

Student Guide to UCFB/GIS Extensions and Extenuating Circumstances

Introduction

We recognise that unplanned events, including ill health, may occur during your time at UCFB/GIS, which could impact your ability to study and complete assessments. This Guide has been designed to outline what you need to do and when, as well as the evidence you need to provide.

What do you need to read?

As well as reading this Guide, make sure that you read:

- your Course Specification and Module Specifications;
 - [UCFB/GIS Undergraduate Course Specifications](#)
 - [UCFB/GIS Postgraduate Course Specifications](#)
- UCFB/GIS Extension Policy and Procedure; and
- UCFB/GIS Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure

Why it is important to let us know that your circumstances are impacting your ability to study and complete assessments as early as possible?

It is important to let us know about any issues you are experiencing as soon as possible so that we can help you find the right support. You may reduce the options available to you if you delay contacting us. The longer you leave it, the fewer options there are!

Who should you talk to?

If you feel that circumstances are affecting your ability to attend lessons and complete your assessments, you should talk to your Module Leader, Course Leader or the Student Support Team. Each of these sources will be able to offer advice on how you can best manage your situation.

Extensions

What are extensions?

In your student academic year, you have the opportunity to use an extension for a piece of course work (a maximum of one per term). This applies to all modes of study. If more than one piece of work has been affected by your circumstances, you are advised to submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances. Some assessments are not eligible for Extenuating Circumstances. These will be confirmed by the Module Leader when the assessment is set.

These automatic assessment extensions are primarily suitable for written assignments. Some assessments are not eligible for an automatic extension, including: presentations, performance, lab work, practicals, clinical work or mathematical assignments, where students may gain unfair access to questions or answers. **You are responsible for checking with your Module Leader, Moodle and Assessment Guide(s) as to whether an assignment is eligible for an extension.**

What if an extension is not sufficient to enable completion of the work?

It is really important that you use your coursework extensions (a maximum of one per term) wisely. If, after using one of your extensions, you feel that you are still unable to engage with the assessment, and your circumstances meet the definition, you may submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances. It is important to note that, if you do not request an extension and you submit late but within 24 hours, you will lose 5 per cent of your mark. If you submit after 24 hours with no notification, you will be awarded a zero.

Using an extension

In your student academic year, you have the opportunity to use an extension for a piece of course work (a maximum of one per term). To activate an extension:

- You need to complete the Extension Request Form **before 23:59hrs on the deadline date (UK time)**.
- Once submitted, you do not need to wait for it to be authorised but need to submit your work within seven calendar days (this is seven continuous days) and **before 14:00 for assessments and 16:00 for reassessment tasks (UK time)**. If this period includes a Monday Bank Holiday, you must submit your work within eight calendar days.
- If your submission is on the last day before a UCFB/GIS closure, you will need to submit your assessment on the first day when UCFB/GIS re-opens.
- If you have already used your automatic assessment extension, and your circumstances meet the definition, you may submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances for any further assessments that you are unable to submit on time.
- Below please find indicative timescales for assessment deadlines and extension requests:

Assessment deadline	New submission of assessment	New submission assessment after a Monday BH
Monday	Following Monday	Following Tuesday
Tuesday	Following Tuesday	Following Wednesday
Wednesday	Following Wednesday	Following Thursday
Thursday	Following Thursday	Following Friday
Friday	Following Friday	Following Monday

- You will be deemed to have used an extension if you have:
 - Submitted a piece of work that is not eligible;
 - Submitted coursework after the deadline; and/or
 - Used an automatic extension and then submitted the coursework on time.
- An automatic assessment extension should not be used as a last-minute attempt to engage with an assessment. You should engage with your Module Leader and discuss any issues or challenges you are facing as soon as you can.
- You should not submit an automatic assessment extension to alleviate conflicting assessment deadlines. You are expected to manage your own workload and time management.

- When you submit your work having used an automatic assessment extension, you need to use the submission mode stated on the Assessment Brief. Please check with your Module Leader if you are unclear where to submit.
- If eligible, you can use an automatic extension for a resit, but only if it is not in the same term.

Extenuating Circumstances

What are Extenuating Circumstances?

It is important to note that periods of stress and anxiety are normal, particularly when deadlines are looming. UCFB/GIS defines Extenuating Circumstances as situations/conditions that are:

- Unforeseeable - in that you could have no prior knowledge of the event concerned;
- Unpreventable - in that you could do nothing reasonably in your power to prevent such an event; and
- Expected to have a serious negative impact on your ability to study and complete assessments.

Extenuating Circumstances Application

You can submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances if:

- You were unable to submit work by the deadline date and a seven calendar-day automatic assessment extension is not sufficient;
- Your circumstances have continued to impact on your performance in assessments beyond the assignment extension/exam postponement that has been granted; or
- You have completed your assessment before becoming fully aware of the impact of the circumstances.

When you submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances, you **must** attach sufficient supporting evidence **at the point of submission**. Without sufficient supporting evidence attached, Extenuating Circumstances applications will not be accepted. Below is a list of supporting evidence that we would generally expect you to provide for a range of exceptional circumstances.

Without sufficient supporting evidence attached, Extenuating Circumstances applications will not be accepted.

Type of Extenuating Circumstance	Acceptable grounds	Unacceptable grounds	Acceptable evidence	Unacceptable evidence
Acute medical conditions	<p>Unforeseeable, debilitating physical or mental health condition, which would directly affect your ability to complete coursework on time, attend an exam or which may result in a poor performance during an exam.</p> <p>Serious illness or medical condition of a dependant, e.g. child, spouse, parent or friend.</p> <p>Flare up of an existing medical condition that a medical practitioner has deemed unforeseeable.</p>	<p>Ongoing/long term conditions that are not unforeseeable (unless a flare up has occurred).</p> <p>Minor illnesses such as a cold.</p> <p>Conditions which are not sufficiently close to the assessment deadline.</p>	<p>GP letter, hospital letter, fitness to work certificate, written evidence from a medical practitioner.</p> <p>Evidence which covers the date of the assessment.</p> <p>If evidence is for a dependent, where possible, evidence to demonstrate the proof of relationship.</p> <p>If the Student Support Team are aware that flare ups are likely with your condition, they can support your claim without you requiring to get medical evidence from your GP.</p>	<p>Photos of an injury, images of medication, prescriptions, generic appointment letters.</p> <p>Evidence not written in English.</p> <p>WhatsApp or text messages.</p>

Type of Extenuating Circumstance	Acceptable grounds	Unacceptable grounds	Acceptable evidence	Unacceptable evidence
Bereavement	<p>Death of a child, sibling, spouse or partner.</p> <p>Your claim must clearly explain the nature of the relationship between you and the person that has died and how your ability to study has been affected. This is essential where the relationship is not within your immediate family (such as a step grandparent, a cousin) or there's no family connection (such as the death of a friend).</p>		<p>Order of service.</p> <p>Death certificate.</p> <p>Ongoing impact on the student if the bereavement happened some time ago (example GP letter, letter from counsellor).</p>	<p>Evidence not written in English.</p> <p>WhatsApp or text messages.</p> <p>News articles.</p>

Type of Extenuating Circumstance	Acceptable grounds	Unacceptable grounds	Acceptable evidence	Unacceptable evidence
Trauma	<p>Victim of serious crime.</p> <p>Involvement in a natural disaster or terrorist incident.</p> <p>Major unforeseeable disruption to home/life, e.g. fire.</p> <p>Domestic/family incident, e.g. marriage breakdown/ divorce.</p>	<p>Solicitor's letter.</p> <p>Letter from GP.</p>	<p>Letter from GP.</p> <p>Written report from police or other legal authority, e.g. solicitor.</p> <p>A letter from an appropriate medical professional, or from the Student Support Team to confirm the impact the investigation has had/is having on your studies.</p> <p>Verifiable evidence to show you/your property were affected.</p>	<p>Police telephone number.</p> <p>Photographic evidence.</p> <p>Evidence not written in English.</p> <p>WhatsApp or text messages.</p>

Type of Extenuating Circumstance	Acceptable grounds	Unacceptable grounds	Acceptable evidence	Unacceptable evidence
Caregiving	Sudden, unforeseeable change in circumstances which results in unexpected caregiving responsibilities for a close relative, e.g. child or parent.	Ongoing care responsibilities for a child, dependent or parent which hasn't recently changed, and the student would be expected to take into account to fit around their responsibilities.	Evidence to show the care arrangements have changed, e.g. social worker, solicitor.	Generic appointment letters. Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages.
Pregnancy	Sudden, unexpected incident, e.g. miscarriage, premature birth, still birth. A medical condition caused by pregnancy which impacts on a student's ability to meet deadlines (talking to Module and/or Course Leader should be done in first instance).	Retrospective disclosure to the UCFB/GIS of a pregnancy. Students should tell their Module and/or Course Leader at their earliest opportunity so a risk assessment can be carried out and adjustments can be made (e.g. if due date is close to a deadline).	A letter from an appropriate medical professional doctor/midwife/nurse/hospital.	Generic appointment letters, hospital images, scans. Photos of home testing kits, images of medication, prescriptions. Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages.
Court appearance	Jury duty, attendance at court required by law as a witness, defendant or claimant.	Attending court to support a relative or friend.	Documentary evidence provided by court or other legal authority e.g. lawyer, solicitor.	News article concerning case. Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages.

Type of Extenuating Circumstance	Acceptable grounds	Unacceptable grounds	Acceptable evidence	Unacceptable evidence
Crime and offence investigation	Where the accusation of a crime or offence leads to either ill health or other serious impact on you.		Evidence of a requirement from the Police to engage with them as part of their investigations. A letter from an appropriate medical professional, or from the Student Support Team to confirm the impact the investigation has had/is having on your studies.	News article concerning case. Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages.
Accommodation crisis such as eviction or the accommodation becoming uninhabitable	Eviction from home or conditions of the home making it uninhabitable.	Evidence of rent arrears but not evidence of eviction. House move that was planned or could have reasonably been expected.	Eviction letter, letter from council or local authority.	Rent arrears letter. Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages. Photos of accommodation.
Deployment	Applies to military, reserves, voluntary and emergency workers.		A letter on headed paper describing the deployment including dates.	Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages.

In the event that you are unable to obtain the evidence required to support your claim, please seek advice via ExtenuatingCircumstances@ucfb.ac.uk regarding possible alternatives. You should write in your supporting statement why the evidence required is proving difficult to obtain.

Examples of reasons *unlikely* to be accepted as grounds for Extenuating Circumstances:

- Holidays, house moves or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected;
- Minor illnesses, such as common colds or hay fever, unless the symptoms are particularly severe and unforeseen and supported by a letter from an appropriate medical professional;
- Assessments that are scheduled close together;
- Misreading the exam timetable and/or Assessment Guide(s);
- Poor time management;
- Minor and/or pre-planned transport disruption;
- Computer, internet access, or printer failure where the student should have backed up their work and/or allotted sufficient time to submit work and receive confirmation;
- Normal exam stress;
- Minor life events, unless the circumstances have had a disproportionate impact;
- Unapproved absence during term-time;
- Financial reasons, unless it can be demonstrated that these have had a severe impact.