

ADDITIONAL TIME DUE TO EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY

Purpose

1. This document defines the University of Suffolk's policy for dealing with requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances in relation to student assessment, including requests for extensions to assessment deadlines, deferral of assessment, further opportunity to take examinations, and intercalation from studies.

Scope

2. This Policy applies to all undergraduate and taught postgraduate students registered on University of Suffolk courses and applies to all summative assessments with the exception of those assessments totally controlled by examining/professional bodies external to the Institution. In such cases, the regulations of the examining/professional bodies with regard to assessment will override those of the University. Students enrolled on postgraduate research programmes should refer to the equivalent policy of their awarding body.

3. All students shall be informed of this Policy at the start of their studies and guidance will be available on MySuffolk to ensure that the Policy is transparent and accessible.

Definitions

4. During a period of study a student may encounter significant personal difficulties that impact on their ability to study for or complete summative assessment including examinations. The University refers to these personal difficulties as **extenuating circumstances**.

5. Where, due to extenuating circumstances, students are unable to submit work by the submission deadline or attend an examination, there are three mechanisms for requesting additional time: an extension, a deferral, or self-certified additional time. An **extension**, if granted, would extend the submission deadline by up to seven calendar days, allowing work to be submitted within one week of the original submission deadline. A **deferral**, if granted, would result in a new submission deadline or new examination date, as determined by the relevant Assessment Board and normally in the next assessment period following the Board. **Self-certified additional time** would extend the submission deadline by up to seven calendar days, allowing work to be submitted within one week of the original submission deadline, or defer an examination date, resulting in a new examination date as determined by the relevant Assessment Board. Self-certified additional time is granted automatically but may only be used for up to two individual components of assessment per academic year.

6. **Intercalation** is defined as an authorised break in studies during a course, but after the course has commenced, normally lasting between four weeks and one academic year. Granting intercalation status assumes that the student has been judged to have the potential to continue with their studies after a break, but does not guarantee that there is an automatic right to return or that the course will be available in its present form or at all on return.

Principles, commitments and expectations

7. The University of Suffolk is an institution which aims to support students to succeed in their studies and will be mindful of that context in the implementation of this Policy. The consideration of all requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances will be undertaken in a fair, reasonable, sensible, student-focused and timely manner

8. The Assessment Board will not change, amend or estimate marks where extenuating circumstances have been accepted. The outcomes of all requests under this policy will be by way of a new submission deadline or examination date, or an authorised break in study, as set out in paragraph 50.

9. No student shall be placed in a position of unfair advantage over other students as a result of a request for additional time due to extenuating circumstances; the aim of the policy is to enable all students to be assessed on equal terms.

10. Students have a responsibility for managing their learning, revision and assessment activities throughout the academic year. It is expected that students will plan such activities carefully to ensure that the preparation of assessed work or revision for examinations is not left until the last moment.

11. The University recognises that illness and difficult or distressing personal circumstances occur as part of everyone's life. However, such circumstances are a normal part of life and can usually be absorbed. If a set of circumstances are such as will prevent a student engaging effectively with their programme of study, suspending study and taking a period of time out (intercalation) should be considered. If a student remains on a course, the University will start any consideration of a request for additional time due to extenuating circumstances from the point of view that a student has taken the decision that they are fit to engage with the programme.

12. Requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances should only be made in exceptional situations. In considering requests, the University will need to be assured that:

- the student could not have reasonably avoided the situation or acted to limit the impact;

this includes making a decision to suspend academic study if the student considers that they cannot cope with the demands of the programme at the time

- the circumstances concerned were genuinely exceptional
- the circumstances impacted adversely on the assessment activity in question
- the timing of the circumstances was relevant to the assessment activity in question.

13. Personal and sensitive data will be treated confidentially and its consideration restricted to those who need to know in order for a decision to be made. It is recognised that there may be instances where the evidence is of such a nature that only the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel should have sight of it. Students should indicate where this is the case when submitting their request.

Fit to sit

14. By submitting work for assessment, sitting an examination or otherwise engaging with summative assessment (e.g. by presentation) the student is declaring that they are fit to do so. The work will be marked on its merits and the result ratified without consideration of any extenuating circumstances known to the marker or assessment board.

15. While every effort is made to ensure that the outcome of requests for additional time are known before the submission deadline or examination date, this is not always possible depending on the timing of the request. In such cases, students should be aware that if they decide to submit work or attend the examination while awaiting the outcome, this will be seen as a declaration of being fit to sit and the request for additional time (extension or deferral) will be rejected as null and void. If the student does not submit work or attend the examination, the request for additional time will be considered in the normal way and granted or rejected in accordance with the criteria set out in this policy. Where the request is rejected and no work was submitted, this will be recorded as a referral in accordance with the relevant assessment regulations.

16. Where a student engages with their summative assessment (i.e. submits work or attends an examination, time-constrained assignment, or presentation) but subsequently wishes to withdraw their fit to sit declaration due to extenuating circumstances that, for good reason, could not have been submitted in advance (for example an undiagnosed condition or poor mental health impacted their ability to make a rational decision about their fitness to sit at that time), they may do so by submitting an appeal under the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

Grounds for extenuating circumstances

17. Circumstances that may be considered as extenuating (i.e. as exceptional or 'unforeseen')

and over and above the course of everyday experience) and are therefore grounds for a request for additional time would normally fall under one of the following categories:

- significant short-term illness, accident or injury (of a nature which, in an employment context, would have led to an absence on sick leave)
- deterioration of a long-term health condition
- the death or serious illness of a close family member or dependant (of a nature which, in an employment context, would have led to an absence in accordance with compassionate leave regulations)
- significant adverse personal or family circumstances directly affecting the student
- parental leave
- other significant factors for which there is evidence of a direct adverse impact on the student.

18. Examples of extenuating circumstances include:

- serious short-term illness or injury
- symptoms of an infectious disease that could be harmful if passed on to others
- worsening of an ongoing illness or disability, including mental health conditions
- death or significant illness of a close family member or friend
- unexpected caring responsibilities for a family member or dependant
- significant personal or family crises
- witnessing or experiencing a traumatic incident
- a crime which has had a substantial impact on the student
- accommodation crisis such as eviction or the home becoming uninhabitable
- an emergency or crisis that prevents the student from attending an exam or accessing an online assessment
- a technical problem with assistive technology used under the reasonable adjustments agreement that prevents the student from accessing online teaching or assessment
- safeguarding concerns (relating to the student or their dependants)
- parental leave (including the minimum two-week maternity leave following the birth, and periods of parental leave from employment)
- jury service
- competing in national or international sporting events or other similarly high-profile activities.

19. Circumstances that will not normally be considered as extenuating include:

- alleged statement of a medical condition without reasonable evidence (medical or

otherwise) to support it

- alleged circumstances that fall outside the relevant assessment period and so could not have reasonably affected the assessment in question
- alleged medical condition supported by 'retrospective' medical evidence – that is, evidence that is not in existence at the same time as the illness, for example a doctor's note which states that the student was seen after the illness occurred and declared they had been ill previously
- if there is a reasonable case that circumstances relied on were foreseeable or preventable
- long-term health condition or specific learning need for which the student is already receiving reasonable or appropriate adjustments (but see paragraph 20 below)
- minor illnesses (such as coughs and colds or hay fever) which in a work situation would be unlikely to lead to absence from work, unless the symptoms are particularly severe
- computer or printer failure where the student should have backed-up their work (noting that all students have free access to OneDrive)
- inadequate planning and poor time management preventing completion or submission of assessment
- minor transport disruption causing late arrival
- misreading the exam timetable and claims that students were unaware of the dates or times of submission or examination
- normal assessment and/or exam stress
- assessments or examinations scheduled close together
- personal or domestic events, such as holidays, house moves or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected
- minor life events, unless the circumstances have had a disproportionate impact
- financial issues, unless an unexpected financial crisis (beyond budgeting difficulties) prevents the student from engaging with their studies
- routine consequences of paid employment, unless supported by the employer in the case of apprenticeships and courses which require a student to be in employment
- late disclosure of circumstances on the basis that the student 'felt unable/did not feel comfortable' confiding in a member of staff about their extenuating circumstances.

20. **Prolonged, chronic or long-term conditions, disability and learning differences** are not normally considered as extenuating circumstances. Students with a chronic illness, disability or learning difference are encouraged to access the support services available who can put in place reasonable adjustments for specific learning requirements and examinations (see [Code of Practice on Reasonable Adjustments for Students](#)), which may include the automatic granting of

an extension to submission deadlines. However, the timing of the diagnosis of such conditions may be considered a basis for extenuating circumstances where anticipatory reasonable adjustments could not have adequately met the student's support needs for the assessment in question. Students with long-term conditions that are subject to flare-ups or changes which would not usually require them to see a GP or other medical professional on each occasion may also have a Care Plan (or equivalent) put in place in addition to any reasonable adjustments. Such plans will typically mean that students do not need to provide further evidence of their condition when applying for additional time due to extenuating circumstances over and above any automatic extensions covered by their reasonable adjustments agreement.

21. **Pregnancy** is not normally considered an extenuating circumstance unless the student experiences ill-health or complications associated with the pregnancy. When a student finds they are pregnant they are encouraged to speak to the Student Life team (or equivalent at their institution). A risk assessment can then be carried out to assess whether any changes are needed to the student's studies for health and safety reasons. This will enable a support plan and appropriate arrangements to be put in place, which could include reasonable adjustments (such as discounted rest breaks in examinations) and the deferral of examinations and assessment deadlines that fall within the two weeks after the due date or birth (in line with the minimum period of maternity leave in the UK). Students who wish to take a period of maternity leave lasting longer than the minimum two-week period should apply to intercalate.

Requests for additional time – what can be requested and when?

22. All requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances must be submitted by the student using the online Extenuating Circumstances form in OASIS (accessed via MySuffolk) as soon as possible and no later than the deadlines detailed in paragraphs 24 to 27 below. In exceptional circumstances, a member of University staff or staff at partner institutions may submit a request on behalf of a student where the student is physically unable to do so themselves, for example because they are in hospital or a similar situation, and the member of staff is privy to the circumstances and has been authorised to submit a request by the Academic Registrar or Deputy Academic Registrar. Requests for extensions or deferrals received after the deadlines detailed below will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, for example admission to hospital preventing a student being able to submit work either online or in person, or illness or accident just before or on the day of an examination.

23. All sections of the form must be completed. Supporting evidence must be provided electronically with the form on submission or, where this is not possible at the time, uploaded within seven days of submission. Where additional evidence is requested, this should be provided

by email to the Extenuating Circumstances team (extcircs@uos.ac.uk).

24. *Extension to assessment submission deadline*

- Students may submit requests for extensions to assessment submission deadlines where they are not able to meet the submission deadline due to extenuating circumstances. It is not possible to request an extension for an examination, time-constrained assignment, presentation or equivalent assessment.
- The standard length of extension to the published submission deadline is seven days.
- Normally requests for extensions must be submitted at least seven days in advance of the assessment deadline and no later than three days after the assessment deadline.
- Supporting evidence will normally be required, and should be submitted along with the form requesting an extension to avoid any delays to the decision-making process.
- Extension requests are considered by the Extenuating Circumstances team (see paragraph 42). Students will be notified, normally within five days of submission, whether the extension request has been granted (noting that this may take longer if there is no supporting evidence provided).

25. *Deferral of submission of assessment or examination*

- Students may submit requests for the deferral of submission of assessment or examination where they are not able to meet the deadline or attend the examination due to extenuating circumstances. Deferral requests should be made if an extension to the assessment submission deadline is not appropriate or sufficient (see paragraph 24 above).
- For the deferral of submission of assessments, a new submission deadline will be set by the relevant Assessment Board, which will normally be in the next assessment period following the meeting of the Board. For deferral of examinations, a new examination date will be set, normally in the next examination period. Students should check their results in OASIS when notified that new results have been released by the Assessment Board to see the new submission or examination dates.
- Normally requests for deferral of submission of assessment or examination must be submitted at least seven days in advance of the assessment deadline or examination date and no later than seven days after the assessment deadline or examination date.
- Supporting evidence will normally be required, and should be submitted along with the form to avoid any delays to the decision-making process.
- Deferral requests will be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, which meets on a weekly basis. Students will be notified, normally within five days of the panel meeting, whether the deferral request has been granted or rejected (noting that this may take longer if there is no supporting evidence provided).

26. ***Self-certified additional time***

- Students may submit a request for self-certified additional time where they are not able to meet a submission deadline or attend an examination due to extenuating circumstances that are sudden, short-term and difficult to evidence (for example a short illness that prevented a student from attending an exam but did not require medical intervention).
- Requests for self-certified additional time will be granted automatically on submission of the form and will either extend the assessment submission deadline by seven days or defer the examination date to a new date set by the relevant Assessment Board, normally in the next examination period.
- Self-certified additional time can only be requested for up to two individual components of assessment per academic year.
- The request can be submitted up to seven days before the submission deadline or examination date and no later than three days after the deadline.
- No supporting evidence is required, but the student must complete the form and provide a brief explanation of their extenuating circumstance.
- Requests for self-certified additional time will be monitored and appropriate action taken if there is cause for concern.

27. ***Intercalation of studies***

- Students may submit a request to intercalate their studies where they are not fit or able to study for an extended period (normally more than four weeks).
- Normally the maximum period of intercalation is one academic year. The minimum period of intercalation is normally four weeks (where those four weeks fall within term time for the programme of study).
- An extension of a year's intercalation will only be granted in exceptional evidenced circumstances, and for no more than a further academic year.
- In some cases, a student may be advised to withdraw from the course and take any award for which sufficient credit has been achieved that is permissible within the relevant assessment regulations.
- Requests to intercalate studies may be made at any time as soon as possible after the circumstances that have prompted the request have occurred. Requests may also be made up to eight weeks in advance where the student is aware that they will be unable to study from a set date (for example due to a planned operation or period of maternity leave).
- Supporting evidence is not always required, but should be provided when submitting the form if available. If not provided, the University reserves the right to request evidence where required.

- All requests for intercalation must be accompanied by a supporting statement from the course leader confirming that the request has been discussed. For all apprentices, a supporting statement from their employer will also be required before any period of intercalation can be approved.
- Where accepted, the date of intercalation will be taken as the date the request was submitted, and the student shall incur no academic penalty for any work due to be submitted on or after the date of intercalation. For requests made in advance, the date of intercalation will be the date requested on the form.
- The Framework and Regulations for the relevant award set out the implications for the status of assessment already undertaken.
- Students on courses subject to the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), apprentices and students on a Student Visa should be mindful of the implications of intercalation and seek early advice from relevant tutors or support services. For apprentices, any break lasting more than four weeks is deemed a 'break in learning' by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and therefore any authorised intercalation will be recorded on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). Further information about intercalation for apprentices is provided in the [Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Framework](#). For students on a Student Visa, the University will report any period of intercalation to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
- It is the responsibility of the student to resolve any financial implications of intercalation. The [Tuition Fee Policy](#) details the timeframe for payment of fees.
- Students with approved intercalation status will have access to the University of Suffolk library, Learning Services, Student Life services, MySuffolk and Brightspace (or equivalents in partner institutions), but may not attend any timetabled sessions or engage with any assessment activity during the period of intercalation.

Retrospective requests

28. In exceptional circumstances, a student may submit a retrospective deferral request for non-submission of work or non-attendance at an examination following the outcome of an Assessment Board where they believe their ability to engage with their study and submit work had been affected adversely by extenuating circumstances of which they were unaware at the time (for example an undiagnosed mental health or medical condition) or which they could not have reasonably reported by the deadline. A retrospective deferral request should be made within 14 days of notification of the academic decision. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will consider the request in the normal way but will also take into account the explanation and evidence provided to justify why the request could not have been submitted earlier. If the Panel does not accept the explanation for the late submission, the request will be rejected.

Evidence

29. All requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances (except self-certified additional time and intercalation) must normally be accompanied by independent third-party evidence which should confirm the existence of the extenuating circumstances and, where possible, state how the reported circumstances have impacted on the student concerned. There may be occasions when the University wishes to use discretion and informed judgement in relation to the evidence provided. As a rule, where evidence can be provided it should be provided but the University recognises that there may be cases where, for a variety of confidential reasons (for example sensitive personal data), this is not possible.

30. Students need to supply evidence as soon as possible and at the latest within seven days of the submission of the online form. Students should be aware that, if evidence is delayed, their request may not be considered before the assessment/examination date and, if the required evidence is not provided by the deadline given by the Extenuating Circumstances team, the request is likely to be rejected.

31. The student is responsible for providing acceptable and sufficient evidence. Wherever possible, supporting evidence should be provided in English or accompanied by an English translation. The Extenuating Circumstances team will not make enquiries to obtain evidence on a student's behalf.

32. A non-exhaustive list of examples of acceptable third-party evidence includes:

- fit note (with relevant date to the assessment)
- medical appointment letters or patient summaries
- death certificate, order of service, or obituary
- police report (of relevant incident)
- letter of support/explanation from a support service at the University of Suffolk or partner institution, e.g. disability or counselling
- letter of support/explanation from a tutor where the tutor has seen appropriate evidence and the student does not wish to submit that evidence to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel due to the sensitive nature
- letter of support/explanation from a third party (e.g. solicitor, employer, medical practitioner, or healthcare professional).

33. A non-exhaustive list of examples of evidence that would not normally be accepted includes:

- a letter from a partner or close relative/friend

- anecdotal evidence from staff or students
- a self-certificated medical note
- undated screenshots of correspondence including text messages.

34. Where evidence relates to another person and contains any personal or sensitive data as identified under the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or the Data Protection Act (2018) (for example personal information relating to a family member, or medical records for a person who is not the student) it is the responsibility of the student to gain permission from that person to submit this information to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. The Extenuating Circumstances team will not make enquiries to obtain consent to share information on a student's behalf and by submitting the evidence the student is confirming that they have been given the appropriate permission. Such evidence should only be provided where necessary and where no other evidence regarding the impact on the student is available.

35. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel (or the Extenuating Circumstances team in the case of extensions to submission deadlines – see paragraph 42) will use their discretion to decide whether the evidence submitted is acceptable.

Role of tutors

36. Students are encouraged to discuss possible extenuating circumstances with their Personal Tutor/Personal Academic Coach and/or a member of the Course Team. Where students are considering applying for an extension or deferral, they are advised to speak to the module leader in the first instance. Tutors may provide support to students as appropriate but should make clear that it is the student's responsibility to complete the online Extenuating Circumstances form and to supply supporting evidence.

37. Tutors must not authorise requests for extensions to submission deadlines or any other requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances. Tutors are however encouraged to comment on requests once they are submitted, particularly in those instances where the student has shared information with them about their personal circumstances, in order to supplement the information to be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel (or the Extenuating Circumstances team in the case of extensions to submission deadlines). The relevant course leader and personal tutor/personal academic coach will be advised simultaneously by email when a request for additional time has been submitted.

38. In the case of requests to intercalate studies, it is expected that students will have discussed their situation with their Course Leader before submitting a request and all intercalation

requests must be accompanied by a supporting statement from the Course Leader before it can be approved. Apprentices should ensure that they discuss any requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances (extensions, deferrals or intercalation) with their employers as well as their tutor or coach, and all intercalation requests will require a supporting statement from their employer as well as the Course Leader.

39. Tutors should ensure that students have a realistic understanding of the range of actions and remedies that are available to deal with their circumstances and be aware that some students may be reluctant to report extenuating circumstances and may consider this a sign of weakness or failure. While tutors may refer students to Student Life where appropriate, staff at these services will not be able to provide supporting evidence of extenuating circumstances if students have had no prior engagement with them. Tutors should not refer students to these services solely to collect further supporting evidence of extenuating circumstances.

Extenuating Circumstances Panel

40. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel has devolved authority from Assessment Boards to determine whether requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances meet the approved criteria and are therefore granted or rejected, and this decision is final. The Panel is responsible for the consideration of all requests under this policy in order to ensure consistency of approach across the range of courses offered within the University and its partner institutions. The Assessment Board is responsible for determining the appropriate action based on the decision of the Panel, in accordance with the relevant assessment regulations. The Panel also has devolved authority to oversee the approval of extensions to submission deadlines where work will be completed in time for marking, moderation and consideration by Assessment Boards.

41. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel membership includes academic staff with experience of the range of assessment experienced at the University. The terms of reference are shown in Appendix 1.

42. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will delegate responsibility for the consideration and approval of extensions to submission deadlines against the agreed criteria set out in paragraphs 17 to 24 to the Extenuating Circumstances team (noting that administrative responsibility may be delegated to other trained professional services staff under the supervision of the Extenuating Circumstances team). Requests for extensions to submission deadlines that are not straightforward will be considered by the full Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

43. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will delegate responsibility for the consideration and

approval of intercalation requests against the agreed criteria set out in paragraph 27 to the Extenuating Circumstances team. Requests that are not straightforward, and requests for a second period of intercalation, will be considered by the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

44. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel is convened at regular intervals, normally weekly, to consider requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances. Meetings of the Panel may be in person or virtual.

Consideration of requests

45. On submission, the Extenuating Circumstances team will carry out an initial screening of requests against the criteria, as set out above, to determine the approval process.

46. For requests due to be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, the initial screening will indicate which are supported by appropriate evidence and, as such, are deemed to be straightforward, and which may require further evidence and/or discussion. Requests which are deemed to be straightforward will be considered by the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel or nominee (normally either the Assistant Director, Student Life or Head of Graduation and Assessment). Those that are not deemed straightforward will be considered by the full Extenuating Circumstances Panel. The Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel reserves the right to refer any requests to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for further consideration. All retrospective requests will be considered by the full Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

47. Examples of requests that may be considered and approved by the Chair of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel include:

- requests supported by a Fitness to Work certificate (fit note) which covers the date of the assessment/submission, or a period immediately before which is likely to have impacted a student's ability to engage with module content or assessment preparation time
- requests supported by evidence of hospitalisation which covers, or is within the period immediately before, the assessment/submission date
- requests supported by evidence of hospitalisation, medical appointments, accident or unavoidable event on the date of an exam, TCA, or presentation
- requests supported by timely third-party evidence (typically from a GP, counsellor or specialist support service, including the University or partner institution's student services) which specifically recommends the student be granted more time
- cases of bereavement where the death is within a reasonable timeframe leading up to the

assessment/submission date and is appropriately evidenced

- requests from students with Care Plans in place where the recommendations of the plan are relevant to the circumstances presented by the student
- requests citing pregnancy where there is medical evidence of complications or assessment deadlines that fall within the two weeks following the birth or due date
- requests which seek to add a further component due in the same timeframe as a previously approved request
- requests that can be rejected on the grounds that no evidence has been provided by the deadline agreed by the full Extenuating Circumstances Panel and where the student has been given a reasonable opportunity to supply it, including prompts.

48. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel reserves the right to reject a request for a deferral and instead grant an extension depending on the timing and circumstances of the request. Such decisions would be agreed by the full Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

49. Where the Extenuating Circumstances Panel does not accept that the request meets the criteria for extenuating circumstances set out in paragraphs 17 to 25 above, the request will be rejected and the relevant assessment regulations will be invoked by the Assessment Board.

Outcomes

50. Students will normally be advised of the outcome of requests for extensions to submission deadlines within five days of receipt of the online form and supporting evidence. The outcome of all other requests will normally be advised to students within five days of the meeting of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. Where a request is rejected, the outcome notification to the student will include the reason for the rejection. Relevant course leaders and Academic Administrators will also be advised of the outcome of requests in order that appropriate preparation for Assessment Boards can take place. Tutors should discuss any concerns about the outcome of requests with the Chair of the Assessment Board, ideally before the Board meets.

51. The Extenuating Circumstances Panel (via the Extenuating Circumstances team) will inform the relevant Assessment Boards whether requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances have been granted or rejected and, where appropriate, make recommendations for consideration. The relevant Assessment Board will then decide, in the context of the student's overall profile and the relevant assessment regulations and any PSRB requirements, an appropriate course of action. Where the request was granted, action may include:

- Allowing the student to be assessed as if for the first time in any or all of the components of assessment and setting an appropriate submission date. If an assessment affected by

extenuating circumstances was itself a second attempt, the student may be permitted to be reassessed as if for the second time

- Where the student has missed substantial content and/or learning opportunities, or where the student has been granted three consecutive deferrals for the same component, recommending that the student repeats the module
- Where progression requirements have not been met due to the deferral of work, setting appropriate submission and/or examination dates for the work to be redeemed to allow progression in a timely fashion or, where there is insufficient time for the work to be submitted before the next academic year commences, setting appropriate submission and/or examination dates and recommending that the student takes an authorised break in their studies with an appropriate return date
- Permitting the student to take an authorised break in their studies (intercalation), detailing how assessment already undertaken will be treated and any outstanding modules to be undertaken on return, and setting an appropriate return date
- Recommending that the student be transferred to an alternative course
- In exceptional circumstances, recommending the student for an exit award or Aegrotat award in accordance with the relevant assessment regulations where the student is unable to continue with their studies.

Where a request was rejected and no work was submitted by the deadline, the Assessment Board will take the appropriate action for non-submission in accordance with the relevant assessment regulations for the award.

Links to other policies

52. **Fitness to Practise:** On courses leading to professional registration to practise, student claims of extenuating circumstances may raise fitness to practise concerns. Where this is the case, the matter will be reported to the relevant Dean of School (or equivalent for partner institutions) by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for consideration under the [Fitness to Practise Procedure](#).

53. **Fitness to Study:** Where student claims of extenuating circumstances raise potential fitness to study concerns, the matter will be reported to the relevant Dean of School (or equivalent for partner institutions) by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for consideration under the [Support to Study Procedure](#).

54. **Safeguarding:** Where student claims of extenuating circumstances raise potential safeguarding issues, either for the student or others, the matter will be referred by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel to the Designated Safeguarding Officer for consideration in accordance with the University's [Safeguarding Policy and Code of Practice](#).

55. **Academic Misconduct:** Where there is the suspicion that a request for additional time due to extenuating circumstances is fraudulent (for example where the supporting evidence provided has been fabricated or falsified) or that the self-certified additional time process is being abused, the matter will be reported to the relevant Dean of School (or equivalent for partner institutions) by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel for consideration under the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Appeals

56. A student who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may appeal under the terms of the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

Monitoring and evaluation

57. The University of Suffolk will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and reflect upon the outcomes for enhancement purposes. A report will be submitted annually to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Quality Committee and Senate. The report will include equality monitoring data.

APPENDIX 1

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PANEL

Terms of Reference

1. To have delegated authority from University Assessment Boards to determine whether student requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances meet the criteria set out in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and therefore whether or not the request is successful, noting that Assessment Boards retain the responsibility for determining the appropriate action to be taken based on the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel, in accordance with the relevant assessment regulations.
2. To have delegated authority from Assessment Boards to oversee the process of approval of extensions to submission deadlines where work will be complete in time for marking, moderation and consideration by Assessment Boards (as set out in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy).
3. To ensure that the decisions of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel are notified to students, their tutors and Assessment Boards to the timescales set out in the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
4. To note that consideration of requests for additional time due to extenuating circumstances need not involve a physical meeting of members of the Panel if alternative methods of discussion and mutual deliberation are available.
5. To review regularly the membership and operation of the Panel to ensure its fitness for purpose.
6. To ensure that Panel members receive appropriate guidance on the operation of the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
7. To note that the Policy is subject to regular review in accordance with the schedule approved by the Quality Committee on behalf of Senate.

Membership

- Deputy Academic Registrar (Chair)

- Head of Graduation and Assessment
- Assistant Director, Student Life
- Academic staff drawn from a pool of representatives nominated by the Schools (4)

Total membership: [7]

Secretary

- Member of the Extenuating Circumstances team