

London's  
International  
Drama School

**Rose  
Bruford  
College**  
of Theatre  
& Performance

# Mitigating Circumstances

Including extensions on assessment

## MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES INCLUDING EXTENSIONS ON ASSESSMENT

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### 1.0 Introduction and scope of this policy

The College understands that during the course of your studies, you may have to cope with unexpected illness or misfortunes which are part of the normal course of life events. Hopefully, such occurrences will have little or no impact on your academic performance. However, we recognise that there may be serious circumstances of a medical or personal nature which are beyond your control and which may affect your ability to complete an assignment or may adversely affect the results you are able to achieve.

Where this happens **mitigation** may be applied – that is to say treating marks or results in a way that recognises the adverse impact that may have resulted from such circumstances or events, or waiving penalties that might arise from late submission of work.

The College has produced this policy so that such personal mitigating circumstances can be reported and considered, and to ensure that all students are treated equitably and fairly.

There are two ways of asking for mitigating circumstances to be taken into consideration:

- i. to submit a request to your Programme Director for an extension to the published submission deadline (see section 4)

- ii. to submit a claim for mitigation to the Mitigating Circumstances Committee (MCC) (see section 5).

This policy outlines the policy and procedures for both extensions and submissions to the MCC

## 2.0 Grounds for mitigation

Grounds for mitigation are **unforeseen** or **unpreventable** circumstances that have a **significant adverse effect** on your academic performance. Each application for mitigating circumstances will be considered on its own merit and the College does not want to be over prescriptive about which circumstances are acceptable or not. However, the following give an *indication* of what might be considered reasonable grounds for mitigation:

- significant personal illness or injury which is not a chronic or permanent condition;
- the death or critical/significant illness of a close family member, dependent or significant other;
- victim of crime;
- family crises or major financial problems leading to acute stress;
- housing problems;
- absence for jury service, for maternity or paternity, or adoption leave;
- serious disruption caused, for example by terrorist attack, natural disaster or extreme weather conditions.

Circumstances which **would NOT normally** be regarded as grounds for mitigation include:

- circumstances over which you could have had some control through prior planning, e.g. holidays, moving house, weddings (including your own), family 'events', missing a deadline for something you thought more important (catching a cheap flight);
- circumstances that affect most other students e.g. assessment deadlines being close together;
- commitments to scheduled (College) productions or work placements;
- circumstances arising from poor time management or personal organisation e.g. misreading the timetable or misunderstanding the requirements for the assessment;
- technology related circumstances e.g. computer or printer failure that prevents submission of work;
- circumstances relating to paid employment (except in some special cases for part-time students);
- stress or panic attacks not diagnosed as illness;
- short term, minor ailments such as colds, headaches, stomach upsets etc., except where this ailment prevented attendance at an assessed performance, presentation or event.

If a disability emerges during your studies, it may be considered under the procedures for mitigation at the first assessment point after it emerges. Thereafter, and following formal

diagnosis, the College will make reasonable adjustment as defined under **Assessment: Policy and Procedure** and the College's **Disclosure Policy**

### 3.0 Required documentary evidence

Any claim you make for mitigating circumstance will only be considered if you can provide supporting documentary evidence.

Depending on the nature of the claim, required evidence might include:

- letter or note from a doctor, counsellor or registered medical practitioner;
- recorded proof of attendance at a hospital, doctor's surgery or counsellor;
- letter/evidence from an independent professional;
- student loan company/debt letter
- tenancy agreement
- official witness report
- death certificate or similar
- newspaper/media report

The above list is indicative but not exhaustive. You should note that any evidence you submit must be in English or in the original language with an official translation provided. The table in Appendix 1 gives examples of what may be required to support your mitigating circumstance claim.

### 4.0 Extensions

Extensions are a form of request for mitigating circumstances to be taken into consideration.

- i. If you are aware of any mitigating circumstance(s) **in advance** of the scheduled submission date you must request an extension on the hand-in date by completing a **Request for Extension** form.
- ii. Requests for extension are considered by your Programme Director (for School of Performance) or Academic Programme Manager (for School of DMTA) and each case treated on its own merits based on the criteria set in section 2. For online programmes, extensions are considered by the Lead Academic Tutor.
- iii. Requests for extensions must be submitted prior to the submission date and you will be required to include documentary evidence as set out in section 3 to support your request. You will not be granted an extension either on or after the scheduled day of submission, or if the new submission date extends the work beyond a Programme Assessment Board.

- iv. **The maximum extension allowed under this policy is 14 days. (The extension will commence immediately following the original hand-in date regardless of whether the revised date falls in term time or not and does not include Bank Holidays.)** Your Programme Director/Academic Programme Manager will decide on the appropriate length of the extension, depending on the circumstances.
- v. You will not normally be granted a subsequent or second extension on the same piece of assessed work.
- vi. Your Programme Director/Academic Programme Manager may decide that there are insufficient grounds to grant you an extension. In this event you may still submit a claim for mitigation to the Mitigating Circumstances Committee (see below).
- vii. Your Programme Director/Academic Programme Manager may decide that there are additional factors that need to be taken into account. In this case, they may grant the extension and/or refer the claim to the Mitigating Circumstances Committee.

## 5.0 The Mitigating Circumstances Committee

If due to mitigating circumstances:

- you fail to meet the published submission date (i.e. late submission);
- your work is submitted incomplete;

**or**

- you have been absent from College and missed important taught sessions which you believe have impacted on your ability to do well in an assignment
- you believe that there were additional extenuating circumstances of which the examiners were unaware at the time the work was marked;

then you may submit an application to the Mitigating Circumstances Committee.

All applications for mitigating circumstances are considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Committee (MCC), a formal committee of the College. The MCC meets at least twice a year prior to each Programme Assessment Board.

The Committee considers applications for mitigation against two criteria:

- that the basis for the application is an acceptable ground for mitigation as indicated in section 2;
- that the application is supported by documentary evidence as indicated in section 3.

You must normally apply to MCC during the same period or semester in which your work was assessed. You should note that undue delay in submitting an application for mitigation might undermine your claim.

Claims for mitigation will be dealt with on merit but will only be considered if both the above criteria are met.

Claims are considered in confidence and the committee's terms of reference can be found in the Committee Handbook on **DoRIS**.

## 5.1 Committee Decisions and Recommendations:

The MCC cannot make formal decisions in its own right; rather it makes recommendations to the appropriate Examination Boards which make the final decisions on all matters relating to assessment, progression and classification. It is not possible for assessors to amend marks to take account of mitigating circumstances. If the MCC accepts your claim for mitigation, it will normally make one of the following recommendations to the Examination Board:

### **Deferral**

The Committee may recommend to the Exam Board that you are offered a deferral – that is another opportunity to submit the work as if for the first time. The original result will be ignored and the resubmitted assessment will be accepted without any penalty unless it is a re-assessment attempt following a previous failure.

### **Uncapped late submission**

If your work has been submitted after the published deadline (or agreed extension), and the MCC consider your mitigation claim is valid, they may recommend that the late submission is condoned and the work marked and recorded as if submitted on time.

### **Recommendation to aegrotat**

Under exceptional circumstances, the MCC may recommend an *aegrotat*.

If you are prevented by illness or other circumstances from completing the final assessed components of a programme (e.g. a practical project), or the committee consider that it would not be in your best interest to undertake the study, they may recommend that the assessment be subject to aegrotat. In this instance, a judgement is made that the learning outcomes are covered by other elements of the module or programme and you would be deemed to have passed the module (or element) and awarded the credit. However, the mark would not be included in calculating the final module mark, year average or final award.

*Aegrotat is used rarely, and if recommended by Mitigating Circumstances Committee, the Examination Board must be satisfied that your prior performance shows beyond reasonable doubt that you would have passed the module, or component of the module but for the illness or other circumstances.*

### **Borderline considerations**

Boards of Examiners may take mitigation into account if a candidate falls within the borderline category of a classification. Taking the entire profile into account, the Board may make the decision to move the candidate to the higher classification.

## **6.0 Applying for mitigation**

### **6.1 Extensions**

- As soon as you are aware that you may need to request an extension, you should complete a ***Request for Extension*** form which is available from your Programme Administrator. This is a two-part form; please ensure you complete both parts of the form.
- You must be able to demonstrate that your request for an extension is an acceptable ground for mitigation as indicated in section 2;
- You should take your completed form along with supporting documentary evidence to your Programme Director for approval. If you are unable to provide documents immediately, you must do so within **5 working** days of making the request for extension.
- If your request for an extension is granted, your Programme Director will agree a new submission date and sign your form.
- After signing:
  - Part 1 of your form should be returned to your Programme Administrator (along with documentary evidence).
  - Part 2 of your form should be attached to your work when this is submitted.
- If your request for an extension is refused, you must submit your work to the original submission date. However, if you feel that there are still reasonable grounds for mitigation, you may submit a claim to MCC.

### **6.2 Mitigating Circumstances Committee**

- It is important that you submit a claim to MCC as soon as a possible after you become aware of the circumstances affecting your work.<sup>1</sup>
- You should complete a ***Request for Mitigation*** form available from your Programme Administrator.
- The completed form and your supporting documentary evidence should be forwarded to the Registrar for consideration at the next MCC along with your supporting documentary evidence. Unsupported claims will not be considered by MCC.
- You will be informed of the MCC's recommendations within **5 working days** of the MCC.

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<sup>1</sup> You may submit a claim to MCC before your work is due in – although it would be more usual to request an extension from your Programme Director if you were aware of mitigating circumstances in advance of a hand-in date.



**APPENDIX 1: Typical documentary evidence required to support claims for mitigating circumstances/extensions.**

	Letter from registered medical practitioner	Proof of attendance at a hospital, doctors' surgery or counsellor	Letter/ evidence from and independent professional (E.g. solicitor or public body)	Student Loan company/ debt letter	Tenancy agreement	Official witness/ police report	Death certificate	Newspaper/ media report	Evidence of travel arrangement or Statement from independent 3 <sup>rd</sup> party	Meteorological office report
Medical problem	✓	✓	✓							
Death/illness in family etc.	✓		✓				✓	(✓)		
Victim of crime	✓	✓	✓			✓				
Family or personal crisis	✓	✓	✓							
Housing problems				✓	✓					
Jury service			✓							
Maternity/ paternity/ adoption	✓	✓	✓							
Serious disruption						✓		✓	✓	✓
	<p><b>All evidence must be submitted in English or in the original language with an official translation provided.</b>                      The above table is intended to give an indication of the type of documentary evidence that may be submitted in support of a claim for mitigating circumstance. It is NOT exhaustive. Ask a member of staff if you are unsure what documents may be acceptable in your case.</p>									

DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX		Version 2.0
<b>Policy / Procedure title:</b>	Mitigating Circumstances	
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Secretary and Registrar	
<b>Lead contact:</b>	Quality Officer	
<b>Audience:</b>	Students and Staff	
<b>Equality Impact Screening date Referred to Equality Impact Assessment Group? Yes/No</b>	Yes May 2014	
<b>Approving body:</b>	LQSC	
<b>Date approved:</b>	23 September 2013	
<b>Implementation date:</b>	1 October 2013	
<b>Previous revision dates:</b>		
<b>Supersedes:</b>	The Principles and Procedures of Assessment	
<b>Previous review dates:</b>		
<b>Next review date:</b>	August 2019	
<b>Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations</b>	Academic Regulations	
<b>Related Policies, Procedures and Guidance:</b>	Student complaints Academic Appeals	
Further information: Reformatted 3 July 2014 Revised August 2017 to bring in line with RBC Academic Regulations Revised October 2018 to clarify role of assessors, aegrotats and borderlines Revised April 2019 to clarify point at which to request an extension to hand-in date Revised January 2020 to clarify 14 day extension rule		