

## **Academic Regulations: Exceptional Circumstances**

### **1. Principles and Definitions**

- 1.1 We know that sometimes external or significant events can have a negative impact on your ability to study and/or engage with your assessments. We are committed to maintaining a fair, consistent, and objective way for you to let us know about such events. This section of the Academic Regulations explains what you must do if you think you may need additional time to complete assessments because of events beyond your control that have impacted your ability to complete assessment work. You must read and understand the following.
- 1.2 Throughout this section of the Regulations, we refer to courses and modules. However, our collaborative partners may use different terminology such as programmes and/or units. Schedule A details Collaborative Partners exemptions.
- 1.3 Studying and preparing for assessments are key activities integral to being a student. These activities normally involve a certain amount of additional pressure: meeting deadlines, planning your workload, and keeping yourself motivated. You should plan your study and personal commitments so that you are able to comfortably meet your published assessment deadlines.
- 1.4 The published assessment deadline is the last possible point at which an assessment can be submitted without incurring a cap on your mark for being late ('late cap'). You should plan your work so that you are not leaving the submission to the day or hour of the published assessment deadline.
- 1.5 Exceptional Circumstances are temporary events that do not prevent you completing your course. For example:
  - Serious short-term illness or accident.
  - Bereavement in the form of death of a close relative or significant other.
  - Evidence of a short-term outbreak of a long-term health condition.
- 1.6 If you have serious, long-term circumstances (medical, personal, or financial) that are likely to last for more than four weeks, we may need you to:
  - Interrupt your studies; or
  - Get and maintain an active Student Support Arrangement.
- 1.7 By attempting an assessment (this means submitting an assessment or attending a live assessment such as a presentation, performance, or exam) you have declared that you are fit to attempt (sometimes referred to as 'fit to sit') that assessment. This means that you cannot make a request for Exceptional Circumstances unless you were medically unable to make a decision about your fitness to attempt the assessment at the time of your attempt. Having attempted the assessment, the only Exceptional Circumstances you may request is to attempt the assessment again. This means that, if approved, your attempt at the assessment is set aside as if it never happened. However, if you were successful in the original assessment attempt but have it set aside as an Exceptional Circumstance, you cannot later ask for that mark to stand for any reason. See case study examples below.
- 1.8 Requests for Exceptional Circumstances are only granted where there is independent

evidence that the events you tell us about could not have been planned for, and were out of your control, and have had a significant or severe impact on your ability to study or complete an assessment or assessments.

- 1.9 If we approve your request for Exceptional Circumstances, you will be allowed, for each assessment included in your request, either:
- An extension. This means that you will be allowed an additional seven calendar days after the published assessment submission date to submit your work. You cannot request an extension if you submit your request less than three working days before your published assessment deadline: if you do, we will consider it as a request for a deferral. See the case study examples below.
  - A deferral. This means that you take the assessment at the next available opportunity. You cannot request a deferral if you submit your request less than five working days before your published assessment deadline. See the case study examples below.
  - A deferral due to being unfit when you attempted the assessment. This means that you take the assessment at the next available opportunity and your original attempt at the assessment has been set aside. You cannot claim the original mark for any reason. Requests for Exceptional Circumstances due to being unfit must be submitted as soon as you become aware that you may not have had the mental capacity to make a decision about your fitness. See the case study examples below.
  - Removal of a late cap. This means that your work will be marked as if it had been received before the published assessment deadline (any late cap is removed). See the case study examples below.

Depending on the circumstances of the assessments included, you may ask for different types of Exceptional Circumstances in your Request. This means that you can ask for an extension for one assessment and a deferral in another, providing the timing of your Request meets the above requirements.

- 1.10 It's possible for you to submit a Request for Exceptional Circumstances up to three weeks after the assessment deadline. Any such late request made up to three weeks after the submission deadline date is only considered where you have provided a clear explanation for the reason for the delay that is supported by independent evidence. The Head of Registry (or nominated representative) retains the right to consider a request at their discretion where they deem there to be a credible explanation as to why the application was not made within the required timescales.

## **2. Supporting Evidence**

- 2.1 Requests for Exceptional Circumstances must be supported by independent evidence that supports your explanation of your situation and either:
- Provide a medical reason why you could not complete your assessments and/or engage in your studies.  
Or
  - Provide an explanation why you could not complete your assessment.  
And
  - (as relevant) provide support for your reason for making a late Request.
- 2.2 Evidence must be dated, signed, and on official letter-headed paper. You should keep the original as we may ask to see the hard copy of your evidence. Examples of evidence include:
- Letter from an independent, qualified clinician (e.g., General Practitioner, psychologist,

psychiatrist).

- Statement of support from your tutor.

- 2.3 If your original evidence is not written in English, you must obtain a certified and independently translated copy. We do not accept online translations using, for example, Google translate.
- 2.4 We may investigate evidence and/or call for independent or expert advice and to make other enquiries as necessary.

### **3. Requests Unlikely to be Approved**

- 3.1 The following are examples of Requests for Exceptional Circumstances that we would not usually approve:

- Relying on a medical condition without acceptable evidence.
- Medical circumstances that do not coincide with the date of the assessment(s).
- Minor illness or injury.
- Long-term health conditions for which the student is already receiving reasonable or appropriate adjustments.
- Personal IT issues.
- Unavailability of books or other resources.
- Financial problems (other than cases of the most extreme hardship).
- Foreseeable life events such as moving home, family celebrations (or similar) where you have control over the date or may choose not to participate.
- Problems with postal delivery of work (you should obtain receipts for assessments submitted by post).
- Paid or volunteer work commitments reducing available time for study or assessment engagement.
- Appointments (including legal, medical, etc.) which could reasonably be rearranged.
- Holidays or travel.

### **4. Process**

- 4.1 Your Request must include:

- A clear statement of the reasons for your Request; and
- All relevant evidence.

If you need more time to collect your supporting evidence, you must submit your Request form by the above deadline and explain when your evidence will be provided. A Request is only considered by a Panel as described below when it's complete. This means that you have submitted your completed Request form and all evidence you want us to consider.

- 4.2 Requests are confidential and seen only by members of staff required to decide the outcome. All Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.3 All complete Requests are considered by an Exceptional Circumstances Panel composed of members of Registry staff. The purpose of the Exceptional Circumstances Panel is to make fair, transparent, and reasonable decisions about Requests based on the explanation of the impact of the events on your ability to complete assessments. Exceptional Circumstances Panels consider whether the event(s) described in your Request are clearly:
- Significant. This means there has been a major impact on your ability to study for and/or complete the assessment(s) identified in the Request.
  - Unexpected. This means that you could not reasonably have known that the event(s) might happen.

- Unavoidable. This means that there was nothing you could reasonably have done to stop the event from happening.
- Overlapping. This means that the events happened during the period you were either studying for or completing the assessment(s).
- Evidenced. This means that you must have provided independent evidence. We cannot accept only your statement or any statement from your family and/or friends.

4.4 You will be told the Exceptional Circumstances Panel's decision by email within three working days of the decision.

4.5 Exceptional Circumstances Panels can make one of the following decisions:

- Approved. This means that you have been given what you requested (e.g., extension or deferral, or removal of late cap).
- Accepted for Deferral. This means that we cannot give you what you requested, but we are able to give you a Deferral to take the assessment at the next opportunity.
- Declined. This means that there is something missing or your Request does not meet the criteria and we cannot give you what you requested. If this is the decision, we will tell you why your Request was declined.

4.6 Request decisions only (not the reason for your Request) are shared with:

- Assessment Boards.
- Your Course Leader and Module Leader.
- Student Immigration & Compliance team (as relevant).
- Student Experience & Welfare team.

4.7 If you are unhappy with the decision made, and you can demonstrate at least one of the grounds, you may appeal.

## **5. Appeal**

5.1 To appeal the decision of an Exceptional Circumstances Panel you must submit an Academic Appeal. Any such Academic Appeals must be received within ten working days of the decision being emailed to you.

5.2 You must be able to demonstrate your Academic Appeal meets any one of the following grounds:

- There are reasonable grounds, supported by authoritative and objective evidence, to believe there has been an administrative or procedural error that may have affected the decision or recommendation to the student's disadvantage.  
Or
- The decision or recommendation in the case was clearly unreasonable.  
Or
- There exists or existed circumstances affecting the decision which, for good reason, the decision-makers may not have known about when taking the original decision.

## 6. Examples:

### Case Study One

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
Jude has been experiencing severe mental ill-health, including feelings of depression, not taking care of themselves, and extremely disturbed sleep. Jude submitted their Business Portfolio Plan for module ABC507 before the published assessment deadline even though it wasn't finished. Jude speaks to a member of the Student Experience & Welfare team and they discuss whether Jude could make a request for Exceptional Circumstances on the basis of being unfit to attempt the assessment.	Jude submits a request and provides evidence from their doctor confirming that they have been experiencing severe mental distress and in their medical opinion Jude would not have had the mental capacity to make a decision about being fit to attempt the assessment. The medical letter is dated three days after Jude submitted the assessment.	Request approved because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jude submitted the Request for Exceptional Circumstances as soon as they became aware that they might not have been fit to attempt the assessment.</li> <li>Jude provided independent medical evidence that was written in the same period that the assessment was submitted and confirms incapacity to make a decision about fitness to attempt.</li> <li>Jude's attempt at the assessment was set aside and they were granted a deferral to submit the assessment at the next available opportunity.</li> </ul>
Following the above, Jude attempts the Business Portfolio Plan for module ABC507 at the next attempt but receives a mark of 37%. Jude asks to keep the mark of 51% from the original attempt that had been set aside rather than do the assessment again.	N/A	Request denied because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The original attempt at ABC507 Business Plan had been set aside. This means that Jude cannot claim that mark.</li> <li>Having failed the work with a mark of 37%, Jude must attempt the assessment as a resit at the next opportunity. If successful, the resit work will be capped at 40%.</li> </ul>

### Case Study Two

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
Sami has had tonsillitis for two weeks and rushed to finish and submit their Proposal for module KPK704. Three weeks later they find out they received a mark of 51%. Sami submits a Request for Exceptional Circumstances on the basis of being unfit to attempt the assessment.	Sami submits a request and provides evidence from their doctor confirming that they had tonsillitis in the previous month. The doctor does not state that the symptoms of tonsillitis include any impact on their ability to make their own decisions. The medical letter is dated four weeks	Request denied because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sami did not submit the Request for Exceptional Circumstances as soon as they became aware that they might not have been fit to attempt the assessment.</li> <li>Sami's independent medical evidence was written a month after the assessment was submitted.</li> <li>The evidence does not say that Sami would not have had the mental capacity to make a decision about their fitness</li> </ul>

	after Sami submitted the assessment.	to attempt the assessment.
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### Case Study Three

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
Ruby has been working on her Design Portfolio that is due in on Thursday 30 November. Two weeks before the deadline Ruby sprains her wrist and is unable to write or draw. Her doctor recommended resting her wrist for a week. The day before the Design Portfolio is due in Ruby puts in a Request for Exceptional Circumstances, seeking an extension of seven calendar days.	Ruby provides a letter from her doctor and explains that she's lost a week because of her injured wrist. Ruby says the reason for the delay in making her Request is because she did not know about the process for Requesting Exceptional Circumstances.	Request for an extension denied because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event Ruby is relying on was unplanned. However, Ruby applied too late for an extension.</li> <li>• Ruby has not provided a good reason for the delay in making her Request.</li> <li>• However, as Ruby has good supporting evidence, her Request is approved as a deferral. Ruby can decide to submit for 30 November or wait until the next opportunity.</li> </ul>

### Case Study Four

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
Mohsi finished his dissertation proposal that was due in by Thursday 16 November at 1.00pm. On Wednesday morning he receives a message telling him that his grandfather has died. Mohsi packs immediately and gets a train to be with his family that evening. On Saturday morning he realised he forgot to submit his assessment: as he had his laptop with him, he submits it straight away and emails his Module Leader. She advises Requesting Exceptional Circumstances, seeking removal of the late cap.	Mohsi's request confirms that the work was submitted late following receiving the news of the death of his grandfather. Mosh's Course Leader writes an email in support of the Request, confirming what they know about the situation, including that they have seen the message about the death of the grandfather.	Request approved because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mohsi had no control over the events and had completed the assessment ready to submit by the deadline.</li> <li>• As soon as Mohsi realised, he submitted the work, and reached out to the Module Leader for advice. Mohsi submitted the Request and explained the delay.</li> <li>• Mosh's evidence (the statement of tutor support) confirms what they know about the situation and that they had seen the message Mosh received.</li> <li>• The late cap on Mohsi's assessment was removed.</li> </ul>

### Case Study Five

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
Tom finished his design portfolio that was due in by Thursday 14 December at 1.00pm. On Monday morning he receives a call telling him there has been a fire in a neighbour's house near the family home. Tom books a flight and goes home that afternoon. On Saturday morning he realises he didn't submit the portfolio: as he had his laptop with him, he submits it straight away and emails his module leader. She advises Requesting Exceptional Circumstances, seeking removal of the late cap.	Tom's request confirms that the work was submitted late following receiving the news of the fire. Tom's Course Leader writes an email in support of the Request, confirming what they know about the situation, including that they have seen news footage about the fire.	Request denied because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tom had no control over the events and had completed the assessment ready to submit by the deadline.</li> <li>• Tom was able to make arrangements for the flight home.</li> <li>• Tom had plenty of time once he returned home to submit his Request online.</li> <li>• Tom did not contact his Module Leader when he made the decision to book a flight to go home: he only contacted them when he was late for submitting his assessment.</li> <li>• Tom's tutor confirmed there had been a fire but was unable to explain the impact on Tom (even whether his home was impacted).</li> </ul>

### Case Study Six

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
Sandeep has been working on his Professional Engagement essay and the published assessment deadline is on Thursday 8 April at 1.00pm. On Tuesday afternoon he develops a cough and doesn't sleep well that night. On Wednesday he still feels ill and submits a Request for Exceptional Circumstances, seeking a seven-day extension.	Sandeep explains having a cough and being unable to sleep. He provides no supporting evidence.	Request denied because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall period to complete his work should have been planned well enough so that one lost night would not significantly impact his ability to complete the essay.</li> <li>• Sandeep provided no evidence and submitted the Request less than three working days before the assessment.</li> </ul>

### Case Study Seven

Event	Request and Evidence	Outcome
<p>Davina has to complete a presentation for one of her Level 3 modules as the assessment. She saved the slide pack on her laptop and made sure to save the changes when she made any amendments. The week before it's due to be delivered, she travels to see her brother to practice the presentation. On her way home she has her laptop stolen. She did not make another copy. She submits a Request for Exceptional Circumstances more than three working days before the presentation is due to be delivered.</p>	<p>Davina provides a police report confirming the theft, and an insurance claim form in relation to the loss of the laptop.</p>	<p>Request denied because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Davina should have made back-up copies in a different location than on her laptop.</li> </ul>



## **7. Schedule A**

These Academic Regulations (set out above) apply to Regent's University London provision delivered directly at Regent's University London or through our Collaborative Partners except as detailed below:

### **Domus Academy**

7.1 TBC

### **Istituto Marangoni (London)**

7.2 Paragraph 3.1 (above) includes:

- Misreading the examination timetable.
- Oversleeping, alarm clock not going off causing a student to be late for or miss an exam or assessment.

### **Istituto Marangoni (Paris)**

7.3 Paragraph 3.1 (above) includes:

- Misreading the examination timetable.
- Oversleeping, alarm clock not going off causing a student to be late for or miss an exam or assessment.

### **MACROMEDIA**

7.4 TBC