

# Student Guide to UCFB Mitigating Circumstances 2025/26

## Introduction

Mitigating Circumstances are those which:

- Impair your examination performance, prevent you from attending examinations and other types of assessment; **or**
- Prevent you from submitting coursework and other assessed work by the scheduled deadline date.

Such circumstances **rarely occur** and would normally be:

- **Unforeseeable** - in that you could have no prior knowledge the event concerned would occur; and
- **Unpreventable** - in that you could do nothing reasonably in your power to prevent such an event from occurring; and
- **Short-term** and expected to have a **serious impact** on performance.

You are expected to make reasonable plans to take into account commonly occurring circumstances (such as transport or computer problems) even those which, on occasion, may have been unforeseeable and unpreventable.

## There are two types of Mitigation

### 1. Mitigating Circumstances Self-Certification

It is acknowledged that there may be times when a student's ability to submit or participate in an assessment is affected or prevented, and they are unable to provide supporting evidence. In such cases, **students are permitted to self-certify for a Mitigating Circumstances application once per semester for a period of up to seven working days.**

Self-certification means you will not need to provide official medical evidence when completing the mitigating circumstances form, but you must provide details explaining the nature, severity, and impact of your illness **in a separate form, which you will receive after contacting [mitigatingcircumstances@ucfb.com](mailto:mitigatingcircumstances@ucfb.com).**

### 2. Mitigating Circumstances with evidence (previously known as Extenuating Circumstances)

Mitigating Circumstances with evidence is available for all assessments and it is important that you submit your form with evidence if you are experiencing any ongoing event or illness that is affecting your studies and is preventing you from engaging and submitting your assessments.

Please be aware that such circumstances are **unforeseeable, unpreventable, short-term and serious.**

If Mitigation (with evidence) is granted at first sit, you will have the opportunity to resit and this will be uncapped (meaning your resit will not be capped to a pass mark and could achieve any grade, including the highest available).

Please ensure to make an informed decision and consider that there are other policies available to support students and more information can be found on the [UCFB Student Policies page](#).

This Guide has been designed to outline what you need to do and when, as well as the evidence you need to provide.

## **Applying for Mitigating Circumstances**

### **What you need to do, when and evidence:**

You can [submit an application](#) for Mitigating Circumstances if:

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

When you submit a Mitigating Circumstances application, you **must** attach sufficient supporting evidence **at the point of submission**, either by uploading it via the application form or by attaching it in an [email to Mitigating Circumstances](#).

In the event that you are unable to obtain the evidence required to support your claim, please seek advice via [mitigatingcircumstances@ucfb.com](mailto:mitigatingcircumstances@ucfb.com). You should include a reason why you are finding it difficult to obtain the evidence in your supporting statement.

It is the student's responsibility to provide acceptable grounds and evidence otherwise the claim may be cancelled.

**Applications submitted without credible documents and acceptable evidence will not be accepted.**

#### **Credible evidence can be:**

- **A supportive statement or letter from a recognised source;**
- **It should clearly state your full name;**
- **It should be dated close to the submission deadline;**
- **It should outline the diagnosis or circumstances, and**
- **Explaining the impact on the student and their studies**

## **Understanding the process**

### **What do you need to read?**

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

- your Course Specification and Module Specifications;
  - [UCFB Undergraduate Course Specifications](#)
  - [UCFB Postgraduate Course Specifications](#)
- UCFB Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure
- [UEL Academic Regulations](#)

### **Why is it 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!

### **Need support? 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 and/or the [Student Support Team](#). They will be able to offer advice such as academic and pastoral support throughout your studies and how you can best manage your situation. If you have accessed Student Support previously, you can also contact them for a supporting statement.

As a UCFB Student, you have access to your Student Assistance Programme (SAP) which offers 24/7/365 free and confidential counselling through telephone and/or video as well as chat-messaging support, with no appointment necessary. You can reach out anytime via the app, or by calling free on 0800 464 3426.

Students can contact the Academic Quality Team via [mitigatingcircumstances@ucfb.com](mailto:mitigatingcircumstances@ucfb.com) for advice about whether their circumstances meet the criteria before submitting a Mitigating Circumstances application. Students must use their UCFB email address for all Mitigating Circumstances communications and ensure they check it regularly.

### **What happens with my application?**

Once you submit a complete Mitigating Circumstances application that meets the criteria set out in the Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure, it will be reviewed by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. The Panel meets regularly throughout the academic year to consider applications. Please note that **applications cannot be approved before the assessment submission deadline.**

Applications should normally be submitted within **seven working days of the assessment submission deadline.** If you are unable to meet this deadline due to serious, unforeseen circumstances, you may still submit a late application. However, this must be done **before results are officially released.** Late applications must include valid supporting evidence and a clear explanation for the delay.

**If your application is incomplete,** it will only be considered by a panel once all required documents have been received. All paperwork must be submitted at least **five working days before a panel meeting.** If received after this deadline, your application and evidence (if appropriate) will be deferred to the next scheduled panel.

If you provide **additional details or evidence after submitting your application**, these will be reviewed at a subsequent panel meeting. This will **not affect your outcome**, as your claim is considered from the original date of submission.

**Applications submitted after results have been released, or without appropriate grounds and documentation, will not be considered by the panel.**

Outcomes are ratified by the Assessment Board, which determines how the mitigation is applied. Your Student Admin Team will confirm your outcome once the Assessment Board has met. They are also the best point of contact for advice on Assessment Board timings and any next steps.

### **Are there examples of reasons unlikely to be accepted as grounds for Mitigating Circumstances?**

- Project dissertations are long-term assessments. To mitigate this, students would need to submit a letter from their supervisor detailing the negative impact, closer to the date of submission along with normal acceptable evidence;
- Changing the submission date or type of assessment;
- Holidays, house moves, or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected;
- Attendance at elite-level sporting events – refer to point 4 of the [UCFB Exceptional Student Absence and Travel in Term-Time Policy](#) for approved absence procedures, see also the [UEL Supporting Elite Athlete Academic Study policy](#);
- 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; and
- Financial reasons, unless it can be demonstrated that these have had a severe impact.

## Examples of Acceptable Evidence

Below is a table which lists the types of Mitigating Circumstances that may be considered, along with the grounds that are accepted or not accepted, and the evidence that would generally be required. This is designed to help you understand what is expected when submitting a claim for mitigating circumstances.

Please note that typically screenshots and photos are not accepted; acceptable evidence must include your full name, be dated close to the assessment deadline, outlining the diagnosis or circumstances and explain the impact on you and your studies.

Type of Mitigating Circumstance	Acceptable grounds	Unacceptable grounds	Acceptable evidence	Unacceptable evidence
<i>Acute medical conditions</i>	<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>

<b>Type of Mitigating Circumstance</b>	<b>Acceptable grounds</b>	<b>Unacceptable grounds</b>	<b>Acceptable evidence</b>	<b>Unacceptable evidence</b>
<i>Bereavement</i>	<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 is 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>

<b>Type of Mitigating Circumstance</b>	<b>Acceptable grounds</b>	<b>Unacceptable grounds</b>	<b>Acceptable evidence</b>	<b>Unacceptable evidence</b>
<i>Trauma</i>	<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>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>

<b>Type of Mitigating Circumstance</b>	<b>Acceptable grounds</b>	<b>Unacceptable grounds</b>	<b>Acceptable evidence</b>	<b>Unacceptable evidence</b>
<i>Caregiving</i>	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 has not 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 letter.	Generic appointment letters. Evidence not written in English. WhatsApp or text messages.
<i>Pregnancy</i>	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 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.

<b>Type of Mitigating Circumstance</b>	<b>Acceptable grounds</b>	<b>Unacceptable grounds</b>	<b>Acceptable evidence</b>	<b>Unacceptable evidence</b>
<i>Crime and offence investigation</i>	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.
<i>Accommodation crisis such as eviction or the accommodation becoming uninhabitable</i>	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.
<i>Deployment</i>	Applies to military, reserves, voluntary and emergency workers.		A letter from organisation confirming deployment including dates.	Evidence not written in English.  WhatsApp or text messages.