Section 14 Reasonable adjustments and mitigation for extenuating circumstances

14. Reasonable adjustments and mitigation for extenuating circumstances

Information about reasonable adjustments that can be provided in respect of long-term health conditions, religious observance, and parental responsibilities, and mitigation that can be offered in respect of extenuating circumstances (sudden, unforeseen disruptions to students' studies.)

Emergencies and first-aid

In the event of an emergency (accident, medical, crime, fire, etc.) or injury that requires first-aid, see Section 23 - Health, safety, and security.

Mental health and wellbeing crisis support

In the event of a mental health or wellbeing crisis (risk of self-harm or harm to others) see Section 16.2.3 - Student support and wellbeing - Mental health and wellbeing crisis support.

14.1. Reasonable adjustments

Information about reasonable adjustments for teaching and assessment.

14.1.1. Overview of reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is a provision or support option that can be made by UCL to learning, teaching, and assessment in order to ensure that students with a disability, long-term condition, religious faith, or parental responsibility are not disadvantaged. UCL also provides reasonable adjustments for students who might not consider themselves to have a 'disability' but who nevertheless would benefit from additional support due to an ongoing medical or mental health condition. It is the responsibility of the student to request reasonable adjustments, and students are encouraged to make a request as early as possible.
Reasonable adjustments can take a range of forms, including for example: additional support for workload planning; provision of teaching and learning materials in an alternative format; additional time to complete assessments; provision of additional library access. The Student Support and Wellbeing Team will work with students to determine any adjustments that are right for them.

14.1.2. Applying for reasonable adjustments

Students with a disability or long-term condition

UCL will make Reasonable Adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment to ensure that students with a disability are not put at a disadvantage. UCL also provides Reasonable Adjustments for students who might not consider themselves to have a ‘disability’ but who nevertheless would benefit from additional support due to an ongoing medical or mental health condition. It is the responsibility of the student to request Reasonable Adjustments, and students are encouraged to make a request as early as possible.

Further information:
- Section 5: Reasonable Adjustments | UCL Academic Manual
- Support for disabled students | UCL Students
- Support for mental health and wellbeing | UCL Students

Students requiring pregnancy and maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave

UCL can also make Reasonable Adjustments for students who are pregnant or who need to go on Maternity, Paternity, Parental Leave and Adoption Leave. Students do not have to apply for a Summary of Reasonable Adjustments but should instead contact UCL Student Support and Wellbeing to find out about the support available.

Further information:
- Support for pregnant & adopting students | UCL Students
- Support for students with children | UCL Students

Students of faith (religious observance)

Students may need reasonable adjustments to help them observe their faith, particularly where classes or assessments might fall on important religious dates. Students do not have to apply for reasonable adjustments but should instead contact the UCL Chaplain for advice and support. Further information is also available in the UCL Religion and Belief Equality Policy.

Further information:
- Support for students of faith | UCL Students
- Religion and Belief Equality Policy | UCL Students

14.2. Reasonable adjustments for examinations
14.2.1. Overview of examination adjustments

Examination adjustments are reasonable adjustments that relate only to examinations. Examination adjustments can be made for students with a disability, medical or mental health condition, and include extra time, rest breaks, or specialist equipment.

14.2.2. Applying for examination adjustments

If you need to apply for examination adjustments, then you should contact the Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing team who can help you to complete an application and advise you on gathering the required documentary evidence. Applications need to be received by the Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing team three weeks before the examination period in question.

After this deadline, you will need to apply to defer your assessment to the next opportunity via the extenuating circumstances procedure (see below.)

Further information:

- Examination adjustments | UCL Students
- Support for disabled students | UCL Students
- Support for mental health and wellbeing | UCL Students
- Section 4: Examinations | UCL Academic Manual

14.3. Mitigation for extenuating circumstances

Information about when, where, and how to submit a claim for mitigation for extenuating circumstances.

⚠️ Please note that this information may be subject to change due to Covid-19 – please check the UCL Current Students’ webpages for the most up-to-date information.

14.3.1. Overview of mitigation for extenuating circumstances

An extenuating circumstance is a significant disruption to a student's studies that is unexpected and beyond their control, including, for example, sudden ill health, bereavement, being a victim of violent crime, or jury service. Students are responsible for letting UCL know about any such circumstances that may affect their performance in assessments at the time take place.
The extenuating circumstances procedure is designed to cover unexpected emergencies; they are not always the best way to help students who might have a longer-term medical or mental health condition, disability or learning difficulty. Although there may be times when it is necessary for such students to use the extenuating circumstances regulations, students should make sure they take advantage of all the other support mechanisms provided by UCL such as: (1) reasonable adjustments; (2) examination adjustments; (3) interruption of study; and (4) ongoing support via UCL's Student Support and Wellbeing services.

Further information:
- Section 6: Extenuating Circumstances | UCL Academic Manual
- Extenuating circumstances | UCL Students

14.3.2. Applying for mitigation for extenuating circumstances

If you need to apply for mitigation for extenuating circumstances, then you should submit an application via the process below within 1 week of the circumstances taking place. Meeting this deadline is important: UCL can only consider late applications if ongoing circumstances mean that it was genuinely impossible for you on time. In particular, you should not wait for supporting evidence to become available before submitting your application. If you are unable to obtain the necessary evidence within the deadlines, then you should still submit your application on time and indicate that evidence is to follow.

The process for making an application is as follows:

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| **Step 1** | Read the UCL Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and Procedures. | Read the regulations, which include important information about eligibility and how to make a claim:  
- Section 6: Extenuating Circumstances | UCL Academic Manual |
| **Step 2** | Check whether the circumstances are covered. | Read the grounds for extenuating circumstances, which sets out the sorts of circumstances that would usually constitute grounds for an application and those that would not:  
- Section 6: Grounds for Extenuating Circumstances | UCL Academic Manual  
In some circumstances, UCL may be able to support students better through reasonable adjustments, examination adjustments, or an interruption of study. |
**Step 3** Complete an application form for mitigation for Extenuating Circumstances.

Complete an online application for mitigation (referred to as an ‘EC claim’) via the Faculty of Engineering Sciences Application Form:

- Faculty of Engineering Sciences - Extenuating Circumstances Application Form

When completing the form, you must ensure that you

- Enter module codes and assessment titles accurately and in their entirety, as if the data is ambiguous then claims may be delayed or impossible to decide.
- List all the modules and assessments that are affected separately, as we cannot make assumptions about what may or may not be affected.
- Tick the box allowing us to share your request with members of staff who are directly responsible for making a decision.

**Step 4** Get supporting evidence.

Collect relevant evidence in support of your application. Supporting evidence needs to be from a registered doctor or other verifiable source, as set out in the Academic Manual:

- Section 6.7: Evidence | UCL Academic Manual

You should ask your evidence provider to read the guidance notes on the form carefully, as we need to understand how the circumstance has affected your ability to do attend or complete the assessment/s.

**Step 5** Submit the completed application

Submit your online application and supporting evidence within a week of the circumstances taking place. We may not be able to help if an application is late.

If you need more time to get your supporting evidence, you should submit your application on time without the evidence (and state that it is to follow), and submit the evidence as soon as you can thereafter.

### Further information:

- Faculty of Engineering Sciences - Extenuating Circumstances Application Form
- Section 6: Extenuating Circumstances | UCL Academic Manual

### 14.3.3. Post-application (getting an outcome)

After you submit an application for mitigation under the extenuating circumstances procedure, it will be reviewed by a member of staff who will establish which departmental or faculty body should consider the application. Applications for 1 week extensions are usually considered by responsible staff in a student’s home department, whereas applications for other forms of mitigation - such as for longer extensions, condoned late submission, and deferral of assessment to another occasion - will usually be considered by a Departmental or Faculty Extenuating Circumstances Panel.
Applications may be approved in full or in part, approved with alternative mitigation awarded, or rejected. The relevant authority will endeavour to provide an outcome on your application as soon as possible. You will be notified of the final decision, and any stipulations, by the Secretary to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

14.3.4. Data handling and security

UCL recognises that the information and supporting evidence that students provide in respect of claims for mitigation for extenuating circumstances may be highly sensitive. Access to case data is restricted to those staff involved in operating and supporting the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure. Outcomes of applications, without case data, are anonymised when transmitted to the Board of Examiners. The department will take every effort to minimise the number of staff involved in processing such data.

14.4. Support for longer-term conditions

The Extenuating Circumstances regulations are designed to cover unexpected emergencies; they are not always the best way to help students who might have a longer-term medical or mental health condition, disability or learning difficulty. Although there may be times when it is necessary for such students to use the extenuating circumstances procedure, you should make sure you take advantage of all the other support mechanisms provided by UCL such as:

**Disability support:**

[Support for disabled students | UCL Students]

**Mental health & wellbeing support:**

[Support for mental health and wellbeing | UCL Students]

**Reasonable adjustments:**

[Section 5: Reasonable Adjustments | UCL Academic Manual]

**Examination adjustments:**

[Section 4.3: Examination adjustments | UCL Academic Manual]

**Interruption of study:**

[Section 5: Interruption of Study | UCL Academic Manual]
14.5. Support to Study and Fitness to Study policies

Information on support to study and fitness to study policies and procedures.

Students with physical or mental health concerns are encouraged to make contact with the available support services as early as possible so that UCL can put in place reasonable adjustments to support them throughout their studies. However, there may be occasions when a student’s physical or mental health, wellbeing or behaviour is having a detrimental effect on their ability to meet the requirements of their programme, or is impacting on the wellbeing, rights, safety and security of other students and staff. In such cases UCL may need to take action under the Fitness to Study Procedure.

Further Information:
- Section 2: Support to Study Policy | UCL Academic Manual
- Section 3: Fitness to Study Procedure | UCL Academic Manual
- Section 4: Learning Agreements, Barring, Suspensions & Termination of Study | UCL Academic Manual
- Support for disabled students | UCL Students
- Support for mental health and wellbeing | UCL Students

14.6. Key contacts in the department for support arrangements and extenuating circumstance

Key contacts in the department for assistance with reasonable adjustments, special examination arrangements, fitness and support to study, and extenuating circumstances.

The department has an experienced team who provide pastoral support can also advise students on the range of support services and facilities available to them throughout their studies, both within the department and across the university. The following departmental contacts can provide support, advice and guidance (see Section 2.4 Key staff related to programmes and modules | CS Student Handbook for contact details):

**Personal Tutor**

In the first instance, we encourage you to approach your Personal Tutor, who can provide you with guidance on physical, mental and emotional welfare, and can also act as a point of referral to avert crisis. Personal Tutors are well placed to deal with a whole range of issues, and can help you gain access to any specialist support you may need. You will be allocated a Personal Tutor in the first week of term.

**Programme Director**

Your Programme Director or Deputy Programme Director can also advise you on the support that is available within the department and faculty, and specifically in relation to your programme of study (i.e. where your needs relate to programme-specific issues.) You are welcome to contact your Programme Director in relation to both academic and non-academic issues.

**Programme Administrator**
Your Programme Administrator can provide guidance on sources of support available and can help you to identify which options are the most appropriate for your circumstances. They can guide you through any procedures for accessing support, and advise you on how to apply for extenuating circumstances.

**Student Advisor (Year 1 Undergraduates)**

First year undergraduate students can speak to the Student Advisor, who is a member of the department and Student Support and Wellbeing Services. They can help you with a range of pastoral issues and connect you with the most appropriate sources of support for your circumstances.

**Further information:**

- Section 2.3: Key staff in the department and faculty | CS Student Handbook
- Section 2.4: Key staff relating to programmes and modules | CS Student Handbook
- Section 9: Tutorials and supervision | CS Student Handbook