

## HE Code of Practice Mitigating Circumstances

### Review

Formal Review Cycle	Biennially		
Latest Formal Review (date)	June 2024	Next Formal Review Due (date)	June 2026
Policy Owner	Associate Principal Quality, Teaching and Assessment		
Policy Author	Head of HE Academic Standards and Quality		

### Approvals

Board of Corp Y/N	N	Committee		Date Board approved	24/05/2024
ELT Y/N	Y	ELT date approved	20/06/2024	Additional committee	HE Board

### Publication

Website Y/N	Y	Unify Y/N	Y	Student VLE Y/N	Y	Other	
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### Change History

Version	Date Reviewed/ Revised	Description of Change	Reviewed by	Approved by
1.0	24 May 2025	New Code of Practice		HE Board

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a code of practice of City of Sunderland College, trading as Education Partnership North East (which includes Sunderland College, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and Northumberland College). These colleges will be referred to as “the College” throughout this document.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 Applicable to all students on all credit bearing Higher Education provision at the College.
- 2.2 For students registered on provision awarded by University partners, the programme handbook will outline the process to be followed
- Further detail can be accessed at:
- University of Hull - [extensions-and-additional-consideration \(hull.ac.uk\)](https://www.hull.ac.uk/academic-appeals)
  - University of Cumbria - [Appendix 3e \(cumbria.ac.uk\)](https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/academic-appeals)
  - Pearson - [Special consideration | Pearson qualifications](#)
- 2.3 The Code has been developed with reference to the principles of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)’s [Good Practice Framework: Requests for Additional Consideration](#)

## 3 Definition of Mitigating Circumstances

- 3.1 Mitigating Circumstances are exceptional circumstances which are outside of the student’s control and normally unforeseeable and unpreventable which have adversely affected a student’s engagement with their programme of study and/or performance in summative assessment.
- 3.2 The following are examples of circumstances which the College is likely to accept. This list is not exhaustive, and each application will be considered individually.
- Serious short-term illness or injury.
  - An on-going illness or disability worsening.
  - Death or significant illness of an immediate family member.
  - Unexpected caring responsibilities for a family member or dependent.
  - Significant personal or family crisis.
- 3.3 The follow are examples of circumstances which are unlikely to be accepted by the College:
- Minor illnesses, such as common colds or hay fever.
  - Planned life events, such as house moves, job changes, holidays.
  - Minor transport disruption.
  - Study related circumstances such as computer/printer failures, poor time management, bunching of assessment deadlines.

## 4 Extension Requests

- 4.1 It is the student’s responsibility to manage their time in order to meet assessment deadlines, however, if there are unforeseen circumstances which will impact this the student must initially discuss these with their Module Leader and Programme Leader.

- 4.2 Programme Leaders can approve extension requests in advance of assessment deadlines of up to 7 calendar days.
- 4.3 All extension requests must be recorded on the Extension Form and an annual report of the number received and approved should be submitted to the Quality Team.

## **5 Applying for Mitigating Circumstances.**

- 5.1 If after discussion with the Programme Leader it is felt that an assessment deadline extension will not address the underlying issues, the student can complete the Mitigating Circumstances Form.
- 5.2 The form should be submitted to [quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk](mailto:quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk). Evidence to support the application must be provided, this may include medical evidence, statements from staff, such as Module Leaders, Programme Leaders where appropriate.
- 5.3 The application will be acknowledged by the Quality Team within 5 working days and progress of the application tracked. Updates will be sent to the student at each stage of the process.

## **6 Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances Applications**

- 6.1 The College will convene on a monthly basis, or on an ad-hoc basis where necessary, a Mitigating Circumstance Sub-Group (MCSG) of the HE Board to consider all applications submitted.
- 6.2 The MCSG will ensure a comparable and equitable consideration of applications and outcomes across the College.
- 6.3 The MCSG will be Chaired by a current Programme Board Chair nominated by the Chair of the HE Board. Two additional members of the HE Board will be co-opted to the MCSG. The outcomes of the MCSG will be formally minuted.
- 6.4
- 6.5 The MCSG will consider whether to accept the application based on the information provided in the Mitigating Circumstances Form only. The Group will not be provided with any information on student grade profiles.
- 6.6 The MCSG on approving an application will record one of the following outcomes:
  - 6.5.1 The opportunity to complete the affected assessment with a revised deadline for submission.
  - 6.5.2 The opportunity to complete a further attempt, either as a first or second attempt. In the case of a second attempt the assessment grade will be capped at a Pass.
- 6.7 The outcome of the MCSG will be communicated in writing to the student, Programme Leader and the Chair of the relevant Programme Board
- 6.8 At Programme Boards/Board of Examiners, mitigating circumstances submitted by students for individual units/modules will be noted on programme grids and the outcome of the MCSG communicated to enable appropriate decisions on progression and award to be made. No discussion of individual student circumstances will take place in these boards.

## 7 Appeal of the decision of the Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Group

7.1 A student may appeal the decision of the outcome of the MCSG within 10 working days of receipt of the written notification. A student should submit their Academic Appeal to [quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk](mailto:quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk) with supporting evidence to support their appeal.

7.2 The process outlined in the HE Academic Appeals Policy will then be followed.

## 8 Privacy and confidentiality

8.1 All Mitigating Circumstances applications received by the College will be treated confidentially and only information disclosed to those members of staff who are directly involved in the Mitigating Circumstances process.

## 9. Associated Documents

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Board of Examiners Guidance

## 10. Policy Monitoring and Review

The HE Education Board will receive on an annual basis a summary report of:

- The number and type of cases considered at each stage of the process and the outcome of each by Faculty.
- The number of applications submitted.
- The number of applications approved.
- The number of appeals received.

The HE Board annual summary report will be reported to ELT for monitoring.

## 11. Equality Impact Assessment

*(Consider whether the policy or procedures may disproportionately impact any group.)*

<b>Have you sought consultation on this policy?</b>		Yes, through Programme Leads, HE Boards		
<b>Details:</b>				
<b>Could a particular group be affected (negatively or positively)?</b>	<b>Impact Y/N</b>	<b>Description of Impact</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Mitigation/ Justification</b>
Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010				
Age	N			

Disability	N			
Gender Reassignment	N			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N			
Pregnancy and maternity	N			
Race	N			
Religion or belief	N			
Sex	N			
Sexual Orientation	N			
Additional characteristics to consider				
Young Persons in Care & Care Leavers	N			
Young Carers & Care Givers	N			
Young Parents	N			
Youth Offenders	N			
Those Receiving Free School Meals	N			
<b>If there is no impact, please explain:</b>				