Frequently asked questions for students relating to submission of EC claims on Portico

Questions are grouped into the following categories:

- About the process
- Submitting an application
- EC claim outcomes

About the process

What are Extenuating Circumstances and UCL's Extenuating Circumstances procedure?	'Extenuating Circumstances' (often know as 'ECs') are events which are sudden, unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond your control and which may affect your performance at summative assessment, such as a serious illness or the death of a close relative.
	The 'Extenuating Circumstances (ECs) Procedure' is UCL's formal process for you to quickly let your department know about a serious illness, bereavement or other significant event which might affect your performance at assessment and for us to consider your claim and how we can best support you.
	You can submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim to request 'mitigation' such as an extension or deferring an assessment to a later date.
	The Extenuating Circumstances procedure is one of several ways that we can support you when you are having a difficult time through our Student Support Framework but may not always be the right process for you. Please read our Student Support Framework to find out more.
I'm not sure whether I need to request an EC, or require other support. How can I find out?	The Extenuating Circumstances procedure is one of several ways that we can support you when you are having a difficult time through our Student Support Framework but may not always be the right process for you. Please read our Student Support Framework to find out more.
What is the EC application process?	You should submit your application via our EC system on Portico. Note that Extenuating Circumstances claims should be submitted as soon as possible, and normally no more than one week after the first affected assessment.
	Your Department or Faculty EC Panel will assess your claim and agree the appropriate mitigation.
	The outcome will be communicated to you via the EC system, usually within 10 working days of your claim being submitted unless you have submitted late evidence / are asked to provide new or additional evidence / no evidence where evidence is required or in exceptional cases where a decision cannot be made within this timeframe.

Why has the EC application process changed?	A central system and consistent process will make it simpler for students to submit and see the progress / outcomes of their claims, improve response times and enable a more consistent and equitable process across the whole university.
What mitigations might I be offered as a result of my EC application?	If your EC claim is successful you will be offered 'mitigation'. This usually takes the form of extra time e.g. a coursework extension, or a deferral of the exam or assessment, typically to the Late Summer Assessment period. Other forms of mitigation may be available depending on your particular circumstances or the type of assessment. The mitigation available is also dependent on whether you self-certify or provide evidence – a wider range of help is available if you are able to provide evidence.
Who reviews my EC application?	This depends on the nature of your EC claim and the level of mitigation required: EC claims may be reviewed by your Departmental EC Panel, Faculty EC Panel, or the Director of Academic Services on behalf of the Vice-Provost.

Submitting an application

Where can I find guidance on how to submit my application on Portico?	Student guidance on submitting EC claims on Portico, can be found here.
I can't access Portico to submit my EC application, who should I contact?	For issues relating to Portico access, please contact the IT Services Desk. For issues with using Portico to submit your EC claim, please contact your department.
When should I submit my EC application?	Extenuating Circumstances claims should be submitted as soon as possible, and normally no more than one week after the first affected assessment. If you cannot obtain the necessary evidence in time to submit your EC claim, you must still submit your claim on time and indicate that your evidence is to follow. You must submit your late evidence no more than four weeks after submitting your EC application. A decision cannot be made until your evidence is received. This may affect the type of mitigation that is available to you.
If I have not received a decision on my EC claim at the time of the assessment /deadline for	If it is possible for you to do so, you should attend/submit your assessment if the decision for your ECs is still pending. In the event your EC claim is approved then the mitigation will be applied retrospectively. If your claim is rejected then your marks will be taken from the assessment you attended/submitted.

coursework submission, should I attend the assessment / submit my work?	
If I have a pending EC application but submit my assessment on time, can I then re-submit the assessment within the extension period if my EC is accepted after the deadline?	If an extension is approved after you have submitted an assessment, you can hand in in line with the extension approved. Please bear in mind that your first piece of work will be expunged as if it had never happened. 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 you are eventually awarded.
How many EC applications can I submit?	An EC claim can cover more than one assessment – make sure you specify all of the affected assessments on your application. ECs are designed to cover short-term problems which are sudden and unexpected. If you submit multiple requests for the same condition or for the same assessment, and your Department/ Faculty considers that you are having a longer-term difficulty, you may be referred to UCL Student Support and Wellbeing for a Summary of Reasonable Adjustments (SoRA), or to the Support to Study Procedure for additional support. The normal course of action is for the EC Panel to accept the EC claim in hand, but let you know that further EC claims for the same condition are unlikely to be approved.
I have submitted previous EC applications using the old process, should I now use the new process?	Yes. All EC claims submitted from 3 October 2022 should be made on Portico.
I am a IBSC students, can I submit an EC claim on Portico?	Yes, IBSC students should also submit EC claims via Portico.
I am a Professional Doctorate / MPhilStud student, can I submit an EC claim on Portico?	From 13 March, the Extenuating Circumstances (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 ECs apply to summative assessments only (i.e. formal assessments where your results count towards your degree). You do not need to submit EC claims for formative assessments. Please note that **you should not use Portico to submit EC claims relating to your thesis:** please liaise with your programme administrator for advice.

I am an incoming intercollegiate student taking a UCL module (/s), can I submit an EC claim via Portico?	No, incoming intercollegiate students taking UCL modules cannot submit EC claims via Portico – you should apply to your home institution for mitigation using their EC system / process. Your home institution will then agree the appropriate mitigation and inform your UCL teaching department.
I am a UCL student taking intercollegiate module(/s) at other colleges, can I submit an EC claim via Portico?	Yes, you should submit your EC claim on Portico. Your department EC panel will review your claim, agree appropriate mitigation and communicate this to your intercollegiate module teaching department. When submitting your EC claim on Portico, you will only see one assessment component listed, even if your intercollegiate module has multiple assessment components: simply select the component that is listed and the most appropriate mitigation from the **mitigation sought** drop down box and click **Next**. Then, on the summary of circumstances screen, you should use the **summary of circumstances** text box to list out all impacted assessments and the mitigation that you are seeking for each of these if it differs by assessment. When approving your claim, your EC Panel will use the **notes to student** textbox to inform you of the mitigation approved for each assessment - you will see these notes when viewing your claim outcome on Portico.
How do I choose the appropriate mitigation for the assessment?	The EC application form will ask you which type of mitigation you would prefer. This will be used to determine how your request is processed but does not determine the outcome of your request.
The pre-populated assessment due date is incorrect, what should I do?	If the assessment due date is empty or incorrectly populated, you should update it with the correct date. If you have a SoRA in place, you should enter the deadline including your SoRA extension.
Can I submit an EC if I already have a Statement of Reasonable Adjustments (SoRA) in place?	Yes. A SoRA should be in place as a proactive means of support for long-term / ongoing conditions whereas ECs are designed to support sudden and unexpected events which may impact your performance. There may be some circumstances where you need an EC in addition to your SoRA e.g. a heightening / worsening of your condition. However, seeking an additional EC shouldn't be seen as a recurring option or long-term solution and you should consider amending your SoRA to ensure it is still right for you.
Will the EC panel know if I already have a SoRA in place?	Yes, it will be flagged on your claim that you have a SoRA in place. However, no further information relating to the SoRA is provided on the claim. A member of the Panel reviewing your claim will contact your Departmental SoRA contact for additional information if necessary.

What is self-certification?	Self-certification is the submission of an Extenuating Circumstances claim without evidence. Students are permitted to self-certify for up to two separate periods of up to two weeks (ten working days) within an academic session. If your programme includes teaching after term 3 (e.g. Taught Postgraduate Masters students) you can also self-certify on a third separate occasion. The third occasion can only be used after the end of Term 3. **You can only self-certify before the assessment takes place**. Self-certification claims must meet the grounds for self-certification as outlined [here](#).
Is there a restriction on the number of times that I can self-certify?	You 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 your programme includes teaching after Term 3 (e.g. Taught Postgraduate Masters students), you can also self-certify on a third separate occasion. The third occasion can only be used after the end of Term 3. **You can only self-certify before the assessment takes place**. * Two week self-certification period: under each self-certification claim, you can request mitigation for all assessments that fall within a two week (ten working day) period. The panel reviewing your claim will identify the most appropriate mitigation according to the assessment type and your circumstances. [Section 2.6 of the Academic Manual](#) outlines the types of mitigation that you may be given.
Can a self-certified claim cover more than one assessment?	Yes, a self-certified claim should cover all impacted assessments within the two week period from the date of submission. When submitting your claim, you should make every attempt to include all assessments that are impacted in this two week period. Once a claim is approved, you cannot subsequently add assessments to this claim or submit new self-certified claims during the two week period. If you need to add an assessment, you should contact your department.
What counts as evidence to support my EC application?	If you are not eligible for self-certification, your EC claim needs to be supported by written evidence from an appropriate, independent and verifiable authority such as a doctor or registered medical practitioner. Further information about the types of evidence which you might be able to use is available [here](#).
Can I upload evidence to support my EC application at a later stage?	Yes. If you cannot obtain the necessary evidence in time to submit your EC claim, you must still submit your application on time and indicate that your evidence is to follow. You must submit your late evidence no more than four weeks after submitting your EC application. A decision cannot be made until your evidence is received. This may affect the type of mitigation that is available to you.
I can't upload my evidence, can my department do this for me?	No, currently they cannot although this may be possible in the future. For now, you should contact your department to inform them of the issue you are having and they will work with you to resolve this.
Who can see the evidence I submit?	Only the panel considering your application will see the evidence submitted. Other staff members who need to will be able to see the decision made on your claim, but not the reason for the claim or your uploaded evidence

I completed the EC application on Portico but I'm not sure if I submitted it, how can I check?	You will receive an email notification from autoreplystudentrecords@ucl.ac.uk when you have successfully submitted your claim. You will receive further email notification(s) when your claim has been reviewed - this may be to request further evidence or information or to notify you that a decision has been made on your claim. When you log in to the EC system on Portico, you can see the status of your outstanding claim(s) and information relating to any previous claims submitted on Portico. Please note that any claims that you have created but not yet submitted will be shown under the title "claims not submitted" - only you can see the detail on these claims until you submit them.
I submitted a claim, but I now need to add other assessments to that claim. How can I do that?	If you need to add extra assessments to a pending claim, you should contact your department. The department can then return the claim to you for you to edit the claim as necessary and then resubmit.

EC claim outcomes

How do I find out the outcome of my EC claim?	You will receive an email notification from autoreplystudentrecords@ucl.ac.uk when a decision has been made. You will then need to log in to the EC system on Portico to view the outcome.
How soon will I receive the outcome after submitting my EC claim?	You should usually receive a response within 10 working days of submitting your claim unless you have submitted late evidence / are asked to provide new or additional evidence / no evidence where evidence is required or in exceptional cases where a decision cannot be made within this timeframe. If you have not had a response within this time, you should follow up with your department.
Who else can see the outcome of my EC claim(s)	The mitigation decision for your claim will be communicated to the relevant Board of Examiners, Teaching Department or Institution (if applicable), and UCL Academic Services. Information shared will only include the type of mitigation which has been agreed and will not include details of the EC itself
Will I be given the reason for the outcome of my EC claim?	If your claim has been approved, you will see the mitigation that has been agreed and the new deadline date (if applicable) when you log in to the EC system on Portico. You will also be able to see any supporting notes that the Panel has added for you, for example, they may tell you "the department will be in touch with further details on your assessment closer to the time". If your claim has been rejected, you will see a note from your Panel outlining the reason for rejection.
Will my previous EC claim(s) influence the outcome of a	It is possible, but there is no disadvantage to submitting ECs. In some circumstances you may not be eligible for further mitigation for an assessment due to previous EC claims deemed to provide appropriate mitigation. Whilst in other circumstances, the detail of previous ECs may help a panel better understand the right type of support you need. EC panels play an important role in

subsequent EC application?	approving supportive mitigations, whilst upholding fairness and consistency outlined in the Student Support Framework.
What time should I submit my assessment on the new deadline date?	You should log in to Portico to view the outcome of your claim. A **New Deadline Date** will be shown for assessments where you have a new deadline for submission. You should also check the **Notes for Student** for any additional information about submitting your assessment, this may include a time. If no time is shown, you should assume that the original deadline time applies, e.g. if the original deadline was 10am and you have been given a new deadline date, you should submit by 10am on this new date. Please contact your department to clarify if you are unsure.
Can I appeal the outcome of my EC claim?	You cannot appeal against an academic or professional judgement that has been reached through due process by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel. However, if you are dissatisfied with your progression, award or classification outcome, you may be able to appeal within specified grounds via the Academic Appeals Procedure, where consideration can be given to whether UCL applied its Regulations and Procedures correctly and whether any decision was reasonable and proportionate.