

# extenuating circumstances

## How to report extenuating circumstances to the University.

### What are extenuating circumstances?

“Extenuating circumstances” (“**ECs**”) are external factors outside your control which affect your ability to:

- study
- work on assessments
- submit assessments
- take exams; or
- perform to the best of your ability in exams.

The formal definition used by the UEA is: *“an acute factor or an acute expression of a chronic condition that can be evidenced, is outside the students’ control, and which affects performance in or engagement with assessment”*

Normally, this should be a factor which has an effect on you **within 3 weeks of the assessment** affected.

### When will extenuating circumstances be considered?

The University may take extenuating circumstances into account when:

- Deciding whether to give you a time extension to complete your work
- Deciding whether to allow you to have a resit treated as a first attempt
- Confirming a mark for coursework or an exam
- Deciding whether to allow you to progress to the next stage of your course
- Confirming your degree classification

### What extenuating circumstances will be taken into account?

Acceptable reasons include:

- short term illness or injury,

- bereavement,
- significant family or personal issues, or other factors causing stress.

In rare circumstances transport problems may be accepted, for example in the case of flooding or severe snowfall where general advice is given not to travel. If your performance is or is likely to be affected by extenuating circumstances, it is essential to let the University know as soon as you can so that they can be taken into account.

## How do I report extenuating circumstances?

You need to fill in an Extenuating Circumstances Report Form and submit it to your Hub. You can find the form here: [uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/documents/student](http://uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/documents/student)

On the form you need to explain what the problem was, which module or modules have been affected, and the period covered. The Student Advice Centre can offer advice on what to include. You will also need to provide supporting evidence. Typically this might be:

- a note from the University Medical Centre, a hospital or your GP
- a letter from the University Counselling Service
- evidence that on the day of the assessment weather conditions or other transport disruptions were so severe that the public were advised not to travel
- a death certificate or a letter from an adult relative or carer

There is a list of the types of circumstances and whether they are likely or unlikely to

be accepted here: [arc.ac.uk/uploadedfiles/documents/ARCAppealsExtCircs.pdf](http://arc.ac.uk/uploadedfiles/documents/ARCAppealsExtCircs.pdf)

IT issues will not normally be accepted as ECs unless you can show exceptional circumstances. You are expected to back up your work regularly and keep copies of it securely. Remember, while memory sticks are handy, they are easily lost and data can be lost or corrupted if they are damaged. Your adviser or the Learning Enhancement Team may be able help with advice about the best way to backup.

If you aren't sure whether your circumstances will be accepted, the Union Advice Centre can offer advice.

If you are concerned because your ECs are of a personal nature and you would like them kept confidential, there is a special process to follow.

You report them to the Director of Student Support who makes a judgment about how severe the impact will be on you and informs the Hub of this impact without revealing the details to anyone.

## I just need some extra time to finish my coursework - what do I do?

If you need more time to complete coursework, (including presentations) because of ECs, you can use the EC form to request a time extension. You should make the request **before** the coursework deadline wherever possible, although it is possible to submit an EC form and evidence up to 10 days after the submission deadline and request a retrospective extension. If you do this you should explain why you were not able to make the request earlier.

You will **automatically** be granted one extension of 5 working days in each academic year, but you must still complete and submit an EC Report Form. If you have more than one deadline on the

same day, these can all be counted as one extension request. You don't have to provide supporting evidence when you are requesting an automatic extension. You may only use self-certification in support of your first extension request in a year.

Applying for an automatic extension – think about whether 5 days will be long enough. If not, make a full extension request explaining why you need longer and what ECs apply to you. Note that an extension request of over 20 days will result in a new assignment being set.

## My exam performance was affected; when do I have to submit my form?

You can ask for a delayed assessment (DA) or re-assessment (DRA). For medical reasons you must see a doctor **on the day of the exam** because you will need to supply medical evidence that you were unwell that day.

You must complete and hand in an EC Report form asking for a DA or DRA within 48 hours of the exam. You then have up to 10 days to hand in supporting evidence (or if you haven't got any, explain why).

If you do not meet these deadlines the chair of the ECP will decide whether or not to accept your application.

The LTS co-ordinator in the Hub can approve the request if the case is straightforward, otherwise it will be considered by the relevant ECP.

Students can be granted DA /DAR even if they passed the assessment the first time round, so if you think you can improve on your mark by doing a resit, consider whether to submit ECs.

## What happens after I submit my form?

Most decisions about extenuating circumstances will be made by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel (ECP) in your school of study. In straightforward cases the LTS co-ordinator in the Hub can approve the request; all other cases will be decided by the ECP.

The ECP considers the impact of the ECs and makes a recommendation to the exam board about how the impact of the circumstances should be accommodated, although the final decision is made by the exam board.

## Decisions about progression or classification

When an exam board meets to confirm marks and make decisions on progression and classification they receive a summary of the ECs reported to the Hub so that they can take these into account when making decisions about degree classification or progression.

A pre-board ECP will meet before each exam board. If you want your circumstances to be considered at an exam board you must report them to the Hub at least 10 days before the pre-board ECP. The dates of these are available on the UEA website: ([uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/students/studying/extenuating-circumstances](http://uea.ac.uk/learningandteaching/students/studying/extenuating-circumstances)); the Advice Centre can check the dates for you.

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union house  
open 10-4  
every weekday**

**01603 593463  
advicecentre@uea.ac.uk  
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