AWARD-WINNING EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION

HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

2024-2025

The Queen's Anniversary Prizes 2023

2022/23 BEACON AWARDS WINNER

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Policy Cover Sheet

Please fill in the following details:

Policy Name	Extenuating Circumstances 2024-2025
Version Number	V1
Policy Owner	Simon Farrar
Release Date	05/08/2024
Policy valid for	1 year

Documents included:

Completed Checklist (below)	X
Policy text	X
Filled in EIA	X

Where should this policy be shared? All policies will be shared on the HUB.

The HUB	X
Net Consent	X
Website	X

Policy Checklist
Have you completed the following tasks:

Used the Microsoft Accessibility Checker	X
Used formatted headings	X
Used Arial 12pt font	X
Included numbered paragraphs	X
Included page numbers	X
Included alternative text for all images which accurately describe what's in the picture	X
Checked for gender neutral language e.g. remove dinner ladies, workmen, he/she and replaced with servers, contractors, they.	X
Used the full phrase instead of the acronym at least the first time	X
Used the spelling and grammar check	X
Gained feedback from colleagues to ensure the policy is clear and accurate	X
Included any legal, social or organisational changes since the last policy review	X
Reviewed the connected policies to ensure they are still active	X
Filled in the change log	X
Listened to the policy using the accessible reader	X
Reviewed the policy flowchart	X
Informed the EDI Manager of upcoming policy deadlines	X

Sign Off: To be filled in by the named person only

	Name	Date
SLT	Liz Duncan	05/08/2024
Corporation (if required)		
Trade Union		
EIA	Adam Carney	05/08/2024

Change log

Version number	Changes description	Major changes? Y/N	Initiator	Approval person/body	Date of completion	Date of next review	New version number
N/A	New Policy	Y	Simon Farrar	Assistant Principal - Quality	August 2024	August 2025	V1

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Hopwood Hall College recognises that all students can be impacted by events and circumstances beyond their control and that when this happens additional support or considerations may be required.

1.2. The college will assist all students in whatever capacity to ensure that if these events do occur the affected student can still successfully complete their course. This includes requesting additional time or consideration with the submission of assessments.

1.3. If a student believes that the changes to their circumstances is significant enough to permanently affect their performance on the course or their ability to complete the course then students should contact their tutor and/or programme manager to discuss other alternatives.

1.4. This policy details examples of what might be considered as appropriate to apply for extenuating circumstances and the process for submitting and reviewing these applications.

1.5. This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on grounds of gender, race, ethnicity or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, trade union membership, disability, socio-economic status, offending background or any other personal characteristic. Any issues of victimisation relating to protected characteristics will be dealt with in line with the Equality Scheme. People being treated unfairly as a result of bringing forward a grievance will be protected under the Equality Act.

2. SCOPE

2.1. The scope of this policy is to covers the procedure for submitting applications for extenuating circumstances to all students who are enrolled on higher education programs at the college.

2.2. In some cases a student may be advised by the extenuating circumstances panel that additional applications to partner validating institutions are required. In these cases, students will be signposted to the relevant policy documents and to tutors and/or Student and College Services staff who can provide assistance. Students can contact the student and college services team directly at college, Via the VLE or via phone on 0161 6437560 for general support and/or support understanding and navigating the extenuating circumstances procedure.

2.3. This policy does not cover changes to the marks awarded for a previously submitted piece of work. Please see the OU Academic Regulations for Validated Awards for details of how to appeal a grade that has been received.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. The College will ensure that students have access to the HE Regulations and ancillary assessment policies and procedures.

3.2. The Course Team Leader will ensure that the assessment requirements for the course are published on the college Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) 'Its learning' by the start of the course (itsLearning).

3.3. This will include:

3.3.1. Student handbook linked to the programme specification

3.3.2. Assessment schedule (including reassessment dates)

3.3.3. Learning outcomes, assessment criteria, weightings and mode(s) of assessment for each unit

3.3.4. Procedures for the submission of assignments including the procedure for dealing with late submission of work, and indicative feedback dates.

3.3.5. Criteria relating to grading and marking schemes

3.4. It is the student's responsibility to:

3.4.1. Ensure they understand and comply with the assessment regulations for their course, ancillary policies and procedures set by partner universities or exam boards.

3.4.2. Attend examinations and submit work for assessment as required

3.4.3. Submit any relevant information on exceptional and extenuating. circumstances which they believe may have affected their performance in accordance with this policy.

4. PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING FOR EXTENSIONS

4.1. It is the responsibility of all students to attend examinations and submit work for assessment by the set date for that assessment if possible.

4.2. Where a student's circumstances are such that the student feels unable to meet this deadline, the student is strongly encouraged, as soon as possible, to discuss their circumstances with an appropriate member of academic staff (usually the Module Leader) in advance of the submission / examination date.

4.3. The member of staff will help the student identify a suitable type of extension, depending on circumstance.

4.4. Short extensions, up to and including 7 days should be agreed verbally directly with the Module Tutor who will inform the student directly if it has been approved. The details of approved short extensions will be added to a student's record via ProMonitor to ensure that the relevant Programme Manager can track, monitor and support where required.

4.5. Long extensions, up to 6 weeks should be agreed by an Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances (EEC) Panel following an EEC application by the student.

5. HOW TO APPLY FOR EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

5.1. If, after speaking with a tutor or programme manager, a student feels the best course of action is to apply for extenuating circumstances then they must complete the extenuating circumstance application found in appendix one.

5.2. Examples of situations where this might be necessary include, but are not limited to, include:

5.2.1. Long term ill health concerns both physical and/or mental that are not covered with other reasonable adjustments which have already been put into place (see Exams Policy and Fitness to Study Policy).

5.2.2. Changes in circumstance that mean that a student can not attend or submit work for an extended period of time.

5.2.3. Bereavement.

5.2.4. Domestic dispute.

5.2.5. Accidental events.

5.3. Circumstances unlikely to be considered or approved include: holidays, house moves or other events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected, minor illness such as common colds or hay fever, minor transport disruption, computer or printer failure where the student should have backed-up their work etc.

5.4. All applications for extenuating circumstances will need to be supported by evidence. This could include:

5.4.1. Medical certificates or doctors' notes.

5.4.2. Written statements from professionals involved in the students case.

5.4.3. Disability advisors or professionals.

5.4.4. Police or crime reference numbers.

5.4.5. Parental or carer evidence

5.4.6. A funeral order of service/obituary

5.4.7. Any other professional evidence that the student thinks will support their case for extenuating circumstances (if obtainable)

5.5. Any extension discussions will be guided by the following principles:

5.5.1. Permission not to take an assessment at first attempt must be given prior to the hand-in/examination date unless serious exceptional circumstances prevent this such as sudden serious illness or bereavement.

5.5.2. Students are encouraged to submit partially completed work rather than not submit anything if a short or a long extension, on the basis of extenuating circumstances, has not been agreed.

5.5.3. If students are experiencing difficulties in submitting work, long extensions should be considered via an EEC application. Long extensions could be given for all modules if the student's circumstances are such that they are likely to be able to work towards submission at the first attempt for all modules during the re-sit period. A form must be completed for long extensions, dated prior to the hand-in date.

5.5.4. If an extension is seen as not appropriate or not feasible, the student should be advised to submit some work, even if partially completed.

6. EXCEPTIONAL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES REGULATIONS

6.1. Students may submit requests for consideration of exceptional extenuating circumstances in respect of their summative assessment where they are:

6.1.1. Unable to submit assessed coursework on the required date.

6.1.2. Unable to attend examinations or other scheduled assessments.

6.1.3. Exceptional factors that have resulted in poor performance.

6.2. If, without good cause, a student fails to seek consideration of exceptional extenuating circumstances in accordance with College regulations, normally any request for appeal on the grounds of these extenuating circumstances will be rejected.

6.3. The College authorises the establishment of EEC Panels (Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances Panels) to:

6.3.1. Consider extenuating circumstances.

6.3.2. Make appropriate recommendations to the relevant Assessment Boards or External Examiners.

6.4. It is the responsibility of the student to do the following:

6.4.1. Inform the College of any extenuating circumstances which they wish to be taken into consideration in respect of assessed work.

6.4.2. Ensure that the request is submitted in the appropriate manner and ensure that the notification is received in a timely manner in accordance with College Regulations.

6.4.3. Provide evidence to support the application where this is appropriate. See section 5.3.

6.5. All submissions giving details of exceptional extenuating circumstances will be confidential to the College staff authorised to receive and consider them, except for the provisions relating to appeal hearings and professional body requirements, as detailed in College Regulations. Records of exceptional extenuating circumstances will be securely retained in accordance with the Data Protection Policy, also recognising that data often shared during exceptional circumstances situations often relate to special category data such a disability.

6.6. Typically, the extenuating circumstances panel will consist of the Head of Quality, the relevant programme manager, relevant module leaders and an independent manager such as a centre director from another college department to ensure that all requests are considered equally and without bias.

6.7. All discussion of extenuating circumstances will remain confidential to the membership of the Panel except:

6.7.1. Where the written requirements of a programme of study accredited by a Professional and Statutory Body, and accepted at the validation of that programme of study, require a wider disclosure.

6.7.2. Where a student subsequently requests, and is granted, an Appeal Hearing.

7. CONSIDERATION OF EXCEPTIONAL EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES (EEC)

7.1. An EEC Panel will be conducted within 10 working days of submission of a long extenuating circumstances request.

7.2. The EEC Panel will consider the extenuating circumstances presented and will determine as follows:

7.2.1. The degree of seriousness of the extenuating circumstances.

7.2.2. The assessments which were affected by the relevant extenuating circumstances.

7.3. The EEC Panel will categorise the seriousness of accepted extenuating circumstances as follows:

7.3.1. Extenuating circumstances which are sufficiently serious to decide to defer an assessment.

7.3.2. Extenuating circumstances which are not deemed sufficiently serious to make a deferral of assessment appropriate.

7.4. The EEC Panel cannot change marks awarded for work that is covered as part of the application.

7.5. The board will produce a report detailing the advice given and make this available to the assessment board within 10 working days.

7.6. Students should continue to work on all assignments during this period of time where possible.

7.7. Students should have a recourse to appeal the outcome of the EEC Panel (see HE Appeals Policy).

8. ASSESSMENT BOARDS

8.1. Assessment Boards will receive a report from an EEC Panel in respect of submitted extenuating circumstances and if appliable, the outcome of an appeals and investigations. The report may not be amended by an Assessment Board. The Assessment Board will consider the decisions advised by the EEC Panel and discuss appropriate action in respect of the students.

8.2. If the EEC Panel permits mitigation, the mitigation will normally be permission for the student to be assessed in the work in question as if for the first time. In such cases the student will receive a deferred outcome, in writing, outlining the reasons for the decision.

8.3. If the student fails the deferred assessment, any re-assessment will be in accordance with the current college regulations.

9. DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POLICY

Available at our University Centre Policy page:

9.1. HE Appeals

9.2. Data Protection Policy (www.hopwood.ac.uk)

9.3. Exams Policy (www.hopwood.ac.uk)

9.4. Fitness to Study (www.hopwood.ac.uk)

If this document is required in an alternative format, please contact equiries@hopwood.ac.uk

10. APPENDIX 1

HOPWOOD HALL COLLEGE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES FORM

Sections A and B must be completed by the student and submitted to the Centre Director within 7 days prior to the affected coursework/project deadline, unless serious exceptional circumstances prevent this.

SECTION A (to be completed by the student):

Student name: _____ Course and year: _____

ID number: _____ Centre: _____ Name of tutor: _____

Please indicate why the form is being completed by ticking the appropriate box or boxes:

- ☐ Explanation for absence from an assessment or non-submission of coursework
- ☐ Claim for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account when an assessment has been attempted
- ☐ Request for an extension to coursework – including a project deadline

Nature of circumstances (to be completed by the student)

- ☐ **Illness/Hospitalisation** (Evidence: A medical certificate or letter)
- ☐ **Family illness** (Evidence: A medical certificate or letter)
- ☐ **Bereavement** - death of close relative or friend (Evidence: Death certificate or supporting letter from an independent source)
- ☐ **Acute emotional/personal circumstances** (Evidence: Letter from the College Counselling Service or equivalent and/or medical evidence)
- ☐ **Victim of crime** (Evidence: Crime reference number plus any written evidence available from the police)
- ☐ **Domestic disruption** (Evidence: Appropriate letter)
- ☐ **Representing College at a national event or involvement in other prestigious event** (Evidence: Letter of confirmation from the relevant organising body)
- ☐ **Jury Service/Court Attendance (UK)** (Evidence: Court or equivalent letter)
- ☐ **Other –** please give details in Section B overleaf and provide supporting documents

NB: Forms which are not fully completed and without the required documentary evidence will not be considered. Where evidence is not available by the deadline for submission of the form, the form should be submitted as required and appropriate evidence must be submitted within 14 days of the coursework deadline or affected examination. If the evidence is not in English an authenticated independent translation must also be attached.

SECTION B Further details (to be completed by the student and Centre/Department):

1. Is supporting documentary evidence attached to this form? Yes / No

If Yes please give brief details of attachments:

The Policy and Procedure sets out full information on the type and quality of evidence required, and gives examples of circumstances not normally considered as acceptable reasons. All evidence submitted in support of an extenuating circumstances claim will be treated with full confidentiality in accordance with the Data Protection Act and will be disclosed only to appropriate members of staff. Any student wishing to restrict the sharing of such information should make his or her wishes known to the appropriate members of staff, preferably in writing.

Is supporting documentary evidence being submitted separately? Yes / No
Note: Supporting documentary evidence should be submitted within 14 days of the coursework deadline or examination.

2. The student should state below the effect that the extenuating circumstances have had on their performance, including the number of days affected and other relevant information. Please expand or attach another sheet if additional space is required. Students are advised to discuss their claim with their Tutor or other member of staff of the programme before completing and submitting this form if at all possible.

3. Where assessments have been affected the student should complete the blue highlighted areas of either or both of the tables below. Please expand or attach another sheet if additional space is required.

(a) Request for Extension to Coursework project deadline

For Completion by Student (all information must be completed or the case may not be considered)					**School Decision/Recommendation**		
Module Code	Module Title	Assessment Period eg Semester one/two	Original coursework deadline	Length of extension requested (days)*	Decision (select code from Section D1 below)	Proposed action (select code from Section D2 below)	Amended deadline for coursework submission

'Exam Board' means that the circumstances that are claimed would be taken into consideration at the Examination Board either in relation to progression to the next stage of the programme and/or in relation to the degree class at the end of the programme.

4. Student confirmation

I confirm that the information provided is true:

Signed (Student): _____ Date: _____

SECTION C: To be completed by the Tutor/Programme manager/Centre Director (please delete):

I have/have not seen the student on behalf of the Centre

Tutor/Programme Manager/Centre Director comments:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Pearson BTEC EDEXCEL HNC/D Academic Regulations requires that all Centres relevant to the student's claim have been informed of the outcome. If this has not been done at the time of completion of this form it must be undertaken by the Programme Manager at an appropriate time. Please confirm whether this has been done:

YES/NO

If this has not already been done the Centre must ensure that it is done as soon as possible.

SECTION D: EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. BOARD OF EXAMINERS DECISION CODES

1 Approved
2 Not approved – reason given is not acceptable within the Colleges Academic Regulations
3 Not approved – supporting evidence does not cover the relevant period
4 Not approved – evidence not supplied by an approved source
5 Not approved – evidence is insufficient to support the claim of seriousness of impact
6 Not approved – wording of evidence supplied does not support the claim
7 Other

2. CODES FOR USE BY SCHOOLS TO INDICATE PROPOSED ACTION TO BE TAKEN:

A Coursework to be submitted or other reassessment period as appropriate for the programme
B Extension to coursework/project to be granted: please give new deadline above
C Module to be retaken
D Refer to final Examination Board for consideration
G Other – specify separately. Cases should be sent to the HE Lead