



**TRAFFORD &
STOCKPORT
COLLEGE GROUP**

HE Mitigating Circumstances Procedure

Author:	Head of HE (Quality & Standards)
Consultation:	TSCG Leadership Team
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1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Trafford & Stockport College Group (TSCG) recognises that unforeseen, unplanned and exceptional circumstances may arise that can disrupt and adversely affect a HE learner's ability to study and submit assessed work on time.

1.1.2 This procedure functions as a measure to support learners in line with our commitment to provide equality of opportunity and comply with our partner universities and awarding bodies' expected standards of delivery.

1.1.3 This procedure applies to all requests for extensions, deferrals and mitigating circumstances consideration, by TSCG learners on Higher Education programmes.

1.1.4 When referring to mitigating circumstances, TSCG defines this term as any unplanned, significant circumstance beyond the learner's control that directly impacts their ability to study and submit work on time, placing the learner at a clear disadvantage.

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 This procedure applies to the considerations that may be available to learners experiencing mitigating circumstances:

- Extensions
- Deferrals

1.2.2 Mitigating circumstances do not apply to long term medical or other conditions. TSCG makes reasonable adjustment in line with the Equality Act 2010 for learners with disabilities which may include extensions on coursework submissions, for which extension requests are not required.

1.2.3 Should a learner seek mitigation for the same condition on more than one occasion, TSCG may adopt procedures as described in the Fitness to Study Policy. This will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

2. Extensions

2.1 An extension gives the learner up to an additional 5 working days (up to 10 working days may be considered for learners with specific arrangements).

2.2 Extensions on coursework tasks may be applied for up to 24 hours after the deadline has passed; submission after the deadline without an approved extension in place will be classed as a non-submission.

2.2 Requests submitted using the Mitigating Circumstances Application Form should include details of a learner's mitigating circumstances as outlined in Section 5, and evidence of a one-to-one intervention with their subject tutor, Module Leader or Programme Leader. Grounds for mitigating circumstances are specified in section 5.1.

2.3 If a learner requests additional extensions beyond 50% of their assessments within an academic year, these requests must be reviewed by the Programme Leader, and an intervention should be made. This intervention could include implementing Stage 1 of the TSCG Fitness to Study Procedure, whereby the decision to approve the extension request will be considered as part of an intervention to support the learner's progress and achievement.

2.4 Where an extension is granted, the final mark must be available at the assessment board for that assessment. If a learner requires any additional time, they must request a deferral as outlined in sections 3 and 4.2.

2.5 Submission of an assessment that goes beyond an approved extension deadline, will be treated in accordance with the submission policies as directed by the relevant university or awarding body.

2.6 Students studying on Sheffield Hallam undergraduate courses may apply for exceptional circumstances where unexpected short-term situations affect assessment performance, if reported within 5 days of the deadline and accompanied by supporting evidence.

2.7 If the Assessment Board has already confirmed the results or the deadline for submitting mitigating circumstances claims has passed, learners may consider an appeal. In such cases, learners should refer to the HE Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.

3. Deferrals

3.1 A deferral moves a learner's submission date to the next available assessment period. *For example, any assessment due in Semester 1 for the assessment board in February, may if approved, be deferred to the end of Semester 2. Submission of an assessment due in Semester 2 may be deferred to the re-assessment board in the summer period.* Should a deferral be approved, the piece of work would normally be due in the following assessment period.

3.2 Requests submitted using the Mitigating Circumstances Application Form should include details of a learner's mitigating circumstances as outlined in Section 5, and evidence of a one-to-one intervention with their subject tutor, Module Leader or Programme Leader. Grounds for mitigating circumstances are specified in section 5.1.

3.3 Deferrals on coursework tasks may be applied for up to 24 hours after the deadline has passed; submission after the deadline without an approved extension or deferral in place will be classed as a non-submission.

3.4 Submission of an assessment that goes beyond an approved deferral deadline, will be treated in accordance with the submission policies as directed by the relevant university or awarding body.

3.5 Decision about grading are governed by the relevant awarding body.

4. Grounds for Mitigating Circumstances

4.1 Examples of mitigating circumstances include but are not limited to the following and each case will be considered on its own merit:

- Significant short-term physical illness or injury.
- Significant short-term mental ill-health.
- A long-term or chronic physical or mental health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently.
- Death or serious illness of a person with whom the learner has a close relationship.
- A long-term relationship breakdown, such as a marriage or other partnership.
- Exceptional (i.e., non-routine) caring responsibilities.
- Experience of any type of harassment or assault.
- Victim of a crime which is likely to have significant emotional impact.

- Military conflict, natural disaster, or extreme weather conditions.
- Severe financial difficulties.
- Exposure to a difficult/challenging home environment.

4.2 Examples of situations that are not Mitigating Circumstances:

- Circumstances which were foreseeable or preventable.
- Holidays.
- Pressure of academic work (unless this contributes to ill-health).
- Poor time-management.
- Lack of awareness of dates or times of assessment submission or examination.
- Failures of equipment, including IT systems and computer viruses. These will only be accepted when they occur site-wide, nationally, or internationally and can be verified by an independent source.
- Attending an interview for a job or placement. (Where an interview for employment or a work placement clash with a scheduled assessment, a learner is expected to rearrange the interview for a more appropriate time, if the employer has flexibility to do that).
- Requests relating to group assessment, particularly in relation to the planning and preparation (e.g., intra-group conflict or absence/non-cooperation of one or more group members). Instead, these should be reported directly to the Module Leader at the earliest opportunity.

5. Forms of Evidence

It is recognised that the provision of written evidence from medical professionals is not always available at short notice and in some cases, it is not possible to obtain. However, applications for extensions and deferrals should be supported by one of the following:

5.1 Medical Reports

5.1.1 Signed note by a doctor, nurse or health advisor including precise dates of illness, a diagnosis or description of symptoms and assessment of their impact on the learner's ability to prepare and/or complete assessment.

5.1.2 Notes or reports from medical professionals that are imprecise and state, for example, that the illness 'may have had an impact,' or that, 'the patient informs me,' will not normally be accepted as valid evidence. Appointment letters are not acceptable.

5.2 Employer Letters

5.2.1 Part time students who are also working and who request extensions or deferrals because of increased workloads, will only be granted such in exceptional circumstances. TSCG is unable to take account of events that are the result of normal working practices.

5.2.2 Letters of support from employers should be on headed paper, signed by the student's line manager and must detail, specifically, the impact of their workplace circumstances on their ability to complete assessment.

5.3 Personal Tutor or Programme Leader Reports

5.3.1 Students may approach their Personal Tutor or Programme Leader to provide a report that outlines their circumstances and advocates the need for consideration. This should be submitted with the Mitigating Circumstances request.

6 Mitigating Circumstances Form

6.1 Students should complete the form using the link [HE Extension and Deferral Request Form](#)



This will be emailed to the HE support inbox: hesupport@tscq.ac.uk, which is monitored on working days. A response can be expected within 48 hours.

Any enquiries may be directed to the HE Support inbox.