



## Cambridge Muslim College Extenuating circumstances Policy

Committee: Assessment Access and Appeal Committee

Next Review Date: April 2023

### 1. Purpose

This policy sets out the associated procedures for managing student requests for extenuating circumstances, with the aim of ensuring consistent and fair treatment for all.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to students and faculty teaching on the OU validated provisions.

### 3. Principles

- 3.1. The College recognises that students may suffer from a serious and unforeseen event or set of circumstances, which, in the student's opinion adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment and/or set an exam. In such cases, students may make a formal request that the College's extenuating circumstances procedures are applied.
- 3.2. Extenuating circumstances may be considered for a variety of situations, including late submission of an assignment, if it falls outside the late submission window of 7 working days, needing to miss an examination, or having to withdraw temporarily from the programme. To be considered extenuating circumstances, such difficulties must meet all the following criteria:
  - 3.2.1. out of a student's control and could not have been prevented
  - 3.2.2. to have had a demonstrably negative impact on ability to undertake an assessment
  - 3.2.3. the timing of the circumstances must be relevant to the impact claimed
- 3.3. The type of circumstance must also be covered by one of the following categories:
  - 3.3.1. Significant physical or psychological illness which last more than a week; (For medical evidence please refer to Appendix 2)
  - 3.3.2. severe personal difficulties;
  - 3.3.3. compassionate grounds, i.e. death of a member of immediate family within a week of the deadline or the exam;
  - 3.3.4. sudden deterioration in a long-standing medical condition or disability;
  - 3.3.5. legal proceedings requiring attendance at court (e.g. as a witness or juror);
  - 3.3.6. visa renewal or expiry issues affecting overseas students.
- 3.4. The following would **not** normally be accepted as valid reason for an extension:

- 3.4.1. misreading information about submission deadlines;
- 3.4.2. holiday arrangements;
- 3.4.3. social and work commitments;
- 3.4.4. illness that last less than three days;
- 3.4.5. technical software, hardware, network or internet problems.

- 3.5. The College will treat all extenuating circumstance applications confidentially, fairly and promptly. Information may need to be shared with Exam Board members as per their requests.
- 3.6. When dealing with student's work which may have been affected by extenuating circumstances, everyone should be assessed on equal terms and no one should put in a position of unfair advantage or disadvantage over other students.
- 3.7. The College aims to respond to the student requesting extenuating circumstances within seven (7) working days, but this may be delayed pending the submission of evidence from the student.
- 3.8. A student who fails to comply with an assessment deadline and does not follow the extenuating circumstance procedure will be in breach of the [College's Assessment Policy](#).
- 3.9. A student who fails to attend an examination and does not follow the extenuating circumstance procedure will be in breach of the [College's Attendance Policy](#).
- 3.10. Extenuating circumstances cannot excuse academic misconduct.

All cases of extenuating circumstances are reported to the Faculty Board, to allow an institution-wide overview. Only list of students who submitted Deferral forms and the AAAC recommendations/ Outcome will be shared with the board

- 3.11. If a student feels the College did not follow its own procedures when refusing permission for extenuating circumstances, they may appeal, or complain, following the procedure laid down in the [Academic Appeals and Complaints Policy](#).

#### 4. References

- Deferral Request Form (Appendix 1)
- [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance- Assessment](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Academic Appeals and Complaints Policy](#)

#### 5. Responsibility

- 5.1. Responsibility for the area of extenuating circumstances lies with the Chair of the Assessment Access and Appeal Committee (AAAC)
- 5.2. It is the responsibility of the Admissions Officer to log all requests in the student record.
- 5.3. It is the responsibility of student to
  - 5.3.1. inform their Tutor by email, of any extenuating circumstances which they consider are affecting their ability to complete assessments and/or affecting their assessment results as soon as the circumstances is foreseen
  - 5.3.2. involve the College Welfare Team, who will provide support and advice
  - 5.3.3. seek professional help, where relevant, to assist in resolving circumstances that are affecting them adversely

## 6. Procedure

- 6.1. To avoid being penalised for late submission, students whose circumstances meet the admissible grounds must make an application for extenuating circumstances by completing a Deferral Request Form (Appendix 1) and submitting to [AAAC@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk](mailto:AAAC@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk)
  - 6.1.1. The Deferral Request should be made at the earliest opportunity i.e. as soon as the situation is foreseen, or as soon as possible, or no later than seven (7) working days after the circumstances apply.
  - 6.1.2. If a student fails, without good cause, to provide information about extenuating circumstances within the timescales specified, the College has authority to reject the request on those grounds. Only in very exceptional circumstances ; i.e. hospitalisation with no access to a means of communication will an application be considered after the published deadline has elapsed.
  - 6.1.3. Students are responsible for providing evidence demonstrating their claimed extenuating circumstances, i.e. sick note from the GP, Hospital admission . This should be submitted at the same time as the Deferral Request or within three (3) working days of the Deferral Request or, if it is not possible to submit evidence within three (3) working days, they must submit an indication that evidence will be submitted within seven (7) working days.
  - 6.1.4. Whenever medical reasons are cited for extenuating circumstances, students are only required to offer a witness certificate for sickness which impacts essay submissions. A letter from a qualified medical practitioner is needed when illness impacts sitting an exam.
- 6.2. After logging the documentation and request in the student record, the Admissions Officer passes the completed application to the AAAC committee for review.
- 6.3. The Admissions Officer to verify the authenticity of evidence submitted and share both the related form and evidence with the AAAC committee members. The timescale for the panel investigation will be no later than seven (7) working days from the date of the student's submitting the Deferral Request form and all relevant supporting evidence.
- 6.4. The panel will investigate the application for extenuating circumstances and make recommendations to the Board of Examiners.
- 6.5. The Board of Examiners will consider the recommendations of the panel and will usually select one of the following options:
  - 6.5.1. To provide a student with the opportunity to take the affected assessment(s) as if for the first time i.e. a 'sit' or 'submit', allowing them to be given the full marks achieved for the examination or assessment, rather than imposing a cap.
  - 6.5.2. To waive late submission penalties.
  - 6.5.3. To determine that there is sufficient evidence of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes from other pieces of assessment in the module(s) for an overall mark to be derived.
  - 6.5.4. To note the accepted extenuation for the module(s) and recommend that it is taken into account at the point of award and classification.

- 6.6. The Board of Examiners, depending on the circumstances, may exercise discretion in deciding on the particular form any reassessment should take. Options are a viva voce examination, additional assessment tasks designed to show whether the student has satisfied the programme learning outcomes, review of previous work, or normal assessment at the next available opportunity.
- 6.6.1. The student will not be put in a position of unfair advantage or disadvantage: the aim will be to enable the student to be assessed on equal terms with their cohort.
- 6.6.2. The module marks released following the meeting of the Board of Examiners should clearly identify results where extenuation has been considered and applied.
- 6.6.3. If extenuating circumstances cause a student to fail more than one module, the student may be offered the option to re-take the entire year, re-attending classes and submitting the required assignments (assignments submitted will be on different questions than those submitted in the previous year). The option of re-taking a year will be at the discretion of the Examination Board and fees may be incurred for the extra year of studies. A student may re-sit a year only once.
- 6.6.4. If the extenuating circumstance persists and a student is unable to continue with their coursework, they will be encouraged to defer their studies to the following year.
- 6.7. The Secretary of the AAAC will inform the student in writing of the Board of Examiners' decision.
- 6.8. The Secretary of the AAAC will save the form and its related decision in the student records.

### REVISION HISTORY

Revision #	Effective Date	Description of Change
00	March 2017	New Document
01	25 April 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formatting change</li> <li>2. Policy number assignment</li> <li>3. Changes to form</li> </ol>
02	28 November 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cases of extenuating circumstances are reported to the Faculty Board not the Academic Advisory Board.</li> <li>2. Whenever medical reasons are cited for extenuating circumstances for other than sitting an examination, students are only required to offer a witness certificate for illness. A doctor note is required if extenuating circumstances impact sitting an examination.</li> </ol>
03	15 March 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update the References of QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education</li> </ol>
04	May 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update the form (Appendix 1) to include a space for committee feedback. Form version is updated to 200.016.02</li> </ol>

		<p>2. A student who fails to attend an examination and does not follow the extenuating circumstance procedure will be in breach of the College's Assessment Policy not the Attendance Policy.</p>
05	June 2022	<p>Update the policy in response to IR conditions as following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List the circumstances that can be accepted as Extenuating Circumstances and the ones that are not considered as Extenuating Circumstances</li> <li>2. Update the procedure to reflect the investigation panel to be the AAAC instead of the selective panel.</li> <li>3. Update the responsibility to the Chair of AAAC instead of the BA Manager</li> <li>4. Add Guidance for medical evidence under Appendix 2.</li> </ol>

Appendix 1



**Cambridge Muslim College  
Deferral Request Form**

This Deferral Request Form is designed for use with the College’s Extenuating Circumstances Policy. Please ensure that you have read and understood the policy before completing this form. Please pass this completed and signed form to the Secretary of AAAC on AAAC@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk

Contact information	
First name	
Family name	
Student number	
Preferred telephone number	
Preferred email address	

Do you have a disability or specific learning difficulty you would like us to be aware of when considering your deferral request?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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Which assessments do you want to defer?

<p><b>Please choose the category that best describes your circumstances</b></p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Ill-health or accident    <input type="checkbox"/> Visa renewal or expiry issues affecting overseas students  <input type="checkbox"/> Compassionate grounds (e.g. Bereavement, serious family issues, unexpected travel)  <input type="checkbox"/> Other                 </p>
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**Reason for your application to defer**

Please provide an explanation why you are applying to defer an assessment(s), continuing on a separate sheet if necessary. You will need to show that the circumstances:

- are/were out of your control – they could not have been prevented
- must have/have had a demonstrably negative impact on your ability to complete an assessment
- the timing of the circumstances must be relevant

**Please indicate which evidence is provided.**

- Medical certificate       Police report       Death certificate
- Other (state evidence)

Please check:

- I have completed all sections of this form.
- I have included supporting evidence.

**DECLARATION**

I confirm that I give my consent for the enclosed supporting medical evidence to be submitted and made available, on a confidential basis, to the members of the AAAC Committee .

<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	





## Appendix 2



### Cambridge Muslim College Guidance for medical evidence

This guide is for students who submit Deferral form on medical grounds to the College requesting an extension for the deadlines. You can share these notes with your medical practitioner to assist them in providing your medical evidence.

Medical evidence could be a letter from your GP, Therapist, Psychiatrist or any other relevant medical professional including Hospital admission preferably from a doctor based in Cambridge.

1. If you were unwell during the week of your assignment deadline or exam/s, the medical evidence should refer to that period of time. If you have a long-term condition and your symptoms worsened, although the medical letter could provide an overview or history of your medical condition, the emphasis should be on the time in question. It should detail what those symptoms were, how they affected your day-to-day life, your ability to study and engage with your studies, and your preparation for or performance during an exam/ assignment.
2. If you were unwell on the submission deadline or an exam, you are expected to seek medical support on the day or as soon as possible. You are also expected to contact the welfare officer and/or your Tutor and, if possible, your GP. If you contacted your GP to arrange an appointment that was offered to you at a later date, you could ask the surgery to write a note confirming the date you first contacted your GP, details of the conversation and the date of the appointment offered to you.
3. The medical evidence should confirm you were unwell and explain the impact the health issues had on your studies, attendance, examinations, etc. The medical professional should provide details of your symptoms, a diagnosis if available (which includes the nature and severity of the illness) or confirmation of further investigations and medication prescribed or recommended. If you experienced side effects from medication, you might wish to ask the doctor to confirm those side effects and the impact they had on your day-to-day life and your ability to study.
4. A hospital admission would need a shorter explanation compared to a condition that would need detail of your medical history and background information.
5. For mental health related conditions, medical evidence would need background information, assessments, diagnosis or possible diagnosis, a treatment plan if available, and an explanation of how the condition is likely to have affected your studies and/or exams.

6. Some medical practices might require a fee to provide medical evidence. The college can not cover these costs
  
7. The evidence should be on headed paper which includes the full address and role title of the practitioner, dated and signed by the practitioner.