

10.3 Procedures for the submission of Mitigating Circumstances

Introduction

- 1 These Procedures set down the process whereby unforeseen circumstances, which have prevented a student from submitting an item of assessed work for the published deadline date, or from attending an examination, can be brought to the University's attention. Notwithstanding such circumstances, the Procedures have been approved to encourage student engagement in assessments and as such attempts to encourage claims based upon the late submission of coursework as opposed to non submission.
- 2 The Director of Academic Administration has overall responsibility for the Procedures for the submission of Mitigating Circumstances.
- 3 No student making a claim under these Procedures, whether successfully or otherwise, shall be treated less favourably than would have been the case had the claim not been made.

Mitigating Circumstances Criteria

- 4 Mitigating circumstances are defined by the University as circumstances that are **acute, severe, unforeseen and outside a student's control that occur immediately before or during the assessment period in question.**
- 5 A claim for Mitigating Circumstances must be received at one of the Registries by the published deadline for the semester in which the circumstances relate.
- 6 A claim for Mitigating Circumstances may be submitted in relation to:
 - 6.1 late coursework, submitted up to 10 working days later than the published coursework deadline (*NB where the late coursework deadline falls within the University's Christmas and Easter vacation periods a single generic late coursework deadline shall be set and published by the University*);
 - 6.2 non attendance at an examination;
 - 6.3 non-submission of coursework.

Validity and Invalidity

- 7 A Mitigating Circumstances claim in respect of academic performance, irrespective of whether the mark in question is a fail, or of passing standard, shall be deemed invalid. Claims in respect of academic performance are considered under the Procedures for the submission of Appeals against decisions of Assessment Board (Section 10.5) (*It should be noted that if an appeal based on academic performance is successful: (i) the student shall surrender the mark achieved for the item of assessed work concerned and (ii) the claim shall count as one of the two accepted claims as detailed in 8 below*). .
- 8 A student may have a mitigating circumstances/academic performance claim accepted on two occasions only for a particular item of assessed work. A mark of zero will be awarded for that item of assessed work with no further entitlement to be reassessed, if it is not then attempted at the next available opportunity.

- 9 Any claim supported by false documentary evidence shall be deemed invalid and will lead the University to take action under its disciplinary procedures.
- 10 A claim for Mitigating Circumstances **must** be submitted on a Mitigating Circumstances Form¹, for it to be deemed valid it **must**:
- 10.1 Be completed in **full** and **specify**:
- 10.1.1 the full name of the student;
- 10.1.2 the correct student ID number;
- 10.1.2 the title(s) and code(s) of the module(s) affected;
- 10.1.3 the component(s) affected;
- 10.1.5 the relevant assessment date(s).
- 10.2 Be supported by appropriate, independent documentary evidence:
- 10.2.1 Claims in relation to late submission of coursework would normally require evidence to demonstrate mitigating circumstances for the period immediately leading up to the assessment and/or the published coursework deadline;
- 10.2.2 Claims in relation to non-attendance at an examination would normally require evidence to demonstrate mitigating circumstances for the period immediately leading up to the examination and/or the date of the examination in question;
- 10.2.2 Claims in relation to non submission of coursework would normally require evidence to demonstrate mitigating circumstances for the period immediately leading up to the assessment and/or the published coursework deadline and must in addition demonstrate why it was not possible to submit the work within the late coursework period.
- (Claims submitted without independent supporting evidence shall not be considered. Students who have good reason for failing to provide appropriate documentary evidence by the Mitigating Circumstances deadline date should consult the Procedures for the submission of Appeals against decisions of Assessment Boards);*
- 10.3 Provide full details of the circumstances, and how these circumstances have affected the student;
- 10.4 Be signed and dated by the student, unless it is impossible for the student to sign;
- 10.5 Be received by one of the Registries by the **published Mitigating Circumstances deadline date**² for the semester in which the circumstances occurred.

Examples as to why a Mitigating Circumstances claim will be rejected

- 11 A Mitigating Circumstances claim will be rejected for any of the following reasons:

¹ Mitigating Circumstances Forms are available from the Registries on both campuses and can be downloaded from www.londonmet.ac.uk/mitigation

² Mitigating Circumstances deadlines are published in Registries, the Student Handbook and at: www.londonmet.ac.uk/mitigation

- 11.1 The claim is not supported by appropriate, independent documentary evidence (*The original documents must be submitted. They must be signed by an appropriate third party and give details of the circumstance, the date and duration of the period affected and, where possible, its impact on the student. Evidence in the form of a Medical Certificate must specify the nature of the illness and where possible a confirmed diagnosis by a GP who saw the student at the onset of illness. The date of a Medical Certificate is critical to the consideration and post-dated certificates are not accepted*).
- 11.2 The claim does not relate, in terms of timing, to the examinations or submission dates affected.
- 11.3 The claim relates to an ongoing or long-term condition unless the condition unexpectedly deteriorates immediately before or during the assessment period (*In such circumstances students should contact Student Services in order that individual needs can be assessed*).
- 11.4 There are reasonable grounds to believe that the circumstances could have been avoided by the student, or the student could reasonably have been expected to take steps to limit the impact of the circumstances (*Examples include: leaving coursework to the last minute; missing the deadline because of computer problems or late transport; failure to make alternative travel plans when disruptions were known in advance; losing work which had not been backed up on disc*).
- 11.5 The claim results from misreading or ignorance of the University's examination timetable, or of instructions regarding the submission of coursework.
- 11.6 There are reasonable grounds to believe that the circumstances described would not have prevented the student from taking the examination(s) and/or submitting the assignment(s) by the published assignment deadline date(s).

Please note that the examples listed are not exhaustive, but refer to the most common reasons for invalidation or rejection of a claim. Students are advised to refer to the Mitigating Circumstances FAQ on the University's website at: www.londonmet.ac.uk/mitigation for further details and information.

Consideration of a Mitigating Circumstances Claim

- 12 Claims shall be considered by Mitigating Circumstances Panel Members, approved by the Director of Academic Administration.
- 13 Each valid claim shall be assessed against the Mitigating Circumstances Criteria listed in 4-10 above. If a claim relates to more than one item of assessment, the circumstances relating to each item of assessment shall be considered individually against the criteria listed in 4 - 10.

Outcomes of consideration

- 14 Claims which demonstrate that the criteria in 4 - 10 have been met, shall be accepted:
 - 14.1 If the assessment in question was submitted up to 10 working days later than the published coursework deadline (*NB where the late coursework deadline falls within the University's Christmas and Easter vacation periods a single generic late coursework deadline shall be set and published by the University*), the mark for the assignment will be confirmed.

- 14.2 If no coursework was submitted for assessment up to 10 working days later than the published coursework deadline (*NB where the late coursework deadline falls within the University's Christmas and Easter vacation periods a single generic late coursework deadline shall be set and published by the University*), or if the student was unable to attend an examination, the student will be given the opportunity to be assessed at the next assessment point³ in the component(s) in question. This attempt shall replace the opportunity to which the mitigating circumstances pertained.
- 15 Accepted Mitigating Circumstances claims **shall not** result in a higher mark.
- 16 Claim(s) which do not demonstrate that the criteria in 4 - 10 has/have been met shall be rejected.
- 16.1 Where a rejected claim relates to work submitted up to 10 working days later than the published coursework deadline (*NB where the late coursework deadline falls within the University's Christmas and Easter vacation periods a single generic late coursework deadline shall be set and published by the University*) the outcome will be progressed as follows:
- First assessments:**
- 16.1.1 Where a mark awarded for a first assessment would lead to an overall pass in the module, the assessment shall be accepted and a capped mark for the module will be recorded; except, where the student has achieved sufficient marks for an overall pass in the module excluding the mark for any late work, in which case a mark of zero will be recorded for the item of late work but the overall mark for the module will not be capped, but will instead be based solely on the work submitted by the deadline.
- 16.1.2 Where a mark awarded for a first assessment would not lead to an overall pass in the module, a mark of zero shall be awarded for the assessment(s) in question.
- Reassessments:**
- 16.1.3 For any reassessment, a mark of zero shall be awarded for the assessment(s) in question.
- 16.2 Where a rejected claim relates to non submission of coursework or non attendance at an examination (as detailed in 14.2 above), a mark of zero shall be awarded for the component(s) in question.
- 17 All Mitigating Circumstances outcomes shall be communicated by the Department of Academic Administration to the relevant Subject Standards Board.
- 18 Mitigating Circumstance outcomes shall be published on Evision normally at the same time as the publication of the relevant module result(s). Students **will not** be contacted individually, in writing or otherwise, to inform them of the outcome of their claim.

³ The next assessment point normally relates to the summer resit period of the academic year in which the module was taken. However, where a claim is accepted for the autumn semester for a module which is also available in the spring semester, the student **may choose** to take the further assessment opportunity during that spring semester assessment period instead of the summer resit period. Where a student has a further assessment opportunity following the summer resit period, it must be taken at the earliest assessment point when the module is next offered in the following academic year, regardless of whether it is a first assessment or reassessment.

Rejected claims and appeals

- 19 There is no mechanism within these Procedures to reconsider a Mitigating Circumstances decision.
- 20 Where a student has been affected by mitigating circumstances which prevented him/her from submitting an item of assessed work by the published deadline date, or from attending an examination, but was unable, for good reason, to draw proper attention to these circumstances via these Procedures, the student may submit an appeal. (See 10.3 Procedures for Appeals against decisions of Assessment Boards.)
- 21 The appeals process **cannot** be used to challenge the mitigation outcome.