

## SSEES Guidance and FAQs on Extenuating Circumstances Procedure 2022-3.

Over the last three years, UCL's procedures for extenuating circumstances (EC) have been adapted several times to help mitigate the unprecedented impact of Covid 19. The policies for 2022-23 are again slightly different and the purpose of this guide is to help you navigate the current system.

**Please read the following carefully before applying for ECs. Further details of the UCL Extenuating Circumstances Policy can be found in [Chapter 2 of the UCL Academic Manual](#).**

### Overarching Principles

The broad definition of an EC is a "sudden, unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond [your] control". You can find more specific guidance on what does (and does not) constitute an EC [here](#).

There are 4 main ECs available to students:

1. Deadline extensions to coursework (inc. dissertation and take-home papers).
2. Removal of late penalties to work submitted after the deadline.
3. Deferral of examinations to the next period (e.g. to LSA).
4. Exclusion of component from module calculation.

You cannot request deferrals for coursework or extensions to exams.

IMPORTANT: There are **two types** of ECs.

1. Conventional ECs
2. Self-certified ECs

IMPORTANT: 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.**

### FAQs

#### **1. What is the difference between conventional and self-certified ECs?**

You can apply for all 4 types of ECs using either route, but conventional ECs must be considered by the SSEES EC panel and normally require supporting evidence. There is no limit on the number of conventional EC requests you can submit.

Self-certified ECs **do not require evidence** but there are important limits to their scope:

- You can only self-certify for **up to two separate periods of up to two weeks** (14 calendar days) within the 2022-23 academic session. Postgraduates can self-certify on a third separate occasion, but the third occasion can only be used after the end of Term 3, 2023.
- The **maximum extension is one week for coursework and two weeks for the dissertation.**
- You can only self-certify **once for any given assessment.**
- You must submit a self-certified EC **in advance of an assessment deadline.** But no more than 2 weeks in advance.
- Once you have started any time-limited assessment, you cannot self-certify a deferral to the next assessment period.
- You can only request to exclude a component worth max. 10% of the module calculation.

#### **2. Should I request self-certified or standard ECs?**

Self-certification requests are designed for circumstances where evidence is difficult to obtain or where the mitigation is limited to the point that it doesn't justify increasing workload pressure on GP practises by insisting on medical evidence.

However, they can be used for any event that constitutes a legitimate EC where evidence cannot be obtained. If you can find evidence, it's a good idea to apply for conventional ECs. Also, if you need longer extensions, if you need to apply for extension on top of an existing EC, or if you've run out of your quota of self-cert ECs, you must apply for conventional ECs.

### 3. How do I apply for an EC?

All EC requests must now be submitted on Portico. **Do not submit using the old Microsoft forms link.**

Use this [step-by-step guide to submitting your claim on Portico](#)

### 4. When should I apply for an EC?

Self-certified ECs: **No earlier than 2 weeks before the deadline.** Requests submitted after the deadline, or after time-limited assessments have started, will not be approved.

Conventional ECs: No more than 2 weeks before the deadline and **no more than 5 working days after the deadline.** If the latter, the expectation is that this is because the EC is ongoing and preventing you from applying for an EC by the deadline.

### 5. What happens if I submit a conventional EC more than 5 working days after the deadline?

You can still submit an EC **as long as it's before your formal results are published at the exam board.** However, you will need to explain why you didn't submit your EC on time. If your EC request is late, and you do not provide a compelling reason, backed up by evidence, then your EC may be rejected even if the panel accepts that you had valid reasons for an EC at the time the assessment was due.

### 6. Can I submit ECs after your results are published?

No. At this point it is too late. Extenuating Circumstances claims cannot be considered through these procedures once your formal results have been published. However, you have the right to appeal your results via the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

### 7. What kind of evidence is required?

This obviously depends on the nature of your EC, but if you are unwell, you should provide a doctor's note. If your evidence isn't written in English, you must provide a notarised translation. Please avoid sending photographs that you think illustrate your condition. Photographs of medication or proof that you have booked an appointment with a GP or therapist are not normally accepted. Further information about the types of evidence which you might be able to use is available in [Section 1.5: Providing Supporting Evidence](#). Your evidence will need to cover the full period for which you are requesting mitigation. If your ECs are submitted late, your evidence should help to explain the delay.

### 8. What if I don't have the evidence yet?

You should submit the EC on time and indicate that your evidence will be forthcoming. Your EC will only be validated on receipt and evaluation of your evidence. **You must submit your evidence within FOUR WEEKS of submitting your EC.**

### 9. How will I know if my EC has been approved and how long will this take?

Please allow up to 10 working days for your EC request to be considered - this is for both self-certified and standard EC request. Requests are usually considered much sooner than this, but at certain points of the year (particularly January and April-May) we received hundreds of requests a week. A standard EC will need to be considered by a departmental panel and this will often take longer than a self-certified EC, particularly when we have a very high volume of requests. Please be patient whilst the panel considers your requests,

### 10. Are IT issues acceptable grounds for an EC?

Routine computer problems such as viruses, disk corruption, printer problems, and short-term network problems are not normally considered acceptable grounds for an EC. You are expected to take proper precautions and make back-up copies and allow enough time to produce your work.

#### 11. What about technical failures in EC exams?

You **CANNOT** use the EC process to appeal technical failures in any assessment on AssessmentUCL. If you have not been able to submit your work because of a technical problem, you must complete an [AssessmentUCL Query Form](#).

#### 12. What if I'm sick during an online exam?

If you experience sickness or an unexpected personal issue during an exam you can use the EC process to request a deferral. But you cannot self-certify once the exam has started; you must provide evidence. See the assessment regulations [here](#).

#### 13. What's the maximum length of extensions I can request?

Students are permitted **one week of self-certified extension without evidence** (two weeks for dissertations). There is no official limit for conventional ECs, but anything over 12 weeks can only be authorised by the Joint Faculty. The length of extension you request should be commensurate to the EC you describe and the evidence you provide – the EC panel will consider the most appropriate form of mitigation and may grant an extension of greater or shorter length than requested.

#### 14. How are extensions deadlines calculated?

Extensions will be granted from the original or last approved deadline, not the decision date (students should therefore continue to work on their assessment if they are able to while a decision is being made).

#### 15. Are EC extensions added on top of SORAs?

Where a student has a SoRA, extensions will be granted from the adjusted deadline. Students will not be entitled to their SoRA adjustment *again* on top of an EC extension.

E.g. Original deadline is 1/5/23 and student has a SoRA extending this to 8/5/23. If the student has a two-week EC extension approved the new deadline will be 22/5/23.

#### 16. Can one of my self-certified EC requests cover more than one deadline?

Yes, as long as they fall within the same 14-day period. You can submit a self-certified EC to cover any assessments (including exams) falling within that period.

e.g. student has deadline of 14/5/23 for module X and 26/5/23 for module Y. Both deadlines would be covered by the EC and would only count as one of your two self-certified opportunities (three if you're a postgrad).

#### 17. Can I apply for two consecutive self-certified ECs?

**Back-to-back self-certified ECs are not allowed.** If you are still unable to meet the deadline you must submit a conventional EC.

#### 18. Can I use self-certified ECs to push an assessment into the next period?

You can only defer time-limited assessments (e.g. exams) to the next assessment period. You cannot defer coursework or the dissertation to the LSA – you can only request a specific extension length. You can only request deferrals 2 weeks in advance of the event.

#### 19. Will applying for an EC negatively affect my grade?

Not in any way.