

Extenuating Circumstances Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 'Extenuating circumstances are defined as serious unforeseen, unpreventable circumstances that significantly disrupt a student's ability to undertake assessment.'
- 1.2 In order for such circumstances to be taken into account with regard to assessment, students need to make a timely Extenuating Circumstances claim, fully supported with documentary evidence. This will enable TLG to make an informed decision and ensure appropriate support is offered. This document outlines the policy and procedures required to process an Extenuating Circumstances claim.
- 1.3 The Policy applies to all TLG students undertaking Undergraduate programmes (For students with long term, on-going conditions or disabilities, see section 4 below).
- 1.4 The level of claim for Extenuating Circumstances is referred to as Request for Extension to Submission Deadline.

2. Fit to Sit/Submit Assessment

- 2.1 The Language Gallery recognises that there are occasions when students are too ill or otherwise affected by extenuating circumstances to take an assessment. Application of the EC policy will be dependent on the provision of appropriate documentation and will not normally be applied to students retrospectively.
- 2.2 The Language Gallery will not ordinarily accept claims of extenuating circumstances relating to a presentation if the student was in attendance at the assessment event unless they are taken ill during the event. In such cases, a claim must still be made by the student and corroboration will be provided by the academic member(s) responsible for the assessment event.
- 2.3 The Language Gallery will not* ordinarily accept claims of extenuating circumstances once an assignment has been submitted by the agreed deadline (or agreed extended deadline).
- 2.4 In these cases, TLG assumes that the student has judged themselves fit to undertake the assessment and so no concurrent or a subsequent claim for extenuating circumstances relating to the assessment will be accepted. This also applies to partial submission of coursework – so an Extenuating Circumstances claim cannot be made for a piece of unfinished work submitted before the deadline.



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2.5 *The Language Gallery may waive these restrictions in the case of a student with a certified illness that would have meant that the student would have been unable to exercise the rational judgement necessary at the appropriate time to deem him or herself unfit to undertake assessments, where this is confirmed by a welfare officer, or similar practitioner qualified to make this judgement.

3. Students' Responsibilities

3.1 Students are responsible for making the decision to take an assessment, or to decide that they are too ill or otherwise affected by ECs which would impede their ability to take an assessment. The Extenuating Circumstances Policy should only be used by students who experience significant, unforeseen disruptions to their studies in circumstances over which they had no control.

3.2 Students are expected to decide if they are too ill or otherwise affected by extenuating circumstances to take an assessment. Students may seek advice from staff, but such advice should be limited to the procedures to be followed and the required evidence. It must place the onus clearly on the student to make the final decision. All claims must be provable; students must be able to provide evidence of what happened and be able to say how this disadvantaged them.

3.3 Students are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understood this policy and the supporting guidelines documents.

3.4 Students are responsible for reporting extenuating circumstances within the assessment period/module of the assessments affected and by the submission date. Students are responsible for complying with the deadline(s) relevant to the assessment being claimed for. The Extenuating Circumstances submission deadlines are published at the beginning for the intake and will be set for each assessment period or module for Undergraduate students. The deadlines allow for timely submission of outcomes to the relevant TLG Examination Board.

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3.6 Students are responsible for reporting extenuating circumstances within the assessment period/module of the assessments affected and by the submission date. Students are responsible for complying with the deadline(s) relevant to the assessment being claimed for.

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- 3.8 Students are responsible for ensuring that all relevant information and supporting documentary evidence is submitted with the Extenuating Circumstances claim. Students should be aware that an Extenuating Circumstances claim can only be considered once the fully completed form and relevant supporting evidence has been submitted. A claim without supporting third party evidence will be rejected.
- 3.9 Normally, late submission of a claim for extenuating circumstances will not be accepted. However, it is recognised that there may be cases where a student is unable to submit a claim for Extenuating Circumstances within the normal time period (e.g., emergency in-patient hospital treatment). In this case the student can submit a claim within one module/assessment period after the initial deadline and will need to provide evidence as to why the claim is late.

4. Ongoing Medical Condition and Disability

- 4.1 Students with declared long standing disabilities or on-going medical conditions, i.e., those that have lasted or are likely to last for a period of more than 12 months, are advised to register with the Welfare Service at TLG. Where appropriate, through assessment by the Welfare Service, the Language Gallery will agree learning and assessment strategies to try to ensure that students are provided with reasonable additional support or facilities. Where these arise after initial admission to a programme and they are likely to be of limited duration, students may be advised to interrupt enrolment. Otherwise, the language Gallery will endeavour to provide reasonable adjustment for support and guidance to enable students to complete their programmes of study. Reasonable adjustment may include the option of requesting extension to a submission deadline for coursework or, if necessary, deferring assessment (in line with the Academic Regulations).
- 4.2 Where a student with a long-standing condition, including an unexpected bout of illness as a result of the chronic or long-term condition, needs to submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim on the grounds of their condition registered with the Welfare Service, they will not be required to provide supporting evidence for the claim. They will need to complete the appropriate form as outlined below, so that their record can be updated accordingly. However, the timing of the diagnosis of such conditions may be considered a basis for following the full extenuating circumstances process. For example, in the event of late diagnosis of a condition, lack of adequate reasonable adjustments made in advance of the assessment. ECs can be requested in such cases.
- 4.3 Should a student with a long-standing condition submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim based on other grounds that are not registered with the Welfare Service, then such claims would need to follow the full procedure outlined in this policy.
- 4.4 Failure to disclose a known disability and seek the support of the Welfare Service will not be accepted as grounds for Extenuating Circumstances.

5. Grounds for Extenuating Circumstances

1.1 Extenuating Circumstances are circumstances that are exceptional or unforeseen and are over and above the course of everyday experience. They may include:

1. significant illness, accident or injury
2. the death or serious illness of a close family member or dependent (a death certificate must be provided)
3. family crisis directly affecting the student
4. disability i.e., where the student's disability comes to light for the first time at assessment (for long standing/ on-going conditions see 4.1 above)
5. absence caused by maternity, paternity or adoption leave
6. absence caused by jury service (deferral of which has been denied by the Court)
7. exceptional and unforeseen financial hardship, i.e., over and above that experienced by all students
8. unavoidable absence from domicile – e.g., eviction;
9. loss of immigration status;
10. training camps and competition at National and International level, e.g. elite athletes
11. other serious circumstances which could not be foreseen by the student.

5.2 Circumstances that will not normally be considered as Extenuating Circumstances include:

1. minor illnesses (such as coughs, colds and Covid-19);
2. computer problems;
3. inadequate planning preventing completion or submission of coursework;
4. stress and panic attacks caused by assessments (that are not diagnosed as an illness or already documented by Student Welfare Service);
5. assessments or presentation scheduled close together. This includes assessments which were deferred or extended due to a previously approved Extenuating Circumstances claim;
6. personal or domestic events, such as moving house or attending a wedding;
7. ongoing position of being a carer for a family member or friend (however unexpected illness or an emergency of the person cared for would be considered under 5.1 above);
8. holidays;



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9. travel arrangements, including scheduled public transport strikes;
10. consequences of paid employment or voluntary work which are not part of the substantive Programme of study; and
11. normal and/or scheduled sports activities.

Please note: The above examples are for illustration only and not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.

6. Supporting Evidence

- 6.1 Students are responsible for providing acceptable and sufficient evidence in support of their EC claim. The language Gallery will not make enquiries to obtain evidence on their behalf. Evidence must be relevant, legible and in English. Evidence obtained overseas which is written in another language must be accompanied by a certified translation. Evidence obtained overseas will not be accepted without the certified translation.
- 6.2 Any costs incurred in supplying evidence are the responsibility of the student.
- 6.3 Where a student is presenting medical evidence in support of their application, they must present certification by a registered medical practitioner. Such evidence must be directly relevant to the circumstances and the timing of assessments as appropriate even if concerning a long-term medical condition. The Language Gallery will not accept medical evidence provided by on-line GP services.
- 6.4 Evidence of personal problems must also be documented and supported by appropriate independent professional statements. Statements from a family member or friend will not be accepted.
- 6.5 The Language Gallery cannot investigate every claim made under this policy and it trusts the honesty and integrity of its student body. However, it reserves the right to contact any person named in an application for extenuation to seek clarification or further information including checking the authenticity of the evidence submitted. This is not done to remedy omissions in the completion of the documentation by the student, or to seek supporting evidence when not supplied.

7. Confidentiality

- 1.1 In making an extenuating circumstances request, students may reveal sensitive personal information. The Language Gallery treats all requests as confidential and access to this information is limited to only those members of staff required to be involved in the administration and approval process for extenuating circumstances.



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8. Consideration of Claims

1.1 Claims for extension to the scheduled submission deadline will be reviewed and approved or rejected by the nominated member of staff within TLG. Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

1.2 The Extenuating Circumstances Board is delegated authority by the TLG Examination Board. The Language Gallery Extenuating Circumstances Board will comprise:

1. a chair
2. an appropriate/ senior member of Academic personnel, or nominee
3. a clerk to record the outcomes and recommendations of the Panel

8.3 Terms of reference of the Extenuating Circumstances Sub Board are:

1. to establish that the evidence is valid, i.e., authentic and appropriate and that it relates to the assessment in question and that it has been submitted by the required date;
2. to review Extenuating Circumstances claims and evidence and make recommendations to the TLG Examination Board whether or not individual claims should be accepted;
3. to make for improvements to the effectiveness and efficiency of the procedure.

1.3 Submissions must be made with supporting evidence; where evidence is awaited, the TLG Extenuating Circumstances may defer decisions, and authorise the Chair to act on their behalf without calling a further panel.

9. Outcomes

9.1 A Request for Extension to Submission Deadline may be approved or rejected and the outcome will be communicated to the student by email to the student email address no more than 5 working days of receipt by the Programme Administration.

9.2 If a claim for extenuating circumstances is granted on the basis of serious ill-health, it is likely that The Language Gallery will require a medical note advising fitness to return to studies to be authorised, before the student can continue.

10. Right to Appeal the Decision of Extenuating Circumstances Sub Board

10.1 The decision of the Sub Board will be based on the evidence submitted with the claim. Students have the right to appeal against the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Sub Board, if there is evidence that the procedures for the Extenuating Circumstances Sub Board and/or consideration of its recommendation to the Examination Board were not followed. See Academic Appeals Procedure for further details.

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