

Extenuating Circumstances

Information for Undergraduate and Postgraduate (taught) students (UK, EU and International students). Postgraduate Research students should seek advice from the Graduate school.

The University considers extenuating circumstances to be unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances that could have a significant adverse effect on the academic performance of a student.

Submitting an extenuating circumstances form (ECF) with evidence will enable your school to decide what action can be taken if your circumstances have affected your performance or ability to complete your assessment (written assignments, project work, practical, laboratory tests, field work, group work, presentations, tutorials, workshops, dissertations and examinations).

What are considered to be extenuating circumstances?

- Serious ill health (not already covered by special, pre-arranged examination provision - those with ongoing health issues are likely to benefit from contacting the Disability Support Office for an assessment as these cannot usually be considered under this procedure);
- Personal accident or injury;
- Death or serious illness of family members or close friends;
- Major household problems, e.g. fire;
- Acute personal or financial or emotional trauma, e.g. acute anxiety or depression, family breakdown, breakdown of close personal relationship;
- Major and unplanned changes to employment circumstances or patterns of employment (except full-time students);
- Impact of natural disaster, civil disruption or other major hazard;
- Absence for jury service or maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

This list is not exhaustive and other circumstances are considered appropriate so long as the circumstances meet the definition above.

What circumstances are NOT taken into account?

- The University are not likely to consider colds or known conditions such as hay fever (unless the effects are unusually severe);
- Normal exam stress or anxiety (unless corroborated by medical evidence as a chronic condition and undergoing treatment);
- Moving house; change of job; holidays; weddings; normal job pressure;
- Minor financial difficulties;
- Oversleeping;
- Work commitments (full-time students);
- Study related circumstances (equipment failure including computing/printer difficulties);
- Failure to have taken back up copies for work stolen or corrupted;
- Bunching of deadlines/examinations; missing books;
- Poor time management;

- Misreading the examination timetable; taking the wrong examination.

What documentary evidence do I need to provide?

- Professional medical/health practitioner's letter/report is needed if an examination or an assessment/performance is affected for medical reasons (**medical practices may charge**).
- If undergoing treatment or getting support for any issue that may be affecting your studies, you should attach a supporting letter from the University/private Counselling and Wellbeing Service and/or Disability Advisory Service.
- Other relevant evidence types might include a death certificate/order of funeral services, official sports body letter, social services letter/statement or any other professional's statements/letters as appropriate to your situation.

You can read more about the specific evidence required to support different extenuating circumstances in **Annex 1** of the University's policy on and procedures relating to extenuating circumstances:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/extencircumstances.pdf>

*All supporting evidence must be in English (or a professional English translation provided). Without supporting evidence, any decision regarding your case will be **delayed**.*

When must I notify the University of extenuating circumstances?

- Firstly, it is important that you keep your Academic Tutor and School/ Department informed if you feel that you are experiencing difficulties which are affecting your performance. You may also wish to visit your [Student Support Coordinator](#), based in your [Student Support Centre](#), as they may be able to discuss with you whether an extension or rescheduling of an examination is a more appropriate option for you.
- **For coursework/assignments/in-class tests:** you must normally submit an extenuating circumstances form (ECF) to your school or department **before** the deadline for submission of the coursework/assignment/in-class test.
- **For exams:** The University has specific deadlines that you can find on the [University's Examinations Office Webpage](#) or at the bottom of this form. The University must have notification of extenuating circumstances **before** the relevant deadline.
- **Submitting an ECF after the relevant deadline:** Extenuating circumstances submitted after the relevant deadline may still be considered, but only with credible and compelling evidence as to why the circumstances were not known or could not have been known beforehand. If you are not able to submit an ECF due to insurmountable circumstances, such as hospitalisation, incarceration or equivalent physical or mental incapacity, then a statement which details the reason for the lateness must be submitted as well as the ECF.

How do I notify the University of extenuating circumstances?

- For Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught programmes, you can submit your ECF request through the RISIS web portal under Actions. There is a video on how to do this here: <http://www.screencast.com/t/NYYGBtuQ>
- This form can be used for a variety of modules, assignments, projects, exams and in-class tests/practicals. Make sure to include **all** affected modules on this form.
- If you are not able submit your supporting evidence when you submit the ECF, evidence must be received within 5 working days of submission of the ECF unless there is an exceptional reason why

the evidence cannot be provided within the specified time frame. You can send additional evidence to your relevant Student Support Coordinator by email.

Extenuating Circumstances Deadlines - 2019

Undergraduate

Part 3, Part 4, Finals	Friday 31 May 2019, 2pm
Part 2	Friday 14 June 2019, 2pm
Part 1, IFP (October cohort) and Foundation Year in Science (excluding Taylors University July intake)	Wednesday 19 June 2019, 2pm
Finals (Institute of Education, excluding BA in Children's Development and Learning)	Friday 31 May 2019, 2pm
BA Children's Development and Learning (Finals)	Tuesday 2 July 2019, 2pm
Part 1 and 2 (Institute of Education)	Tuesday 2 July 2019, 2pm
Foundation Degrees (Institute of Education only)	Wednesday 10 July 2019, 2pm
International Foundation Programme (January cohort)	Monday 5 August 2019, 11am
August / September Re-sits (All Parts)	Monday 9 September 2019, 2pm

Postgraduate

January examinations (ICMA and Whiteknights MBA only)	Friday 1 February 2019, 2pm
Programmes less than 12 months in duration	Friday 7 June 2019, 2pm
April/May examinations	Friday 7 June 2019, 2pm
PGCEs	Tuesday 2 July 2019, 2pm
August/September examinations	Monday 9 September 2019, 2pm

Flexible Executive and Executive MBA, MSc in Coaching and Behavioural Change, MSc in Strategic Marketing Leadership and all related programmes.

March 2019 examinations	Wednesday 20 March 2019, 2pm
June 2019 examinations	Wednesday 19 June 2019, 2pm
September 2019 examinations	Wednesday 18 September 2019, 2pm
December 2019 examinations	Wednesday 18 December 2019, 2pm

Advice on completing an extenuating circumstances form (ECF)

If you are unsure whether to submit an ECF, discuss your situation with:

- Your School Senior Tutor;
- Your Academic Tutor (or other staff in your department);
- Student Services;
- Your School/Department Director of Teaching and Learning;
- Your Student Support Coordinator.

If you are unsure how to raise your circumstances with them or feel uncomfortable about doing so then an Academic Adviser within RUSU may be able to help. The Advisers offer a confidential service, independent from the University so they can discuss your case with you in private.

Appealing the outcome of your extenuating circumstances form (ECF)

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your ECF, you can appeal the decision. If you do choose to submit an appeal, a RUSU Academic Adviser can offer support and guidance throughout the process.

- To appeal a decision made at School-level by a **Senior Tutor** you will need to submit a completed 'Appeal of an extenuating circumstances decision' form to the Student Appeals and Academic Misconduct Officer (ecfappeals@reading.ac.uk) **within five working days** of receiving the Senior Tutor's decision in writing (this is usually sent by email). Your appeal will then be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Appeals Board (ECAB).
- To appeal a decision made by the **University Standing Committee on Special Cases (USCSC)**, you will need to submit a completed 'Appeal of an extenuating circumstances decision' form to the Student Appeals and Academic Misconduct Officer (ecfappeals@reading.ac.uk) **within five working days** of receiving the USCSC's decision in writing (this is usually sent by email), **or in the case of USCSC decisions notified in the Summer Term, the day following the final day of the relevant exam period**. Your appeal will then be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Appeals Board (ECAB).
- In order to submit an appeal, you will need to demonstrate one or more of the following grounds:
 - There was a procedural irregularity;
 - The outcome was not fair and reasonable given all the circumstances;
 - You have new evidence which you were unable to provide earlier in the process for a valid reason and the new evidence is relevant to your ECF outcome.
- You will need to provide a clear and detailed account of why you are appealing your ECF outcome and provide any supporting documentation (if possible) regarding the ground(s) on which you are appealing.

RUSU Advice

If you would like further advice or to speak with somebody in person then a RUSU Adviser may be able to help. The specialist Advisers offer a confidential service, independent from the University so they can discuss your case with you in private.

Contact us by email at advice@rusu.co.uk, or visit us in the RUSU building.

You can book an appointment or attend a drop-in session. Drop in runs on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday (11:00 - 13.30) and Wednesday (14:00 -16.30).