Sometimes, factors beyond your control can affect your academic performance. In such cases, the University may be able to take your circumstances into consideration when reviewing your assessment results or arrangements.

This guide aims to make the process of mitigation easier to understand.

Please note however, that the University's policy on Mitigating Circumstances will always take precedence.

You can see the full document at: bit.ly/mitigationpolicy

Please also remember, we cannot apply mitigation for circumstances you don’t tell us about. If you are unsure whether your circumstances qualify, or have any other questions about mitigation, please contact your School’s support officer for further guidance.

You can get further information and advice from:

- The Atrium student support hub
- Students’ Union Advice Service
- Your Academic Advisor or student support officer

This is part of a series of introductory guides to complicated policies and procedures, produced by Teaching and Learning Support. Guides are also available for:

- Academic Appeals
- Student Complaints

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What is mitigation?
The Policy on Mitigating Circumstances allows the University to take into account any unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstance you disclose that could have a significant impact on your academic performance.

Mitigation reviews are considered by a Mitigating Circumstances Panel, made up of academic and support staff from your School.

Do I have mitigating circumstances?
The circumstance affecting you must be unforeseeable or unpreventable, and could have a significant effect on your academic performance, to be considered mitigating.

Common examples include:
- Significant personal illness or injury;
- The critical illness or death of a close family member/dependent;
- Significant family crises or financial problems leading to acute stress;
- Absence for public service (e.g. jury service).

Circumstances not normally considered 'mitigating circumstances' include:
- Events that were planned or reasonably foreseen (e.g. booked a holiday);
- Failure, loss or theft of a computer or printer;
- Non-diagnosed illness e.g. exam stress;
- Inadequate time management/planning or paid employment commitments;
- A chronic illness or disability (of which the University is already aware), unless there has been an acute change in your condition.

For a more extensive list of examples, see the University’s Policy on Mitigating Circumstances (link overleaf).

Requesting consideration of mitigating circumstances
If you believe you have a mitigating circumstance, you should approach the appropriate person in your School (e.g. student support officer, Academic Adviser), named in your School handbook or website. They will advise you on making a request under the Policy for Mitigating Circumstances, and provide you with a Notification of Mitigating Circumstances form.

Supporting documents
You will need to submit evidence to support your application. You can get advice on this from your School. Documents you provide must be sufficiently independent and time-specific in order to ensure their accuracy and relevance to your case.

Information of a confidential nature should be submitted in a sealed envelope and difficulties with providing documentation should be made known to your School.

When to submit your request
It is important you tell us of your circumstance, as soon as you become aware it might affect your performance, and before the deadline for submission of mitigating circumstances, outlined in your programme handbook.

A 'late' request will not be considered, unless supported by a credible and compelling explanation of why the circumstances were not known, or could not be shown, before the assessment period. Personal feelings such as embarrassment or concerns over confidentiality are not considered valid explanations.

How could it help me?
The outcome of a mitigation request is dependent on your particular circumstances. If your request is approved by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, then it will be up to the Examination Board to decide how to apply it, given your assessment results.

Some of the options available to the Examination Board include:
- Permission to re-sit and exam;
- Permission to allow a further attempt at an assessment;
- Arrangement of an alternative mode of assessment;
- Awarding of a mark based on other grades within a unit.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of possible outcomes, and in some programmes of study, discipline-specific or professional requirements may mean that the options that are available to the Board for dealing with mitigation are restricted.

You should also be aware that a request for mitigation does not result in the changing of marks, and that you may only be granted mitigation once for each attempt at any one assessment.