



Graduate School of the Environment Extension and Extenuating Circumstance Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction and Scope

- 1.1. It is each student's responsibility to undertake the required assessments for their programme of study on or by the dates set by the Graduate School. However, we recognise that students may encounter personal difficulties or circumstances outside of their control that affect their ability to attempt or complete assessments. This policy provides details of processes to support students in these circumstances
- 1.2. This document describes the procedure for requesting extensions to published coursework submission deadlines (a separate procedure is available to students wishing to apply for extenuating circumstances - see Section 3).
- 1.3. This policy and application form is for use by students enrolled on all programmes validated either by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) or University of East London (UEL).
- 1.4. Any form of application that is incomplete or not correctly submitted will follow normal CAT policies and procedures for late submission of assessment.
- 1.5. Students will be able to apply for an 7 day extension where a student needs a brief period of extra support or extra time to submit an assessment or extenuating circumstances where the extra support is more extensive.

2. Coursework Extensions

- 2.1. Where illness or other verifiable cause will prevent a student from completing an assessment, consideration will be given to allowing an extension upon receipt of a completed application form and appropriate supporting evidence.
- 2.2. Applications for a 7 day coursework extensions should be made by **no later than 72 hours before a published deadline**. Applications received within 72 hours of the deadline **may** still be considered. However applications submitted **after the submission deadline has passed cannot be considered** unless there are special mitigating circumstances that prevented the student from applying.
- 2.3. In one academic year, a student normally has three opportunities to request a 7 day assessment extension for the assessment(s) on a module (a maximum of one module per term). This applies to both full and part time modes of study.
 - Term 1 Modules with teaching beginning between September to January inc.
 - Term 2 Modules with teaching beginning from February to April inc.
 - Term 3 Modules with teaching beginning from May to July inc.

- 2.4. As dissertations can span multiple terms a Dissertation student can only apply for one extension.
- 2.5. 7 day assessment extensions are primarily suitable for written assignments. Assignments not eligible for a 7 day assessment extension include live presentations, group work, or mathematical assignments, where students may gain unfair access to questions or answers. If you are uncertain if your assignment is eligible for a 7 day assessment extension, seek advice from the module leader.
- 2.6. Any student wishing to engage with a 7 day extension or extenuation can only do so by submitting an application. The link to the 7 day online application form for extension and extenuation requests can be found within these guidelines.
- 2.7. An extension will extend an assessment deadline up to a maximum of 7 calendar days. No further extension to that assessment deadline will be permitted. Work submitted after the 7 calendar days deadline will receive a zero grade and fail.
- 2.8. Applications for a 7-day extension do not need to be supported by third-party evidence. However, the student is required to provide a concise summary of their current circumstances and what has led to the specific 7-day extension request.
- 2.9. Where a student with Additional Learning Needs has approved 7-day ALN additional assessment time provision for all written assignments in place through an approved Student Access Agreement, they may also apply for an additional 7-day extension (as described in paragraphs 2.1-2.3) should additional circumstances they are encountering require it. Such an additional 7-day extension can only be approved for one module per term.
- 2.10. Applications for coursework extensions must be made via the completion and submission of a 'Coursework Extension Request Form' submitted electronically. This can be found in the Students Forms Hub via the following link: [Forms Hub](#)
- Please contact the Student Support Team if you would prefer to submit an application via another format or require any additional information about applying for an extension.
- 2.11. The applicant will be informed that the extension request has been received and the published submission date will be put back by the 7 calendar days extension that has been agreed. The 7-day extension will be applied equally to part time and full time students as the extension pertains to the module and not the mode of attendance.
- 2.12. Coursework should be submitted through the usual submission route (normally via Turnitin for UEL students or Speedgrader for LJMU). Work that is submitted late and without an authorised extension request will be subject to the normal assessment rules and regulations of LJMU or UEL, subject to your degree and validating partner. Subsequent resubmission will be capped at 50%.
- 2.13. For students with approved extensions, draft submissions will not be considered within the extension period.
- 2.14. For UEL students, it should be noted that there is no option to submit 24 hours later following an approved 7-day extension date.

- 2.15. For LJMU students, it should be noted that there is no option to submit 1 week later following an approved 7-day extension date.
- 2.16. In circumstances where an extension of up to 7 working days is unlikely to be sufficient, students may apply for Extenuating Circumstances (see next section).

3. Extenuating Circumstances

- 3.1. A student may make an application for Extenuating Circumstances where timely, severe, acute and unforeseeable circumstances occur that prevent them from attempting a summative assessment task and where the offer of a 7 day extension is insufficient or inappropriate and which are not already taken into account by Reasonable Adjustments previously agreed for Additional Learning Needs.
- 3.2. Students who attempt and submit a summative assessment task declare themselves 'fit to attempt' that assessment task and applications for the consideration of Extenuating Circumstances are not normally permitted for that assessment. However, in exceptional circumstances a student may apply to defer an assessment attempt when there is clear evidence that they were not in a fit state to decide whether they were fit to attempt the assessment.
- 3.3. The Graduate School defines extenuating circumstances as:
 - 3.3.1. Unforeseeable - in that you could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned.
 - 3.3.2. Unpreventable - in that you could do nothing reasonably in your power to prevent such an event.
 - 3.3.3. Relevant - You must be able to link the event or circumstance, and its impact, to the period for which the application is being made.
 - 3.3.4. Corroborated - An application for mitigating circumstances must meet the normal requirements for independent documentary evidence (see [Supporting Evidence section 4](#)).
 - 3.3.5. Significant - expected to have a serious impact on your academic performance.
- 3.4. Ongoing long term circumstances are not usually unforeseeable within the timeframe of the module. In these circumstances a student should contact student support to discuss their situation, where options such as consideration of additional learning needs or intermission/leave of absence may be discussed in the first instance.
- 3.5. CAT's intention is to respond to students sympathetically and to support them in addressing the assessment shortfall. CAT can only do this if it is aware of the situation, and it is therefore the student's responsibility to inform CAT of such circumstances as soon as possible after they occur. Documentary evidence will be required to support claims made under extenuating circumstances procedure.
- 3.6. Applications for extenuating circumstances can be made at any time but should normally be made by no later than **1 calendar week or 5 working days after the submission deadline whichever is longest**. Applications received after this period of time may still be considered, however applications submitted after this deadline has passed cannot be considered unless there are special ongoing mitigating circumstances that prevented the

student from applying. Ongoing circumstances need to be made clear within the provided evidence.

- 3.7. Extenuating circumstances requests are considered anonymously by a panel. Therefore each request should include supporting evidence and not refer to previous requests as evidence.
- 3.8. Where an Extenuating Circumstances request is granted, the submission deadline will usually be the next available resubmission point.
- 3.9. If multiple module deadlines are on the same date an application should be made for each assessment, but both can use the same evidence.
- 3.10. The Extenuating Circumstances policy and application form is available from the GSE forms hub at the following link [Forms Hub](#)

Please contact the Student Support team if you would prefer to apply via another format or require any additional information about applying for extenuating circumstances.

- 3.11. **A student can apply for either a 7 day extension or extenuation. There cannot be a dual application for both.**
- 3.12. If a student has an extension granted, but thereafter feels they are unable to engage with an assessment(s), they are eligible to apply for extenuation and the extension is rescinded upon confirmation of extenuation being granted. If extenuation is not granted the extension remains.
- 3.13. Where a student has submitted an extension and the Graduate School feels that there may be a need for more support or the student to engage with extenuation, a recommendation will be made to the extenuation panel and/or relevant support services.
- 3.14. There are no termly limits on the number of requests for extenuating circumstances. However, under normal circumstances the number of separate requests to extend a single assessment deadline under the extenuating circumstances process is two.
- 3.15. Note, students can submit draft versions of their coursework at any time during the module, which may be incomplete. If extenuation is granted any draft work submitted prior to the submission date will not be assessed.

4. Supporting Evidence for Extenuation Circumstances Applications

- 4.1. In all cases it is a requirement to provide us with independent, third party evidence to support an extenuation request confirming the reason(s) why you are applying e.g. a fit-note or medical letter in the case of illness lasting more than one week; or a letter from employer if due to unexpected work commitments etc.
- 4.2. The following table is non exhaustive and provided for guidance only, and lists some common circumstances where requesting Extenuating Circumstances is / is not considered acceptable:

Acceptable reasons

- If you are taken ill during an assessment period, or caring for someone taken ill during that period;
- Sudden, unexpected incident related to pregnancy eg miscarriage
- If you are involved in an accident or serious incident that prevents you meeting an assignment deadline
- If you experience an immediate family bereavement or illness that prevents you meeting an assignment deadline;
- Serious personal problems such as relationship issues;
- Victim of serious crime or trauma. Involvement in a natural disaster or terrorist incident.
- Unexpected professional or financial problems;
- Delays in obtaining ethical approval and/or risk assessment or delays in accessing support.
- Independent verifiable evidence is required in all other circumstances and the Student Support team will be happy to provide advice if needed.

Examples of evidence requirements

- In the case of personal illness, a 5 day self-certification is permissible. Longer extensions will require medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription or discharge letter.
- Retrospective disclosure to CAT of a Pregnancy supported by evidence from doctor/midwife/ nurse/hospital.
- Written report from police or medical evidence.
- Death certificate, order of service
- Solicitor's letter, letter from GP.
- Written report from police or other legal authority e.g. solicitor.
- Crime reference number
- Financial statements
- Letter from employer. NB Not if self employed
- In these circumstances Student Support will also be an acceptable source of evidence.

Non-acceptable reasons

- Minor illnesses e.g. coughs, colds or hay fever
- Computer failure or printing failure at home, lost assignments;
- Holidays, house moves or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected.
- Unverifiable travel difficulties;
- Not realising deadline is imminent or poor time management;
- Wanting 'to get it perfect';
- Normal assessment stress;
- Minor life events, unless the circumstances have had a disproportionate effect;
- Any other event that could have reasonably been expected or any anticipated commitments (weddings, changes in employment, sporting competitions etc.) interfering with completion of course work.

Unacceptable Evidence

- Screenshots from smartphones
 - Photos of an injury, images of medication, generic appointment letters.
 - Screenshots of websites where there is no identifiable link to the applicant
 - Emails of support from CAT staff in the absence of primary verifiable evidence. NB ALN related evidence provided by staff may be used where unforeseen circumstances are relevant
 - routine medical tests
 - medical evidence in relation to other people without their consent
 - Evidence not written in English – see 4.6 below
- 4.3. If you have experienced sexual violence, you do not need to tell us what happened, but there may be other forms of evidence you can provide. Some examples of this include a supporting letter from a Sexual Assault Referral Centre, an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser, or a voluntary organisation, such as Rape Crisis, Women's Aid, Victim Support, The Survivors Trust or Male Survivors Partnership.
- 4.4. Supporting evidence can be uploaded directly if using the online application form, or alternatively please email or post your supporting documents to the Student Support Office.
- 4.5. Please note that all supporting evidence will be treated in accordance with our Data Protection policies, further details of which can be found in our [Privacy Notice](#).
- 4.6. Evidence should be provided in English. If the original evidence is in another language this should be provided along with a translation.
- 4.7. Occasionally the panel will request additional verifiable evidence to support the application. In these circumstances the panel will only review your application on one further occasion. Should you miss the deadline for resubmitting evidence then the panel will not accept further evidence.

5. Notification of decisions

- 5.1. The decision to accept or reject an exceptional circumstances application will be recorded on the Graduate School's Student Record system. Students will be notified of the outcome via email in a timely manner. An authorised extension request will still have access to the full range of marks.

6. Appeals

- 6.1. There will be no appeal against the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel other than on the grounds that special mitigating circumstances may apply or that there has been a material administrative error in handling the application.
- 6.2. Students must lodge the appeal with the Student Governance Office within 10 working days of notification of the outcome. Please contact the Student Support team in the first instance should you wish to appeal a decision.

7. IT Failure

- 7.1. As mentioned above computer or printer failure is not normally considered as an acceptable reason for exceptional circumstances.
- 7.2. If a student experiences a network or hardware fault at the point of submission, they should take a date-stamped screenshot or photograph of any error message prior to the deadline and submit a copy of the assignment with the screenshot to the Student Support Office. They should then submit their assignment as soon as possible through the usual route once the fault is resolved and send a copy of the captured error message to the School for consideration. The assignment submitted must also carry the pre-deadline date stamp, and not have been further worked on subsequent to this.
- 7.3. Students are reminded to make regular backups of the work they are undertaking to minimise the impact of any IT failure – preferably to remote storage such as the OneDrive cloud storage platform available to you through your Office365 account; failure to back up work regularly and leaving completion or submission of work so late that students cannot find another suitable computer or printer to complete/submit their work, are not normally be accepted as grounds for mitigation.
- 7.4. Students might wish to consider submitting part completed work so that there is some record of achievement should there be an IT failure – this is not a requirement but is good practice and would provide evidence of work completed, as part of any consideration.

8. Additional Key Information

- 8.1. In the event of national emergency such as the COVID-19 pandemic which has longer term extenuating circumstances that apply to the whole student body, temporary amendments may be made to adapt this policy in line with guidance from LJMU and/or UEL. In these circumstances all students will be contacted with any changes that are implemented
- 8.2. A 7 day extension should not be used as a last-minute attempt to engage with an assessment. A student should engage with their academic tutors and discuss any issues or challenges they may be facing as part of a discussion around support, where extension may be one option available to them.
- 8.3. A student should not submit a 7 day request to alleviate conflicting assessment deadlines, especially if it has been created due to another assessment having an extension granted. Students are expected to manage their own workloads and time management to avoid being impacted upon by a minor illness or other insignificant cause.
- 8.4. Where a student has submitted a 7-day extension request and the school feels that there may be a need for more support, or that the student would be better to engage with Extenuating Circumstances, a recommendation will be made to the Extenuating Circumstances panel and/or relevant support services.

- 8.5. If, owing to work, family or other personal or professional commitments, you find that you do not have sufficient time for your studies, and the Extenuating Circumstances Policy is not suitable, you may apply for intermission/leave of absence. An intermission (leave of absence) can be requested for a period of up to a year with the approval of the relevant Programme Leader, and during this period no modules may be studied. Details of intermission/leave of absence can be found in the [Student Welfare and Support Guide](#) and [Student Withdrawal Policy](#) – Section 5. It should be noted that if a student takes intermission/leave of absence, and they are being funded by Student Finance England / Wales or other funders, we recommend contacting that the student contacts the relevant body with details of their change in circumstances. In these circumstances please contact CAT's Student Finance team for further advice.
- 8.6. In the absence of either an extension, Extenuating Circumstances or intermission/leave of absence being approved for an assignment, then the normal regulations regarding late submission of coursework will be implemented.
- 8.7. The extenuating circumstances panel meets typically on a monthly basis, therefore there may be some time between submission of your application and a response. Therefore you should complete the assessment as soon as possible rather than await the panel outcome.

9. Updates to Policy v 3.1 dated May 2023

Minor typographical and spelling errors corrected.

'Automatic' replaced by 7 day for clarity.

1.1 Statement of expectation of student to complete all assessments by published deadlines, and recognition of unexpected events that can affect this.

2.4 Exceptions to 7 day extensions added

2.7 ALN statement

2.12 statement regarding draft submissions

2.13 and 2.14 statement that no further consideration of late submissions is made if a 7 day extension has been granted

3.1 Definition of Extenuating Circumstances expanded to account for Additional Learning Needs assessment

3.2 Self-declaration of 'fit to attempt' an assessment

3.3 Definition of exceptional circumstances added

3.6 Deadlines for applying for mitigating circumstances added

3.12 consideration of extenuation following additional extension

3.13 consideration of extenuation following additional extension by the GSE

4.2 Additional examples of evidence provided, and examples of unacceptable evidence.

4.3 Information on cases of sexual assault

4.5 Evidence to be provided in English

4.6 Resubmission of evidence

5 Notification of results

6.2 Appeals options clarified

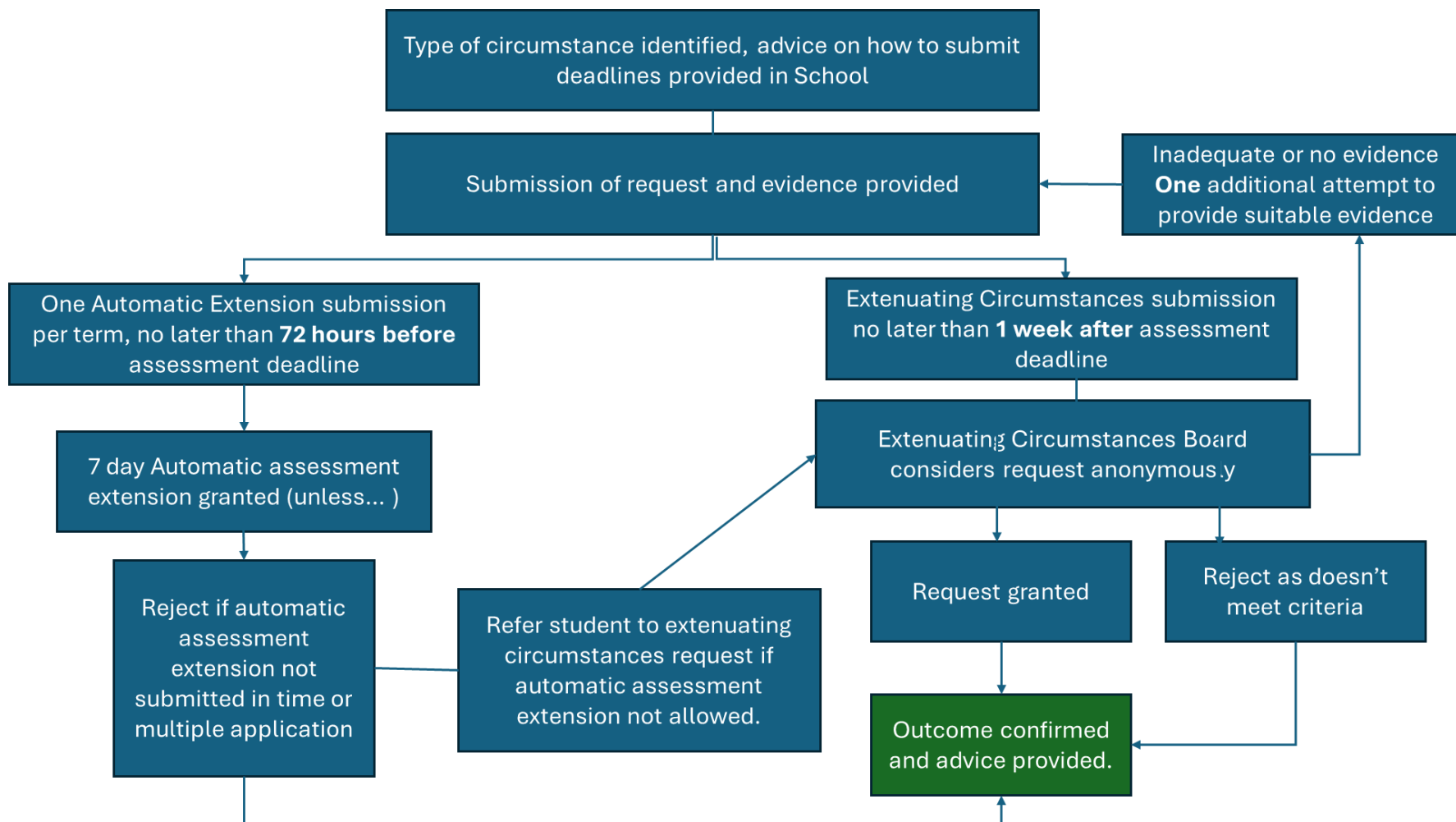
Section 7. IT Failure added

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Version 3.2

By: Academic Council

To be reviewed by: July 2027



Appendix A - Extension Application Form

YOUR DETAILS

Student Number:	
Programme Title:	
Module Code / Title:	
Module Start (Month & Year):	
Please state the assessment component(s) for which you are applying for an extension:	
Coursework due date:	

EXTENSION REQUEST DETAILS

Please state the extension period requested:

Extension period requested (maximum 7 calendar days)	
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Please indicate the reason(s) why you are requesting an extension (tick all that apply):

Work or professional commitments	
Family commitments	
Other personal circumstances	

Please use the space below to provide any additional information:

[illegible]