
Evidential Requirements Guidance – Wrexham University Validated Degrees