



Mitigating (or ‘Extenuating’) Circumstances Policy for **Ravensbourne University London (RUL)** Taught Degree Programmes

Version: 1.0

Category: Academic Regulations (externally validated programmes)

Owner(s): Head of Student Lifecycle

Approved by: The Board of Governors

Access: **Public** – Anyone can view this document

Applicability: This policy applies to student on courses leading to awards from
Ravensbourne University London

1. Policy for Externally Validated Programmes

- 1.1. Fairfield School of Business delivers higher education programmes that lead to awards from external awarding bodies. Under these arrangements, you are enrolled as a student of the awarding body and subject to its academic regulations.
- 1.2. Students enrolled on programmes leading to an award from **Ravensbourne University London** will have their mitigating circumstances requests dealt with in the following way:
 - Requests will be considered by Fairfield School of Business (FSB), who will decide if the circumstances are valid and determine the appropriate remedy in accordance with Ravensbourne University London's [General Academic Regulations; Section 8 Chapter 3: "Extenuating Circumstances"](#).
 - If you are not happy with the outcome of your request for Mitigating Circumstance, you may have recourse to a review of the decision under the Appeals Policy and Procedures (Stage 2) for Ravensbourne University London programmes. Appeals are decided by the University.

Note that Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances are two separate processes. If you are unsure which procedure to follow, please speak to your student support officer.

2. What are Mitigating (or 'Extenuating') Circumstances?

- 2.1. **Mitigating Circumstances** (sometimes referred to as 'Extenuating' or 'Exceptional' circumstances) are unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances that can occur in a student's life that affect their performance in an assessment, leading to them achieving a lower grade than they would otherwise be capable of. Such circumstances may also have prevented them from attempting an assessment. These would be:
 - i. short-term disruptive circumstances,
 - ii. beyond the control of the student,
 - iii. happen shortly before or during an assessment,
 - iv. have had a material effect on the students' ability to undertake the assessment.
- 2.2. Mitigating Circumstances do not apply to an any ongoing disability, specific learning need or mental health condition that a student may already be receiving support for under our Reasonable Adjustments Policy. Students should speak to their on-campus Student Support office if they have any long-term support need. This policy may however apply in the event of a severe episode or an acute worsening of these conditions.
- 2.3. A list of examples of what are considered Mitigating Circumstances is given in [Section 5](#) of this policy.

- 2.4. Depending on the circumstance and the type of assessment, students may be granted an extension, a resubmission attempt without academic penalty, or an alternative form of assessment (if sanctioned by the appropriate Assessment Board).
- 2.5. We expect those who enrol on a study programme with us to be able to balance their personal life commitments with their academic deadlines, manage their workloads independently and cope with the pressure of meeting all assessment requirements. Issues arising from these would not normally be considered as valid Mitigating Circumstances and the school's Students Services and Academic Support Services can assist students who are struggling to reconcile their study/life balance or experiencing feelings of stress.

3. Procedure

- 3.1. The student must complete the Ravensbourne Extenuating Circumstances form, which is accessible through the VLE and FSB mobile application, in order to request extenuating circumstances. Students can contact the student support services to get advice on how to appropriately fill out the form.
- 3.2. Students will be required to attach appropriate evidence that backs up their extenuating circumstances claim at the time of form submission. Without sufficient evidence, the claim will not be accepted, and the form that is incomplete or erroneously filled out will be returned.
- 3.3. The form will be taken into consideration by the Extenuating Circumstances panel, which meets regularly during the term, after it has been submitted. Representatives from the academic, registry, and exam departments will make up the panel.
 - 2.4. In reaching a decision, the panel will examine the following factors:
 1. Severity of the issue
 2. Problem duration, which should be backed by data
 3. Relevance (i.e., how close the affected period is to the evaluation point)
- 3.4. The student and the awarding body (Ravensbourne University London) will be promptly informed of the panel's decision.
- 3.5. In the event that the panel grants the Extenuating Circumstances claim, the student's scores will remain uncapped and they will have an opportunity to resubmit their work in the assessment round.

4. The fit to sit/submit rule

- 4.1. It is presumed that the student is able to demonstrate typical academic performance in the event that they choose to turn in an assessment. The student might not be able to apply for extenuating circumstances after the submission.
- 4.2. Should the student believe, they will be able to demonstrate regular academic performance, they may choose to complete their assessment on time if they have a prior approved extenuating circumstances claim. The extenuating circumstances claim will be deemed void should they decide to submit.
- 4.3. This principle prohibits the use of extenuating circumstances to lessen the outcome of an assessment or to waive the late penalty.

5. Legitimate Extenuating Circumstances

- 5.1. It's likely that the following instances will be regarded as legitimate extenuating circumstances:
 - Serious personal injury or accident
 - Hospitalisation, including surgery
 - Participation in national, international, or cultural events
 - Recent diagnosis of a disability or long-term condition (e.g., chronic fatigue syndrome), so that reasonable adjustments haven't yet been put in place;
 - Abrupt deterioration of a long-term condition;
 - Serious personal disruption (e.g., relationship breakdown, separation or divorce, victim of crime);
 - Major household problem (break-in, fire); Absence from public service (e.g., jury duty, service with reserved forces).

6. Plausible reasons for Extenuating Circumstances

FSB is required to use the University's definitions of what would constitute mitigating (or 'extenuating') circumstances, for the purpose of this policy.

- 6.1. The list of permissible forms of evidence is as follows:
 - Death certificate or order of service
 - Medical certification (doctor's note, hospital appointment, hospital, or counsellor's letter).

- Court or solicitor's letter
- Police written testimony (with criminal reference number).

6.2. Generally, continuing events are not taken into account when citing mitigating circumstances. It is advised that students who have a long-term illness or disability make use of the support services offered, since these can arrange for appropriate modifications to meet particular learning needs (such as more time for exams). Furthermore, the following situations might not qualify for extenuating circumstances:

- Short-term/minor illness (e.g. cough, cold, sore throat)
- Unspecified anxiety or mild depression
- Transport issues
- Misreading of assessment dates and times
- Personal events that could have been anticipated (e.g. holiday, sports event, field trip)
- Inadequate planning, organisation, or time-management
- Pressure of academic workload, including multiple examinations in a short period of time • Demands for paid employment
- Language of assessment not being your main language

7. Deadline for Filing the Claim

7.1. Extenuating circumstances claims should be submitted as close to the deadline as is practical. Retrospective or late claims, however, might be approved under certain special conditions.

7.2. It is not advisable to make claims too far in advance so that it is hard to predict how the mitigating circumstances will impact them.

8. Request for Review

8.1. The student may consult the Appeals Policy and Procedure in order to file an appeal against the Extenuating Circumstances panel's decision.