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SALC Mitigating Circumstances and Extensions Advice Sheet for Students 2026-27

Introduction

This advice sheet provides guidance on the University of Manchester's procedures for applying for extensions and mitigating circumstances in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures (SALC) for the 2026–27 academic year. It reflects the latest University policies and procedures, ensuring you have the most accurate information to support your studies when unforeseen events affect your assessments.

If you have any questions, please contact the Student Support & Wellbeing Team for advice via email to: salc.mitcircs@manchester.ac.uk

Section 1: Overview – Extensions vs Mitigating Circumstances

What is an Extension?

An extension is a short period of extra time (typically up to 7 days, maximum 14 days) given to complete summative coursework, a final year project, or a dissertation. Extensions are designed for one-off, isolated incidents that affect your ability to meet a deadline. You do not need to provide evidence if the request is made before the deadline.

What are Mitigating Circumstances?

Mitigating circumstances are unforeseeable and unpreventable events that have a significant negative effect on your academic performance in assessments, including exams. These circumstances are typically more serious or ongoing, and you must provide supporting evidence for your application.

Key Differences

- Extensions are for situations impacting your ability to meet coursework deadlines. No evidence is required if your application is submitted in advance or by 2pm on the deadline date.
- Extensions must be requested before the coursework deadline. If you need additional time after the deadline, you must apply for mitigating circumstances.
- Mitigating circumstances are for significant or ongoing issues affecting any assessment (coursework or exams). Evidence is usually required unless you are applying regarding a DASS registered condition.

Section 2: Extensions Process

Who Can Apply and When?

Any undergraduate or postgraduate taught student who experiences an unforeseen circumstance that affects their ability to submit a specific piece of coursework on time may request an extension. You must apply before the coursework deadline and at the latest by 2pm on the deadline date.

Eligible Circumstances

- Short-term illness or injury (physical or mental health)
- Technology/IT issues (e.g. broken laptop, Wi-Fi outage)
- Unexpected domestic or family crisis (bereavement, relationship breakdown, caring responsibilities)

- Personal issues (accommodation issues, theft, assault)
- Absence for public service (e.g. jury service)
- Flare up of a Disability or long-term condition (whether or not you are registered with DASS)

What is Not Eligible?

- Planned events (holidays, moving house, foreseeable appointments)
- Poor time management or inadequate planning
- Assessments scheduled close together (unless impacting your health/wellbeing)
- Religious observance (see University's policy for exceptions)
- Paid employment (except in exceptional circumstances related to family/financial crisis)

How to Apply

- Submit a Mitigating Circumstances or Extension Form
- In question 1 please select 'Extension'.
- You do not need to provide supporting evidence if you apply before the coursework deadline.
- State clearly how the issue affects your ability to submit the work on time.

What type of assessments are eligible for an extension?

You can request an extension on formally assessed individual coursework such as:

- Essays
- Source analysis
- Reports
- Dissertations

The following assessments are **not eligible for an extension:**

- Groupwork or teamwork
- Presentations
- Formative coursework
- Open-book examinations
- Weekly submissions or assessments which require feedback from your lecturer
- Timed written examinations to be completed at home.
- In-class tests, online tests, or quizzes.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Typical Extension Periods

Extensions are normally granted for up to 7 calendar days, and up to 14 days in exceptional cases. Extensions will not extend beyond the feedback deadline for the assessment.

If You Need More Time

If you require longer than 14 days, or if your request is after the deadline, you must apply for mitigating circumstances and provide evidence (see section 3).

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Please note that if you have requested an extension, unless your circumstances prevent you from doing so, you should continue working on your assessment, and if possible, submit it, while you wait for the decision of the Committee. Awaiting the decision on the outcome of your application cannot be used as a reason for not submitting coursework if your circumstances permit you to do so (e.g. you have recovered from a short-term illness). Please note that the Student Support & Wellbeing Team do not advise submitting unfinished work while awaiting the outcome of a mitigating circumstances application, as **resubmissions are not usually permitted**. If you have submitted unfinished work, please inform the Student Support & Wellbeing Team as soon as possible.

Section 3: Mitigating Circumstances Process

Who Can Apply and When?

Any student who experiences unforeseeable and unpreventable circumstances that have a significant negative effect on their ability to complete or perform in any assessment (including exams and coursework) can apply for mitigating circumstances. You must apply as soon as possible and by the published deadlines (see Section 5).

Eligible Circumstances

- Serious health issues (illness, injury, or acute mental health conditions)
- Worsening of an ongoing illness or disability, including mental health conditions
- Death or critical illness of a close family member or dependant
- Significant family or personal crises, major financial problems leading to acute stress
- IT failure at the point of submission (with evidence, e.g. screenshot with date/time)
- Absence for public service (e.g. jury service)
- Flare up of a disability or long-term condition (whether or not you are registered with DASS)

How to Apply

- Submit a Mitigating Circumstances or Extension Form
- In question 1 please select 'Mitigating Circumstances'.
- Provide supporting evidence (if required) with your application or explain any delay in providing evidence.
- Apply as soon as possible, and no later than 7 calendar days after the coursework assessment deadline or by the semester deadline for exams (see Section 5).
- If you are unable to complete the form yourself (e.g. due to hospitalisation), a third party can help submit on your behalf.

What is Not Eligible?

- Planned or expected events (holidays, moving house, foreseeable appointments)
- Loss/theft of a computer or printer (students are expected to back up work regularly)
- Exam stress or panic attacks not diagnosed as illness or supported by medical evidence
- Time management issues, misreading timetables, late start to studies
- Paid employment (except for certain part-time students in special cases)
- Disruption in an exam not reported to invigilators at the time

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Process for DASS-Registered Students

- If you are registered with the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) and your request relates directly to your disability, **you do not** need to provide additional supporting evidence. However, you must provide a detailed explanation of how your disability is affecting your studies at the time.
- If your request is unrelated to your registered disability, evidence may be required.
- If you have an automatic extension as part of your DASS support plan (usually 7 days), this applies only to eligible written coursework – see information here. If you need more time, or are affected in other assessments, you must submit a mitigating circumstances application.

Possible Outcomes

Your application will be considered by school staff, and you will be notified of the decision within 5 working days of your application.

- Removal of late penalties for coursework submitted late due to accepted circumstances (Please note this is for coursework only and cannot be considered for exams.
- Opportunity to resubmit coursework or resit an exam as a first attempt (deferral), or in some cases as a second attempt (referral)
- Exclusion of certain marks from unit averages or degree classification calculations, in line with University regulations (See your programme handbook for more information)
- Recommendation to repeat the year, or to take an interruption of studies for health reasons
- Referral to further support services if appropriate

Mitigation does not result in a direct change to your marks but may allow you to complete or resit assessments without penalty.

Section 4: Evidence Requirements

When Is Evidence Needed?

- Extensions: No evidence is required if you apply before the coursework deadline.
- Mitigating Circumstances: Evidence is required except in DASS-registered cases directly related to your disability (see above). Evidence must relate to the relevant time period and clearly support your case.

Please note that evidence must normally be submitted within 2 weeks of your application submission. If you apply near the end of the semester, evidence must be submitted by the end of semester deadline as listed below on section 5.

Types of Acceptable Evidence

You should upload your supporting documents directly to the application form. If this isn't possible you can send via email to: salc.mitcircs@manchester.ac.uk

- Medical notes, GP letter, prescription, hospital/clinic appointment card
- Photo of labelled medication
- Letter or email from a family member (for bereavement or family crisis)
- Financial records (for financial crises)
- Jury service summons, MAT B certificate (for maternity/paternity/adoption)

- Police or insurance report (for crime/burglary)
- Screenshot or photo of IT issue (with date/time of issue clearly visible), service provider information, or repair receipt

If you are unsure about what evidence to provide, contact the Student Support & Wellbeing Team for advice. You do not need to provide original documents – clear scans or photos are acceptable.

Section 5: Deadlines and Late Applications

Published Deadlines

Extensions:

Apply before the coursework deadline, at the latest by 2pm on the deadline date.

Mitigating Circumstances:

For coursework: apply as soon as possible and no later than 7 calendar days after the assessment deadline.

For exams, the deadline is usually the SALC semester deadline as below:

SALC Deadlines for 2026-27: The forms will close by 23.59pm on the following dates:

Period	Deadline
Semester 1	Monday 01 February 2027
Semester 2	Monday 14 June 2027
August resit period	Wednesday 01 September 2027

Evidence for mitigating circumstances must be attached to your form or emailed in by these deadlines.

What Happens If You Miss a Deadline?

- Late applications may only be considered if you provide a strong and acceptable reason with supporting evidence. You should provide this explanation on your form.
- Personal feelings (embarrassment, pride, confidentiality concerns) are not accepted as valid reasons for late submission.
- If you miss the deadline and do not have a valid reason, your application will not be considered, but you may be able to appeal the final decision of the Examination Board (see here).

Section 6: Further Support

Support Services

- Student Support & Wellbeing Team (SALC): salc.mitcircs@manchester.ac.uk 0161 529 3348
- The Mental Health Support Team counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk | 0161 275 2864
- Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS): dass@manchester.ac.uk | 0161 275 7512
- Students' Union Advice Centre: advice.su@manchester.ac.uk | 0161 275 2952
- Report & Support: www.reportandsupport.manchester.ac.uk

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If you are struggling, please speak to your Academic Advisor or contact the Student Support & Wellbeing Team for further help and guidance.