

# Student Guide to Extenuating Circumstances 2024/25

**Part 1** – General Information about Extenuating Circumstances (Page 1)

**Part 2** – Examples of Extenuating Circumstances (Page 4)

**Part 3** – Circumstances not normally accepted for Extenuating Circumstances (Page 8)

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

## PART 1 – General Information about Extenuating Circumstances

### What are Extenuating Circumstances?

The university 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 an 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

As you begin your application, 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 Extenuating Circumstances application via the online system, accessible via Campus Connect.

You can apply for ECs once your original or extended submission deadline/assessment date has passed and up to 10 working days after.

The Extenuating Circumstances application form can only be completed in one sitting - it is important that you prepare to make your application by ensuring you have the following ready:

- Details of the assessment that has been affected, including the module number and name.  
You will need to select the relevant assessment from a list before starting your application.
- The date you submitted the assessment if you submitted late (after the original or an extended deadline).
- You will need to provide a brief outline of your circumstances - the form will provide you with space to give the most pertinent details regarding how your

circumstances have affected your assessment (maximum of 400 characters).

- Please note, you will be asked to self-certify your circumstances, however you will not need to provide supporting evidence.
- It is important that you provide concise, accurate information - you should assume that the EC Committee will have no prior knowledge of your situation and provide adequate detail accordingly.

## When should I apply?

**\*IMPORTANT INFORMATION\*** All Extenuating Circumstances applications must be made via the online system, accessible via Campus Connect, once your submission deadline/assessment date has passed and up to 10 working days after.

You should complete and submit your EC application as soon as possible after the submission deadline/assessment date affected by your circumstances. You will need to submit a new application for each affected assessment.

**Applications cannot be accepted after the 10-working day application window following your submission deadline/assessment date.**

If you were unable to make an application due to circumstances out of your control, please email the ECs Team for advice at [ECs@rhul.ac.uk](mailto:ECs@rhul.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

## When will I get a response?

**To confirm your application has been submitted and been received by the EC Team:**

You will receive an automatic email, once you have completed and submitted your EC application, confirming that your application was received and providing you with an application reference number, which you should include in any further correspondence you have with the team about your application.

You will receive various email notifications throughout the process and will also be able to check the status of any applications you have made in the system.

**Interim Outcomes for EC applications:**

You will receive an Interim Outcome to confirm if your application has been accepted or rejected – you will receive your interim outcome shortly after the EC Committee have met and reviewed your application. The EC Committee will usually meet monthly.

You will also receive your final outcome at this time if either of the following apply to you:

- You submitted your assessment late and the lifting of any applied late submission penalty is the most suitable outcome in your case.
- You have applied to defer an assessment (PGT students only) and this has been accepted.

**Final Outcomes**

All other decisions and mitigation outcomes for accepted ECs (as decided by the School Progression and Award Board) are sent by email to your university email account on the day your results and progression decision are released.

## 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 monthly. The Committee will consider your application, assessing if your circumstances meet the criteria of an acceptable Extenuating Circumstance and if you have provided suitable information. The Committee will decide whether or not to accept or reject applications.
3. You will be notified if your application has been accepted or rejected.
4. Where you submitted your assessment late and the lifting of any applied late submission penalty is the most suitable outcome in your case or have applied to defer an assessment (PGT only), you will be notified if this outcome has been agreed.
5. All other accepted applications are passed to your School Progression and Award Board who then decide which of the possible mitigating outcomes is most appropriate in your case, depending on your performance in the affected assessment compared to your performance across your other assessments. School Progression and Award 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 School Progression and Award Board.

## What information do I need to provide?

- The date your circumstances have started and ended
- If your circumstances prevented you from accessing the resources you needed to complete your assessment. This could include IT/Media resources, access to the library, lab spaces, practical or practice spaces.
- If your circumstances prevented you from attending the teaching necessary to complete your assessment. This could include lectures, seminars, fields trips, lab/practical sessions.
- If you have completed/submitted your assessment on time, late (after the original or an extended deadline) or not at all.
- If you have completed/submitted your assessment late, you will be asked to provide the **actual** date of submission.
- If you are a PGT student and you are applying to defer your assessment, you will be asked when you would prefer to defer your assessment to (Summer Vacation Assessment Period (SV-AP) or Next Academic Year).
- You will be asked to indicate the nature of your circumstances that directly affected your ability to attend/submit the assessment.
- You will be asked to provide a brief outline of your circumstances that directly affected your ability to attend/submit the assessment.

## 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**

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/ All requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Examples of what this might cover</b>
<b>Illness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>An illness that prevents you undertaking your normal daily activities</b> – such as food poisoning or short-term stomach bug, influenza, Covid-19, infections and virus, illnesses bought on as a side effect of medication or longer-term conditions</li></ul>
<b>Unexpected Hospitalisation</b> (sudden illness/accident)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visits to A&amp;E, overnight or longer stays in hospital that were not planned</li></ul>
<b>Planned Hospitalisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In-patient hospitalisation for surgery, treatment, or investigative procedures</li></ul>
<b>Flare up/onset/new diagnosis of a mental health condition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A short-term flare up of a mental health problem such as a depressive episode, panic attack, period of extreme symptoms.</li><li>• Where a new diagnosis of a mental health condition is made, and you are adjusting to the diagnosis/news.</li><li>• The short-term effects of the onset of a new mental health condition where you are adjusting to or waiting for treatment/medication.</li><li>• Short term side effects of medication.</li></ul>
<b>Flare up/onset/new diagnosis of a longer-term medical condition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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)</li><li>• 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</li><li>• The short-term effects of the onset of an illness or medical conditions where you are adjusting to or waiting for treatment/medication.</li><li>• Short term side effects of medication/treatment for your condition/illness (e.g. chemotherapy, pain medication)</li></ul>

<p><b>Bereavement</b> (death of immediate family member, partner, very close friend, extended family member, friend, or colleague/classmate)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The death of person close to you at a time close to your assessments</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Attendance at a funeral on the day of an examination</li> <li>• Attendance at a funeral on the day of other assessment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unexpected issues arising pregnancy, maternity or paternity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues arising from pregnancy, maternity or paternity other than routine appointments and expected physiological symptoms, such as mild morning sickness or tiredness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Family/Relationship issues</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorce or separation from your partner</li> <li>• Divorce or separation of your parents/other close family member</li> <li>• Matters relating to custody of your child/children</li> <li>• Diagnosis of serious/terminal illness of or harm to a close friend, partner or relative</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unexpected Caring Responsibilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domestic Crisis</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major damage to your place of residence due to fire/flood etc. or other "Force Majeure".</li> <li>• Major disruption due to emergency repairs to your place of residence that were not planned in advance.</li> <li>• 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 longer term you will be expected to make arrangement for more suitable study locations such as campus study spaces or alternative accommodation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unexpected Financial Difficulties</b></p>	<p>The usual financial difficulties, including additional stretching of budgets as experienced by all during the current cost-of-living crisis, do not constitute mitigating circumstances, unless there has been a significant, sudden and unexpected change in financial circumstances, such as redundancy, change in funding/sponsorship, bankruptcy, political unrest in home country impacting funding/sponsorship.</p> <p>If your personal financial situation has been negatively impacted by external factors beyond your control, which may be preventing you from studying, we would recommend that you contact the <a href="#">Financial team</a> in the first instance, to assess your finances and what support may be available to you. They will also be able to advise you of the best course of action to take. Once the financial team have assessed your finances, you may then make an Extenuating Circumstances application.</p>

<p><b>Unexpected Work Commitments</b> (part-time students only)</p>	<p>The usual professional commitments or employment demands do not constitute extenuating circumstances, unless there is evidence from an employer that commitments and demands have been exceptionally substantial and temporary. This only applies to part time students.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>IT issues at the time of submission</b> (when alternatives could not be accessed)</p>	<p>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> <p>It is your responsibility to ensure that you are completing an online assessment in a suitable environment and have a stable internet connection and you have a backup if required. The University campus is open, and you can opt to work there if necessary. If you have any technical issues in accessing or submitting the assessment or problems in producing the assessment in the format requested, you should contact your School for advice as soon as possible; do not leave this until after the deadline. Remember the upload time built into the exam is to allow any IT issues to be resolved. Leaving your upload of an exam or coursework until the last 5 -10 minutes before the submission deadline is at your own risk, and an extenuating circumstances application relating to a temporary loss of internet will not be accepted, unless it occurs on campus.</p> <p>It is your responsibility to ensure that when using your own device your operating system is able to submit in the appropriate file format, please ensure when using apple-based systems that you are able to work and submit in Microsoft applications.</p> <p>If you are unable to access your device for authentication, you will need to contact the <a href="#">IT Service Desk</a> (Telephone: +44 (0)1784 414321) to intervene on your behalf. The Service Desk can help you access your account to add a new method of authentication. Alternatively, you should visit the IT Service Desk in the Library. You can find further details about the Multi-Factor Authentication <a href="#">here</a>. Please note that we will not accept EC applications relating to problems using MFA unless you can evidence that you have contacted IT (see above) in a timely manner to seek advice.</p>
<p><b>Major transport problem/delay</b></p>	<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"> <li>• Mass cancellations of trains and/or buses on your route and where no alternative route is available</li> <li>• Car breakdown on the way to an assessment</li> <li>• Flight delays preventing travel to an assessment</li> </ul>

<b>Involvement in an accident</b>	<p>This could cover many kinds of accident but may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being involved in a road traffic accident</li> <li>• tripping or falling</li> <li>• being involved in an accident while using public transport</li> <li>• accident sustained during paid employment</li> <li>• accident sustained whilst participating in sports/hobbies</li> </ul>
<b>Invalid Suspension of Access to University Facilities or Studies</b>	<p>Where the University has placed a hold on systems and/or services in error – which prevented you from completing/submitted your assessment.</p>
<b>Victim of Crime</b>	<p>Where you are the victim of illegal activity that causes injury or distress</p>
<b>Court Attendance</b>	<p>Where you are summoned to appear in court either as a witness or defendant.</p>
<b>Jury Service</b>	<p>Where you are called to attend Jury Service and are unable to defer or be excused your service.          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.          Information about requesting excusal/deferral from Jury Service is available <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<b>Problems which results in you being absent from the UK during term time</b>	<p>Where a significant event requires you to return to your home/family's country during term time, and suitable permission has been gained from the University (to ensure you still meet Visa requirements) and your absence from the UK prevents you from being able to complete/submit your assessment.</p>

### PART 3 – CIRCUMSTANCES NOT NORMALLY ACCEPTED FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Circumstances not normally deemed to be acceptable for an EC application	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.



<p>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</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>It is your responsibility to ensure that you are completing an online assessment in a suitable environment and have a stable internet connection and you have a backup if required. The University campus is open, and you can opt to work there if necessary. If you have any technical issues in accessing or submitting the assessment or problems in producing the assessment in the format requested, you should contact your School for advice as soon as possible; do not leave this until after the deadline. Remember the upload time built into the exam is to allow any IT issues to be resolved. Leaving your upload of an exam or coursework until the last 5 -10 minutes before the submission deadline is at your own risk, and an extenuating circumstances application relating to a temporary loss of internet will not be accepted, unless it occurs on campus.</p> <p>It is your responsibility to ensure that when using your own device your operating system is able to submit in the appropriate file format, please ensure when using apple-based systems that you are able to work and submit in Microsoft applications.</p> <p>If you are unable to access your device for authentication, you will need to contact the IT Service Desk (Telephone: +44 (0)1784 414321) to intervene on your behalf. The Service Desk can help you access your account to add a new method of authentication. Alternatively, you should visit the IT Service Desk in the Library. You can find further details about the Multi-Factor Authentication <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Please note that we will not accept EC applications relating to problems using MFA unless you can evidence that you have contacted IT (see above) in a timely manner to seek advice.</p>
<p>Problems in group work where other members of the group do not cooperate.</p>	<p>This should have been raised with the School/Department and resolved at the time.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>

Problems which prevent you from returning to the UK for assessments etc.	<p>Visa issues - 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 can apply but 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.</p> <p>Other issues – All students are expected to remain in the UK during term times and other published learning times of their programme. Please see the guidance regarding traveling during your studies here. Failing to comply with UKVI rules and university guidance is not an acceptable reason for Extenuating Circumstances. Please contact International Advice for further information and advice.</p>
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.
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 university facilities or studies	This will not be accepted as a valid Extenuating Circumstance.
Fasting	The university does not normally deem religious fasting to be an extenuating circumstance because the mainstream rules around fasting, for example at Ramadan ( <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.