



# **Extenuating Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustment Policy**

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<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction	3
Guidance on Reasonable Adjustment	4
Disabled Students	4
Examples of reasonable adjustment	4
How do I inform the Board of Examiners?	4
Applying Reasonable Adjustment	5
Extenuating Circumstance - how do I inform the Board of Examiners?	5
What documentary evidence do I need to provide?	6
How are extenuating circumstances judged by a Board of Examiners?	7
What action can the Board of Examiners take?	7
Lost or damaged work	7
Complying with Policy	7

# Extenuating Circumstances, Special Consideration and Reasonable Adjustment Policy

## Introduction

Extenuating circumstances are circumstances beyond your control which cause you to perform less well in your coursework or examinations than you might have expected, or else prevent you submitting your work on schedule. In general, extenuating circumstances will normally be of a medical or personal nature that affect you for any significant period of time and/or during the assessment period.

There is a set criteria on what will and won't be accepted as extenuating circumstances, for example, a death or illness where a doctor's note confirms they would not have been fit to study/take an assessment.

**Reasonable Adjustment** – This is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and involves any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

The College expects any disability or impairment that might incur reasonable adjustment to be declared at enrolment.

## Guidance on Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

The College understands that reasonable adjustments must be approved (internally or externally) and set in place prior to assessment commencing. It is an arrangement to give a learner access to a qualification. The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners.

## **Disabled Students**

The College is fully aware of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and will make every effort under the requirement of 'reasonable adjustment' to ensure that all assessment opportunities are fully inclusive and do not discriminate against any disabled student.

Listed below are examples of reasonable adjustment. It is important to note that not all adjustments described below will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments.

### **Examples of reasonable adjustment**

Reasonable Adjustments permitted by the College may involve:

- Changes to Assessment Conditions;
- The use of mechanical and electronic aids;
- Modifications to the presentation of assessment material;
- Alternative ways of presenting responses;
- Use of access facilitators.

## **Applying Reasonable Adjustment**

Reasonable adjustments are approved before an assessment and are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated. A Learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the DDA) to qualify for reasonable adjustment; nor will every learner who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment. Allowing reasonable adjustment is dependent upon how it will facilitate access for the Learner.

The College applies reasonable adjustment in a transparent and unbiased manner. All reasonable adjustments made must be recorded using the College reasonable adjustment form which is readily available on the College website. It should be completed and sent to the College Welfare Officer ([m.touseef@grafoncollege.com](mailto:m.touseef@grafoncollege.com)). Once completed, these would be held by the College in the Learner's file and shall be available at all times for scrutiny by the awarding body, if so requested.

All reasonable adjustments implemented by the College are subject to meeting the requirements of the appropriate assessment strategy and assessment criteria for each qualification and awarding body.

It is the responsibility of the Director (or designated nominee) to ensure that any access arrangement implemented by the College on behalf of the learner, is based on firm evidence of a barrier to assessment.

For all qualifications that are internally assessed, the College will look to action a request to implement a reasonable adjustment, but it must:

- Only make reasonable adjustments that are in line with this policy;
- Record all reasonable adjustments made on the appropriate forms;
- Keep all forms on the appropriate Learner's record.

**Extenuating Circumstances** – This is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment.

### **How do I inform the Board of Examiners?**

It is your responsibility to inform the Board of Examiners about extenuating circumstances. You can do this by completing an extenuating circumstances form available on the College website. This should be returned to the College Welfare Officer (details below) who will ensure it is considered by an Extenuating Circumstances panel who will then make recommendations to the Board of Examiners regarding the effect your circumstances have had on your performance (including non-submission of work or absence from an exam).

Although you may have previously discussed your difficulties with staff in your department,

this does not in itself constitute the submission of extenuating circumstances. You must formally submit an extenuating circumstances form for the Board of Examiners to consider; informal notification will not be considered by the Board. You need to complete an extenuating circumstances form which is available on the College website. It must be returned to the College Welfare Officer (m.touseef@grafoncollege.com) within 10 working days of your original submission deadline. We cannot guarantee that forms submitted after this date will be referred to the Extenuating Circumstances panel or sent directly to a Board of Examiners.

It is essential to inform the Board of any extenuating circumstances before it meets because you cannot subsequently appeal against any decision of the Board of Examiners on the grounds of extenuating circumstances if you could reasonably have been expected to inform the Board in advance. It is also your responsibility to explain fully the impact of extenuating circumstances on your work. If you do not sufficiently explain their impact then you cannot subsequently appeal and ask the Board to consider additional information

### **What documentary evidence do I need to provide?**

You are required to submit documentary evidence to support claims of a medical or non-medical nature relating to absence from examinations/invigilated tests, or related to an individual coursework assignment. It is your responsibility to get this evidence as the College will not seek it on your behalf.

### **Examinations**

If you miss an examination or an invigilated test due to illness or are claiming to have been affected by medical problems during your examination, you must seek medical attention on the day or as near to it as possible, and you must submit documentary evidence. The evidence must relate specifically to the time of the illness and must make it clear that you were medically unfit to take the exam.

### **Coursework**

You are required to submit documentary evidence to support claims of a medical or non-medical nature. In many cases Boards of Examiners may judge that a short-term or minor illness has not had a significant effect on your overall performance. You will need to have experienced long-term illness with possible hospitalisation. You will have had many weeks to complete your work so some progress will be available for review.

## **How are extenuating circumstances judged by a Board of Examiners?**

Boards of Examiners try to determine whether, and to what extent, extenuating circumstances have affected your academic performance, and determine what action, if any, can be taken. In assessing the significance of extenuating circumstances, Boards will normally consider:

- a. the severity of the problem and the length of time involved
- b. any supporting documentary evidence
- c. whether all work in the same period appears to have been equally affected
- d. whether it is possible to gauge the effect of the extenuating circumstances upon academic performance
- e. whether your achievement is consistent with past performance
- f. the type of assessment affected, and how long you had to complete the work (i.e. date when work set and deadline for submission).

## **What action can the Board of Examiners take?**

The Board of Examiners will try to ensure a fair result based on your overall performance. It could take a number of actions including:-

- allowing a reassessment attempt to be treated as a first sit, often for uncapped marks where capping applies
- No action – extenuating circumstances rejected.

The Board will either agree or discuss the recommendations of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

## **Lost or Damaged Work**

When a Learner's work has been lost or damaged, the College may consider accepting a grade for which there is no available evidence. In all cases, the College shall be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.

## **Complying with Policy**

The College understands that failure to comply with the requirements contained within this policy document could lead to assessment malpractice, which will impact on the learner's result.

For further information about malpractice in assessment, please refer to the Academic Misconduct Policy in the course directory.

### **Where can I get more guidance?**

If after having read these notes you feel you need more help in putting forward your extenuating circumstances, you should contact Student Services.

If you require feedback on the way in which the Board of Examiners has handled your extenuating circumstances claim, you can ask for feedback after the results have been released by contacting the Head of Academics or Student Services.

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