

Student Guide to Extenuating Circumstances

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This document should be read in conjunction with the [Extenuating Circumstances Policy 2021/22](#) and the information provided on the [Extenuating Circumstances](#) pages on the Student Intranet.

PART 1 - Information about Extenuating Circumstances

What are Extenuating Circumstances?

The College defines extenuating circumstances as circumstances which are outside a student's control and which may temporarily prevent a student from undertaking an assessment or have a marked/ significant detrimental/adverse impact on their ability to undertake assessment by coursework or examination to the standard normally expected.

This means that extenuating circumstances rarely occur and are deemed to be out of your control if they are:-

- Unforeseeable - you would not have prior knowledge of the event (e.g. you cannot foresee that you will be involved in a car accident or have a medical emergency)
- Unpreventable – you could not reasonably do anything in your power to prevent such an event (e.g. you cannot reasonably prevent a burst appendix)

How do I apply for Extenuating Circumstances?

1. Read the guide and information on the webpages
You will be asked to confirm a number of declarations - it is very important that you read and understand these declarations. If you tick the declarations it is taken as agreement on your part to the information in them.
2. Complete the form available on the Extenuating Circumstances pages of the Student Intranet.
The Extenuating Circumstances application form is quite long and can only be completed in one sitting - we currently are not able to offer the facility to save your form and return to complete it at a later time. It is important that you prepare to make your application by ensuring you have the following ready:
 - Details of the assessment/s that have been affected including the module number and name, the assessment in that module that has been affected and the date of the assessment or the correct submission date.
 - If you were granted an extension for the assessment/s
 - The date you actually submitted/completed the assessment
 - If you wish, you can provide a pdf/word document outlining more detailed/complex areas of your circumstance - the form will provide you with space to

- give the most pertinent details but you may have more information that you feel relevant.
- Suitable evidence to support your application - The EC Committee is unable to retrieve or access evidence that you have provided to other departments in the College. Any evidence you wish to provide must be uploaded together with your form.
- It is important that you provide concise, accurate information. Data protection laws in the UK mean that your personal data, including information about circumstances you experience, cannot routinely be shared across departments - you should assume that the EC Committee will have no prior knowledge of your situation and provide adequate detail and evidence accordingly.

When should I apply?

You should complete and submit an EC form as soon as possible after the assessment or submission date for the last assessment affected by your circumstances. It is important that you do not apply in advance so the Committee can consider your application on actual fact rather than speculation on how a circumstance may affect you. You can apply for up to 5 assessments to be taken into consideration on each application. You may apply again if your circumstances continue and affect later assessments or if new circumstances occur at a later date. Leaving your application to the last minute close to the final deadline may limit the available options the Committee and your Department Assessment Board can put in place to take into consideration your circumstances.

Applications cannot be accepted after the relevant deadline listed on the [Extenuating Circumstances](#) pages of the Student Intranet – if your deadline is not showing please contact your School or email ECs@rhul.ac.uk

When will I get a response?

You will receive a confirmation by email that you have submitted your form. This will include a form reference number (FRMXXXXX) – please make a note of this reference or save the confirmation email and quote the reference number in any correspondence you have about your application.

You will be informed of the outcome of your application on the same day that you received your progression decision/results. This may be some time after you have submitted your application. As long as you have received a confirmation email when submitting your form, you do not need to follow up on your application. Please only contact the team about your application if you have not received a confirmation email or you have further evidence to submit, or wish to withdraw your application. Outcome letters are sent by email to your College email account (or for students on non-standard partner programmes, to the email provided in your application).

PGT students requesting a deferral of assessment will receive an outcome after your application has been presented at the next available EC committee (usually held monthly throughout the year).

Some outcomes relating to late submission of assessments may be made available throughout the year if the EC committee and Department Assessment Board think this appropriate.

What happens to my application once I submit it?

1. Your application form will be received by the Extenuating Circumstances (ECs) team who will triage your application to check that you have completed the form correctly and that your circumstances are applicable.
2. Your application will then be presented to the Extenuating Circumstances Committee who meet regularly throughout the year. The Committee will consider your application, assessing if you have provided sufficient suitable evidence, if your circumstances meet the criteria of an acceptable Extenuating Circumstance and how much your circumstances are likely to have affected your studies. The Committee will decide whether or not to accept or reject applications and identify the possible mitigating outcomes available under the College regulations.
3. Accepted applications are passed to your Department Assessment Board who then decide which of the possible mitigating outcomes is most appropriate in your case, depending on your performance in the assessment compared to your performance across your other assessments. Department Assessment Boards meet at the end of each academic year to review and agree marks, progression, awards and classifications - this is when the final decision regarding your Extenuating Circumstance will be made.

What circumstances count as extenuating circumstances?

Please refer to the table in Part 2 of the Guide for more details of the type of circumstances that can be taken into account by the EC Committee and your Department Assessment Board.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Please refer to the table in Part 2 of the Guide for examples of the evidence you can provide to support your application – please remember these important principals:

- Evidence needs to be provided at the time you make your application. If you do not yet have the evidence required, you should wait to make your application until you have all the necessary documentation. If this is close to the EC deadline for your cohort, you should contact the EC Team for advice as a matter of urgency.
- Evidence needs to be in English. Where your evidence is not in English you will be required to provide a translation either by an authorised notary/legal practitioner or by a third party (not a family member). The third party must provide their name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
- Evidence provided should be relevant to the circumstances you are reporting and cover the period of time for which you are claiming.
- Evidence needs to be attributable to yourself – examples of evidence we cannot/will not accept includes: photos of injuries, photos of persons who have passed away, photos of yourself in a particular place or photos of the consequences of accident, domestic crisis or crime. The only exception to this is where the photographs you are providing are official police, emergency service or medical photographs clearly labelled with your personal details or a relevant crime number. Where such photographs may contain sensitive or distressing images, you must indicate this on your application.
- Where a third party is providing confirmation of a circumstance, this should wherever possible not be a member of your immediate family. Third party confirmation will not be accepted from members of RHUL staff other than members of the Wellbeing team involved in your support through the circumstances.

- Our systems currently have difficulty opening HEIC image files (usually generated by newer iPhone models). If your file is an HEIC file please convert this to jpeg format before uploading.

Can I appeal the outcome of my Extenuating Circumstances application?

Students cannot appeal against the outcome of an extenuating circumstances application on the basis of the judgement made by the Committee. Further information on what constitutes grounds for appeal against module or degree course outcomes and/or complaints processes can be found on the [Academic Appeals webpage](#):

Failure to have read the Extenuating Circumstances policy, the Assessment Guidance for Students or this guide, or to follow any of the instructions in the application form will not be considered as valid grounds for appeal.

The private or confidential nature of circumstances for which you are not willing to provide details will not be accepted later as grounds for appeal.

PART 2 - EXAMPLES OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES and SUITABLE EVIDENCE

The table on the following pages is for general guidance; it does not represent an exhaustive list of all possible acceptable reasons for applying for extenuating circumstances, neither does it provide a finite list of acceptable evidence. All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

General Principals for providing evidence to support your Extenuating Circumstances application:

- Evidence needs to be provided at the time you make your application. If you do not yet have the evidence required you should wait to make your application until you have all the necessary documentation. If this is close to the EC deadline for your cohort you should contact the EC Team for advice as a matter of urgency.
- Evidence needs to be in English. Where your evidence is not in English you will be required to provide a translation either by an authorised notary/legal practitioner or by a third party (not a family member). The third party must provide their name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
- Evidence provided should be relevant to the circumstances you are reporting and cover the period of time for which you are claiming.
- Evidence needs to be attributable to yourself – example of evidence we cannot/will not accept include photographs of injuries, photos of persons who have passed away, photographs of yourself in a particular place or photographs of the consequences of accident, domestic crisis or crime. The only exception to this is where the photographs you are providing are official police or medical photographs clearly labelled with your personal details or a relevant crime number. Where such photographs may contain sensitive or distressing images you must indicate this on your application.
- Where a third party is providing confirmation of a circumstance this should wherever possible not be a member of your immediate family or a fellow student at RHUL. Third party confirmation will not be accepted from members of RHUL staff other than members of the Wellbeing team involved in your support through the circumstances.
- Our systems currently have difficulty opening HEIC image files (usually generated by newer iPhone models – where you file is an HEIC file please convert to jpeg format before uploading.

Circumstance	Examples of what this might cover	EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE EVIDENCE (This is not an exhaustive list – please provide anything you may think useful to support your claim following the general principals outlined above)
Serious Illness	An illness that prevents you undertaking your normal daily activities – such as food poisoning or short term stomach bug, influenza, severe Covid-19 (not mild or asymptomatic cases), infections and virus, illnesses bought on as a side effect of medication or longer term conditions	<p>Where possible medical evidence should be sought.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Covid-19 - PCR or LFT test results should be provided. (please note that a photograph of an LFT test strip cannot be attributed to you so please ensure you register you test outcome and provide the confirmation text/email) • If you interact with your GP via online services please provide email confirmations or screenshots of confirmation screens, copies of prescriptions - ensure the date of prescription is visible. • Email/written confirmation of appointments, hospital discharge, diagnosis, treatment • A fit to work/sick note from a GP • Where you are unable to provide medical evidence please provide any correspondence you have with the College regarding absence that is dated appropriately. • Where NONE of the above or other suitable evidence are possible to obtain and you can explain why it is not possible to provide evidence, a statement from a third party who cared for you/or observed you while unwell may be accepted– the name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself must be provided. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
Unexpected Hospitalisation	Visits to A&E, overnight or longer stays in hospital that were not planned	<p>Medical evidence will need to be provided</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge notice from the hospital • Prescriptions issued • GP’s note confirming hospitalisation • Follow up appointment confirmations

Circumstance	Examples of what this might cover	EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE EVIDENCE (This is not an exhaustive list – please provide anything you may think useful to support your claim following the general principals outlined above)
Planned Hospitalisation	In-patient hospitalisation for surgery, treatment or investigative procedures	Medical evidence will need to be provided <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of appointment confirmation • Hospital discharge notice • GP’s confirmation of hospitalisation • Follow up appointment confirmations
Bereavement (death of a close relative or friend)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The death of person close to you at a time close to your assessments. • The death of a person for whom you are the executor of their will or for whom the settling of their affairs will fall to you. • Attendance at a funeral on the day of an examination • Attendance at a funeral on the day of other assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The death certificate of the person who has passed away. • Paperwork relating to the registering of a death or the management of their affairs (this should include/confirm the date of death) • An order of service for a funeral/memorial/or other ritual to mark the death of a person – where possible showing the date of the event • Where NONE of the above are possible to provide and you can explain why it is not possible to provide evidence, a statement from a third party confirming the death may be accepted. The third party must provide name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
Flare up/onset/new diagnosis of a mental health condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short term flare up of a mental health problem such as a depressive episode, panic attack, period of extreme symptoms. • Where a new diagnosis of a mental health conditions is made and you are adjusting to the diagnosis /news • The short term effects of the onset of a new mental health condition where you are adjusting to or waiting for treatment/medication. • Short term side effects of medication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of diagnosis/flare up from a GP or mental health practitioner. • A copy of a prescription (with appropriate dates) • Confirmation for appointments for talking therapy, CBT, psychiatry treatments. • Where NONE of the above are possible to provide and you can explain why it is not possible to provide evidence, a statement from a third party confirming the situation may be accepted. The third party must provide name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.

Circumstance	Examples of what this might cover	EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE EVIDENCE (This is not an exhaustive list – please provide anything you may think useful to support your claim following the general principals outlined above)
Flare up/onset/new diagnosis of a longer term medical condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short term flare up of a longer term medical condition/illness. (E.g. an episode of acute Sciatica as a result of an ongoing back problem) • Where a new diagnosis of a longer term medical condition (E.g. diabetes, cancer, lupus, arthritis) is made and you are adjusting to the diagnosis /news • The short term effects of the onset of an illness or medical conditions where you are adjusting to or waiting for treatment/medication. • Short term side effects of medication/treatment for your condition/illness (e.g. chemotherapy, pain medication) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of your diagnosis • Medical evidence of the flare up – GP letter, Consultant’s letter • Details of medication in the form of a copy of your prescription which should show the date and your name • Where NONE of the above are possible to provide and you can explain why it is not possible to provide evidence, a statement from a third party confirming the situation may be accepted. The third party must provide name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
Family/relationship issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divorce or separation from your partner • Divorce or separation of your parents/other close family member • Matters relating to custody of your child/children • Diagnosis of serious/terminal illness of or harm to a close friend, partner or relative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any documentation relating to the legal proceedings surrounding the family situation • Any documentation confirming the involvement of third parties in addressing the matter – Social Services, counselling or mediation services, etc. • Confirmation of the situation of your close friend/partner or relative. • Where NONE of the above are possible to provide and you can explain why it is not possible to provide evidence, a statement from a third party confirming the situation may be accepted. The third party must provide name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.

Circumstance	Examples of what this might cover	EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE EVIDENCE (This is not an exhaustive list – please provide anything you may think useful to support your claim following the general principals outlined above)
Unexpected Caring Responsibilities	The unexpected need to care for a family member as they are unwell or require other urgent support. (This can include short term unexpected childcare issues such as unexpected school closures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical evidence relating to the illness/condition of the person you need to care for. (See the list of suitable medical evidence in points 1, 2, 3 and 5 above. • Documentation relating to their need for care • Any other documentation relating to the circumstances • Where NONE of the above are possible to provide and you can explain why it is not possible to provide evidence, a statement from a third party confirming the circumstances and how they affected your ability to study may be accepted. The third party must provide name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
Domestic Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major damage to you place of residence due to fire/flood etc. or other "Force Majeure". • Major disruption due to emergency repairs to your place of residence that were not planned in advance. • Short term unforeseen severe disruption to the suitability of your place of residence for study due to the actions of others residing in the property. Where this becomes more long term you will be expected to make arrangement for more suitable study locations such as campus study spaces or alternative accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of estimates for repair, insurance claims, police reports, major incident communications from local authorities etc. • Confirmation of emergency repairs from contractors/landlords etc. • Correspondence relating to issues of the behaviours of other residence at your property.

Circumstance	Examples of what this might cover	EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE EVIDENCE (This is not an exhaustive list – please provide anything you may think useful to support your claim following the general principals outlined above)
IT issues at the time of submission	IT issues at the time of submission should be notified to your School/Department using the communication methods outlined for each assessment. You should only apply for Extenuating Circumstances if your School/Department advise you to do so.	<p>You will need to provide at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of the problem that occurred – i.e. screenshots of error messages with time and date visible. • Evidence of the actions you took to try to resolve the problems – i.e. emails/details of phone calls to your department/school and their confirmation that an Extenuating Circumstances application should be made. • Where internet speeds are problematic a screenshot of a speed test (including date/time) • Confirmation from your Internet Service Provider’s website of outages in your area on that date.
Major transport problem/delay	<p>When travelling to an assessment and your ability to get there on time is prevented due to transport problems such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass cancellations of trains and/or buses on your route and where no alternative route is available • Car breakdown on the way to an assessment • Flight delays preventing travel to an assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the delays (photographs of railway/bus departure board that clearly show date and time and level of disruption will be accepted). • Screenshots of details of the delay from travel providers apps/websites/direct communications • Details of car recovery/repairs clearly dated. • Details of other routes sought/attempted.
Involvement in an accident	<p>This could cover many kinds of accident but may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being involved in a road traffic accident • tripping or falling • being involved in an accident while using public transport • accident sustained during paid employment • accident sustained whilst participating in sports/hobbies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical evidence of any injury sustained • Details of any disruption/delay/upset caused by the accident • Incident forms from attending services • Accident records from the location where the accident occurred. (In the UK accidents occurring on the property of a business/organisation need to be recorded – a copy of this record will be suitable).

Circumstance	Examples of what this might cover	EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE EVIDENCE (This is not an exhaustive list – please provide anything you may think useful to support your claim following the general principals outlined above)
Victim of Crime	Where you are the victim of illegal activity that causes injury or distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical evidence of any injury caused • The crime reference number from the police • The crime incident log from the police or any correspondence you have from them regarding the incident • Witness statement from third parties. The third party must provide name, contact number, email and relationship to yourself. They must consent to be contacted for verification purposes.
Jury Service	<p>Where you are called to attend Jury Service and are unable to defer or be excused your service.</p> <p>If you're summoned for jury service, please contact your Personal Tutor immediately to discuss your application for excusal. Applications for excusal of Jury Service from students during term-time, and particularly during examination periods, will be deferred by HMCS in the first instance. However, only in extreme circumstances will a person be excused entirely from jury service.</p> <p>Information about requesting excusal/deferral form Jury Service is available here</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of your summons to attend • Copies of the correspondence relating to your request to defer or be excused service including HMCS's rejection of your application
Court attendance	Where you are summoned to appear in court either as a witness or defendant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of your court summons • Where you attend as a defendant and the case extends over more than one day, confirmation from legal counsel or the court clerk of the dates of attendance.

PART 3 – CIRCUMSTANCES NOT NORMALLY ACCEPTED FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Circumstances not normally deemed to be acceptable for an extension application or Extenuating Circumstances application to the examination board	Explanation
Personal/domestic events that could have been anticipated and/or arrangements made, e.g. moving house, marrying, routine childcare	These are not normally accepted as extenuating circumstances as such events can be anticipated and alternative arrangements made.
Oversleeping	It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit work by the published submission deadline and/or arrive at scheduled examination venues before the scheduled start Time of your assessment(s).
Misreading the timetable	It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of the location of your examination as well as the start time and duration (see sections 3, 5 and 6 of the Instructions to candidates)
Examinations which are scheduled close together or on the same day	These are unlikely to constitute acceptable extenuating circumstances as students are aware of such scheduling in advance and are expected to manage their time accordingly.
Academic workload	You are expected to manage your workload.
Paid employment (unless you are a part-time student in full or part-time employment), voluntary work and job interviews (unless this relates to part of your programme of study or is for a post-graduation job)	Full-time students are only permitted to work part time i.e. for a maximum of 20 hours per week, to support their studies and should arrange such work or voluntary work so that it does not conflict with their responsibilities as a student.
IT and/or computer problems, except where these occur at the time of submission/assessment and where you have followed the correct guidance in the Student Guide to Assessment	IT problems encountered during your usual study time should be addressed by accessing IT facilities in study areas on Campus or by arranging alternative IT facilities yourself.

Circumstances not normally deemed to be acceptable for an extension application or Extenuating Circumstances application to the examination board	Explanation
Problems in group work where other members of the group do not cooperate.	This should have been raised with the School/Department and resolved at the time.
Minor, local transport problems, e.g. being stuck in normal rush hour traffic, not allowing enough time in travel plans for minor unanticipated delays, missed public transport.	You are expected to plan your travel to campus in such a way that there is some contingency for unanticipated delays due to road works, an accident etc.
Visa problems which prevent you from returning to the UK for examinations etc.	It is your responsibility to take steps to apply for your visa well ahead of your return and to anticipate that there may be some minor delays. If, however, your application was submitted in a timely fashion and the delay occurred at UKVI or other relevant agencies, you will need to provide evidence of the date of your request for a visa and any other relevant documentation from the UKVI relating to the processing of your visa.
Choices in your personal life, e.g. family holidays; family celebrations; weddings; attending Wimbledon or other similar sports events	You are not permitted to take holidays in published term times. If these coincide with submission deadlines, it is your responsibility to submit work ahead of such events. In the case of missed examinations the School Progression and Awards Board may permit you to resit but this would count as a second attempt and the course outcome would be capped.

Circumstances not normally deemed to be acceptable for an extension application or Extenuating Circumstances application to the examination board	Explanation
Cultural celebrations	If these coincide with submission deadlines it is your responsibility to submit work ahead of such events. In the case of missed examinations the School Progression and Awards Board may permit you to resit but this would count as a second attempt and the course outcome would be capped.
Extra-curricular sports activities, e.g. taking part in a match for a local sports team	If these coincide with submission deadlines it is your responsibility to submit work ahead of such events. In the case of missed examinations the School Progression and Awards Board may permit you to resit but this would count as a second attempt and the course outcome would be capped.
Driving test	If your driving test interferes with your studies (prevents you from attending class, taking an examination or submitting work on time) this is both foreseeable and preventable and you are expected to reschedule.
Any other foreseeable/ preventable circumstance	Where circumstances are deemed to be within your control and therefore could be foreseen or prevented, they will not normally be accepted as valid reasons for not engaging with your studies or completing assessments as required.
Valid withdrawal or suspension of access to College facilities or studies	This will not be accepted as a valid extenuating circumstance.

Circumstances not normally deemed to be acceptable for an extension application or Extenuating Circumstances application to the examination board	Explanation
Fasting	<p>The College does not normally deem religious fasting to be an extenuating circumstance because the mainstream rules around fasting, for example at Ramadan (cf. Ramadan On Campus) or Lent, should ensure adherents are not disadvantaged by this obligation. However if a student feels particular adverse circumstances apply to them, they are asked to raise the issue well in advance to see if any adjustment is appropriate.</p>