



## Deferral, Extension and Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure

### Introduction

The School recognises that students may suffer from a sudden illness, or other serious or unforeseen event or set of circumstances, which adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment, or the results they obtain for an assessment. This Policy and Procedure sets out the School's approach applying extenuating circumstances in these situations.

A student who is prevented from attending or completing a formal assessment component or who feels that their performance would be (or has been) seriously impaired by extenuating circumstances, may submit a deferral request. This Policy and Procedure also sets out the procedure for applying for a deferral and how this is determined, as well the procedure for applying for an extension of a deadline date for coursework.

### Deferral Procedure

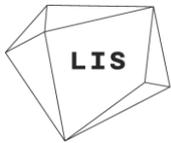
Where extenuating circumstances have impaired a student's ability to prepare for an examination or assessment, the student may apply to the [Extenuating Circumstances Panel](#), to defer the examination or assessment to the next available sitting.

The application for a deferral must:

- a. Be made by 12.00 noon the working day before the date of the examination or assessment (a working day is defined as Monday to Friday, excluding weekends and public holidays);
- b. Be made by email, to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel at [extenuatingcircumstances@lis.ac.uk](mailto:extenuatingcircumstances@lis.ac.uk), including:
  - i. Student name;
  - ii. Student number;
  - iii. Contact details;
  - iv. Which assessment component the student is applying for a deferral for;
  - v. Extenuating circumstances on which the student is relying to justify the extension, supported by objective and authoritative evidence (e.g., from a qualified medical practitioner).

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel must be satisfied that:

- a. The illness or other good cause would render the student unfit to enter the examination or assessment; and
- b. That the illness or other good cause would either:
  - i. Have a significant and adverse impact on the student's performance in the examination or assessment; *or*
  - ii. Would prevent the student from sitting the examination or assessment.



Where the Extenuating Circumstances Panel is satisfied that the above conditions have been met, the student will be withdrawn from the examination or assessment and deferred.

The School aims to process deferral applications by 18.00 on the day before the assessment. If a student has not received confirmation of their deferral prior to the examination, they should assume that it has not been granted and therefore should expect to sit the examination or assessment.

Where an application for a deferral is received after the deadline, defined as 12.00 noon the working day before the date of the examination or assessment, at the latest, a student will be required to submit an Academic Appeal based on Extenuating Circumstances (see below).

Where a condition is enduring (I.e., lasting for 12 months or more), candidates with specific learning differences and/or disabilities or medical conditions are encouraged to disclose this to the Student Support Department, in line with the School's [Disability Policy](#), in order to access an agreed and signed learning contract, which includes recommendations for examination concessions. This is required at least one month before the date of the examination, to ensure that any reasonable adjustments are considered and accommodated. In all cases, evidence from a GP, doctor or consultant, educational psychologist or equivalent will be required.

The Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall keep a record of deferrals and extensions granted and make these available to the Registry.

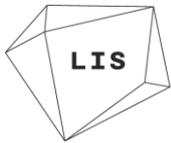
A deferral application for particular dates is normally expected to cover all examinations and assessments on those specified dates.

Where a student seeks to defer one or more but not all of the diet of examinations or assessments that they would normally be required to take within a single examination or assessment sitting, the student must provide evidence to justify the split of the examination and assessment diet. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel must be satisfied that the integrity of the examination process has not been undermined or that the student has not gained an unfair advantage over other students who have taken the full diet in one period.

Students are required to complete their programme in accordance with the time limits set out in the School's [Registration Policy](#). Deferrals do not extend the permitted maximum period for completing an award programme.

### **Extension Procedure**

Where a student considers that because of illness or other good cause, there are valid reasons for seeking an extension to the deadline for handing in an assessment, the student may apply to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for an extension of the deadline.



Students with active learning contracts, established in line with the School's [Disability Policy](#), can negotiate extensions to coursework in certain circumstances where the Student Support Department and the Director of Teaching and Learning are satisfied that such an agreement does not place the student at an unfair advantage nor compromises academic standards (see Reasonable Adjustments section below).

The application for an extension must be:

- a. Received by 12.00 noon on the last working day before the deadline (a working day is defined as Monday to Friday, excluding weekends and public holidays);
- b. Made in writing, by email, to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel at [extenuatingcircumstances@lis.ac.uk](mailto:extenuatingcircumstances@lis.ac.uk) including:
  - i. Student name;
  - ii. Student number;
  - iii. Contact details;
  - iv. Which assessment component the student is applying for an extension for;
  - v. Extenuating circumstances on which the student is relying to justify the extension, supported by objective and authoritative evidence (e.g., from a qualified medical practitioner).

In exercising its discretion, the Extenuating Circumstances Panel must be satisfied that the illness or other good cause would prevent the student from completing and submitting the assessment within the timeframe permitted for the assessment. Where the Extenuating Circumstances Panel is satisfied that this condition has been met, a new submission deadline will be set.

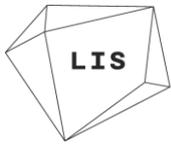
## **Academic Appeals on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances**

### **Definitions**

Extenuating circumstances are defined as unforeseeable and unavoidable circumstances that may have a detrimental effect on academic performance.

The School encourages students who do not consider themselves fit to sit an examination or who believe that an assessment would be impaired because of unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances outside their control, to use the procedures open to them such as deferral of an assessment or an extension of the deadline for submission, in advance of the examination or assessment (see above).

Where a student believes that their summative assessment has been adversely affected by unforeseen circumstances, they may make an appeal on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances under the School's [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).



## Fit to Sit Policy

The School requires all students to sign a declaration that they are fit to do so before taking an examination or submitting an assessment.

A student who has signed a declaration that they are fit to sit an examination or submit an assessment may not submit an Academic Appeal on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances:

1. They are affected by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control after signing the fit to sit declaration but before the end of the examination; or
2. They are subsequently diagnosed as having been suffering from a condition at the time of the assessment of which, for a reason supported by evidence, they were unaware at the time of assessment; or
3. At the time of signing the fit to sit declaration they were suffering from a condition which impaired their ability to make a rational judgment as to their ability to take the assessment; or
4. At the time of signing the fit to sit declaration they were for any other valid reason unwilling or unable to disclose the extenuating circumstances that rendered them unfit to sit.

In all of the above cases, the student must believe that these circumstances affected their performance in the assessment and in each case they must provide objective and authoritative evidence of their condition.

### Stage 1: Lodging of an Academic Appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances

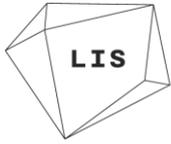
A student may make an Academic Appeal on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances where they believe that their assessment has been adversely affected by unforeseen circumstances beyond their control. Students may make such an application:

- a. If the circumstances prevented the students from undertaking all or part of an assessment task;
- b. If the assessment task is completed, but the student believes that the extenuating circumstances have had a detrimental effect on the standard of work presented for assessment.

Students must make an Academic Appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances by email to the Registrar no more than 7 calendar days after the assessment took place or was due (registrar@lis.ac.uk).

The application must include:

- Student full name;
- Student unique number;



- Contact details;
- Which assessment(s) the application for Extenuating Circumstances refers to;
- Extenuating circumstances on which the student is relying to justify the application, supported by objective and authoritative evidence (e.g., from a qualified medical practitioner);
- Explanation of why the student could not instead apply for a deferral or extension, as well as explanation of any fit to sit declaration signed, and why this should be discounted (see above). These explanations should be supported by objective and authoritative evidence.

Objective and authoritative evidence must show the time and character of the circumstances; it must be original, signed documentation from an appropriate third party (e.g., a doctor or psychiatrist), and should be proximate and relevant to the assessment or assessment period. If a document submitted as evidence is not in English, an independent translation must be provided.

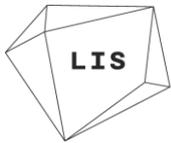
Late applications will not be considered unless the student is able to prove that they were mentally or physically incapable of submitting an application within the prescribed time limit, or were for any other valid reasons unwilling or unable to do so. Late applications must be accompanied by authoritative and objective evidence which confirms that the student was incapable of submitting an application within the prescribed time limit.

Students taken ill or who experience any unforeseen or unavoidable incidents during an assessment are expected to notify the invigilator before leaving the venue, to ensure that the time and nature of the illness or incident is noted in the invigilation report. Students will also be required to seek medical attention on the day of the assessment or as close to it as possible if they feel their performance was adversely affected by illness.

Students may not make an appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances as a result of technical or other problems (such as a computer failure) unless the problem was with an LIS machine or an external server (e.g., Turnitin). The Extenuating Circumstances Panel may however accept these problems as reason to give a limited extension to an assessment deadline.

Appeals on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances under the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#) are intended to cover circumstances which, though they may cover a period of time, are essentially transient, and do not prevent the student from continuing with the work of the programme.

If a student is affected by serious ongoing circumstances (which may for example be medical or personal) which appear unlikely to be resolved or significantly improved within the timescale of the student's assessment for a programme, the student may be referred to the Student Support Department or advised to interrupt their studies.



The Registrar shall keep a record of all academic appeals, including those based on Extenuating Circumstances, and report these to the Academic Council on an annual basis. The Registrar shall also keep a record of any granted concessions per student, and will take this into account when considering an Extenuating Circumstances application, including reporting these to the Academic Appeals Board.

## **Stage 2: Initial Consideration**

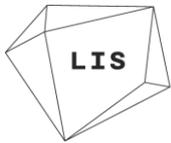
The Registrar will issue the student with an acknowledgment of receipt within 5 working days of receiving the formal appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances; this should be kept by the student as evidence that their appeal has been successfully lodged.

The Registrar will determine whether the information presented by the student constitutes a case that satisfies the threshold conditions for a valid academic appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances and will communicate this decision to the student within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal.

To meet the threshold conditions for a valid academic appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances, the application must:

- a. Be made in writing in line with the guidelines set out in Stage 1 above, and include all the information set out in those guidelines; *and*
- b. Clearly identify the unforeseeable and unavoidable Extenuating Circumstance(s); *and*
- c. Have been received within the time limits set out above; *and*
- d. Include evidence which demonstrates to the Registrar or their nominee that the extenuating circumstance is connected to the assessment; *and*
- e. Shows evidence and grounds that are reasonably arguable that:
  - i. The extenuating circumstance(s) arose either immediately before or during the exam sitting or the summative assessment submission deadline that affected the assessment outcome—specifically, it arose after 12pm on the working day before the examination or coursework submission deadline; *or*
  - ii. The student had a valid, documented reason for being unable or unwilling to disclose the factor(s) that affected their performance before the deadline for applying for a Deferral or Extension
- f. Where the student had a request rejected by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, the application must show evidence and grounds that are reasonably arguable that:
  - i. There was a procedural error, irregularity or maladministration in the decision-making of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel *or*
  - ii. The decision of the Extenuating Circumstances was not made fairly on the basis of the evidence originally submitted.

The Registrar or their nominee will inform the student in writing that either:



- a. The Extenuating Circumstances application is rejected because it is not admissible (does not constitute a “case”, e.g., incorrectly submitted or submitted out of the time limit); *or*
- b. The Extenuating Circumstances application is rejected because it does not satisfy the threshold conditions for valid concession as set out above; *or*
- c. That a case satisfying the threshold conditions for a valid appeal on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances has been established, and the Academic Appeals Board will consider the appeal.

Where the Academic Appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances is rejected, the student will be informed in the Registrar’s written response that they have the right to request a review of the decision by the Chief Executive or their nominee within 5 working days of their notification by the Registrar that their appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances has been rejected.

Such a review will only be undertaken where the applicant clearly states the reason(s) why the decision of the Registrar or their nominee is unsound. Failure to do so will constitute an invalid request for review by the Chief Executive or nominee, and will be dismissed without further consideration.

The Chief Executive or nominee will either:

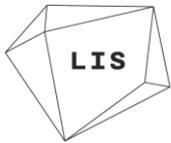
- Reject the appeal; *or*
- Accept the appeal on the grounds of extenuating circumstances and refer it to the Academic Appeals Board for consideration.

Where the Chief Executive or nominee rejects the academic appeal on the grounds of extenuating circumstances, the student will be informed in writing that the School’s internal appeal procedures have been exhausted.

Where the student is notified that their case has been referred to the Academic Appeals Board for consideration (either by the Registrar or by the Chief Executive or nominee), they student will be in writing informed of:

- The date of the Academic Appeals Board meeting;
- The timeline for receiving a written decision (within five working days of the Academic Appeals Board meeting);
- Any evidence submission requirements and deadlines for these;
- Rights to appeal the Academic Appeals Board decision.

The Chief Executive or nominee will give their written decision to the student within 10 working days of receiving the appeal for consideration.



## **Stay on Action**

Where a student is submitting an Academic Appeal on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances on a final assessment attempt, from the date of lodging the application, a stay of execution shall be placed on any action or decision affecting the student's registration status or progression whilst the outcome of the Extenuating Circumstances appeal is pending. Boards of Examiners shall not implement any decision, or consequential action of the final assessment attempt before the outcome of the Extenuating Circumstances appeal is known.

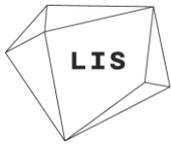
Pending the outcome of the Extenuating Circumstances application and where they have the right, the candidate may undertake classes, attend the School, and must prepare for and retake any assessments or examinations that have been scheduled. However, such assessments are sat at the students' own risk.

## **Stage 3: Academic Appeals Board**

In advance of the Board(s) of Examiners, the Academic Appeals Board will be convened to consider student requests for consideration of extenuating circumstances affecting assessment. The Academic Appeals Board consists of the Head of Quality or nominee (Chair), the Director of Teaching and Learning (or nominee) and at least one senior member of academic staff drawn from a pool of members previously approved by the Academic Council. Where the appeal is on the grounds of Extenuating Circumstances, the Academic Appeals Board will also co-opt an External Examiner. Where the Appeal relates to a decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, the Academic Appeals Board must not comprise any member of that Panel.

In the case of Extenuating Circumstances referred under the Academic Appeals Procedure, the Academic Appeals Board is responsible for:

- Considering and determining all applications from students regarding academic appeals on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances as expeditiously as is reasonably possible, having regard to the circumstances of each case and the requirements of natural justice and fairness.
- Determining whether the application submitted is admissible in relation to the grounds set out in this Procedure;
- Determining whether the application is supported by appropriate, objective and authoritative evidence;
- Determining whether the circumstances described in the application are such as to warrant a concession and are sufficient to have had an adverse effect on the student's performance;
- Agreeing whether the application should be accepted, referred back for further information or rejected;



- Where an application is accepted, agreeing the scope of the concession to be recommended to the Board of Examiners.

In making its decision, the Academic Appeals Board will investigate the appeal, call for any relevant papers, take evidence, examine witnesses and conduct any other relevant enquiries. The student has a right to review any documentation considered by the Academic Appeals Board.

The Academic Appeals Board will not have access to the students' profile of results, and will not make decisions about the outcomes or grades of assessment. The Academic Appeals Board may consider previous Extenuating Circumstances application(s) made by the student.

The Academic Appeals Board shall determine:

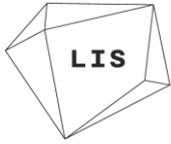
- a. That no extenuating circumstances have been substantiated by the evidence provided to or gathered by the Academic Appeals Board, and that the students' results be processed as normal; *or*
- b. That extenuating circumstances have been substantiated by the evidence provided to or gathered by the Academic Appeals Board, and recommend a concession to the Board of Examiners; these might include:
  - Providing a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time, allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the examination or assessment, rather than imposing a cap;
  - Waiving late submission penalties;
  - Taking the extenuating circumstances for the module(s) into account at the point of award and classification.

The Registrar will inform the student of the decision in writing within 5 working days of the Academic Appeals Board meeting. This written statement will set out:

- The decision that has been made by the Academic Appeals Board;
- The reasons for reaching that decision;
- Any actions required by the student or the School to follow up and implement that decision;
- Details of the further right to appeal to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#), available to the student if they remain dissatisfied with the final outcome of the School's internal Academic Appeals Procedure.

Where the Academic Appeals Board finds that extenuating circumstances have been substantiated by the evidence provided to or gathered by the Academic Appeals Board, the Academic Appeals Board shall submit these findings to the Board of Examiners or its subsidiary board, along with recommendations for subsequent actions.

Students should note that a degree cannot be conferred whilst an appeal is ongoing.



### **Consideration by the Board of Examiners**

The Academic Appeals Board shall make a confidential, written report of the Extenuating Circumstances applications and its recommendations.

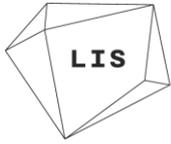
Upon receipt of recommendations from Academic Appeals Board, the Board of Examiners or its subsidiary board will decide whether to:

- a. Provide a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time, allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the examination or assessment, rather than imposing a cap;
- b. Waive late submission penalties;
- c. Determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived;
- d. Note the accepted extenuating circumstances for the module(s) and recommend that it is taken into account at the point of award and classification.

The Board of Examiners, depending on the circumstances, may exercise discretion in deciding on the particular form any reassessment should take. Options are a *viva voce* examination, designed to show whether the student has satisfied the programme learning outcomes, additional assessment tasks designed to show whether the student has satisfied the programme learning outcomes, review of previous work, or normal assessment at the next available opportunity. The student will not be put in a position of unfair advantage or disadvantage: the aim will be to enable the student to be assessed on equal terms with their cohort.

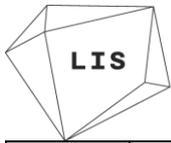
### **Monitoring and evaluation**

The Registrar will provide an annual report to the Academic Council summarising the cases that have been considered, the actions taken, a commentary on the effectiveness or otherwise of the procedures, and any recommendations for change. The Academic Council will authorise any changes to the Deferral, Extension and Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure.



<b>Name of policy/procedure:</b>	<b>Deferral, Extension, and Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure</b>
<b>Document owner:</b>	Hannah Kohler, Director of Admissions and Student Support
<b>Date Originally Created:</b>	01/2019
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	08/2021
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Dr Andrew Redford (Head of Quality)
<b>Audited by:</b>	Academic Council
<b>Date of Audit:</b>	12/2019, 03/2020 – approved
<b>Date of next review:</b> (annually unless otherwise agreed)	
<b>Related documents:</b> (eg associated forms, underpinning processes, related policies or overarching policies)	Extenuating Circumstances Panel: Membership and Terms of Reference Disability Policy Academic Appeals Procedure Registration Policy Assessment and Classification Framework Examinations and Assessments Regulations and Procedures for Students

<b>Version Control</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief summary of changes</b>
1	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions Student Support)	13/01/2019	Original draft



2	Prof. Carl Gombrich (Director of Teaching and Learning)	10/03/2019	Minor wording changes
3	Prof. Chris Maguire (Registrar)	20/06/2019	Minor edits.
4	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	23/06/2019	Removed flexible deadlines for assessment.
5	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	24/06/2019	Revision of Extenuating Circumstances process to align with Academic Appeals Procedure. Added section on release of results. Alteration of reasonable adjustments section to align with Disability Policy and to clarify link to Academic Appeals Procedure.
6	Prof. Chris Maguire (Registrar)	28/06/2019	Minor wording changes
7	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	15/08/2019	Establishment of Extenuating Circumstances Panel to deal with deferral/ extension requests
8	Academic Council	18/12/2019	Requires review given need for update of all general academic regulations in light of decision to pursue NDAPs
9	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Support)	04/01/2020	Removal of references to validating partner.
10	Academic Council	16/03/2020	Approved
11	Dr Andrew Redford (Head of Quality)	08/2021	Minor changes of job titles