**Extenuating circumstances (ECs) – SBBS PGT policy**

1. **Definitions of Extenuating Circumstances**

Extenuating circumstances (ECs) are defined by Queen Mary as:

‘circumstances that are outside a student’s control and which may have a negative impact on a student’s ability to undertake or complete any assessment so as to cast doubt on the likely validity of the assessment as a measure of the student’s achievement’.

If you find yourself in this situation, you suggest that you think about applying for an Extenuating Circumstances (EC) claim.

This includes sudden/acute illness, death of a close relative and other circumstances beyond your control that have had a negative impact on your ability to study.

The following are not considered extenuating circumstances and a claim made solely on one or more of these grounds will be rejected.

i failure to submit or complete an assessment.

ii arriving late for an examination or assessment/travel disruptions.

iii misreading or not checking for updates to a timetable.

iv having multiple examinations or deadlines in close succession.

v computer failure and/or loss of work.

vi employment commitments.

vii academic workload issues.

viii planned holidays or events, including activities with Queen Mary Students’ Union.

ix submission of an ‘incorrect’ version of an assessment.

X observance of a religious festival or holy day (it is expected that you would plan ahead for coursework deadlines and that you complete the ‘’religious holiday exemption’ form when exams are being scheduled).

Xi long-term personal/health conditions are not automatically valid as ECs (unless it is an acute flare-up or a particular condition) and this is also true of specific learning differences (e.g. ADHD or dyslexia – as you will have a student support summary in place which will already have put in place reasonable adjustments).

**What is Fit to Sit policy?**

If an assessment of any type is attempted then you are deemed as being ‘fit to sit’ and can’t then submit ECs for support with the marking process of that assignment.

Queen Mary operates a **fit to sit policy**, which covers all assessments including coursework and exams. If you sit an exam or submit a piece of coursework you are deemed to be fit to do so. In such instances a request for extenuating circumstances will not normally be considered. If you do not feel you are well enough to attend an invigilated exam then you should not attend and should submit a claim for extenuating circumstances instead. You will need to attend a medical consultation within three days of the date of your exam that you missed. Similarly if you get sick during an exam and have to leave you will need to attend a medical consultation within three days.

1. **Extenuating Circumstances - Process**

Before submitting an EC claim, it is strongly recommended that you book an appointment with the PG SBBS Support Team to discuss your EC claim. Please email **sbbs-student-support@qmul.ac.uk** to request an appointment.

To submit an extenuating circumstance request you must log a claim through the online extenuating circumstances task in [MySIS](https://mysis.qmul.ac.uk/urd/sits.urd/run/siw_lgn) following the instructions there. It is your own responsibility to submit any claims for extenuating circumstances.

When you submit an EC claim you will receive a formal acknowledgement, you must keep this safe for the duration of your studies.

All EC claims are kept confidential until they are considered by the EC Sub-Board of SBBS. All proceedings of the EC Sub-Board are strictly confidential and will not normally be discussed at the full examination board meetings.

EC Deadlines

All EC Claims must be submitted by the EC deadline for the relevant semester, and no later than three working days before the relevant EC Sub-Board meeting, otherwise they cannot be considered. EC deadlines for each semester are provided in the Key Dates section of this Student Handbook.

It is not possible to make a retrospective claim for extenuating circumstances, specifically once you know your results. Therefore claims submitted after the deadline will not be considered by the EC Sub-Board.

EC Outcome

You can expect to be notified of your EC outcome within 4 weeks of submitting your EC Claim.

**3. Standard EC claim**

A standard EC claim must be accompanied by relevant supporting evidence, for example:

* Medical certification
* Death certificate
* Police report and crime number
* Other written evidence from a person in authority

Please note that although accompanying documentation can be submitted after the claim, standard claims without any evidence cannot be considered. It is in your best interest to provide evidence and supporting documentation that is as comprehensive as possible.

All evidence submitted in support of your EC claim application must be in English. If your evidence is not in English, it is your responsibility to obtain a certified translation.

Further guidance on evidencing extenuating circumstances is available here: Extenuating Circumstances: a guide for students

**4. Self-Certification**

Each student is entitled to submit up to three self-certified claims per academic year, which involves providing details of the extenuating circumstances without the provision of documentary evidence.

Each self-certification can cover a period of up to seven calendar days - this is the maximum amount of time that each instance of self-certification can cover.

It is not permitted to use consecutive self-certification applications, that is, you cannot claim for two back-to-back seven-day periods using self-certification. Also, you cannot normally use a self-certified application more than once for the same assessment.

Please note that self-certification does not mean automatic approval of a claim – the School will consider it in the normal way and will check that it meets the criteria of the university's extenuating circumstances policy. Any claims beyond those three self-certifications must be accompanied by evidence as part of a standard EC claim, as described in the previous section.

**5. Non-attendance or non-submission EC claim**

If you do not submit an assessment by the deadline, this is considered as a fail. However, if you have extenuating circumstances to explain your non-attendance or non-submission, you should submit an EC claim in line with the following procedures.

When submitting your EC claim in MySIS, please select 'non-attendance' (for exams/FAEs/in-class tests/presentations) or 'non-submission' (for coursework/dissertations) as the EC Impact and leave the Late Date blank.

If you have an accepted non-attendance or non-submission EC claim for your first attempt at an assessment, you will be permitted another uncapped first attempt at the next available opportunity. You would then still be entitled to a resit attempt should you fail and are also able to apply for extenuating circumstances, should you need to do so.

If you have an accepted non-attendance or non-submission EC claim for your resit attempt at an assessment, you will be permitted another capped resit attempt at the next available opportunity. You would be able to apply for extenuating circumstances, should you need to do so.

Please note: Students who have to resit assessments the following academic year due to extenuating circumstances are not entitled to attend lectures or classes of any kind. However, QMplus access is available through the QMplus Archive.

**6. Late Submission Policy SBBS PGT**

**No extensions are permitted** under any circumstances for **any** assessment.

Coursework and dissertations can be submitted up to 7 days after the specified deadline, but will be recorded as late, and a late penalty will be applied – see the Mark Deduction section below.

**No late submissions are permitted under any circumstances for online exams**.

**Online exams**

No late submissions are permitted under any circumstances for online exams. Therefore if you cannot submit or be assessed by the date due then a mark of 0-NS (Non-Submission) will apply. However, extenuating circumstances may apply for non-submission – please refer to the extenuating circumstances section for further information if appropriate. Queen Mary operates a fit-to-sit policy, which covers all assessments including coursework and exams. If you sit an exam or submit a piece of coursework you are deemed to be fit to do so. In such instances, a request for extenuating circumstances will not normally be considered.

**Coursework and Dissertations**

If a coursework or dissertation is submitted after the specified deadline, it shall be recorded as late, and a penalty shall be applied.

If you have extenuating circumstances to explain your late submission of a dissertation, you should submit an EC claim in line with the following procedure to request for the late penalty to be revoked.

When submitting your EC claim in MySIS, please select **'late submission'** as the EC Impact and include the date you submitted work as the Late Date. Although you may see the option to request an extension in MySIS, you must still select ‘late submission’ as **the School does not permit extensions**.

If you wish to submit a late submission EC claim, **you must first submit your work up to 7 days late, then submit your EC claim before the EC deadline**. The School cannot process your late submission EC claim until we know when you have submitted your work late. **If you submit a late submission EC claim before you have submitted your work late, your claim will be declined** - you can submit another claim once you have submitted your work late.

**Mark Deduction**

For every period of 24 hours or part thereofthat an assignment is overdue there shall be a deduction of five per cent of the total marks available (i.e. five marks for an assessment marked out of 100). After seven calendar days (168 hours or more late) the mark shall be reduced to zero, and recorded as 0FL (zero, fail, late) and the student will have to resit at the next opportunity.

Certain assessments may cease to be a valid measure of a module’s learning outcomes prior to the seven working day cut-off. For example, where feedback has been provided to the class, any submission made after that point would not be an accurate measure of attainment. In such cases, the late submission policy shall apply as normal up to the day on which feedback is given; at that point, a mark of zero (0FL) shall be applied, even if this is within seven calendar days of the deadline. All feedback dates should be clearly stated to the students.

A late penalty may be revoked where a student provides evidence for the late submission under the extenuating circumstances policy. A student must submit a formal claim with supporting evidence in line with that policy in order for the circumstances to be considered. If an extenuating circumstances claim is rejected no further action will be possible.

A student may submit work of passing standard but fail the module because of the late submission penalty. Where the student is eligible for a resit attempt in such a case, the student shall not be required to resubmit the assessment; instead, the minimum pass mark of 50 will be entered for the resit. Where a student is not eligible for a resit, this provision does not apply.

* **Clarification of 7-day rule**:

It is important to consider all of the above, particularly the 7 day rule for self-cert applications, when you decide which type of application to make. **If you need to defer for longer than 7 days, then you will need to submit a standard claim and provide supporting evidence**. All claims of extenuating circumstances are considered by the SBBS MSc EC committee. All proceedings of the EC committee are strictly confidential. You will be informed of the outcome of your extenuating circumstances application via MySIS.

An assessment deferral is when the assessment is deferred to the next assessment period.

It is strongly recommended, that you do complete and submit the assessments your tutors have set during any assessment period where possible. Deferrals of assessment can impact you in the following ways:

* Deferring numerous components of assessment will require you to take these in the resit/deferral period. This means you will have assessment deadlines close together.
* Deferring at certain points of the year may mean you cannot progress onto the next stage of study or onto future modules until your deferrals have been taken. This will mean it will take longer to complete your degree and may impact on your funding.
* Deferring assessment may impact on student route visa requirements for sponsored students.

**Resits and re-submissions**

A first attempt at the assessment for a given module is known as a First-Sit. Students are only entitled to one Resit attempt for each module. The maximum mark allowed for a successful Resit is 50% in modules on your MSc programme unless you submit Extenuating Circumstances which are accepted and in this case this cap may be removed.

Resits must be taken at the first available opportunity (Late Summer Resit (LSR) if no deferral has been granted) and you will be automatically registered for any resits you are entitled to. If you opt out of a resit or fail to attend the examination you will forfeit any further opportunity to resit the module.

All resits and resubmissions of any assessment (with the exception of the final project dissertation) will be set during the Late Summer Resit period in August,

The University Late Summer Resit period is in August and is available for all students and all modules in all years, including final year modules. It is important that you make no holiday, flight, employment or other arrangements that might interfere with a possible LSR or your revision for it. If you fail to attend an LSR this will still count as one attempt and could end your resit allowance for that module.

**How do I apply for extenuating circumstances?**

You will submit your claim via MySIS under the section entitled ‘Extenuating Circumstances’ at the top of the screen. This applies to all assessed modules that you are registered for. There is a user guide for this MySIS task and more information about this from the following link:

<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/student-experience/student-wellbeing-hub/extenuating-circumstances-a-guide-for-students/>

**There are two types of ECs – Standard and Self-certification:**

1. **Standard**

Evidence is required to support this type of claim. There are no limits on number of claims.

**Examples of suitable evidence:**

* Medical notes (e.g. hospital admissions certificate)
* Supporting statement for health professional (e.g. counsellor)
* Student Support Summary (this is in place for all students who have disclosed a diagnosed long-term health condition)
* Death Certificates
* Crime Reference Numbers
* Supporting evidence from court / solicitor regarding legal proceedings
* Letter regarding Jury Service

**You can claim for an ‘deferral’ or ‘missed submission’**

* **Deferral =** if approved, you will be granted a new deadline during the Late Summer Resit period in August.
* **Missed (i.e. late) submission =** if approved, the late submission penalty will be removed.

1. **Self-certification**

No evidence is required in the first instance to support this claim *but note that this is not automatic approval*.

You can claim in this way three times per year.

Please note the following rules:

* One application can cover several modules.
* It is not permitted to use consecutive self-cert applications (i.e. you cannot claim for two back-to-back seven-day periods using self-certification).
* You cannot use a self-cert application more than once for the same assessment.
* Self-cert applications can be submitted to remove a late penalty but not to request a deferral.
* **Clarification of 7-day rule**:

It is important to consider all of the above, particularly the 7 day rule for self-cert applications, when you decide which type of application to make. **If you need to defer for longer than 7 days, then you will need to submit a standard claim and provide supporting evidence**. All claims of extenuating circumstances are considered by the SBBS MSc EC committee. All proceedings of the EC committee are strictly confidential. You will be informed of the outcome of your extenuating circumstances application via MySIS.