



THE
**TRAFFORD
COLLEGE**
GROUP

Section: Mitigating Circumstances
Version: 2.1.1
Introduction: March 2017
Review Date: June 2022

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Author	Description
1	March 17	Mark Harris	Initial Approval
1.1	Nov 17	Tristan Edwards	Adopted by Trafford College
2	April 18	Mark Harris	Trafford College Group Approval, amendments to titles, roles
2.1	Jul 20	John Simpson	Amendments to titles and roles
2.1.1	May 21	John Simpson	Amendments to reflect merger, titles and roles and awarding bodies

APPROVAL

Version	Committee	Approval Date	Comment
1	CMT	March 17	
1.1	Executive	December 17	
2	HECOMM	May 2018	
2.1	HECOMM	October 20	
2.1.1		June 21	

HIGHER EDUCATION MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY, PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy is made for the use of staff and students of the Trafford College Group, comprising of Trafford College, Stockport College, Cheadle College and Marple Sixth Form. For convenience, and unless otherwise indicated the group of colleges is referred to as 'we', 'our' or 'the College'. 'You' and 'your' refer to all students of the Trafford College Group.
- 1.2. This policy outlines the procedures relating to applications for consideration of mitigating circumstances by the mitigating circumstances panel (MCP).
- 1.3. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) define mitigating circumstances as "serious or significant circumstances which are unforeseen and/or beyond a student's control and could significantly impair their academic performance in one or more assessed activities, possibly over a short period of time. Mitigating circumstances may include medical matters, bereavement, jury service, etc."
- 1.4. Mitigating circumstances do not apply to long term medical or other conditions. The College makes reasonable adjustment in line with the Equality Act 2010 for students with disabilities which may include extensions on coursework submissions, for example.
- 1.5. Generally, students will not be able to claim mitigation for the same condition on more than one occasion. Should a student seek mitigation for the same condition on more than one occasion, the College may undertake procedures as described in the College's Fitness to Study Policy. There may be exceptions to this which will be managed on a case by case basis.
- 1.6. The mitigating circumstances policy and procedure at the College is evidence based.
- 1.7. Students will be required to evidence their claim appropriately. Additionally, students note the grounds on which mitigating circumstances can be claimed as at section 3 of this policy and the associated arrangements for claiming.

2. Principles

2.1. This policy and the practices contained therein are guided by the following principles

- Equality
- Consistency
- Confidentiality

3. Grounds for mitigating circumstances

3.1. Examples of mitigating circumstances may include; but not limited to

- Serious illness that is not a permanent medical condition (see paragraph 1.3). This might include, for example, an illness requiring hospitalization or a broken bone.
- Serious illness or death of an immediate family member
- Sudden deterioration in a long standing medical condition or disability
- Being a victim of a crime
- Legal proceedings requiring attendance at court

3.2 Reasons not considered

- Failure to read the examination timetable or coursework deadline properly
- Pressure of work
- Failure to save work properly/ failure of IT equipment
- Minor illness or self-induced conditions (headaches, colds or upset stomachs etc)
- Religious festivals
- Domestic or personal disruption which may have been anticipated (e.g. moving house, wedding, holidays etc)
- Sporting fixture

The lists above is not exhaustive and should therefore be used as an indicative guide.

3.3. Where a student believes they have been impacted by the circumstances described at paragraph 3.2, particularly in relation to public transport delays, bad weather etc. they should liaise with their course leader in the first instance. If approved, appropriate supporting evidence will be required to verify claims. It is only anticipated that this will apply to students who experience difficulties in traveling to College to undertake assessment. All claims will be required to be supported by evidence.

3.4. Students entering an examination room or submit assessed work are considered to have declared themselves fit for assessment.

4. Categories of mitigating circumstances

4.1. Extension request

Where a student requests, in advance, an extension to a coursework submission deadline.

Extensions are usually for a relatively short period of time, usually no longer than 5 working days.

4.2. Deferral request

Where a student was unable to attend at, or submit for, a scheduled assessment, of any sort, and requests to move the assessment to the next available assessment opportunity.

4.3. Mitigating Circumstances Board

Where a student has missed the submission deadline/examination or believes their performance has been adversely affected, they should submit a claim to the Mitigating Circumstances Board.

5. Procedures for dealing with mitigating circumstances requests

5.1. Extension requests

Students seeking an extension should complete Annex 1 of this document and discuss their reasons for extensions with their course leader. The course leader will either approve the request, defer a decision pending further evidence or reject the request. The student will normally need to provide appropriate evidence at the point of submission. Course leaders will then ensure the form and evidence are reported to the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

Where an extension is granted, the final mark must be available at the next assessment board. If a student requires any additional time they must defer to the next available assessment opportunity as at paragraph 4.2.

5.2. Deferral Requests

Students seeking to defer a scheduled assessment should complete the form in Annex 1 and provide supporting evidence. Students should inform their course leader and submit complete applications to HEsupport@tcg.ac.uk.

Should a deferral be approved the piece of work would normally be due in the next assessment period and students will receive notification of a new submission date via their college email account.

5.3. Applications to the Mitigating Circumstances Board

Students making applications to the Mitigating Circumstances Board should complete form in Annex 1 and provide supporting evidence. you should inform their course leader and submit complete applications HESupport@tcg.ac.uk.

Should the board accept the claim, the student would be granted the opportunity to submit for assessment as a first attempt (or continued second or third attempt) during the next assessment period. If accepted, should the learner achieve a lower mark upon their next submission, the highest grade will stand.

5.4. Mitigation and confirmed results

If results have been confirmed by assessment boards or the published deadline for receipt of mitigating circumstances claims has passed, the student may decide they have grounds to appeal.

Students should be directed to the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure in this instance.

6. Acceptable forms of evidence

6.1. Medical reports

Students must visit a doctor or a nurse whilst they have symptoms so as to obtain a signed note including precise dates of illness, a diagnosis or description of symptoms and assessment of their impact on the student's ability to prepare and/or complete assessment.

Notes or reports from medical professionals that are imprecise and state, for example, that the illness 'may have had an impact,' or that, 'the patient informs me,' will not normally be accepted as valid evidence. Appointment letters are unacceptable.

6.2. Mental Health Advisor Reports

Students who are receiving support from the College's wellbeing team may request a signed note (prepared by the College's wellbeing team leader/manager) that includes a description of the symptoms and an assessment of their impact on the student's ability to prepare and/or complete assessment. Appointment letters are unacceptable.

6.3. Employer's Letters

Part time students who are also working full time who request extensions or deferrals because of increased workloads will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The College is unable to take account of events that are the result of normal working practices. Letters of support from employers should be on headed paper, signed by the student's line manager and must detail, specifically, the impact of their workplace circumstances on their ability to complete the assessment(s).

6.4. Other

All supporting evidence that does not fall within the categories above must provide independent verification of a claim

Your Circumstances			
Please describe the nature of your mitigating circumstances and explain how they have affected your academic performance in the assessments above? Please provide evidence			
What steps are you taking (or have you taken) to minimise the effect on your work? e.g. Action plans, liaison with tutors and Support Staff			
Student Declaration			
I confirm that I have read and understood the College's policy and procedure for mitigating circumstances and that I have attached independent Documentary evidence that supports my request. I understand that requests submitted without evidence will not be processed.			
Student Signature:		Date:	
Outcome	Approved <input type="checkbox"/>	New submission date (usually within 5 days of original date)	
	Not approved <input type="checkbox"/>		