



Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure

MCB will consider the claim and the evidence submitted in support of that claim. The purpose of the MCB is to establish whether there is substantiated evidence of eligible circumstances, and that there is clear evidence that the dates of the assessment and the dates of the Mitigating would have been affected. The MCB will not consider the marks or the academic profile of the individual student concerned. Mitigation should be dealt with on a department-wide basis as far as possible to facilitate consistent and equitable treatment.

3. Grounds for Mitigation

- 3.1. Grounds for mitigation are unforeseeable and unavoidable circumstances that could have, or did have, a significant impact on the academic performance of a student. This may occur at the time of the assessment or

4. Conditions for acceptance of claims

- 4.1. In order for a claim to be accepted, a student must provide independent documentary evidence² to demonstrate that the circumstances:
- were unforeseen;
 - were out of their control and could not have been prevented;
 - relate directly to the timing of the assessment affected; and
 - meet the requirements relating to documentary evidence set out in section 5 below.

5. Independent documentary evidence

- 5.1. All claims must be supported by independent documentary evidence (see 5.2). Copies of evidence can only be accepted where there is a reasonable explanation for the original not being available. The evidence must be an official document e.g. a letter signed on official headed paper and must include the dates during which the circumstances applied and the contact details of the person or company supplying the evidence for verification purposes if required.
- 5.2. In limited circumstances, such as an illness of short duration where a medical certificate could not be obtained (e.g. Influenza), or for an acute flare up of a chronic condition (e.g. migraine, epileptic seizure, panic attack), a student -certificate . They must clearly describe the nature of the circumstances, the impact that they have had on ability to complete the assessment, as well as the reason for being unable to provide independent evidence. The use of self-certification will be monitored to ensure this is not abused.
- 5.3. A student can seek a supporting statement from their Personal Tutor (or other suitably qualified member of College staff) in order to help them articulate their claim, if that individual is aware of the circumstances and the impact on the student. However, this would not normally constitute independent documentary evidence but may be accepted in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.4. The College reserves the right to check the authenticity of all documentation submitted as part of a mitigating circumstances claim. In the event that a student is found to have submitted evidence which is not authentic, this will normally be investigated in accordance with the Academic Misconduct Procedure.
- 5.5. All documentary evidence should be presented in English. Any evidence that is not in English must be translated using an authorised translator before it is submitted.

6. Potential sources and types of documentary evidence

- 6.1. The guidance document provides further details of the types of evidence that a student may consider submitting to support a claim for mitigation. Please see the document at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-policy/exams-and-assessment/>.
- 6.2. Students should ensure that any evidence that refers to a third party, such as a family member, is provided with their consent and in line with data protection principles.

² See section 5 for more information about the evidence requirements.

- 6.12. The College recognises that the impact of a bereavement is likely to have an ongoing impact on a student in their studies, particularly on significant dates. Students should seek support from their personal tutor, for example, and use this policy to claim for mitigation where appropriate.

Financial and accommodation issues

- 6.13. Financial and accommodation problems must be substantiated by documentary evidence. Claims and evidence for financial and accommodation problems are considered on a case-by-case basis and must meet the conditions for acceptance as set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.3 above.

Employment

- 6.14. Part-time students from attending or completing assessments by the published deadline must provide documentary evidence from their employer.
- 6.15. Full-time students will not normally be eligible to claim for mitigating circumstances in relation to employment. The College expects that full-time students make their studies a priority.

Personal issues

- 6.16. The College notes that students may have significant commitments outside of their studies which have the potential to impact on their studies. It is expected that students should normally be able to complete their programme of study alongside their commitments, however, should this prove problematic, it may be appropriate to apply for mitigation, request an extension or seek support in other ways. Students are encouraged to discuss their circumstances at the earliest opportunity with the programme team or their personal tutor.
- 6.17. Evidence to support personal issues will likely be varied in relation to each circumstance but should be sure to demonstrate the impact on studies in relation to the grounds for mitigation.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1. The Mitigating Circumstances form and evidence will need to be considered by members of the Mitigating Circumstances Board for the purpose of processing the student's claim.
- 7.2. If a student is reluctant to disclose evidence of a highly personal and sensitive nature, they should submit the evidence in a sealed envelope marked with their name, programme of study and the module(s)/assessment(s) for which they wish the circumstances to be taken into account alongside the form. The envelope should be clearly identified as *Mitigating Circumstances Board: Strictly Confidential*.
- 7.3. Communication to any other parties must only describe the form of mitigation which has been agreed and must not disclose any details of the circumstance itself. Only the student's name and contact details should be included in the communication.

8. Mitigating Circumstances Board

- 8.1. The membership of the Mitigating Circumstances Board should be drawn as widely as possible so as to allow for the independent scrutiny of claims by staff who are not involved in the delivery of the individual student's programme.
- 8.2. A member of academic staff must be nominated to act as Chair of the Board and an administrator to act as Secretary to the Board. A nominee of the Academic Registrar can attend the Board as an Observer.
- 8.3. Where a student is known to a member of staff other than in their professional capacity, or where there has been significant prior involvement in the case, that staff member must declare an interest to the Chair of the Board and must not participate in any discussion of that student's claim.
- 8.4. Mitigating circumstances claims should normally be considered by at least three members of the Mitigating Circumstances Board. The Board should have planned

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part of the learning outcomes for the module. Alternatively, the circumstances may mean that the extension would fall beyond any provisional feedback or marks have been released to other students in the cohort. An interruption of studies or claim for mitigating circumstances may be more appropriate.

12.8. Where a request has been rejected, the student should be given a clear reason for this and given advice about any appropriate support mechanisms such as applying for mitigating circumstances, an interruption of studies or other welfare support mechanisms available within the College.

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