

# The Courtauld

## EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Policy sets out, for both students and staff, what should be done when you, a student, experiences an **unexpected non-academic incident** (extenuating circumstance) which could have an impact on your preparation or ability to sit your examination(s) or submit an assessment. Extenuating Circumstances are defined as events which are unexpected, significantly disruptive and beyond your control. This definition also includes sudden, unexpected changes in family circumstances, which might affect your ability to make academic progress as a consequence of demonstrable emotional impact upon you.
- 1.2. The Courtauld is aware that it may be difficult to disclose personal details in these circumstances, but we are committed to supporting students through difficult or sensitive circumstances and ensuring that this information remains confidential. Please see <https://courtauld.ac.uk/about-us/policies/data-privacy-and-it/privacy-policy/> where we outline our responsibilities to you in respect of holding sensitive and personal information. If you feel inhibited from talking to a tutor or other member of staff in the first instance, you can talk to a member of the Students' Union or staff in Student and Academic Services for initial, informal advice.
- 1.3. This Policy only applies to summative assessments (including examinations) that contribute to your final mark. It also includes marks for BA1 exams, which although these do not count to the overall grade of your degree, students are required to achieve a pass mark to progress to the second year.
- 1.4. The Courtauld operates an **evidence-based policy** to ensure that all claims are dealt with fairly and no student is either advantaged or disadvantaged by the Policy. A list of evidence required can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this Policy.
- 1.5. This Policy applies to all students undertaking the following courses of study at The Courtauld:
  - BA (Hons) History of Art (all years)
  - The Courtauld Graduate Diploma in History of Art
  - MA History of Art
  - MA Curating the Art Museum
  - MA Buddhist Art: History and Conservation
  - PGDip in Conservation of Easel Paintings
  - MA Conservation of Wall Paintings
  - PhD Research students

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- 1.6. Extenuating Circumstances may occur at any time and affect any form of summative assessment including coursework, examinations and dissertations. These circumstances fall under the remit of this Policy when they are:
- **Non attempt:** prevents a student from sitting an examination/assessment or submitting a piece of coursework.
  - **Late submission:** prevents a student from submitting coursework, assessment or dissertation on time.
  - **Affects performance:** seriously affects a student's performance in an assessment/examination or their ability to prepare for an assessment/examination in the period immediately leading up to submission or sitting an examination.
- 1.7 If you believe that you are unlikely to perform to the best of your ability in an assessment/examination, you are strongly advised not to take the assessment and to submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim. **Claims cannot be submitted as an insurance against poor performance in assessment/examinations.** By submitting an Extenuating Circumstances claim you are confirming that your circumstances are severe and have impacted your assessment. Submitting false claims or evidence is a serious matter and will be dealt with under The Courtauld's disciplinary procedures.
- 1.8 The Extenuating Circumstances policy provides for students who are experiencing sudden, unexpected and short term difficulties. Students who have chronic and long term issues will be supported through our disability and special assessment arrangements and coursework extension processes.
- 1.9 It is each student's personal responsibility to report extenuating circumstances promptly and in accordance with this Policy. If you need advice about whether to apply for extenuating circumstances or an extension to your coursework deadline based on extenuating circumstances, you can discuss your case with your course tutor, Personal Tutor, or Wellbeing Manager. However, you must make the application yourself. If you are unable to make the application yourself due to illness you can have an **initial** application made on your behalf by someone who knows your situation. However, once you are in a position to submit an updated application you must do so yourself. Tutors at The Courtauld may not lobby on your behalf, and the final decision will be made purely on the medical or other relevant documentation that you supply.
- 1.10 To submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim you should complete the relevant form, which can be found on [The Courtauld website here, under the section Student Policies and Procedures](#) and submit it to Student and Academic Services together with the appropriate documentary evidence to support their claim. Examples of appropriate documentary evidence can be found on pages 4 and 5 of this Policy.

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- 1.11 Submissions for claims related to examinations will be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, which meets in February after the January examinations, in June after the May Examinations and in September after the August Re-sits.
- 1.12 Submissions for claims related to coursework, assessed essays and dissertations are considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, which comprises of the Associate Dean for Learning and Teaching, Senior Tutor and the Academic Registrar on a case-by-case basis.

## 2. Submission Deadlines for Extenuating Circumstances

### 2.1 Coursework, Assessed Essay and Dissertation

Extensions to submission deadlines for assessed coursework will only be given if you present a case for extenuating circumstances that is supported by the appropriate documentation. If you are claiming extenuating circumstances for the late submission of assessed coursework, you must complete the form **Extenuating Circumstances Coursework**. This form can be found on [The Courtauld website here, under the section Student Policies and Procedures](#). You must submit this together with appropriate documentary evidence (outlined on pages 4 and 5) to Student and Academic Services on the day of the submission deadline or no later than 2 working days after the deadline has passed. If you do not submit a claim within this time frame your Extenuating Circumstances application will not be considered. We appreciate that formal evidence to support your claim can take longer to provide and this should be supplied within one week of the submission of the claim form. If you are experiencing problems in providing suitable evidence, then please speak to Student and Academic Services ([sas@courtauld.ac.uk](mailto:sas@courtauld.ac.uk)).

### 2.1 Examinations

Completed extenuating circumstances forms for examinations must be submitted no later than 17.00 hours on the day after your examination was scheduled (17.00 hours on the following Monday for exams that are held on a Friday). You should complete the **Extenuating Circumstances - Exams**. This form can be found on [The Courtauld website here, under the section Student Policies and Procedures](#). If you do not submit a claim within this timeframe, your application will not be considered. We appreciate that formal evidence to support your claim can take longer to provide and this should be supplied within one week of the submission of the claim form. If you are experiencing problems in providing suitable evidence, then please speak to Student and Academic Services ([sas@courtauld.ac.uk](mailto:sas@courtauld.ac.uk))

## 3. What Constitutes an Extenuating Circumstance

- 3.1 The Courtauld has three different categories of extenuating circumstances claims. These are:

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1. Circumstances that will normally be considered - provided that there is strong and appropriate documentary evidence to support these claims.
2. Circumstances that may be considered - provided there is evidence to show the impact of these on the student.
3. Circumstances that would not normally be considered.

3.2 The tables below set out some examples of what may or may not constitute an extenuating circumstance. If you are unsure of whether you should complete an Extenuating Circumstance form, then please contact Student and Academic Services.

<b>TABLE A - Circumstances that would normally be considered</b>		
<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Type of Evidence required</b>
Serious Physical Medical Condition	1. A serious personal injury, medical or psychological condition preventing attendance or completion, performance and submission of assessed work	Independent written evidence. For example, from a doctor, hospital, psychiatrist, psychologist or other qualified practitioner.
	2. Sudden deterioration of an existing medical condition or disability	Independent written evidence from a doctor, hospital, psychiatrist, psychologist service
Mental Health Condition	3. The sudden onset, or deterioration of an existing mental health condition	Independent written evidence. For example, from The Courtauld's Wellbeing Manager or Counsellors who have been supporting you; or from an external support services who have been supporting you
Bereavement	4. Death of a close family member (including parents, children, siblings, spouse or partner)	Independent written evidence confirming the death (usually not a family member) with their contact details provided and including a view on the closeness of the relationship to you; or Where the closeness of the relationship is evident (e.g. a close relative – a parent, sibling, or child), a death certificate or order of service
Illness	5. Serious illness or accident of someone close to the student	Independent written evidence. For example, from a doctor or hospital and evidence of closeness

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Trauma	6. Victim of a serious crime 7. Major fire 8. Theft of academic work to be submitted – such as essay or Thesis	Independent written evidence. for example, a police crime reports, or evidence from a doctor or hospital
Other	9. Disruption caused by terrorist incident or natural disaster	Evidence of the student's location at the time of the event
Court Attendance	10. Jury Service 11. Other required Court attendance	Letter from the Court

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<b>TABLE B - Circumstances that may be considered</b>		
<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Type of Evidence required</b>
Moderate Medical or Psychological Condition	1. Moderate personal injury, medical condition or psychological preventing attendance, performance or completion and submission of assessed work	Independent written evidence from The Courtauld Wellbeing Manager or Counsellors. From a doctor, hospital, psychiatrist, psychologist or other qualified practitioner
Bereavement	2. Death of or serious injury to close relative or friend not covered above	Independent written evidence confirming the death, with their contact details provided and including a view on the closeness of the relationship to you
Other	3. Unexpected caring responsibilities caused by sudden serious illness or worsening of medical condition to child, partner, close relative or dependant	Independent written evidence of from patient's medical practitioner and written evidence of impact on claimant from a Medical practitioner

<b>TABLE C - Circumstances that would not normally be considered</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor illnesses or ailments, e.g. hay fever, colds, sore throats where these are not symptoms of a more serious condition;</li> <li>• Examination stress or worry. Having feelings of stress or worry at such times does not necessarily mean you are unwell or have an eligible Extenuating Circumstance. If you suffer from panic or anxiety attacks, you may be eligible and should seek medical advice and inform your Personal Tutor;</li> <li>• Computer, printer or other IT failure. However, theft of a computer may be an Extenuating Circumstance;</li> <li>• Holidays, weddings or other ceremonies, sporting fixtures, training in preparation for a sporting event, paid or unpaid employment commitments, foreseen disruptions such as moving house or booked travel arrangements;</li> <li>• Hangovers, ill-effects from the use of recreational drugs;</li> <li>• Ongoing caring responsibilities;</li> <li>• Ignorance of the dates of the assessments/deadlines for assignments;</li> <li>• Extenuating Circumstances submissions without appropriate documentary evidence;</li> </ul>

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- Personal or long term health issues that have already been accommodated through the extension or special arrangements processes;
- Travel issues getting to the exam.

## 4. What Actions the Extenuating Circumstances Panel can take

4.1 Extenuating Circumstances can never result in the changing of marks for individual modules/assessments or examination marks. Therefore, Extenuating Circumstances will not overturn an adverse academic performance.

4.2 Each case is different and it is important to consider every submission on its merits. It is, however, unfair for students in similar circumstances to be dealt with differently. To help ensure consistency of treatment across The Courtauld, the Extenuating Circumstances Panel review the claim against the criteria set out in the tables in section 3.2 of this policy.

- Do the Extenuating Circumstances meet the definition of acceptable mitigating circumstances?
- Were the Extenuating Circumstances exceptional, short-term, unforeseen and unpreventable?
- What is the proximity of the events covered by the Extenuating Circumstances claim to the timing of the relevant assessment(s)/examinations?
- The suitability and validity of the evidence submitted.

4.3 The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will not grade the claims. Extenuating Circumstances by their nature are significant events which are likely to have impacted on your assessment. It is not possible to determine how a particular set of circumstances will impact on you, as the same circumstances can affect other students in different ways.

4.3 In cases where the assessment process has in some way been disrupted (e.g. a problem with an examination paper, disruption in the exam hall) appropriate adjustments may be made to the outcomes for the affected group of students, including potentially to marks. In such circumstances students should not be required to submit a claim for extenuating circumstances.

4.4 The Extenuating Circumstances Panel can recommend one of the following actions if they consider that the extenuating circumstances have had sufficient impact on your performance. These actions are:

- A. You will be given additional time to complete your course/module/assessment without penalty (this applies to coursework submissions only, not to examinations)

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- B. Late (or other) penalties for your assessment are waived
- C. Exam not sat/ failed: you will be permitted to re-sit your examination and this will be allowed as a first attempt at an examination (and hence the mark is not capped as is the normal convention)

If the Extenuating Circumstances claim is accepted, then this will not use up a right of assessment entry for the relevant course. You will be required to sit the examination at the next available opportunity and the mark for the examination will not be capped (unless the examination was already a resit attempt).

- D. In exceptional circumstances the Extenuating Circumstances Panel can exclude the affected assessment/module from completion, progression, award or classification decisions.
- E. No action - as there has been no evidence of your assessment/examination performance being affected.

**ENDS**