

## MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

### What is mitigation?

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.

### What counts as a mitigating circumstance?

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.

### What circumstances will NOT be considered?

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.

### Disabled students

If a disability (including dyslexia) emerges during your studies, you can submit a claim for mitigation 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**

### When should I apply?

If due to mitigating circumstances:

- you fail to meet the published or negotiated 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 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 (MCC). 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.

### What does the MCC do?

All applications for mitigating circumstances are considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Committee (MCC), a formal committee of the College which is chaired by the Director of Learning, Teaching and Curriculum Development. The MCC meets twice a year prior to each Programme Assessment Board. The committee considers the claim and the supporting documents and makes recommendations to the relevant Examinations Board. This would normally be one of three recommendations:

### Deferral

The Committee may recommend that you are offered a deferral – that is another opportunity to submit the

work as if for 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**

If it is not possible for you to submit or recover your work (e.g. a practical project), or the committee consider that this would not be in your best interest they may recommend that the assessment be subject to *aegrotat*. In this instance, you would be deemed to have passed the module (or element) and be awarded the credit. However, the mark would not be included in calculating the final module mark, year average or final award.

### **What sort of documents should I supply to support my claim?**

Depending on your reasons for requesting an extension, required evidence might include:

- letter or note from a doctor, counsellor or registered medical practitioner;
- recorded proof of attendance at a hospital, doctors' 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

### **How do I make a claim?**

- It is important that you submit a claim MCC as soon as a possible after you become aware of the circumstances affecting your work.
- 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.

### **You should also read the guidance leaflet on Extensions.**

**For more information about Mitigating Circumstances (including Extensions), see the see the College's Policy on the Document, resource and Information System (DoRIS)**



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