

ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARDING: TAUGHT PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK**Chapter 10 – Annex 1: Mitigation Supplementary Information****1. Overview**

- 1.1 Mitigation can be granted in response to difficult personal circumstances, outside of a student's control, that may have prevented students from either demonstrating or acquiring the skills, knowledge and/or competencies required to meet the learning outcomes associated with an assessment that contributes to the qualification for which they are studying.
- 1.2 Difficult personal circumstances for which mitigation is applicable may be unforeseen, unavoidable, short or long in duration, and isolated incidences and/or cumulative in effect.
- 1.3 They may occur close in time to the submission deadline/assessed activity and/or disrupt preceding teaching and learning activities, and thereby have an impact on a student's academic performance in the related assessment.
- 1.4 Applications for mitigation are considered on an individual student basis, taking in to account any previous applications for mitigation.
- 1.5 Where an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is in place, recommendations for support are considered for students in conjunction with [Chapter 4 – Assessing Students with Disabilities](#) within the Assessment, Progression and Awarding Handbook, and Access Ability or Wellbeing Services.
- 1.6 Students with long term, fluctuating health conditions/ disabilities will be able to apply for mitigation as a result of their health and their ILP. They **must** provide the Mitigation Committee or its delegated representative a useful context when considering an application.
- 1.7 It is at the discretion of the Mitigation Committee to consider the individual circumstances provided by the student in order to agree reasonable and justifiable outcomes.

2. Examples of circumstances which may be considered to have significantly affected a student's performance.

A non-exhaustive list of examples of commonly accepted grounds / reasons (see section 5 for accepted evidence):

- i. Bereavement – death of close relative / significant other.
- ii. Serious short-term illness or accident of a nature which in an employment context would have led to an absence on sick leave (please see section 3 below for guidance on non-accepted medical grounds).
- iii. An ILP in which extensions on coursework are supported.
- iv. A long-term fluctuating health condition/ disability.
- v. Significant worsening in any difficult personal/ family/ welfare circumstances. This could include unexpected financial hardship which is impacting a student's ability to study.
- vi. Caring responsibilities e.g. where pre-established caring arrangements temporarily break down (please see section 5 below for guidance on non-accepted grounds related to caring). Please also see the [Student Carers webpage](#) regarding support for students with caring responsibilities.
- vii. With respect to online examinations, IT issues such as internet outages and computer failure which are reported during the assessment.
- viii. Other contextual factors for which there is evidence of impact.
- ix. Students undertaking Clinical Education Development and Research (CEDAR) programmes and who are required to demonstrate clinical competencies and the application of knowledge and theory as part of their programme, are permitted to apply for mitigation on the grounds that there are workplace or clinical circumstances preventing them from completing a clinical assessment.

3. Examples of circumstances which may not be considered to have significantly affected a student's performance: a non-exhaustive list of examples of commonly rejected grounds/reasons:

- i. Alleged medical circumstances outside the relevant assessment period or learning period for which extenuating / special circumstances have been applied for.
- ii. Colds, minor illness or ailment, which in a work situation would be unlikely to lead to absence from work. Students **should** allow time for such circumstances within their planning.

- iii. If there is a reasonable case that circumstances relied on were foreseeable or preventable, i.e. the following will commonly not be accepted:
 - a) Holidays.
 - b) Long-term and ongoing financial issues.
 - c) Poor IT practice e.g. no back up of electronic documents.
 - d) For coursework assignments: IT issues. Students are expected to follow guidance contained within coursework submission guides and allow themselves enough time to resolve any problems they encounter.
 - e) Lack of awareness of submission dates /times and examination date / times.
 - f) Poor time management.
 - g) Submission errors.
- iv. Late disclosure of circumstances on the basis that students were able but unwilling to confide in a staff member about their extenuating / special circumstances.

If the disruption to study caused by illness/ accident does not reasonably disrupt the submission of an assignment on time, mitigation will not be approved (please refer to sections 1 and 2 above for more information on accepted grounds for mitigation).

4. Late / retrospective applications must be made via the evidence-based mitigation process.

4.1 Late (made within three (3) weeks of the original assessment deadline)

Non-exhaustive examples of exceptional circumstances which may justify consideration of late application for mitigation

- i. A health condition which prevents a student from understanding or engaging with the procedures, for which we have independent medical evidence or a statement from a qualified medical professional confirming the impact on the student's ability to engage with the mitigation processes, or evidence from University Wellbeing Services or a Pastoral Mentor that they have been supporting the student.
- ii. An emerging health condition, the effect of which was not clear at the time of the assessment and would have significantly impacted on the student's ability to engage with their studies, and to engage with the procedures, as evidenced by a medical diagnosis or working diagnosis from an independent medical professional.

- iii. Illness which has led to confirmed hospitalisation of the student and prevented the submission of a mitigation application.
- iv. An unexpected traumatic event, defined as a sudden event that could not have been anticipated, for which the student was unprepared and impacted their ability to engage with support and university processes. Examples might include natural disasters, accidents, the sudden death of a loved one or violent incidents.

4.2 Retrospective

Non-exhaustive examples of exceptional circumstances which may justify consideration of retrospective applications for mitigation:

- i. A health condition which prevents a student's ability to understand or engage with the procedures for which we have independent medical evidence or a statement from a qualified medical professional to confirm the impact on the student's ability to engage with the mitigation processes.
- ii. An emerging health condition, the effect of which was not clear at the time of the assessment and would have significantly impacted on the student's ability to engage with their studies and to engage with the procedures, as evidenced by a medical diagnosis or working diagnosis from a qualified medical professional.
- iii. Illness which has led to confirmed hospitalisation of the student and prevented the submission of a mitigation application, verified by medical evidence from a qualified medical professional.
- iv. An unexpected traumatic event, defined as a sudden event that could not have been anticipated, for which the student was unprepared and impacted their ability to engage with support and university processes, verified by an independent source.

5. Non-exhaustive examples of accepted evidence in order of preference for acceptance:

5.1 Bereavement:

- i. Any medical evidence of impact of bereavement e.g. letter from a Doctor or another medical professional.

- ii. Death certificate.
- iii. Copy of order of service.
- iv. Statement from an immediate family member.
- v. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor, Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, dissertation tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

5.2 **Serious short-term illness or accident** (of a nature which, if were you employed, would mean an absence on sick leave):

- i. Any medical evidence of impact e.g. letter from a Doctor or another medical professional. This **must** include the dates impacted by the illness/accident.
- ii. Where a student requires an evidence-based extension for health-related circumstances lasting seven (7) days or fewer, it is sometimes not possible to obtain supporting evidence directly from a qualified third party (e.g. Doctor or medical professional). Where this is the case, one or more of the following types of evidence would be acceptable:
 - a) Extracts from medical notes (Doctors' surgeries/health centres can provide copies of these).
 - b) A letter/note from a Nurse, Occupational Therapist, Pharmacist or Physiotherapist.
 - c) Copy of a prescription or photo of the label on prescribed medication.
 - d) A letter/email confirming a medical appointment or a hospital admissions letter.
- iii. Where a student requires an evidence-based extension for health-related circumstances lasting seven (7) days or fewer, but cannot provide the above evidence, students **must** provide evidence that they have informed, in writing (i.e. via email), **both of** the following academic staff of their application and the reasons for it:
 - a) Their Pastoral Mentor /Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), and
 - b) The relevant Module Lead/ Convenor(s) whose assessment(s) submission deadlines are cited in the application for mitigation.

In these circumstances, a statement of support from the Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor) or relevant Module Lead/Convenor(s) is not required.

5.3 A long-term fluctuating health condition/ disability:

- i. Any medical evidence of impact of incident e.g. letter from a Doctor or other medical professional. This **must** cover the period(s) of impact.
- ii. An ILP which supports the granting of extensions.
- iii. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member: e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor/Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, dissertation tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

5.4 Significant worsening in any difficult personal/family/welfare circumstances, including unexpected and unavoidable short-term financial hardship which is impacting a student's ability to study.

- i. Any medical evidence of impact of incident e.g. letter from a Doctor or other medical professional.
- ii. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice unit or SU in Penryn, Dissertation Tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

If a student is unable to provide the above evidence, they are required to provide evidence that they have informed relevant pastoral members of staff of their application and the reasons for it, so that appropriate support can be provided (e.g. Pastoral Mentor/ Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Welfare staff, the Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, or the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team).

- iii. For students on work placements: a statement of support from the workplace supervisor, manager or service lead.

- iv. For applications on financial grounds, evidence **must** demonstrate the difficult personal circumstances which are making it hard for a student to engage with teaching and learning activities, and/or complete their assessments. This could include:
 - a) Relevant financial documentation, in the form of bills and/or confirmation of financial support from the Student Funding team via the Success for All Fund, and evidence of how the related circumstances are impacting a student's academic work.
 - b) Statement of support from, or relevant correspondence with, a workplace supervisor, manager or service lead indicating an increase or decrease in working hours and the resulting impact on a student's academic work.
 - c) Statement of support from any relevant University of Exeter staff member (e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor/ Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), and the University scholarships team) and/or Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

5.5 Caring responsibilities:

- i. Message from caring provider stating that the provision is not available.
- ii. Any medical evidence of impact of incident e.g. letter from a Doctor or other medical professional.
- iii. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, dissertation tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment.

This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

If a student is unable to provide the above evidence, they are required to provide evidence that they have informed relevant pastoral members of staff of their application and the reasons for it, so that appropriate support can be provided (e.g.

Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Welfare staff, the Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, or the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team).

5.6 IT issues (for online examinations) such as internet outages and computer failure which are reported at the time of the issue:

- i. Statement of outage (Wi-Fi/ electrical) from provider.
- ii. Video of crashed device with date and student number evidenced in the picture.
- iii. Statement from staff member if staff member was present at time of technical issue.

5.7 Other contextual factors for which there is evidence of impact:

Examples of acceptable evidence/ application support routes.

5.7.1 Impact from racial trauma – Range of possible suitable evidence in order of preference for acceptance:

- i. Statement of support from any Exeter Racial Equality or EDI role holder e.g. faculty (or delegated School)/ department Academic Lead for Student Support (Racial Equality and Inclusion)/ Race Equality Resource Officer/ Dignity and Respect Advisors/ Raising Concerns Leads (CMH clinical programmes only).
- ii. For students on work placements: a statement of support from the workplace supervisor, manager or service lead.
- iii. Formal complaints report submitted through [Report and Support](#) / Raising Concerns Leads.
- iv. Police report, if available.
- v. Estate patrol report, if available.
- vi. Any medical evidence of impact of incident e.g. letter from a Doctor or other medical professional.
- vii. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member: e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, Dissertation Tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

5.7.2 *Impact from global or national disruption:*

Students studying in their country of domicile may experience impact of issues on the ground in that country: evacuation, local infrastructure, local safety, recent disruptive events:

- i. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member: e.g. Module Lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment/ Dissertation Supervisor/ Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor)/ Education Welfare Advisors / Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn.
- ii. For students on work placements: a statement of support from the workplace supervisor, manager or service lead.
- iii. Any national or government instructions or notices (in English).
- iv. News articles or other reliable media sources.
- v. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member: e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, dissertation tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

5.7.2.2 *For those studying in Devon or Cornwall who experience the impact of issues for family or business in their country of domicile:*

- i. Any medical evidence of impact of incident e.g. letter from a Doctor or other medical professional.
- ii. One or more of the following:
 - Any national or government instructions or notices (in English).
 - News articles or other reliable media sources.
- iii. Statement of support from any Exeter staff member e.g. Education Welfare Advisors, Wellbeing Staff, Pastoral Mentor / Academic Tutor (also known as Personal Tutor), Guild Advice Unit or SU in Penryn, dissertation tutor, module lead for the module/ seminar lead for that group or assignment. This **should** be a member of staff who is already familiar with the circumstances and has knowledge of the issue about which the application for mitigation is being made.

5.8 CEDAR Programmes only - workplace or clinical circumstances preventing them from completing or submitting a clinical assessment:

- i. A supplementary supervisor form completed by a workplace supervisor/manager/service lead and providing details of the clinical or workplace issues experienced as well as information on how circumstances are being managed. This is not an exhaustive list, and similar exceptional circumstances **should** be considered alongside guidance in section 10.4.2 of the Mitigation guidance which refers to late applications.

5.9 Religious Observance where accommodations cannot be made in the scheduling of assessments via the Religious Observance process. Mitigation will only be considered for time-constrained/specific assessments, for which scheduling adjustments have not been possible, where an on-time and valid application was received via the Exams Office. Mitigation applications for auspicious dates (not for weddings/baptisms, etc.) will not be accepted.