Fairfield School of Business
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Additional Consideration Policy (formerly Extensions & Mitigating Circumstances)

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	Public
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Category	Academic Regulations
Approved by	Board of Governors

Description

This policy is based on **Birmingham Newman University's** *Additional Consideration Policy* for supporting students whose ability to complete assessed work is adversely affected by unexpected or unavoidable personal, medical, or practical difficulties. This policy does not address matters relating to appeals, academic integrity, fitness to practise, or reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, all of which are governed by separate, dedicated policies.

Applicability:

This policy applies to student on courses leading to awards from **Birmingham Newman University.**

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1. Scope and process

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. In this case the awarding boy is Birmingham Newman University (BNU). This policy is based on their Additional Consideration Policy for supporting students whose ability to complete assessed work is adversely affected by unexpected or unavoidable personal, medical, or practical difficulties.

1.2. It should be noted that this policy does not address matters relating to appeals, academic integrity, fitness to practise, or reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, all of which are governed by separate, dedicated policies.

1.3. 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.

1.4. Students enrolled on programmes leading to an award from **Birmingham Newman University (BNU)** will have their mitigating circumstances requests dealt with in the following way:

- You should submit your request forms online which will go to Student Support and then be sent to FSB's Exams team (NMUexamination@fairfield.ac) to review.
- The Exams team will then check the request to make sure the information is correct and inform Student support if they need additional evidence (Student support will inform the student).
- When sufficient evidence is provided then a Panel will be held to review the case and approve or reject the case and the student will be notified.
- If the student is unhappy with the outcome, they can appeal the decision. Please refer to the appeals policy (Appeals-Policy-and-Procedure-Birmingham-Newman-University.pdf).

Note that Assignment Extensions and Mitigating Circumstances are two separate processes.

1.5. If you require an extension to an assignment deadline, please speak to your Student support or Academic support team. Extensions can normally only be granted if the request is made one week before the due date for the assignment. However, extensions may be agreed up to one week after the due date, in exceptional circumstances and where relevant evidence is provided.

2. Definitions

2.1. Mitigating Circumstances

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.

Mitigating Circumstances do not apply to an 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.

A list of examples of what are considered Mitigating Circumstances is given in Section 6 of this policy.

An approved Mitigating Circumstances claim will not excuse students from completing their assessment(s) but will defer the coursework deadline for those modules or assessments approved on the claim to the next assessment point. Students will still be required to demonstrate that they can achieve the required learning outcomes to successfully pass each of their modules and to meet the programme requirements for progression or award.

2.2. Extensions

Extensions are short term deadline extensions students can also request. Depending on the circumstances 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).

2.3. **Deferral**

If Mitigating Circumstances are approved, this would normally 'defer' a student's coursework deadline to the next assessment deadline in the academic year. Deferred assessment is treated as a first attempt (i.e uncapped), with the full range of marks available. Students can also seek to 'defer' a referred (capped) piece of work to the next assessment period through this policy.

2.4. **Alternative Assessment Methods**

Where necessary, an alternative form of assessment may be offered to ensure the assessment is accessible and fair. This could include formats such as a presentation or a viva in place of written work. These arrangements may be approved as part of a reasonable adjustment (e.g., for a disability) or through an Additional Consideration request.

2.5. **Retake**

In more serious or prolonged cases, students may be advised or required to repeat a module or an entire academic year. This is generally reserved for complex circumstances and may carry financial and academic implications, including delays to progression or completion.

2.6. **Capped**

Capped marks are if the final grade awarded is restricted to the minimum passing mark (e.g., 40% for undergraduate coursework). This will depend on the nature of the assessment adjustment and the student's academic status.

2.7. **Uncapped**

The full marking range is available, allowing students to achieve any grade in accordance with their performance. This will depend on the nature of the assessment adjustment and the student's academic status.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. **Students**

Students are expected to notify FSB promptly if personal, medical, or other circumstances arise that may prevent them from meeting assessment deadlines or fulfilling academic requirements. Provide truthful and complete information and seek guidance form the relevant departments.

3.2. **Student support**

They are normally the first point of contact for students and will provide them with the information they need and direct them to the relevant department or form they need.

3.3. **Academic Support**

This team can be visited by any students and will be on hand in campus to help students

understand any issue they have with their assignments and to guide them in structuring the assignment as per the assignment brief. On the board/panel they will inform the panel what support has been request to them by the student and what support they have provided.

3.4. **Personal Academic Tutors (PATs)**
When you start the course then you will be assigned a PAT. They will function as your primary academic contact, facilitating your engagement with all our resources and support systems. On the board/panel they will inform the panel what support has been request to them by the student and what support they have provided.

3.5. **Course coordinator**
Course coordinator are responsible for managing and overseeing the delivery of the course at the campus. Ensuring that the course meets program and accreditation requirements. On the board/panel they will inform the panel what support has been request to them by the student and what support they have provided.

3.6. **Course Leader**
Responsible for maintain good communication with the BNU academic team. Updating academic teams of any changes. On the board/panel they will engage with the rest of the panel in what judgment should be made to the student's case, in line with the evidence and the policy.

3.7. **Exams Officer**
Will set up any board or panels relating to student's assignments. They will bring all the evidence they have received from the student and present it to the rest of the board/panel and will engage with the rest of the panel in what judgment should be made to the student's case, in line with the evidence and the policy.

3.8. **VLE**
The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Support Team at FSB are responsible for the smooth running of FSB connect. This includes the online forms where you can find the mitigating circumstances and Extension request forms. As well as the submission links on FSB Connect, where students go to submit their assignments.

4. Considering the Request

4.1. Applications are reviews by the exams team and are then taken to the relevant panel/board or are considered by the Exams Team (for applications approved clerically).

4.2. Mitigating Circumstances Board will consist of the following people. Exams offers, Dean of the campus, Course coordinator, Academic support, Student support and Course leader. Additional Registry or management staff could also be invited to the board.

4.3. Extensions are reviewed by the Exams team and a decision is then made by then to approve or reject it.

5. Outcome of the Procedure

5.1. The decision of Mitigating Circumstances Board is confirmed to student. This will be of the following:

a. Request accepted. Student resits without penalty during the next resit period.

b. Request accepted. Student resits but mark is capped due to earlier non-submission/failure/academic offence.

c. Request not accepted; standard resit applies. Appeal processes available following Programme Assessment Board.

d. Recommendation student is granted a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) / Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

e. Request for further evidence to be provided.

5.2. The decision of the Extensions is done by the Exams team (for applications approved clerically) is confirmed to student. This will be of the following:

a. Request accepted. Student gets one week or two weeks extension depending on the request and the level of the circumstances.

b. Request not accepted; student has to submit the assignment on time and if it is late then they are capped 5 marks below.

c. Request for further evidence to be provided.

6. Examples of Mitigating Circumstances/Extensions requests

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 following examples are likely to be considered eligible for mitigating circumstances claims:

- Serious personal accident, injury or illness
- Hospitalisation (including operations)
- Death or serious illness of close family member, dependent, partner or friend
- National disruption or national mourning
- Serious complications in pregnancy or maternity
- Unexpected caring duties for child, family member or friend
- Sudden deterioration or escalation of ongoing illness, condition or disability
- Serious personal disruption (such as a relationship breakdown, separation, divorce, house move, victim of crime)
- Serious incident (such as assault or harassment)
- Major household problem (such as break-in, fire, homelessness)
- Absence for public service (such as jury service, service with reserved forces)
- Recent diagnosis of disability or long-term condition
- Recent change, commencement or cessation of medication
- Delay in the receipt of appropriate support for disability or long-term condition
- IT issues (such as digital poverty or laptop malfunction or theft)

6.2. The following examples are likely to be considered as ineligible exceptional circumstances and students should use these as a guide to whether their circumstances would meet the Exceptional Circumstances criteria.

- Computer failure
- Pressure of work
- Number of deadlines close together
- Unaware of the submission date
- Unaware of closing times for Registry
- Unaware of the Drop Off Box facility

- Holidays
- Weddings.

7. Review and Update of this Policy

7.1. This policy will be reviewed annually and updated in accordance with periodic changes to BNU's policies and the terms of the Partnership agreement between FSB and BNU. Changes to this policy will be verified by the University and approved for publication by FSB's Board of Governors.

Document governance

Document owner*	**Registrar**
Consulted parties**	Quality Manager, Programme Manager
Next update due	September 2027
Classification	Public

**Responsible for updates to this content.*
*** To be consulted on updates to this content.*

Versions

Version no.	Description of Changes	Approved by	Date
1.0	First version adapted from BNU's General Academic Regulations localised for FSB as per agreed responsibility under partnership agreement.	Board of Governors (C.A.)	Sep 2024
2.0	Changes to period of extensions. Document formatted.	Board of Governors (C.A.)	Sep 2026

