ECs on Portico - questions and answers for staff

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Submitting an EC claim process

How does a student submit a claim on Portico?	The student should log in to Portico and navigate to the **My Studies** tab on Portico and then click on **My Extenuating Circumstances**. Student guidance on submitting an EC claim is available in the [Extenuating Circumstances section](#) in chapter 2 of the Academic Manual.
Where can students find out about the support available to them and definitions of EC related terms like deferral or tuition?	The [Student Support Framework](#) outlines the main academic support processes and where students can go for further support as well as definitions and detail around mitigations and grounds for Extenuating Circumstances.
How are EC claims routed to the appropriate department?	When submitting an EC claim on Portico, students are shown the list of assessments assigned to the programmes that they are enrolled for and can select all assessments for which they wish to receive mitigation as part of the claim. When they submit the EC claim, it is automatically routed to the Department EC Panel for the student's teaching department. This removes the scope to accidently submit a claim to the wrong department.
Does a student have to submit a separate claim for each programme?	No, one EC claim can cover multiple assessments across multiple programmes. When submitting an EC claim, the student will select the mitigation requested for each assessment that they have added to the claim - this will enable them to select different mitigations as appropriate to the nature of their assessment.
Is there guidance for students on the amount of detail to include in the **"Summary of circumstances"** section.	The "Summary of circumstances" is a mandatory field - students must complete this in order to submit their claim. Students are advised to outline the circumstances clearly and concisely within a 5000 character limit.

Sometimes evidence is not available until a later date. Can students submit their EC claim (as non-self-certifying) and then upload the evidence later?	Yes. Extenuating circumstances claims should be submitted as soon as possible and normally no more than one week after the first affected assessment. If a student cannot obtain the necessary evidence in time to submit their EC claim, they must submit the claim and select to upload evidence later in the "Upload Supporting Evidence" section. They will then be able to submit the claim and return to the claim at a later date to upload evidence. Evidence must be submitted no more than four weeks after submitting the EC claim. Panels will be able to view the submitted claim. Claim stage will show as 'Awaiting Evidence' and this will the change to Department Panel once the student has uploaded evidence. If evidence is not uploaded within four weeks, the claim can be rejected if necessary. Please refer to section 2.9 **If you miss the deadline for EC claims** in the Academic Manual.
Can students submit a late EC claim?	Extenuating Circumstances claims should be submitted as soon as possible, and normally no more than one week after the first affected assessment. EC claims cannot be considered through the EC procedure once formal results have been published. However, appeals can be made through the Academic Appeals Procedure.
Can a department submit an EC on behalf of a student?	Faculty Chairs and Faculty Secretaries only can do this currently. If a student is unable to complete a claim themselves, Department EC Panels should contact their Faculty Panel. We are looking at this as a possible future system enhancement.
Can IBSC students submit EC claims using Portico?	Yes, IBSC students should submit their EC claims via Portico.
Can intercollegiate students submit EC claims via Portico?	Incoming intercollegiate students taking UCL modules cannot submit EC claims via Portico – they should apply to their home institution for mitigation. Approved mitigation should be communicated by their home institution to the UCL teaching department for accurate mark entry. Outgoing UCL students taking intercollegiate modules at other colleges should submit EC claims via Portico. Note that only one assessment component will be listed in the ECs system for each intercollegiate module. Therefore, students should use the Summary of Circumstances free text field to list all affected assessments and the mitigation requested for each of these if known. The panel reviewing the EC claim should agree the most appropriate mitigation for each assessment and they should record this in the notes to student and panel discussion notes as well as informing the partner institution.

Can Professional Doctorate / MPhilStud students submit an EC claim on Portico?	From 13 March, the ECs system on Portico will be open to Professional Doctorate and MPhilStud students to submit EC claims relating to assessed pieces of work for their modules.
	Please note that **the system should not be used for EC claims relating to thesis submission:** staff should continue to submit requests to suspend any regulations relating to a student's thesis in line with the Research Degree Suspension of Regulations request process.
	If EC Panels receive an EC claim relating to a student's thesis on Portico, they should advise the student to delete the claim. The supervisor or programme administrator should resubmit the request via the Research Degree Suspension of Regulations request form or contact the Research Degrees team on researchdegrees@ucl.ac.uk for advice. Students must not submit these requests themselves.

Mitigations

If an assessment is not listed under a programme, can the student add the assessment component for which they are seeking mitigation?	The student will be able to select from the assessments assigned to the programmes listed on their record only. If the assessments do not match, departments will need update their records to reflect the programmes / assessments that they are enrolled for – please add this to your SR query log and the Student Records team will work with you to correct the record. When setting up programmes, departments should consider the benefits of adding all assessment components.
Does the system show the student what category mitigation (e.g. category 1, 2 etc.) they are requesting?	The EC system on Portico does not show these categories - students select the mitigation they wish to request from a drop down list. However, students can view mitigation options and associated categories in section 2.6 of the Academic Manual.
Is there an 'other' option for the type of mitigation?	No. Students can only select mitigations available in the "mitigation sought" dropdown shown to them when submitting an EC claim on Portico. These mitigations are listed in the mitigation options table outlined in section 2.6 of the Academic Manual.
Can students request a "resubmission of an assignment" mitigation?	No. Students can only select mitigations available in the "mitigation sought" dropdown shown to them when submitting an EC claim on Portico. These mitigations are listed in the mitigation options table outlined in section 2.6 of the Academic Manual.

Self-certification

What are the regulations on self-certification?	Regulations for self-certification are provided in section 2.7 of the Academic Manual. Links are provided to this for students on student webpages relating to Extenuating Circumstances and on the relevant pages on the EC system.
How many self-certification requests can a student make?	Students can self-certify for Extenuating Circumstances for up to two separate periods of up to two weeks (ten working days) within an academic session. If the programme includes teaching after Term 3 (e.g. Taught Postgraduate Masters students), they can also self-certify on a third separate occasion. The third occasion can only be used after the end of Term 3.
Does the EC system prevent students from submitting more than the allowed number of self-certified claims?	The EC system will not allow students to submit more than their allocated number of self-certified claims.

Will self-certified requests be rejected if they are not eligible for self-certification?	Students will be unable to submit a self-certification claim that is not eligible: the system will ask them for evidence. The criteria for self-certified claims are set out in section **2.5 Grounds for Extenuating Circumstances** of the Academic Manual.
Can students add assessments to an EC claim during a self-certification period?	Only one EC claim can be submitted per self-certification period. If a student needs to add extra assessments to a pending claim, they should contact their department. The department can then return the claim to them with a request for amendment and the student will then be able to edit the claim to include the additional assessments. Once a claim has been approved, it is not possible to add assessments to it. The workaround in the event that a student needs to add an assessment to an approved self-certified claim is to either: (a) ask the student to submit a new evidenced claim (without uploading evidence) which you should then approve with a note referencing the SC claim; or, (b) convert the original SC claim to evidenced claim (you will need to ask the FECP secretary or chair to do this) and then the student will be able to submit a second SC claim.

Reviewing an EC claim

Who can review an EC claim and record decisions on Portico?	Staff members who are assigned as Panel Members can access the EC system and view EC claims. All panel members can approve or reject claims as appropriate. Anyone with access to Exam Board reporting can view decisions to enable them to action them. See the Reporting User Guide for details of how to access reports.
How does a panel member view a claim on Portico?	The Panel Member should log in to Portico, select the **Extenuating Circumstances** tab and then click on **My Panel Membership** and select **view** for the relevant panel. They will then be presented with a list of claims which they can filter and view. Staff guidance on using the EC system is available here.
How are Panel Members notified that a claim has been submitted?	Department and Faculty Panel members will receive a daily summary of their claims outstanding. This will include new claims received that day and older claims awaiting decisions. A daily decision notification email will be sent to the nominated email address for a programme, providing a summary of all decisions submitted that day for a programme. The Department Secretary or Faculty Secretary will need to manually add the appropriate email address in order for this notification to be sent. Guidance on how to do this is available here.

Can departments log in to Portico as a student to see their view (similar to module selection)?	No this will not be possible.
Is it possible to see whether a student has a SoRA when reviewing an EC claim?	If a student has a SoRA, this will be flagged in the EC Details tab of the student's claim. No further information relating to the SoRA is provided, therefore a member of the panel should contact their Departmental SoRA contact for additional information if necessary.
Is it be possible to see if a student has submitted previous EC claims and what the decisions / mitigations were?	Yes. Panel members can see EC History for the student when actioning an EC claim - this will show any previous claims (including claim details and outcome) that the student has submitted via the EC system on Portico. Note that claims submitted prior to October 2022 and / or not via the EC system on Portico will not show in EC History.
Can other staff members be given access to cover annual leave etc.?	Yes, Faculty chairs / secretaries can manage panel access easily.
Can EC claims be approved without convening the panel?	While Panels are responsible for all decisions, the administration of claims may be carried out by appropriate academic and/ or professional services staff under the supervision of the Panel Chair and Deputy Chair. This may include approval of self-certified claims that meet all of the relevant criteria. Any uncertain or edge cases should be considered by the full Panel. Approval process regulations for Departments and Faculties can be found [here]().
Are there any restrictions as to how many people can be involved in the panel?	There is no formal limit - the size of the Panel can be set at the discretion of the Panel Chair based on what is appropriate according to the size of department and the number of claims received.
If a SoRA is in place, will the system automatically grant the SoRA extension in addition to the mitigation?	No not at present. The panel member recording the decision should ensure that the new deadline date reflects the SoRA plus any additional time granted under the mitigation.
Can the Panel approve alternative mitigations to the mitigation requested?	Yes. It is at the discretion of a Panel to decide the appropriate mitigation for a student.
Can Panels process applications without evidence if required?	Yes - Panels are able to process applications without evidence if required at their discretion. Though regulations state evidence should be uploaded for claims that are not self-certified (or eligible for self-certification).
When a Panel member adds a comment on the claim, will it show who has added this comment?	Yes

For claims forwarded to Faculty EC Panel, will the FECP be able to view Department EC Panel comments in the discussion tab? Or do we need to include all relevant comments for the FECP in a separate comments box?	The Faculty EC Panel will be able to see the comments on the Panel Discussion tab.
What should the Panel do if the student has entered the incorrect due date?	When reviewing a claim, the panel should check that the student has entered the correct assessment due date. Note that if the student has a SORA, this date should include the SORA extension. Panel members should update the assessment due date if it is incorrect.
What does **earliest due date** mean? (viewable by staff on the list of open claims)	This field is only visible to staff and enables them to view the earliest due date on a certain claim. This may help panels prioritise which claim needs to be reviewed most urgently.
Is there a way to filter claims by module? (staff view)	Yes. You can enter a module code into the 'search' function on the list of claims.
Can students see information captured in the Panel Discussion tab?	Students will see text entered in the 'Notes for Student' section when recording a decision and any text that is entered when sending a claim back to a student asking for further evidence or to amend their claim. Students cannot view information captured in the Panel Discussion tab. However, please be mindful that all information captured may be subject to a Freedom of Information (FOI) request and information should be captured with the assumption that it could be viewed by students under an FOI request.
Is it possible to tag another member of staff to review the EC claim / view a comment?	No, it is not possible to tag other members of staff on Portico. You could capture a comment for another Panel Member in the comments field on the assessments or panel discussions tabs. Please note that they will not receive any system notifications about these comments.

Claim decisions

Can all Panel Members record a decision on a claim (e.g. approve / reject a claim)?	Yes. All Panel Members can record decisions on a claim.
Does the new deadline take into account closure days when calculating the	The new deadline date is entered by the Panel Member who is recording the decision. They should factor in closure dates as applicable.

new 5 working days deadline	
Can a student appeal an EC decision?	A student cannot contest the outcome of an EC request on the grounds of academic or professional judgement. However, they can request a review of an EC decision if they feel that there has been a significant procedural error in the handling of their request. Section 2.10 Requesting a review of an Extenuating Circumstances decision covers the process for this. If a student is dissatisfied with their progression, award or classification outcome, they may be able to appeal via the Academic Appeals Procedure.
Can EC claim decisions be changed once recorded on the EC system? For example, in the event of user error.	No, once the Panel Member recording the decision clicks 'Save and Publish Decision', it cannot be reversed.
Does a Faculty EC Panel decision go straight to the student or back to the Department EC Panel for approval before it is returned to the student?	Faculty EC Panel decisions are notified directly to the student - no additional approval from the Department EC Panel is required.
If a student has a pending EC application and submits an assessment on time, but then their EC is accepted after their deadline, can they then re-submit the assessment within the extension period?	When approving an EC after the assessment deadline has passed you should try to identify the piece of work already submitted and highlight that this should not be marked. If the assessment has already been marked, the mark should be expunged as if it had never happened (to preserve the attempt). Please note that, once mitigation has been approved on an attempt already made and the mark for that attempt has been expunged, the original mark cannot be reinstated, even if it is higher than the mark that is eventually awarded.

Notifications

What notifications do students receive from the EC system after submitting their claim?	Students will receive at least 2 and up to 5 system generated emails in the course of submitting an EC claim on Portico. These are: 1. Upon submission of an EC claim (always received): confirmation that their claim has been submitted along with the claim reference number 2. When submitting an evidenced claim but choosing to upload evidence later rather than at time of initial submission: notification that they should upload supporting evidence within 4 weeks

	3. A reminder that they have 7 days remaining to add evidence to an existing claim where they have selected to upload evidence later
	4. When a decision has been recorded in the EC system in Portico (always received when a panel member has recorded a decision and clicked "Save and Publish decision"): notification that a decision has been made and prompt to log in to Portico to view the decision
	5. Request for further information or evidence (only received the panel reviewing the claim wish to request further information or evidence or require an amendment to the claim)
Who is notified once a decision has been made on a claim?	The student will receive a notification once a decision has been made - this will inform them that a decision has been made and prompt them to log in to Portico to view the decision. A daily decision notification email will be sent to the nominated email address for a programme, providing a summary of all decisions submitted that day for a programme. The Department Secretary or Faculty Secretary will need to manually add the appropriate email address in order for this notification to be sent. Guidance on how to do this is available [here]().
How is a student informed of their new submission date following a claim decision?	Once a decision is recorded in the EC system, the student receives a notification prompting them to log in to the EC system and view the decision. The new submission date appears to students when they view their decision along with the mitigation that was approved.
How are EC claims flagged to Panel Members?	Department and Faculty Panel Members will receive a daily summary of their claims outstanding. This will include new claims received that day and older claims awaiting decisions. A daily decision notification email will be sent to the nominated email address for a programme, providing a summary of all decisions submitted that day for a programme. The Department Secretary or Faculty Secretary will need to manually add the appropriate email address in order for this notification to be sent. Guidance on how to do this is available [here]().
Will the student notification come from a 'No-reply' address?	Email notifications will be sent from autoreplystudentrecords@ucl.ac.uk. All emails will include the text "This is an automated email from Portico. Please do not reply to this address."

Reporting

Can the report be exported to Excel?	Yes. Please see the [Reporting User guide](#) for guidance on how to do this.
How would running the report work for an Exam Board, for example if have students on modules from other Faculties?	The report can be run by teaching and parent departments. We will look at including the exam board in the search criteria as an enhancement post go-live.
Are Department EC Panels required to provide annual reports?	Normally yes. We will look at statistical reports to help analyse ECs against assessment components etc. in future enhancements post go-live.
Who can run reports?	Staff members with access to Data Quality Reports in Portico (Awards, Assessments and Achievements tab) can view reports.
Does the report show a quick view of whether the EC was approved or rejected and the new deadline?	The report shows this. You can also search by individual students.