POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Extenuating Circumstances Policy & Procedure
1. Introduction

1.1 These regulations apply to all students registered on Edexcel Pearson HNC's and HND's at Newcastle-under-Lyme College. For those students studying on Staffordshire University programmes please refer to the website address below to obtain information on the university procedures relating to extenuating circumstances:

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/assets/extenuating_circumstances_procedure%201516_tcm44-84943.pdf

1.2 The College defines extenuating circumstances as circumstances “which are beyond the control of the student, which could not reasonably have been foreseen or prevented by the student and which would substantially impact on a student’s performance in assessment.”

1.3 In all cases, you are strongly encouraged to discuss the situation with your Lecturer, Course Leader, or Student Services.

2. Grounds for Claiming Extenuating Circumstances

2.1 The College has put in place arrangements to make reasonable adjustments for students with a disability. As a result, if you have a disability, you should only normally claim for extenuating circumstances when new and unforeseen circumstances occur which affect your work and are not addressed by the reasonable adjustment arrangements.

2.2 In considering claims for extenuating circumstances, the key considerations for the College will be whether the circumstances were beyond your control and could not have been foreseen or prevented, together with the impact these circumstances could have on your academic performance.

2.3 Taking into account the criteria in paragraph 2.2 above, the grounds on which extenuating circumstances can be claimed are normally limited to:

1) a serious illness, which would have a detrimental effect on your performance;

2) the death of a close family member or personal friend, normally in the period leading up to the date of the assessment, which would have a detrimental effect on your performance;

3) other serious circumstances beyond your control, which could not have been foreseen or prevented and which would have a detrimental effect on your performance.

2.4 If you are studying on a part time programme, the College expects you to plan your work in order that you allow sufficient time to cope with both the demands of employment and study workloads. Nevertheless, it is recognised that you may, for example, have unplanned work patterns and/or unforeseen and exceptionally high workloads, and in those cases where acceptable evidence is provided, claims for extenuating circumstances could be considered under 3) above.
2.5 You may not normally claim extenuating circumstances on the basis that your academic performance has been affected by family, financial or other lifestyle problems. In particular, extenuating circumstances cannot normally be claimed on any of the following grounds (this list is not exhaustive):

- Inadequate planning, organisation or management on your part
- Timetabling of coursework or examinations
- Misreading of assessment dates and times
- Personal computer or printer problems
- Minor illnesses, such as a cold
- Holidays or social occasions
- Transport problems
- Moving house
- Normal work patterns & pressures of employment
- Pregnancy (unless unexpected complications occur)

If you are uncertain whether your claim might be legitimate, please discuss this with your Course Leader, Course Tutor or the College Quality Manager.

2.6 Any student who is alleged to have submitted falsified evidence in support of a claim for extenuating circumstances will be referred for consideration under the terms of the College’s academic misconduct procedures.

3. Categories of Extenuating Circumstances

3.1 Extenuating circumstances can be claimed as follows:

1) Where you request to be allowed to submit work within five working days after the deadline for submission (a late submission request). A working day is deemed to be Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

2) Where you were unable to attend, or submit for, a scheduled assessment of any sort, and request a deferred assessment at a subsequent opportunity (a deferral request).

3) Where you believe that your performance has been unexpectedly and negatively influenced by circumstances beyond your control and wish this to be considered when decisions on progression are made (a mitigation request).

4. Acceptable Forms of Evidence

4.1 All claims for extenuating circumstances must normally be supported by relevant and independent documentary evidence, such as a Doctor’s note/certificate or a counsellor’s statement. Supporting statements from College staff such as Lecturers, Course Leaders, Tutors, Technicians or Student Support Services will also be accepted as evidence. The College will not
accept self-certification of your own circumstances or other evidence which is not supplied by an independent authority.

5. **Procedures for Dealing with Extenuating Circumstances Requests**

5.1 All extenuating circumstances claims will be considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

5.2 If you wish to request a **late submission** beyond the coursework submission deadline, you should complete the extenuating circumstances form and submit it with your late submission of work, at the latest, five working days from the original deadline for submission. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will make a decision based upon the evidence provided by you. You will be notified of the decision in relation to your late submission request within fifteen working days of the date of submitting your extenuating circumstances claim. If your claim for late submission is upheld, your work will be marked and counted as if it had been submitted by the original deadline. If your late submission claim is not accepted by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel but the work submitted was of a pass standard, then a pass grade will be awarded.

5.3 Where you request either **deferral** or **mitigation**, then you must complete the extenuating circumstances form and submit it by the deadline for submission of such claims, as published annually by the College. You will be notified of the decision in relation to your deferral or mitigation request within fifteen days of the deadline for submission of claims.

5.4 If your **deferral** request is granted, you will be offered another opportunity to take the assessment at the next available opportunity. If the deferral request is not granted and the original deadline for submission of the work has passed then the assessment will be awarded a fail grade.

5.5 If a claim for **mitigation** is upheld, you will be informed of the mark/grade awarded for the assessment. Following the meeting of the Assessment/Award Board, you will be offered the choice of accepting the original mark/grade or attempting the assessment again in order to improve the mark/grade. If you choose to attempt the assessment again, then the higher grade achieved in either the original or reassessment attempt will stand. If you choose to accept the original mark/grade then the original mark achieved in the module(s) will remain unchanged. You will also be notified if the claim for mitigation is not upheld. It is not possible for the Assessment/Award Board to speculate about precisely how you might have performed if the extenuating circumstances had not intervened and as result the Assessment/Award Board will not change any of your marks/grades as a result of a successful claim for mitigation. However, the Assessment/Award Board will take account of the recommendation of the College Extenuating Circumstances Panel when it considers your progression outcome.

5.6 You should note that, where appropriate, you may claim both late submission and mitigation for the same module(s).

5.7 Extenuating circumstances claims are always treated sensitively and in confidence. Only the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel and the administrator supporting the work of the Panel will be aware of your name, while other members of the Panel will consider your circumstances anonymously.
5.8 The decisions of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will be made available to Assessment/Award Boards as appropriate. However, your particular circumstances will not be divulged to the Assessment/Award Board. As a result, the Assessment/Award Boards may not question the decision of a Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

6. Appeals

6.1 You may appeal against the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. The only grounds for appeal are that:

1) The Panel did not take full and proper account of your extenuating circumstances claim; OR
2) New, relevant and independent evidence, which for good reason you had been unable to make available to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, had become available.

6.2 You must submit an appeal in writing, to the Director of Curriculum and Performance within seven working days of receiving notification of the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

6.3 You may not claim extenuating circumstances after the published deadline for such claims to be received. If you have extenuating circumstances but miss the deadline for submission, you may appeal through the academic appeals procedure only after the Award Board has met and agreed on your progression or award, although you will be required to demonstrate reasonable grounds for not having earlier utilised the extenuating circumstances procedure.

7. How to Apply for Extenuating Circumstances

7.1 If you consider that your circumstances fit the College criteria to apply for Extenuating Circumstances, or you have been advised to put in an application for Extenuating Circumstances by your Course Tutor or other member of staff, please use the Extenuating Circumstances Application. You can access this via the College HE Portal on I-Site. Please compete the form and return to your Course Leader.