

## MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

### 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.

### 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 / psychological problems

The course examination board will be considering.

- (1) The severity of the mitigating circumstance.
- (2) The documentary evidence submitted.
- (3) The time period affected and the likelihood your performance may have been affected.
- (4) 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 Advice Centre or Academic Caseworker.

### 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

### 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 the Students' Union Advice Centre and/or Student Services for guidance.**

It helps to keep your personal tutor / course leader informed as to your situation.

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 UBSU.net and in Section H of the General Examination and Assessment Regulations for Taught Courses (**GEAR**). GEAR can be found on Student Central.

**Do also contact the Students’ Union who 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**

Academic Adviser  
[k.mayo@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:k.mayo@brighton.ac.uk)  
 01273 643532

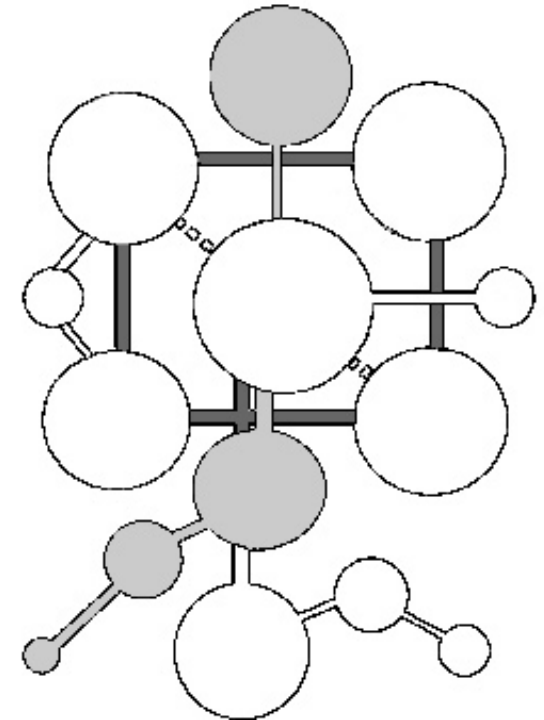
Education Research Co-ordinator  
[a.r.lewis@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:a.r.lewis@brighton.ac.uk)  
 01273 643328

Education and Equalities Sabbatical Officer  
[s.u.v.p.education@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.v.p.education@brighton.ac.uk)  
 01273 643196

UBSU Student Advice Centre  
 Room G33, Cockcroft Building  
[s.u.advice@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:s.u.advice@brighton.ac.uk)  
 01273 642876

**University of Brighton**  
 Student Services Welfare  
[studentservices@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:studentservices@brighton.ac.uk)  
 01273 642888

# MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES



Community  
 Legal Service



**student  
 advice centre**

university of brighton students' union