

Academic Principles and Regulations

Codes of Practice

**Extenuating
Circumstances and
Mitigation
Student Handbook**



**LEEDS
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY**

Opening minds
Opening doors

1 Introduction

Leeds Beckett University recognises that circumstances may arise in which you are unable to complete assessment. These are known as extenuating circumstances.

You may submit your circumstances to request an extension or apply for mitigation to lessen the harmful effect of your extenuating circumstances on your assessment outcomes.

All requests will be treated confidentially.

You are advised to read this guidance document in conjunction with the Academic Principles and Regulations, section 2.7, a link may be found in the Advice and Further Guidance section of this document.

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2 Fit to Sit / Submit

The University Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation regulations are based on the Fit to Sit/Submit principle. This means that when you take assessment you are declaring yourself fit to take the assessment.

If you are not fit to take assessment then you may wish to apply for an extension or submit a claim for your extenuating circumstances to be considered by your Mitigation Panel – see section 3 below for details of how to do this.

Any claim for extenuating circumstances to be considered in relation to assessment would not, normally, be considered when you have declared yourself fit to sit/submit.

Where you do not take assessment and you have not submitted a claim for extenuating circumstances to be considered your assessment will, normally, be recorded as non-submission.

3 Extension or Mitigation?

You may seek an **extension** to a coursework submission deadline, where you have valid extenuating circumstances which prevent you from being able to meet the relevant assessment submission deadline(s).

Alternatively, if you have valid extenuating circumstances which would not be alleviated by an extension you may apply for **mitigation** which would be considered by a Mitigation Panel.

To request an extension

You will need to **complete an Extension Request form, attach relevant independent evidence** and submit your request to your Student Administration Office for consideration by your Mitigation Co-ordinator(s).

Forms are available online via the Student Hub web pages or by following the link, [here](#), or in hard copy format from your Student Administration Office.

If you think you have valid extenuating circumstances to request an extension you may do so up to your original assessment deadline and will normally receive a decision within 3 working days and should continue with any assessment whilst you are awaiting a decision.

If successful, an extension would normally only be granted for up to 5 working days.

To request mitigation

You will need to **complete a Request for Mitigation Form and attach relevant independent evidence** and submit your request to your Student Administration Office for consideration by a Mitigation Panel.

The Panel meets on a regular basis and decisions are notified to students in writing by e-mail to your university student e-mail address.

All decisions of the Mitigation Panel will be forwarded to the relevant Board of Examiners meeting to take any action as necessary in relation to your academic profile.

4 Authorised Absence

The University recognises there may be occasions where you are fit to sit/submit but are prevented from doing so as a result of a formal obligation, such as court proceedings or jury service, for example. In such circumstances you may submit an application with supporting evidence to your Student Administration Office for consideration by the Mitigation Co-ordinator(s).

To request an authorised absence

You will need to complete a **Request for Authorised Absence Form, attach relevant independent evidence** and submit your request to your Student Administration Office for consideration by your Mitigation Co-ordinator(s).

5 Students' Responsibilities

In accordance with our Academic Principles and Regulations you have a responsibility to:

- Declare yourself fit to sit/fit to submit by attending or submitting assessment
- Inform the University of any extenuating circumstances you wish to be considered if you are prevented from submitting assessed coursework and/or taking examinations or other scheduled assessment.
- Submit extenuating circumstances in writing using the appropriate university form to the designated member of staff
- Include any original documentary evidence
- Include details of the module(s) affected and the date(s) concerned

If you fail to undertake these responsibilities in respect of your extenuating circumstances you may not be granted mitigation.

6 Timescales

- Extensions
The Mitigation Co-ordinator is permitted to authorise an extension for 5 working days and may, if appropriate, authorise an extension for up to and including 10 working days. A request must be submitted no later than the date of the affected assessment(s).
- Authorised Absence
The Mitigation Co-ordinator is permitted to authorise an absence for the date(s) on which you have an obligation and cannot meet your assessment requirements. A request must be submitted no later than the date of the affected assessment(s).
- Extenuating Circumstances
Where you have not taken assessment, because you consider yourself to be unfit to do so, you may make a request for consideration of your extenuating circumstances. The request must be submitted at the earliest possible time and normally no later than 5 working days from the date of assessment.

Where you have submitted or taken an examination or other scheduled assessment and later realise that you were unfit to do so you may, **exceptionally**, submit a request for mitigation. This must be completed within 5 working days from the date of assessment.

All submissions detailed above must be accompanied by independent evidence of your extenuating circumstances. See section 7 below and Advice and Further Guidance for details about evidence.

7 Evidence

All requests for extension, authorised absence and mitigation must be accompanied by independent, original (not copies) documentary evidence. If you submit your form electronically (to the designated school e-mail address) your evidence must be submitted for the attention of the Mitigation Co-ordinator by hard copy as soon as possible and no later than 5 working days from submission of your form. All requests for mitigation and accompanying evidence are treated with the utmost care and confidentiality.

If you do not wish to leave your original documentation with us we can photocopy it while you wait. Once verified, the original documentation will be returned to you and the photocopied evidence will then go to the Mitigation co-ordinator and/or Mitigation panel with your request form. Please **DO NOT** send in photocopied evidence.

The types of evidence which are acceptable are listed at the end of this document in the Advice and Further Guidance section.

It is very important that any evidence contains the dates between or on which your extenuating circumstances apply.

8 Mitigation Panel Outcomes and Notification

The mitigation panel is required to:

- Categorise the seriousness of the extenuating circumstances presented, as follows:
 - Category A, Very Serious
 - Category B, Serious enough to warrant deferral
 - Rejected - the panel will reject claims which are late, not substantiated by original documentary evidence or are not deemed sufficiently serious to warrant deferral
- Confirm the assessments which have been affected

The mitigation panel will make a report, by student, to the relevant Board of Examiners, as follows:

- Assessments affected
- Category of seriousness
- All extensions and authorised absences granted by the Mitigation Co-ordinator

All outcomes will be notified to you in writing following the mitigation panel having been held. This may be completed by letter or e-mail and a record is kept on your student file (electronic or hard copy) which may be needed in the event of any subsequent appeal hearing request.

Advice and Further Guidance

Students' Union Advice Service

The Leeds Beckett Student's Union Advice Service offers free, independent and confidential advice and representation to students. If you need advice on your circumstances or help to complete the relevant form(s) you may contact the Students' Union Advice Service. Please visit their web pages for further details of how they may assist you.

<http://www.leedsbecketttsu.co.uk/advice>

Student Hub

The forms to request an extension, mitigation or authorised absence are available online via the Student Hub web pages. You can also find out here where to submit your form, either electronically or hard copy.

<http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/public-information/academic-regulations/>

Academic Principles and Regulations

The Academic Principles and Regulations governing our Extenuating Circumstances and Mitigation practice may be found at the following web page:

<http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/about/student-regulations.htm>

Evidence – indicative examples of what is and isn't acceptable

Acceptable Evidence



- Medical Appointment letter
- Doctors note
- E-mail from Tutor
- Death Certificate
- Funeral Order of Service
- Crime report and number
(this should also be accompanied by evidence of the work you had been preparing such as notes, work plan, draft assignment)

Not Acceptable Evidence



- Note from a friend
- Wedding invitation
- Corrupt USB stick
- Bank Statements

If you have consulted the University Student Wellbeing Service in relation to your circumstances you may submit a statement of attendance as supporting evidence, It is expected that you would also have some other form of evidence of your circumstances to verify your request.

Extenuating Circumstances – indicative examples of what is and isn't acceptable:

Acceptable Extenuating Circumstances



- Bereavement
- Illness
- Hospitalisation
- Victim of crime
- Transport cancellation, where this may be evidenced

- Court attendance
- Traumatic incident
- Serious family illness where the impact on the students' ability to undertake assessment may be demonstrated

- Accident

Not Acceptable Extenuating Circumstances



- Holidays
- Weddings
- Family celebrations
- Printing problems
- Computer failure, corrupt USB sticks

- Financial problems
- Work related problems
- Pressure or anxiety associated with assessment preparation or exams
- Accommodation issues
- Criminal conviction

- Mild illness less than 7 days would not normally warrant mitigation. The mitigation co-ordinator will determine whether a mild illness warrants an extension to the assessment deadline should an extension be requested.
- Mis-reading assessment arrangements