

What are mitigating circumstances?

These are circumstances beyond your control (i.e. unforeseen and unavoidable) which may be affecting your academic work or performance in an assessment. As a result of these circumstances you may have submitted work late, failed to submit work, been absent from an assessment or are concerned that you will give an unrepresentative performance in an assessment.

I think I have Mitigating Circumstances -What should I do?

Make sure you get the help and support you need to deal with the circumstances. Contact Student Services for guidance. It helps to keep your personal tutor or course leader informed as to your situation. If you think you are not going to be able to finish your work on time you may want to apply for an extension.

How do I apply for an extension?

If you need to apply for an extension to a deadline, you should complete an ARGEAR 1 form (available from your School Office). This will need to be accompanied by documentary evidence supporting the reasons why you require the extension. The form should be taken to your course leader, at least one day before the deadline, they will have the responsibility for granting the extension.

Work submitted following an extension is marked using the same criteria as if it had been submitted on time. If you believe that the reasons that led you to apply for an extension also affected the standard of your work you

should also submit mitigating circumstances.

What circumstances are considered valid?

The University has a mitigating circumstances procedure and the type of circumstances that are normally considered valid are:

- Personal illness
- Illness of a close family member
- Death of a family member or close friend
- Personal or psychological problems

The course examination board will be considering:

- The severity of the mitigating circumstance.
- The documentary evidence submitted
- The time period affected and the likelihood your performance may have been affected.
- Whether the circumstances were foreseeable or avoidable.

Often, life is complicated and your circumstances do not fit neatly into one of the categories described. If you are unsure whether or not you are eligible and would like to discuss this further please contact the Students' Union.

What circumstances are not normally considered valid?

- Paid employment
- Other University deadlines
- Car breakdown
- Missing a bus or train, lateness of lift to University
- Oversleeping
- Misunderstanding a timetable or not knowing about an assessment
- Computer problems
- Job interview
- An ongoing situation known to you
- Circumstances that might reasonably have been foreseen

Make sure you get the help and support you need to deal with the circumstances. **Contact the Students' Union and/or Student Services for guidance.**

Complete an **ARGEAR 3** form which you can obtain from your School Office. This will need to be submitted to the Chair of the Examination Board via your School Office, along with documentary evidence in a sealed envelope, by the deadline published in your School. If you are away from University and unable to submit it by hand, send it by recorded delivery.

Try to hand in the form before any assessments as submission after the event may weaken your case unless this is due to exceptional circumstances.

What documentary evidence should I include?

It is very important to include appropriate documentary evidence as the exam board will only consider cases where it is provided. Evidence should be from an independent, professional source such as a GP or counsellor. Uncorroborated evidence from friends and family is not normally considered acceptable.

What could the outcome be?

The course exam board will decide whether to accept or reject your claim for mitigating circumstances. If your claim is accepted the exam board then decides on an outcome, which depending on the circumstances could be:

- Repeating the assessment with no penalty as if for the first attempt [deferral]
- Undertaking an alternative assessment, comparable to the original assessment
- When work was submitted after a deadline allowing the actual mark to stand
- Exceptionally if the affected work made only a minor contribution to your overall mark, allowing the mark to be calculated without reference to the affected work

I was unable to submit an ARGEAR3 before the Exam Board met – what should I do?

If you were unable [or for valid reasons unwilling] to submit your claim for mitigation prior to the Exam Board meeting, it may be possible to request a review of the Exam Board's decision using the University's **Appeals Procedure**.

Details of the appeals procedure can be found on www.ubsu.net/sars and in Section H of the General Examination and Assessment Regulations for Taught Courses (**GEAR**). GEAR can be found on Student Central.

The Students' Union can provide you with further advice and support with the appeals process.

This leaflet provides only an outline of the mitigating circumstances procedure, we would strongly recommend that you consult your student handbook and GEAR section C14 for more information.

Useful Contacts

Students' Union

Students' Advocate
Individual Representation
Nicola Trelawny
nt68@brighton.ac.uk
01273 643532

Student Advocacy & Education Research
Co-ordinator
Anthony Lewis
a.r.lewis@brighton.ac.uk
01273 643328

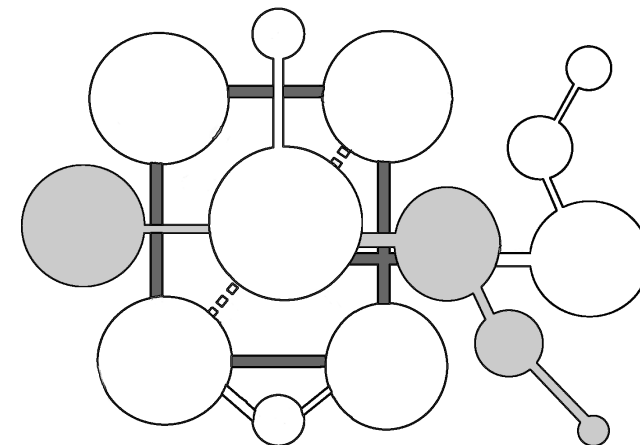
University of Brighton

Student Services Welfare
studentservices@brighton.ac.uk
01273 642888

UBSU Student Advocacy & Research Service

Mitigating Circumstances

A very brief guide.



Drop in times

Moulsecoomb

Cockcroft G35 Wednesday & Friday
10 am - 4pm

Falmer

Uckfield House 204 Monday & Thursday
10am - 4pm

Grand Parade

UBSU Office - Mezz floor Tuesday & Thursday
10am - 4pm

Eastbourne, Hastings & Partner Colleges
by appointment.



university of brighton
students' union

www.ubsu.net/sars
ubsuacademic@brighton.ac.uk

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