



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

# **Policy on Submission and Approval of Mitigating Circumstances**

Version: 8.00  
Status: Final  
Date: 27/03/2020

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## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update**

*Update made 27 March 2020*

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic we have made the following temporary changes to this policy in order to support our students:

- You are **not** required to submit medical evidence in support of mitigating circumstances that would normally require such (amendment to section 4.4 (page 4) and appendix A (page 8)).

*We understand that obtaining medical evidence for coronavirus currently goes against guidance given by some governments. In addition, we want to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on healthcare systems. Your claim for mitigating circumstances should still include, as outlined in section 4.3 (page 4), information about your circumstances, dates and periods when your study was affected, (parts of) module/units affected, and what your preferred outcome is.*

- Decisions on relevant cases can now be made by the Academic Registry without prior Chair's approval (amendment to section 6.3 (page 5)). Such decisions will still be subject to audit by the Panel.

*This approach will ensure that we can provide you swift decisions during this difficult time.*

For more information about UCEM's response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) visit the [Coronavirus section on the VLE Help page](#).

## 1. Introduction

This document outlines UCEM's policy on mitigating circumstances and the procedure that students can use to make a mitigating circumstances claim.

This document must be read in conjunction with:

- [UCEM Academic and General Regulations for Students](#);
- [UCEM Assessment, Progression and Award Regulations](#) for your programme.

This document applies to all students on UCEM programmes, except for students on the Facilities Management Supervisor Apprenticeship who should refer to the Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management 's Special Considerations Policy.

If you need any help, please contact Student Central.

## 2. What are mitigating circumstances?

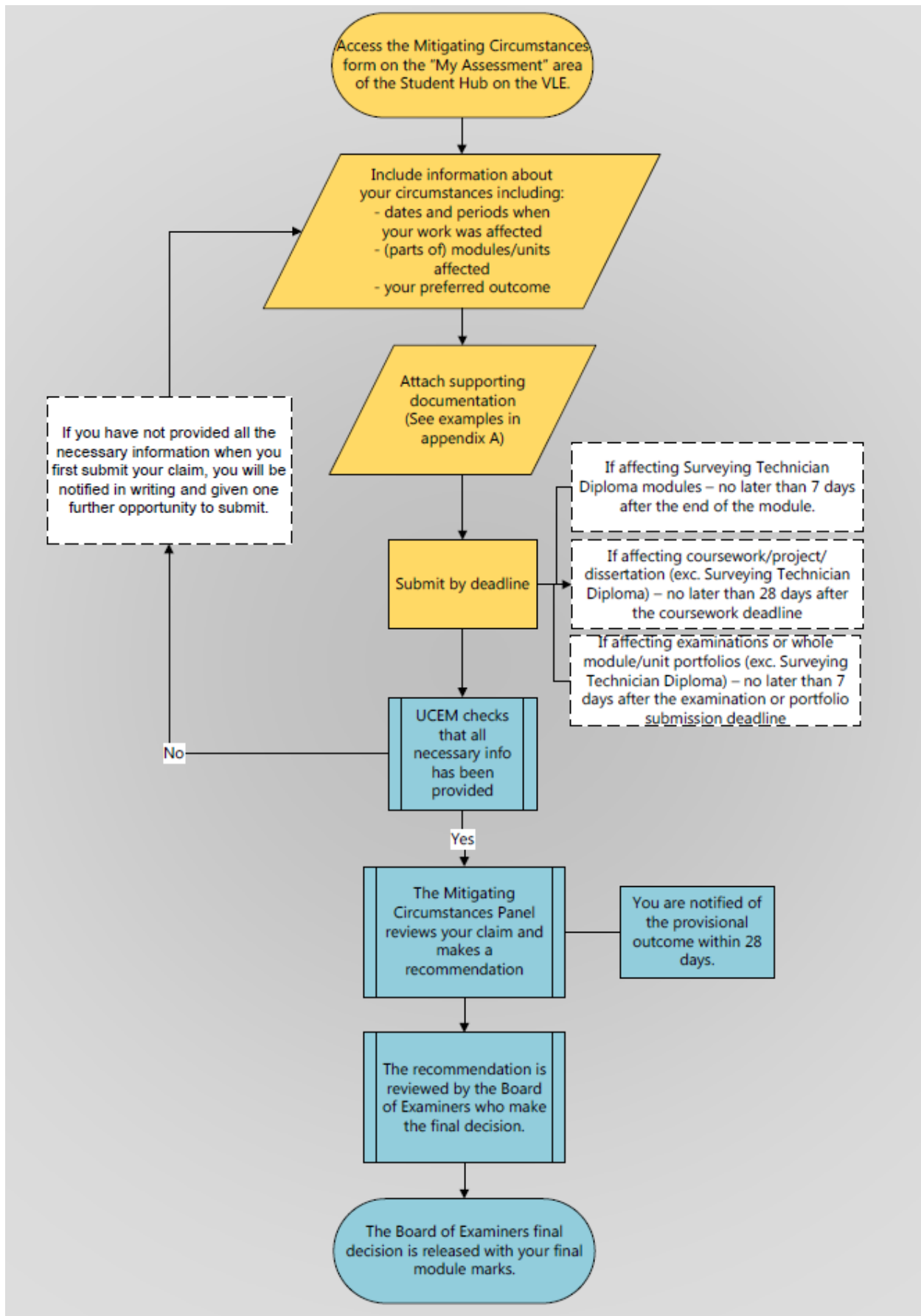
- 2.1 A mitigating circumstance is defined as “an unforeseen or unforeseeable event(s) that substantially affects your ability to complete the assessment task(s) set”.
- 2.2 Mitigating circumstances can occur at any point during your study.
- 2.3 [Appendix A](#) gives examples of the types of circumstances that fit the definition of mitigating circumstances, and the types that do not. Circumstances that do **not** qualify as mitigating circumstances are when they could have been anticipated, or if they relate to a lifestyle choice or an issue common to all students.
- 2.4 The circumstances outlined in [Appendix A](#) are examples. They are not a complete list of what qualifies as a mitigating circumstance and what does not. Each case will be considered individually.
- 2.5 If you are unsure whether your particular circumstances are acceptable, you should submit your claim anyway.

## 3. Extensions

- 3.1 Where appropriate and if available on your programme and module/unit, you are expected to take an extension to mitigate the effect of circumstances on coursework submission.

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This diagram outlines the key steps of mitigating circumstances claims. More detail can be found in section 4.



## 4. How to submit claims for mitigating circumstances

- 4.1 You should tell UCEM about your mitigating circumstances using the mitigating circumstances form, which is available on the “My Assessment” area of the Student Hub on the VLE.
- 4.2 You should tell us as soon as possible and,
- for mitigating circumstances affecting Surveying Technician Diploma modules, **no later than 7 days after the end of the affected module;**
  - for mitigating circumstances affecting coursework, projects and dissertations (excluding Surveying Technician Diploma modules), **no later than 28 days after the coursework deadline;** or
  - for mitigating circumstances affecting examinations or whole module/unit portfolios (excluding Surveying Technician Diploma modules) must be submitted, **no later than 7 days after the examination or whole module/unit portfolio submission date.**
- 4.3 The mitigating circumstances form must include information about your circumstances, dates and periods when work was affected, (parts of) module/units affected, and what your preferred outcome is. Examples of the possible outcomes are outlined in Section 7.
- 4.4 All mitigating circumstances forms must be accompanied by valid evidence. Types of acceptable evidence can be found in [Appendix A](#).

## 5. What if I submit my claim late?

- 5.1 If you have missed the deadline to submit your mitigating circumstances, you should contact Student Central as soon as possible.
- 5.2 Mitigating circumstances submitted after the deadline will only be considered if insurmountable circumstances prevented you from submitting the form (for example, hospitalisation, incarceration, or equivalent incapacity).
- 5.3 You will be asked to provide a statement explaining, in full, the reasons for the late submission, as well as evidence supporting the reasons for lateness, where appropriate.

## 6. How is my claim considered?

- 6.1 All mitigating circumstances claims will first be reviewed by a member of the Academic Registry to confirm that all the relevant information, including acceptable evidence, has been provided.
- 6.2 If you have not provided all the necessary information when you first submit your claim, you will be notified in writing and given one further opportunity to submit the necessary information. You must ensure you meet the deadline set by the Academic Registry in the written communication. If you do not meet the deadline your claim will only be considered if insurmountable circumstances prevented you from meeting the deadline (see section 5).

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- 6.3 Once a full and complete mitigating circumstances claim has been received, your case will be reviewed by the Academic Registry. The Academic Registry will either recommend an outcome to the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel or refer your case to the full panel to consider a recommendation.
- 6.4 The recommended outcome is sent to the relevant Board of Examiners for consideration, who make the final decision. Recommendations from the Panel are usually accepted by the Board of Examiners, unless it is in your interest academically for them not to be.
- 6.5 You will be informed of the recommendation of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel in writing within 28 days. Remember this outcome is provisional and subject to change until it is confirmed by the Board of Examiners.

## **7. What will the outcome be?**

- 7.1 The outcomes that are likely to be made are outlined below, but outcomes are not limited to this list.

- **No change**
- **Removal of penalty on late coursework**
- **Partial removal of penalty on a late coursework (up to 10 marks below the full mark)**
- **Exceptional extension**

This would allow an extension of up to 21 days, where the normal 7-day extension available to students is not sufficient.

Additionally, this could include not counting an extension against the semester or yearly quota, where an extension has been used on an affected module/unit and the mitigation is upheld.

- **Deemed not to have sat (DNS) the module/unit**

This would be used where you either were unable to complete the assessment for a module/unit or were severely affected by your circumstances during submission of an assignment, or immediately prior to or during an examination. This may also be recommended in conjunction with removing penalties, as above.

- **Calculation of a mark for a missing summative assignment**

This would be used where a DNS or RTR would otherwise be recommended, but the size, scope, or timing of the affected element/s would support this approach (e.g. a single Computer Marked Assignment of minor weighting, or a minor element of a dissertation or project).

This can be by using the mark of a piece of coursework that has been submitted for formative purposes – this may occur when one piece of work only has been affected and the other results suggest that if the mitigating circumstances had not occurred then you would have been able to submit a good standard piece of work.

Alternatively, where there are no formative pieces of course work, one or several summative piece/s may be used to inform the likely mark for another summative piece of coursework.

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- **Alternative form of assessment**

This may occur where you have special educational needs, and normal adjustment such as extra time or use of a PC in examinations would not be suitable.

- **Further evidence required before consideration can be made**

For apprenticeship students, where severe or prolonged mitigation leads to, or may lead to, you being unable to complete your apprenticeship by the planned end, you should speak to your employer and Apprenticeship Outcomes Officer to discuss the best course of action, which may include taking a break from your learning. The Mitigating Circumstances Panel has a responsibility to report on all apprenticeship students who have had RTR and DNS (but not reasons why) to their apprenticeship provider.

- 7.2 If the panel decides on an outcome not listed above they will also consider whether it should be incorporated into this policy in the future.
- 7.3 The Panel may also provide advice on your study or progression options in light of your mitigating circumstances, if applicable.
- 7.4 The Panel's recommendations cannot alter:
- any UCEM decisions on withdrawal of programmes;
  - teach-out arrangements for withdrawn programmes; or
  - changes to programme outlines due to new modules post September 2020.

## **8. How will my personal information be dealt with?**

- 8.1 UCEM will treat students' personal information gathered during mitigating circumstances confidentially, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR).
- 8.2 Relevant case information will only be disclosed to UCEM staff who are processing or deciding on your claim. If you wish the information to remain more private, i.e. known to one or two people only, then you should discuss this, before submitting, with the Student Advice Team via Student Central.
- 8.3 Identifiable information on your mitigating circumstances will be retained throughout your registration with UCEM and for 2 years after your end date with UCEM.
- 8.4 UCEM will keep summary details on mitigating circumstances claims in order to be analysed for evidence to inform continuous improvement of process and provision.
- 8.5 In order to preserve the confidentiality of others, you are asked not to include personal information about third parties such as family members, unless it is necessary to support your mitigating circumstances claim. Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, UCEM is required to notify third parties if it is processing their information. This means that, if you do disclose personal information about someone else, we will need to confirm with them in writing that they consent to us processing their information. You may wish to seek advice from UCEM's Data Protection Officer on [dataprotection@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@ucem.ac.uk).



## 9. Group mitigation

- 9.1 Group mitigation is where a cohort of students has been adversely affected by events outside of their control, impacting upon coursework or examinations. In such instances, the Chair of Mitigating Circumstances Panel will make a recommendation that a report, outlining the circumstances and details of those affected, is forwarded to the appropriate Board of Examiners for consideration and adjudication of outcome. Students affected by these circumstances will be notified of this action and will not be required to submit individual mitigating circumstances claims.

## 10. Appeals

- 10.1 You have the right to appeal against the decisions of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. Please see the [Code of Practice chapter on Appeals and Complaints](#) and the [Student Appeals Procedure](#) for more information.

## Appendix A: Examples of mitigating circumstances (and acceptable types of evidence) and examples that are not mitigating circumstances

The circumstances outlined below are examples. They are not a complete list of what qualifies as a mitigating circumstance and what does not. Each case will be considered individually.

Examples of Mitigating Circumstances	Acceptable Evidence
Being ill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctor's certificate,</li> <li>• Prescription,</li> <li>• Letter from hospital,</li> <li>• Statutory sick pay (SSP) form letter from employer,</li> <li>• Police accident report,</li> <li>• Newspaper announcement</li> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper).</li> </ul> <p>Note: 'Retrospective' medical evidence (i.e. doctor's notes which states a student was seen after illness occurred and declared to have been ill previously) will not normally be considered unless supported by evidence of ongoing medical conditions.</p>
The illness or death of a close family member, where it can be shown that this significantly involves the student in caring/making arrangements or visiting hospital, or observing a period of mourning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctor's certificate,</li> <li>• Letter from hospital,</li> <li>• Hospital admittance/release form,</li> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper),</li> <li>• Police accident report,</li> <li>• Death certificate,</li> <li>• Order of service,</li> <li>• Newspaper announcement.</li> </ul>
A recurrence or worsening of an existing condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctor's certificate,</li> <li>• Letter from hospital.</li> </ul>
An unexpected change of work circumstances such as redundancy or threat of redundancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper).</li> </ul>
Familial or marital breakdown.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorce or other legal papers.</li> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper),</li> <li>• Doctor's letter (if health is affected).</li> </ul>
Failure of electricity or equipment outside of the student's control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair bill.</li> <li>• Letter from IT department/employer.</li> <li>• Letter from internet/electricity service</li> </ul>
Court attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official correspondence from court/</li> </ul>
Being the victim of a crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police report,</li> <li>• Doctor's letter (if health affected).</li> </ul>

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Examples of Mitigating Circumstances	Acceptable Evidence
Discharge of public service such as active service in the armed forces, jury duty or national service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper),</li> <li>• Letter of deployment.</li> </ul>
Special educational needs for which appropriate adjustment could not be made, or, where adjustment was made it was not sufficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctor's letter,</li> <li>• Educational psychologist's letter.</li> </ul>
Exceptional workload in the workplace; (not applicable to apprentices who must be released for a minimum of 20% of the contracted working hours to undertake off-the-job i.e. their degree. If you are an apprentice and are not receiving 20% off-the-job training time you should contact your Apprenticeship Outcomes Officer.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper).</li> </ul>
Refusal by an employer for time off to attend an examination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from employer (on headed paper).</li> </ul>
<b>Examples that are <u>not</u> mitigating circumstances</b>	
Failure to complete the assignment submission process;	
Death or illness of a pet.	
Lateness to an exam due to transport problems, unless caused by severe weather or terrorism;	
Family celebrations;	
Planned holidays or house moves;	
Public holidays;	
Misreading the instructions or deadlines for an assignment or examination;	