

Mitigating
Circumstances:
What do I do?





MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM

There may be a time when, as a student, something is going on in your life that affects your ability to study, sit an exam or hand in an assignment. Because this means your ability and/or performance may not have been accurately measured, it could be considered ‘mitigating circumstances’.

The University has a policy that covers this issue and involves completing a ‘Mitigating Circumstances’ form. Supporting documentation will always be requested with the Mitigating Circumstances form: if you do not have evidence, you can still submit the form – but you will then need to explain why you have no evidence.

Examples of mitigating circumstances include (but are not limited to):

- Being ill
- Being in an accident
- Bereavement
- Significant adverse personal or family circumstances
- Political upheaval disrupting the study and learning of a group of students.

Events or circumstances that would NOT normally be considered a mitigating circumstance include the following:

- Holidays or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected.
- Assessments that are scheduled close together, or on the same day, or that clash due to incorrect registration by the student.
- Inadequate time management or planning
- Last minute or careless travel arrangements
- Consequences of paid employment
- Exam stress or panic attacks NOT supported by medical evidence.



Confidentiality

Anything you tell a mentor and/or the school and any support staff, is confidential. Some of the people you provide with information may need to inform another member of staff about that information, in order to allow your circumstances to be dealt with appropriately. However, the information itself remains confidential.

Frequently Asked Questions

When do I hand in the form?

Ideally the form needs to be handed in advance of you missing or not performing well in your assignment, exams or studies. However, that may not always be possible. You should hand in the form as soon as you can after the assignment, exam, or period of study which has been affected and explain on the form why you were unable to hand it in earlier, ie, if you were in hospital. The reason for handing in the form in advance is to allow your school and/or the examinations board, adequate time to consider your particular circumstances and adjust your grades accordingly. If you hand it in late, then you may end up making an academic appeal which can take time to process and may cause more worry.

Where can I get the form from?

You can either download the form online here: **<http://www.hw.ac.uk/students/studies/examinations/mitigating-circumstances.htm>** or your school office will be able to give you a printed copy to complete.

But I think I can cope. Do I really need to tell someone?

Quite often we think we are going to be able to struggle through without any additional support or help. However, physical and emotional hurdles can take a toll on us as human beings. You will not be judged for asking for help – the policy here is to help you by taking into account your own individual circumstances and how they have affected you.

I didn't tell anyone and now I feel it's too late...

The University has an appeals process for a reason—to take into account that, had all things been equal, you would have performed better. While there are guidelines about when you should notify the school, if you did not do so, all hope is not necessarily lost. There may be a valid reason why you were unable to do so at the time. The Hub will help you to put forward an appeal case.

‘the advice hub’

Your Union Your Support

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