

## Annex 4.1.1: Grounds for Extenuating Circumstances

### How to use this guidance

1. Panels and members of staff should exercise academic judgement in assessing each EC **on an individual, case-by-case basis**.
2. The following is provided as a guide to what UCL would normally consider to be extenuating, based on sector best practice provided by the Academic Registrars' Council. The examples provided are **non-exhaustive** but are designed to ensure that, as far as possible, students across faculties are treated equally and fairly. However every case will be different, with different factors needing to be considered, including culturally-sensitive issues, and so the following should only be viewed as a guide to assist decision-making.
3. Where a panel or member of staff is unsure about whether an EC can be accepted, advice is available from Academic Services: [academic.services@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:academic.services@ucl.ac.uk).

	<b>Section A: Circumstances which would normally be considered:</b>	<b>Section B: Circumstances that may be considered where there is evidence of the impact on the student:</b>	<b>Section C: Circumstances that would not normally be considered</b>
<b>Bereavement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bereavement for a child, sibling, parent, spouse or partner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bereavement for a grandparent, aunt, uncle or other relative not identified in Section A</li> <li>• Bereavement for a friend.</li> </ul>	
<b>Shorter-term medical conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious personal injury, medical condition or mental health condition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate personal injury, medical condition or mental health condition</li> <li>• Surgery which cannot be rescheduled.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor illnesses or injuries (such as coughs, colds, headaches, hayfever)</li> <li>• Circumstances supported by evidence from unregistered medical practitioners, such as alternative therapists</li> <li>• Circumstances supported by 'retrospective' evidence e.g. a medical note which states that the student declared they had been ill previously</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditions which are not properly diagnosed by an appropriate authority, for example medical notes which say “the patient informs me that...”</li> </ul>
<b>Longer-term medical conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious worsening or acute episode of an ongoing disability, medical condition or mental health condition</li> <li>• Mental health crises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circumstances where there is insufficient time to put Reasonable Adjustments in place</li> <li>• New disabilities or long-term medical or mental health conditions</li> <li>• Medical or mental health problems which fluctuate unpredictably</li> <li>• A severe long-term illness which can only be addressed by an extension, deferral or other form of one-off mitigation</li> <li>• Gender confirmation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable, established disabilities, medical conditions and mental health conditions e.g. dyslexia (students should apply for Reasonable Adjustments)</li> <li>• Conditions which have lasted and remained unchanged for more than a year (students should apply for Reasonable Adjustments)</li> <li>• Conditions for which the student is already receiving Reasonable Adjustments</li> <li>• Non-disclosure of a disability, medical condition or mental health condition</li> <li>• Claims that the student did not want to apply for Reasonable Adjustments.</li> </ul>
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious complications in pregnancy or maternity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate illness due to pregnancy or maternity e.g. morning sickness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned pregnancy or maternity where there are no complications (students may however apply for other reasonable adjustments or an interruption of study).</li> </ul>
<b>Caring responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious injury or illness in a child, sibling, parent, spouse or partner.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious illness of a grandparent, aunt, uncle or relative not identified in Section A</li> <li>• Serious illness of a friend</li> <li>• Unexpected caring responsibilities caused by sudden serious illness or worsening of ongoing medical or</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring responsibilities for relatives with minor illnesses or injuries (such as coughs, colds, headaches, hayfever etc.)</li> <li>• General childcare responsibilities and school holidays.</li> </ul>

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		<p>mental health condition in a child, sibling, parent, spouse, partner or other close relative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct experience of violent crime, war, terrorist incident or natural disaster by a child, sibling, parent, spouse or partner.</li> </ul>	
<b>Crime</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victim of violent crime (e.g. assault, mugging, sexual assault, rape)</li> <li>• Theft of work required for assessment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victim of non-violent crime e.g. burglary</li> <li>• Experience of an abusive relationship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victim of petty theft e.g. mobile phone theft, bicycle theft or car break-in (unless these involve mugging or assault).</li> </ul>
<b>Major incidents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major fire in residence</li> <li>• Direct experience of terrorist incident, war or natural disaster.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious travel or other disruption caused by terrorist incident or natural disaster</li> <li>• Major travel disruption (such as cannot be remedied by finding an alternative mode of transport or by better time-keeping).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Booked travel arrangements</li> <li>• Minor private or public transport failure</li> <li>• Missed or delayed trains, tubes or buses.</li> </ul>
<b>Family and personal circumstances</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family breakdown (such as divorce)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Booked holidays</li> <li>• Trips to see family abroad</li> <li>• General domestic/ family problems.</li> </ul>
<b>Financial problems</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious financial problems preventing the student from studying.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General financial problems.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing problems</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious housing problems preventing the student from studying.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving home</li> <li>• General housing problems</li> </ul>
<b>Work commitments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional emergencies e.g. medical, police, fire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major changes in professional commitments impacting on the student's ability to study.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing work commitments</li> <li>• Participation in extra-curricular activities (e.g. sport)</li> <li>• Time spent on job/internship applications/interviews</li> </ul>

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<b>Academic work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An acute flare-up of a mental health or medical condition due to increased exam stress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious problems with academic project work e.g. obtaining ethical approval, equipment failure, problems with sample collection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General exam or assessment worries (unless there is evidence of an underlying mental health condition)</li> <li>Visa problems</li> <li>Poor time management</li> <li>Failure of IT equipment/ printers</li> <li>Failure to back up electronic documents.</li> </ul>
<b>Court appearance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jury Service</li> <li>Attendance at court or tribunal as a witness, defendant or plaintiff.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting a relative or friend at court.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circumstances which are foreseeable or preventable</li> <li>Claims that a student was unaware of the dates or times of submission or examination</li> <li>Circumstances which do not relate to the timing of the assessment</li> <li>Late disclosure of circumstances on the basis that a student felt unable to follow the UCL EC procedures</li> <li>Circumstances without reasonable supporting evidence (medical or otherwise)</li> <li>Circumstances supported by evidence from a relative or other person with a conflict of interest.</li> </ul>