

# EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES - GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS



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## 1. Introduction

During your studies you may be faced with significant personal circumstances, e.g. health difficulties that impact on your ability to study. These might also affect your performance in assessment or prevent you from taking such assessment. It is your responsibility to bring any such difficulties to the attention of your department and/or to staff in the relevant College central professional support services offices at the earliest opportunity if you wish them to be taken into account. The sooner your department and/or the College are aware of the difficulties you are encountering, the easier it is to help you.

There are three types of circumstances that may impact on your ability to study and perform in assessments:

- (i) Shorter-term (temporary) and unexpected circumstances which may affect your ability to study before an examination, prevent you from taking an examination or prevent you from completing coursework on time or to your usual standard.
- (ii) Longer-term circumstances not covered by (i) which may affect your ability to study and undertake an assessment.
- (iii) A physical or mental impairment, chronic medical condition or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which would count as a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 that is, "a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial effect on

your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". It is for such conditions and SpLDs that Disability and Dyslexia Services can put in place support and exam access arrangements (see below for more details). Please note that a "long-term" impairment is one that has lasted or is likely to last for 12 months or more.

It is the shorter-term (temporary) and unexpected circumstances in (i) that the College normally regards as extenuating circumstances. Sub-boards also consider the circumstances in (ii) as extenuating circumstances but you should read carefully the guidance below in this regard as there are limited options available to Sub-boards in terms of actions that they can take.

## 2. What are extenuating circumstances?

**Definition:** *Extenuating circumstances are 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 such circumstances rarely occur. They are outside your control as 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);
- Unpreventable – you could not reasonably do anything in your power to prevent such an event (e.g. you cannot reasonably prevent a burst appendix.)

The circumstances would be expected to have had a **serious** impact on your performance in assessed work, e.g., may cause you to fail an exam which, based on other marks already obtained for the course unit or on marks obtained for coursework and examinations in other course units, you would otherwise have been able to pass, or may prevent you from actually taking an examination or completing other assessment (e.g. group or oral presentation).

You may also be experiencing challenging long-term personal circumstances that impact on your ability to study, e.g. long-term illness of a parent where you have some caring responsibilities. In such cases you should discuss with your department and with College professional services whether it would be more beneficial to change to part-time study or interrupt your studies until these circumstances have eased and/ or what support can be put in place to help you. See below for more details.

## 3. What are NOT extenuating circumstances?

- Feeling a little unwell and experiencing symptoms such as anxiety, insomnia, and nausea. Preparing for and completing assessments can be both physically and mentally demanding. At such times both during the year, e.g. when doing an oral presentation, or during the examination period where examinations may be scheduled close together, you may feel a little unwell and experience symptoms such as anxiety, insomnia, and nausea. This is natural and common for most people when under pressure to perform. You can also foresee such feelings and can take steps to lessen their impact, e.g. take advantage of support from the College in relation to managing examination stress and managing your revision time by forward planning. Therefore such symptoms are not normally considered to be good reasons for not being able to prepare sufficiently for an assessment, not being able to take the assessment or for performing significantly below expectation on the assessment. If you feel that you require support to manage stress, you should contact Student Advisory & Wellbeing Services, for support (See Appendix A for contact details).

- Similarly, you are expected to manage minor (short-term) illnesses such as coughs, colds and sore throats, etc. These may impact on submission dates for individual pieces of assessment; however, departments generally give students coursework submission deadlines in good time and you are expected to manage your workload so that you can meet such deadlines, even with unforeseen minor illnesses or other circumstances. Minor illnesses should not therefore impact on your ability to submit on time; however, if you feel they are, you can apply to your department for an extension. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by a designated academic member of staff in the department, usually the Academic Coordinator or Programme Director, on submission of appropriate supporting documentation, which is subject to the same requirements as that submitted to the Sub-board of examiners. Departments may therefore check the legitimacy of any evidence you produce in support of an extension request. You need to consult your Student Handbook for full details of the process for requesting extensions. If you are taking course units in different departments you should make sure that you are fully aware of the process to be followed for the assessment in question. Minor (short-term) illnesses during the period prior to an examination period or indeed during the examination period should also not have a serious impact on your results and you should not therefore submit a request for extenuating circumstances on these grounds.

#### **4. Should I submit extenuating circumstances if I have a disability, Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) or long-term medical condition requiring ongoing treatment?**

A number of students at College have a disability, Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) or long-term medical condition requiring ongoing medication and other treatment and/ or support. These are not considered through the extenuating circumstances process.

If you have a physical or mental impairment, chronic medical condition or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which would count as a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (that is, “a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”) which you expect to have an impact on your studies and for which you will require ongoing support during your studies, you should contact the Disability and Dyslexia Services at the earliest possible opportunity.

Depending on your circumstances the Disability and Dyslexia Services may do one or more of the following:

- Advise your department of reasonable adjustments that have been/ need to be put in place, e.g. that your coursework will be flagged if you have a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD);
- Advise you on how to apply for exam access arrangements and liaise with Student Administration to put these in place , e.g. extra time, room on own depending on the nature of your condition;
- Put in place study support;
- Refer you for other support as appropriate.

Under the terms of the Equality Act (2010), the College is required to take positive steps (make reasonable adjustments) to take account of students’ disabilities so that they can fully participate in their studies and other benefits, facilities and services provided by the College. Disability and Dyslexia Services and Assistant Registrars are able to assist when considering such cases. These arrangements are intended to make full adjustments for the condition. The Sub-board will therefore not consider applications for consideration of these conditions and will not make further allowances unless there has been a marked change to your disability, SpLD, long-term condition or you are affected by a short-term circumstance which is not covered by the reasonable adjustments that have been put in place. If you are registered with the Disability and Dyslexia Services and are not satisfied with the support already provided, or if you think that the support in place is insufficient for you to have equal access to the course as non-disabled students, it is your responsibility to make the Disability and

Dyslexia Services aware of this so that alternative reasonable adjustments can be explored at the earliest opportunity. Dissatisfaction with the support provided cannot be taken into account as extenuating circumstances by the Sub-Board if you have not raised concerns at an appropriate time.

If you are diagnosed with a chronic medical condition, a psychical or psychological impairment or a SpLD part way through your studies and have not therefore had reasonable adjustments or support in place prior to the diagnosis, you should submit this as extenuating circumstances to the Sub-board for consideration. The Sub-board may be able to take this into account when making decisions on, for example, whether first sits are awarded or not, or in making decisions about a final degree classification; however, the Sub-board is NOT able to revisit (change) marks awarded in previous years of study when support was not in place.

#### 5. Can I submit ongoing personal or health issues as extenuating circumstances?

When you take up an offer to study full-time you need to be aware of the commitment that this requires. If you have substantial other commitments, e.g. caring responsibilities, you need to think carefully about how you are going to juggle these with your studies and what contingency plans you can put in place in the case of an emergency, e.g. the carer who takes over when you attend lectures calls in ill. These commitments, which you know about, cannot be taken into account as extenuating circumstances by the Sub-board.

Similarly some students after commencing their studies begin to experience ongoing personal circumstances that are stressful and may impact on their studies, e.g. a family member may be diagnosed with a terminal illness. These circumstances may make it very difficult for you to meet minimum attendance requirements set for your programme of study and/ or to complete assessments, or to complete them to the standard of which you believe you are capable. If this is the case you should discuss with your Personal Advisor whether or not it would be in your best interests to interrupt your studies for a period of time and return once you are in a better position to fully engage with your studies, or to change from a full-time to part-time mode of study. Often students choose not to take advice suggesting that they interrupt and decide to continue with their studies. If you choose to carry on, you are demonstrating a commitment to study and need to be aware, as explained below, that the Sub-board has limited options available to it.

Please see the relevant paragraph of the academic regulations which apply to you:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/study/our-college-regulations/attendance-and-academic-regulations.aspx>

You should also contact the relevant section of the College's Student Wellbeing & Advisory Services to see whether support can be put in place: [www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/help-and-support.aspx](http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/help-and-support.aspx)

You are also advised to read the College's guidance on Fitness to Study:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/documents/pdf/support/fitnesstostudyguidancejuly2015.pdf>

While departments can support you by permitting you to **marginally** fall below the required attendance and/ or give you extensions for the submission of work, they do have to ensure that you attend a minimum number of learning activities associated with your programme of study. If you find yourself in this situation it is strongly recommended that you seek advice from the College Student Advisory & Wellbeing Services.

If you have long-term extenuating circumstances that have impacted on all your academic work across the year (but would not constitute a disability as defined by the Equality Act (2010)) the Sub-board has limited options available to it as explained above. If you have not failed any courses but the

passing marks you have achieved are lower than you believe they should be, the Sub-board is normally not able to take any action. They may, however, take this into account in your final year when classifying you if your final average is very close to the zone of consideration for raising to the next classification band, for example. They may decide to request a suspension of regulations; however, these are only granted in **very exceptional circumstances** by the College Board of Examiners' Executive Committee and there is no guarantee that such requests will be approved. You are strongly advised to read the relevant section on extenuating circumstances in the College regulations so that you are aware of the options that the Sub-board has available.

**6. What happens if extenuating circumstances affect my ability to submit a piece of coursework by the published deadline?**

As noted above you should follow the guidance in your Student Handbook about applying for an extension to the submission deadline. If your department accepts your circumstances and grants you an extension you should not submit a further request for consideration to the Sub-board of examiners because the Sub-board will not normally be able to make additional allowances. See Appendix B for a list of extenuating circumstances that would be (un-) acceptable to your department when requesting an extension.

**7. Who can inform the Sub-Board of Examiners of my extenuating circumstances?**

It is **your responsibility to inform each department/school** in which you are studying by filling in the [Extenuating Circumstances Application Form](#) and providing appropriate original, supporting documentation. Therefore, if you are a joint or combined honours student, or a Single Honours student taking one or more electives in another department you should submit original documentation with your form to your home department and copies of the form and documentation to other departments where courses in those departments have been affected. If only one course is affected, you should submit original documentation to the department in which the course is taken. If you are studying a course at another College of the University of London you should submit everything to your home/ lead department and they will forward copies to other departments in which you are studying as appropriate.

If there is a significant disruption to your examination and/ or problems with examination papers that you have raised with invigilators at examination venues, the invigilators will inform you if they plan to notify Student Administration and the Chairs of Sub-board, and if you therefore do not have to submit extenuating circumstances. If the invigilators do not make it clear that they will be doing this, you should submit details of the disruption or errors in the examination paper to the relevant Sub-board for consideration.

**8. Who cannot/will not inform the Sub-board of examiners of my extenuating circumstances?**

- Wellbeing services within the College and the Clarence Medical Health Centre do not directly provide documents to students to support a submission for extenuating circumstances.
- If you require documentation from any of the College Wellbeing services you should contact Student Advisory & Wellbeing Services ([wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk)) who will collate all relevant interactions with their services into one document once you have given your consent for this information to be shared with your Department.
- If you are registered as a patient with the Clarence Medical Health Centre and you wish to request medical evidence you should contact them directly ([wamccg.rhhealthcentre@nhs.net](mailto:wamccg.rhhealthcentre@nhs.net)) you will need to provide them with consent for them to share records with your Department. They can only provide evidence of issues you have sought medical treatment for and which were unforeseeable and unpreventable.

- The Disability and Dyslexia Services will not pass on any documentation or information regarding any support received or changes in your disability / Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs), unless you expressly ask them to do so. Please note that the Disability and Dyslexia Services does not play a part in making or influencing the decision making of the Sub-Board.
- Members of administrative or academic staff in your department with whom you may have discussed problems are not permitted to divulge such personal information about you to the Sub-board. Similarly if you submitted evidence to your department as part of a disciplinary process (assessment offence, formal warning), this will not be passed on to the Sub-board. You need to ensure that you submit that evidence to the Sub-board if you wish them to consider it in relation to assessment during the year.
- If you inform an Invigilator that you are leaving an Examination Venue because you do not feel well, the Invigilator will not pass on this information to the Sub-board. In this case you will still need to submit an [Extenuating Circumstances Application Form](#) and indicate clearly that evidence will be supplied by a medical practitioner. Please note that even if you are seen by a medical practitioner acceptance of the extenuating circumstances is still at the discretion of the relevant Sub-Board.

#### 9. What do I need to submit and to whom?

In line with the guidance in Section 7 above you need to submit to the Department Manager in the relevant departments the following in a sealed envelope marked 'Confidential' and addressed to the Chair of the Sub-board of Examiners:

- (i) A completed [Extenuating Circumstances Application Form](#) for application for consideration of extenuating circumstances by Sub-board of Examiners
- (ii) Supporting evidence as appropriate in English– please see Appendix B for details of acceptable circumstances and the evidence required in each case

**The burden of proof to support a claim lies with you at all times.** It is therefore important that you provide the Sub-board of Examiners with as much information about your circumstances as possible, including details about the effect these have had on your studies. If you are asking medical practitioners, etc. to provide supporting documentation it is your responsibility to ensure that they provide full details of the circumstances you experienced and how, and when. College staff cannot contact your doctor (even if invited to do so), the police or anyone else to gather further information or to clarify details, nor can they provide you with an indication of whether your evidence is sufficient. The College acknowledges that all documentation relating to extenuating circumstances is confidential and sensitive, and information will only be shared with a small number of members of staff (see 11 below).

#### 10. What is the deadline for submission of my extenuating circumstances?

It is your responsibility to ensure that you take note of the relevant deadline and submit the required form and supporting documentation as soon as possible but at the latest by the deadlines as indicated below.

UG – The College date for submission is listed in the *Instructions to Candidate'* for the current year: <http://www.students.royalholloway.ac.uk/study/exams-assessments-and-results/>

PGT – The College date for submission of extenuating circumstances relating to examinations in May/ June is listed in the *Instructions to Candidates'* for the current year:

<http://www.students.royalholloway.ac.uk/study/exams-assessments-and-results/>

Given that final postgraduate Sub-boards meet at different times during the year, your department/school will notify you of the deadline for the submission of extenuating circumstances relating to non-examination assessments (Essays, Dissertations, Projects and Group Work). This deadline will be before the Sub-board of Examiners meets to agree marks.

Student Administration and your department may also send you reminders about the deadline for submission but are not obliged to do so.

#### **PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING**

- Failure to read this guidance, the [Instructions to Candidates](#) and/ or emails informing you of the deadlines will not be considered as valid grounds for appeal.
- Requests for special consideration will not be considered retrospectively, that is, after Pass/Fail and classification lists have been released by departmental examination boards and the College's examination boards respectively.
- The private or confidential nature of circumstances will not be accepted later as grounds for appeal.
- Not being able to obtain the necessary supporting evidence by the deadline for submission will not be accepted later as grounds for appeal.
- Not being able to or not submitting complete details of your circumstances will not be accepted later as grounds for appeal.

#### **11. Who will consider my Extenuating Circumstances?**

Your submission will be considered by a small sub-committee of the Sub-board consisting of:

- the Chair of the Sub-board of Examiners;
- the Head of Department or nominee;
- at least one of the External Examiners, who is external to the College; and
- a representative from Registry.

in a closed meeting to protect your privacy and to ensure your extenuating circumstances are only known to a small group. Your circumstances are not discussed or shared with the full Sub-board of examiners.

#### **12. What happens if my application is considered by the Sub-board but rejected?**

##### **Coursework**

If you experience extenuating circumstances around the time of a submission deadline, it is assumed that this will be dealt with through the granting of an extension to enable you to submit the work. All departments have processes for students to request extensions if they experience extenuating circumstances and provide acceptable supporting documentation (see Appendix B). In most cases where an extension was granted, the Sub-board will not take any further action to mitigate the impact of the extenuating circumstances as it is assumed that the extension will have been sufficient.



If you did not submit a piece of coursework (either with or without the extension) or complete an assessment and your extenuating circumstances are rejected, e.g. assessed seminar, group presentation, etc. you will be awarded zero for the assessment. If you pass the course overall with this zero, the pass mark for the course stands. If you fail the course, the Sub-board may offer you the opportunity to redo the assessment (unless the particular piece of coursework is exempt from resits, e.g. practicals, presentations) but the mark for the course overall will be capped at 40% for UG students and 50% for PGT students. Alternatively they may require you or offer you the opportunity to repeat the course in attendance.

### Exams

If you missed an exam and your extenuating circumstances are rejected, you will be given a mark of zero for the exam. The zero or mark obtained if you took the exam and failed it will be averaged with marks for other pieces of work for the course. If you pass the course overall, the pass mark stands. If you fail the course, the Sub-board may give you the opportunity to redo the examination depending on the results you have achieved in other courses but the mark for the course overall will be capped at 40% for UG students and 50% for PG students. Alternatively the Sub-board may require you or offer you the opportunity to repeat the course in attendance.

### **13. What decisions can the Sub-board make and what can they do in terms of the regulations if my application for consideration is accepted?**

The Sub-board will accept your extenuating circumstances if they meet the criteria set out above – that is they are outside your control and have had a significant impact on your performance – and there is acceptable supporting documentary evidence. However, it is not possible for them to make accurate and consistent assumptions about the standard of work which you may have achieved had you not experienced extenuating circumstances. **The College regulations therefore do not permit the Sub-board to simply add marks to a final course outcome or to individual assessments as compensation.**

The Sub-board will make a decision whether, in spite of the circumstances, you have/ have not met the learning outcomes of the course(s) and this will inform their decisions on what options may be available to them in terms of the *College Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Regulations*. This means that when you have not met the learning outcomes, academic progression will remain impossible even if your circumstances have been accepted by the Board as significant and beyond your control.

Below is a brief outline of the regulatory options available if you have extenuating circumstances. You are strongly advised to read the [Undergraduate Regulations](#) or [Postgraduate Taught Regulations](#), so that you are aware of the details of these options. Sub-boards consider students with extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis taking into account their full academic profile.

#### Undergraduate Students:

The *Undergraduate Regulations* give Sub-boards the following options (see Section 14):

- if your circumstances have affected up to one third of the course assessment and you have met the learning outcomes, the Sub-board can recommend that your marks for assessments which were not affected are proportionately scaled up, that is, the mark for the affected assessment will be discounted and the marks obtained for unaffected assessment will be used proportionately to give a final course unit mark. The Sub-board can also require you to complete some additional formative work to test whether you have achieved the learning outcomes of the course;
- The Sub-board can award one of the following if your circumstances have affected more than one third of the course assessment;



(a) an Allowed (AL) for the whole course without a percentage mark but only if you have shown that you have met the learning outcomes of the course. You are only permitted an AL in a maximum of three full course units across your programme of study and no more than two full course units within any one academic year. Courses with AL outcomes are excluded from calculations of the year average and the final degree average;

(b) a First Sit (FS) where you cannot complete a piece of assessment or you feel that standard of the completed assessment on the first attempt was **severely** affected by extenuating circumstances. A First Sit means that you can take or resubmit the affected assessment as if it was your first attempt at the assessment. The final course outcome is calculated using the marks achieved in the unaffected assessments and the marks for the assessments being taken as 'first sits'. You can only get an outcome of First Sit (FS) for a course on a maximum of two occasions as you are only permitted a maximum of three opportunities to complete a piece of assessment;

(c) a First Sit for Repeat / Resit' (FR) where you are resitting or repeating a course due to failure at the first attempt and then experience extenuating circumstances in relation to this second attempt. See bullet point above on how final course unit outcomes are calculated. The mark for a 'First Sit for Repeat/ Resit' (FR) may be capped or uncapped depending on whether it was the student's assessment for a resit or repeat which was affected;

(d) require or offer you the opportunity to repeat the failed course in attendance.

If you have longer-term circumstances that have impacted on all your ability to study and complete required assessments for your programme of study across the year (but would not constitute a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010), the Sub-board has available to it the options given above. However, if you have not failed any courses but the passing marks you have achieved are lower than you believe they should be, the Sub-board is normally not able to take any action. They may, however, take this into account in your final year when classifying you if your final average is very close to the zone of consideration for raising to the next classification, for example. Depending on how close your final degree average is to the zone, they may decide to request a suspension of regulations; however, these are only granted **in very exceptional circumstances** by the College Board of Examiners' Executive Committee whose decision is final.

### Postgraduate taught students

The **Postgraduate Taught Regulations** give Sub-boards the following options (see Section 14):

- if your circumstances have affected up to one third of the course assessment and you have met the learning outcomes, the Sub-board can recommend that marks for assessments which were not affected are proportionately scaled up, that is, the mark for the affected assessment will be discounted and the marks obtained for unaffected assessment will be used to give a final course unit mark.. The Sub-board can also require you to complete some additional formative work to test whether you have achieved the learning outcomes of the course;
- where you have failed the course, award you an uncapped resit to enable you to take an exam you missed, retake a failed exam or redo a piece of coursework missed or which you failed. The final outcome for the course will not be capped at 50%. There may be some constraints in terms of resitting some coursework elements, e.g. group presentations cannot be resat and therefore in such cases you may be required to repeat the course in attendance;

- where you have failed the course, award you an exceptional third attempt at the course which may be capped at 50% or uncapped depending on whether or not previous attempts have been affected by extenuating circumstances. The Sub-board may require you to take the attempt by resitting or by repeating the course in attendance;
- where you have failed the course, require or offer you the opportunity to repeat the course in attendance;
- permit a deferral of assessment when you have missed an examination or failed to submit a piece of coursework. You are only permitted to defer assessment on two occasions.

**14. Will my department let me know whether my extenuating circumstances have been accepted?**

The Sub-board will inform you by the date of your results being published on the Campus Connect Portal of the outcome of your application for consideration of extenuating circumstances.

**15. Postgraduate Research Students**

Interruption and extension requests

If you are applying for an interruption of study or an extension to the submission deadline on the grounds of extenuating circumstances you are required to provide appropriate supporting documentation as listed in Appendix B.

Annual Review, upgrade or viva

Similarly if you want the annual review or upgrade Panel to be made aware of how your academic performance over the year has been affected by illness or extenuating circumstances, you need to provide appropriate supporting documentation as listed in Appendix B. In such cases you should submit your statement and supporting evidence to the Panel Chair within the deadline set by the department for the submission of material for the upgrade or review. In the case of circumstances relating only to your performance at an upgrade or review meeting or the oral examination (viva), you should inform the panel members or examiners of the circumstances prior to the meeting or oral examination and submit the statement and supporting evidence within seven days to your department or Student Administration, Registry, in the case of an oral examination.

## APPENDIX A: ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The College's Student Advisory & Wellbeing Services offer a range of support:

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/help-and-support.aspx>

<b>Emergencies</b>	<a href="http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/get-help-with-an-emergency-or-contact-security.aspx">www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/get-help-with-an-emergency-or-contact-security.aspx</a>
<b>Disability/ SpLD</b>	<a href="http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/disabilities-and-dyslexia/home.aspx">www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/disabilities-and-dyslexia/home.aspx</a>
<b>Counselling Services</b>	<a href="http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/counselling/home.aspx">www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/counselling/home.aspx</a>
<b>Health Centre (Clarence Medical Centre)</b>	<a href="http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/health-centre/home.aspx">www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/health-centre/home.aspx</a>
<b>Student Wellbeing</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/wellbeing/student-wellbeing.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/wellbeing/student-wellbeing.aspx</a>
<b>Childcare</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/childcare.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/childcare.aspx</a>
<b>Financial Support</b>	<a href="http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/finance/managingyourmoney.aspx">www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/finance/managingyourmoney.aspx</a> <a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/eCampus/finance/FinancialDifficulty.aspx#tabbedareaC">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/eCampus/finance/FinancialDifficulty.aspx#tabbedareaC</a>
<b>International support</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/international/support/student-support-services/home.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/international/support/student-support-services/home.aspx</a>
<b>Peer guidance</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/peerguidancescheme.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/welfare/peerguidancescheme.aspx</a>
<b>Faith support</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/campuslife/faithsupport.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/ecampus/campuslife/faithsupport.aspx</a>
<b>Hall Life</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/where-i-live/hall-life-team.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/where-i-live/hall-life-team.aspx</a>
<b>Private accommodation</b>	<a href="https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/where-i-live/where-i-live.aspx">https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/students/where-i-live/where-i-live.aspx</a>

The Students' Union: <https://www.su.rhul.ac.uk/advice/>

Email: [advice@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:advice@su.rhul.ac.uk)

**Kally Tomkins – Student Support and Outreach Advisor (Housing) – 01784-276740**

**Beenish Khan – Student Support Advisor (Academic) – 01784 276704**

**The Students' Union Co-President Welfare and Diversity Willow Wong**

The Co-President Welfare and Diversity can be contacted in person, by email ([vpwelfare@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:vpwelfare@su.rhul.ac.uk)), via <http://www.su.rhul.ac.uk/voice/officers/cpwelfare/>

## APPENDIX B: EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

### Circumstances likely to be deemed acceptable if their timing is deemed to have had a significant impact on your assessment

The following table is for general guidance; it does not represent an exhaustive list of all possible (un-) acceptable extenuating circumstances. All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Please note: All supporting medical evidence must be original, written in English, or as an official translation obtained by you. You are responsible for costs associated with obtaining medical certification and/ or for official translations. The examination board or other staff at the College may take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves of the authenticity of any documentation and the relationship of the author to the student. Equally, the College reserves the right to seek further advice from the Health Centre’s Chief Medical Officer regarding the impact of the medical condition cited as extenuating circumstance when the medical evidence provided is unclear or imprecise in this regard.

Circumstance	Supporting Evidence (Original documents required)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Serious or incapacitating illness, injury or medical condition,</li> <li>- sudden and significant deterioration of on-going/ longer-term medical condition</li> <li>- emergency operation on or shortly before the day of an examination or assessment deadline, or during the revision period</li> </ul>	<p>An original medical certificate or letter (on headed paper) from a suitably qualified medical practitioner (normally a GP or hospital specialist, who is registered with the General Medical Council in the UK or the equivalent in your home country), psychiatrist or educational psychologist as appropriate (see Appendix C). The practitioner must <b>have seen you during the period of the condition</b> and therefore be able to attest to your condition at the time. This person should not be a close friend or relative. <b>Please note:</b> Retrospective certification of a condition will not normally be accepted (that is, a note from the doctor/practitioner indicating that you reported your illness/condition to them after the event but did not see them at the time of the illness/ you experienced the condition).). If you leave the examination venue during an examination it is your responsibility to submit an extenuating circumstances form and to provide appropriate medical evidence.</p> <p>In the case of hospitalisation you should provide documentation showing the date of admission and release from hospital and details of the condition that resulted in your admission. The documentation should also detail any health issues that may follow on from this hospitalisation.</p>

Unexpected / current personal/ emotional circumstances	Evidence from a professional who is not a family member or friend who had direct knowledge of the difficulty and provided support to you at the time of the examination / assessment. The evidence must provide details of the period during which you were experiencing problems and details of their roles in providing support. If this support has been from a College service you will need to contact Student Advisory & Wellbeing Services who will collate details of your engagement with them
Sudden serious illness of dependent or close family member	Medical Certification/ letter from an independent medical professional confirming the nature and severity of the illness of the dependent/ close family member. This should be supplemented with a letter from your GP corroborating the illness of the dependent/ close family member. You should indicate clearly in your written explanation the distress you are experiencing and the impact this has had on your ability to study and/ or complete an assessment/ examination, e.g. visiting relative in distant hospice, having to shoulder extra responsibilities etc.
Bereavement	Death certificate or other documentation such as order of service or letter confirming the death from an independent person (not a family member) with their contact details and an indication of the closeness of the relationship. In cases of bereavement students should discuss the evidence they should provide with their department/ school. This is usually only accepted as an extenuating circumstance where a close relationship between you and the deceased can be demonstrated.
<u>Major</u> transport problem/ delay	A copy of online or newspaper reports on the problem/delay. For longer distance travel you should provide original travel tickets/ documents which indicate your intention to travel to arrive at least one hour before the examination or deadline for submission of work. Documents for revised travel arrangements should also be provided.
Involvement in accident/ victim of crime or any other incident involving the police, ambulance or fire services	Written statement of events, supported by written evidence from the police (e.g. police report, ambulance) and crime reference number.

<p>Representing the College at a national event or your country at an international event or being selected to take part in some other prestigious or significant event representing College or country.</p>	<p>STARS student - a letter from the Sport Development Executive.  For non-STARS students - a letter from the organising body confirming the dates and times you will be involved in the event. You will need to explain on the application form for the consideration why the particular event should be considered significant/ prestigious and why you are required to miss the assessments in question. Such requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Student Administration normally tries to make arrangements when it is alerted to such circumstances so that the student does not miss an examination. Representing the College etc will only therefore be considered an acceptable extenuating circumstances if you have made appropriate attempts to make alternative arrangements, e.g. with Student Administration, in advance.</p>
<p>Jury Service (UK citizens only)</p>	<p>The Courts will permit Jury Service to be deferred for students in higher education on one occasion. Jury Service will therefore only be considered as an acceptable extenuating circumstance if a deferral has been refused in which case you should provide a letter from the Court with proof that your request for a deferral was rejected or with proof that a previous request was accepted.</p>
<p>Court attendance (e.g. being charged with criminal offence, divorce proceedings, etc.)</p>	<p>Official correspondence from the Court confirming the date and time of your required attendance.</p>
<p>Divorce (parental or self)</p>	<p>If you are involved in divorce proceedings and miss an assessment, you need to provide official correspondence from the Court confirming the date and time of your required attendance. If your parents are involved in divorce proceedings and this has impacted significantly on your ability to study you will need to provide medical evidence of this.</p>
<p>Paid employment (<b>only for PT students</b>)</p>	<p>If you are studying part-time while in full- or part-time employment it is expected that will have informed you employer of this and of the need for you to be present for assessments, e.g. group presentations, examinations, at certain times of the year. There may, however, be extraordinary circumstances at work which will mean that it is impossible for you to be present. In such cases you will need to provide a letter from your employer explaining the situation and why it is impossible for you to undertake the assessment.</p>

Faith Issues	<p>College is a secular institution and does not specifically offer remission for faith days. However it does in its <a href="#">Faith Policy</a> agree to support students in their observation of their mainstream faith obligations and so on very rare occasions extenuation may be appropriate when examinations or deadlines coincide with specific <u>religious days of obligation of a mainstream faith of which the student is a regular practicing member</u>. This only applies to faiths which <u>specifically proscribe work to all adherents</u> on certain days and to the days so demarcated. Students should make their departments aware of these conflicts well in advance to allow rescheduling when possible and should not expect extenuation for days of obligation which occur in the run-up to an examination or deadline. College will be guided by the Chaplaincy and Faith Support Office if clarification is needed about whether days constitute days of obligation and the degree of obligation imposed on mainstream adherents. The College does not normally deem religious fasting to be an extenuating circumstance because the mainstream rules around fasting, for example, at Ramadan (cf. <a href="#">Ramadan On-Campus</a>) 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>
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Similarly, the following list gives examples of the kind of circumstances which would not normally be deemed sufficient to warrant action by the Sub-board of Examiners or an extension for coursework:

<b>Extenuating circumstances not normally deemed to be acceptable</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
A request without appropriate, independent supporting evidence.	It is your responsibility to provide appropriate, independent supporting evidence in a timely manner.
A request which fails to make clear to the examination board which assessments have been affected or the way in which they have been significantly affected	It is your responsibility to make clear to the examination board how your circumstances have impacted on your performance.
A request submitted after the deadline for submission.	Deadlines are clearly communicated to students by Student Administration and departments.
Reluctance to disclose circumstances as they are personal/ sensitive/ confidential.	The College can only consider circumstances if they are disclosed in line with this guidance. Your circumstances are considered by a small sub-committee of the examination board which considers them in confidence



Minor illnesses, e.g. coughs, colds.	You are expected to manage these and they do not normally have a significant impact on performance.
Self-diagnosed examination nerves, stress, insomnia either from student or a letter from counselling indicating that the student reported feeling such stress, insomnia etc.	As mentioned above most students experience these and similar symptoms ahead of and during periods of assessment. These are not therefore normally considered as acceptable extenuating circumstances unless a medical diagnosis of illness has been made, in which case a note from a medical practitioner should be provided.
Long-term illness, physical or mental impairment or SpLD which would count as disability under the Equality Act 2010 where earlier disclosure would have enabled Disability and Dyslexia Services to have put in exam access arrangements.	Unless the disability was diagnosed part way through your studies and consideration needs to be given to the period when reasonable adjustments were not in place, long-term illnesses and/ or disabilities are not normally considered as acceptable extenuating circumstances as consideration has already been given to them.
Assessments where exam access arrangements have been put in place, e.g. extra time, room on own.	See above.
Refusal to take up support offered by the Disability and Dyslexia Services or other sections of the College.	If students do not take up support offered, they cannot later expect the examination board to take into account difficulties they may have experienced and which impacted on their studies
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.
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 section 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, including a computer crash close to the deadline for submission of work.	Loss or corruption of files is not an acceptable extenuating circumstance as you are expected to keep a back-up copy of work which is electronically generated and stored
Problems in group work where other members of the group do not cooperate.	This should have been raised with the 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 Sub-board may permit you to resit but this would count as a second attempt and the course outcome would be capped.
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 Sub-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 Sub-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.
Withdrawal or suspension of access to College facilities or studies	This will not be accepted as a valid extenuating circumstance.
Fasting	The College does not normally deem religious fasting to be an extenuating circumstance because the mainstream rules around fasting for example at Ramadan (cf. <a href="#">Ramadan On-Campus</a> ) 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.

## APPENDIX C: UK HEALTH PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BODIES

In the UK there are nine health professional regulatory bodies which regulate health and social care professionals in the UK. They are overseen by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care which protects the interests of the public by:

- Maintaining registers of those who are fit to practice as health professionals in the UK;
- Assessing the performance of the regulatory bodies to ensure that health professionals meet the required standards of behaviour, competence and education;
- Dealing with concerns from patients and the public more generally about health professionals who may not be fit to practice;
- Removing from the register those who are not fit to practice and who would therefore put patients at risk.

<http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/about-us/our-work>

The nine professional regulatory bodies and the professions that they regulate are as follows:

### **General Chiropractic Council (GCC)**

- Chiropractors

### **General Dental Council (GDC)**

- Dentists
- Dental nurses, technicians, hygienists and therapists
- Clinical dental technicians
- Orthodontic therapists

### **General Medical Council (GMC)**

- Doctors

### **General Optical Council (GOC)**

- Optometrists
- Dispensing opticians
- Student opticians
- Optical businesses

### **General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)**

- Osteopaths

### **General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)**

- Pharmacists

### **Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI)**

- Pharmacists

### **Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)**

- Art therapists
- Biomedical Scientists
- Chiropodists/ podiatrists
- Clinical Scientists
- Dieticians
- Hearing Aid dispensers
- Occupational therapists
- Operating department practitioners
- Orthoptists
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapists
- Practitioner psychologists
- Prosthetists/ orthotists
- Radiographers
- Speech and language therapists
- Social Workers in England

### **Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)**

- Nurses
- Midwives