

# **Guidance on Acceptable Circumstances and Evidence (EC Procedure)**

## **1. Core considerations**

This guidance supports the University's Extenuating Circumstances Procedure and should be read in conjunction with the procedure.

In order to be considered under this procedure, circumstances must meet all of the following criteria:

They must be out of the student's control – the student could not have prevented them.

They must have had an impact – they must have had a demonstrably negative impact on the student's ability to study or to undertake an assessment.

The timing of the circumstances must be relevant to the claimed impact.

## **2. Standard of evidence**

1. With the limited exception of the circumstances provided for in the [Examination Self-Certification Policy](#), all claims made under the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure must be supported by independent, reliable documentary evidence of inability to comply with the assessment requirements or to attend teaching or undertake required study.

2. The burden of proof to support a claim lies with the student at all times.

3. Evidence presented by students must meet the following standards and should be:

(a) Written and signed by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent of the student.

Students should note that the University Clinic and the University Counselling Service at UNNC will not provide such confirmation if the student has had no engagement with the service(s) prior to the affected assessment(s).

(b) Confirming specifically that the circumstances were witnessed on the relevant date as opposed to being reported retrospectively.

(c) In English. It is the student's responsibility to provide supporting documentation and any translation should be undertaken by an accredited translator. Any associated costs must be met by the student.

(d) Unaltered by the student. Documentation that has been amended for any reason will be deemed inadmissible by the University.

As an exception to the above, Extenuating Circumstance Panel should consider evidence supplied by other members of staff known to the student, for example, Personal Tutors, Senior Tutors or Student Support Advisors..

People in these roles should only provide supporting evidence if:

1. The student has engaged with them sufficiently prior to the affected assessment(s) such that they are fully conversant with their situation.
2. They are satisfied that there will have been an adverse impact on the student's ability to study and/or take assessments
3. The student does not require medical/professional treatment for their circumstances

A [template](#) is provided for staff wishing to provide a supporting statement. This statement serves as evidence in support of an extenuating circumstances claim, it is not confirmation that the claim has been approved. An Extenuating Circumstances Panel has the final decision regarding the claim.

Extenuating Circumstance Panel should also consider evidence available in Invigilator reports and, if the report indicates significant negative impact during the assessment, should suspend the need for medical evidence if the student would not normally require medical treatment for the circumstances e.g. sickness and diarrhoea or migraine.

4. The Extenuating Circumstance Panel should only consider upholding a student's claim of extenuating circumstances when, in their opinion, all of the above conditions are fully satisfied.

5. The University reserves the right to take such steps as are deemed necessary to verify the evidence submitted without prior notification. Where the University is unable to authenticate the material to its satisfaction, the claim may not be accepted. The University reserves the right to request sight of original documents, if necessary.

6. If there is evidence that a student has fraudulently presented documentation to the University the matter will usually be referred for consideration under [the University's Academic Misconduct regulations](#), but may also be referred for consideration under the [Code of Discipline](#) or the University's Fitness to Practice Procedure.