Policy on and procedures relating to extenuating circumstances (for PGT programmes which finish in September 2017)

[This policy has been replaced from the Autumn Term 2017, but remains effective in the case of taught postgraduate programmes which finish in September 2017.]

[Approved by the University Board for Teaching and Learning on 23 May 2014 and came into effect from the 2014/15 academic year. Subsequent revisions were approved by the Board on 8 December 2014, 17 February 2016 and 14 June 2016. The policy and procedures were revised in August 2016 to take account of organisational changes with effect from the 2016/17 academic year.

For the purposes of the process described in this document, in international branch campuses, the Head of Section, or their designate, will fulfil the role of Senior Tutor unless otherwise stated. The functions of the School Director of Teaching and Learning (SDTL) will revert to the SDTL at the University of Reading UK. References to the School should be understood as referring to the Section. Where this causes a conflict of interest, the relevant SDTL at UoR-UK will make decisions at School level as prescribed below.

For the purposes of the processes described in this document, in Henley Business School references to ‘School’ should be taken to mean ‘programme area’ and reference to School Senior Tutor should be taken to mean Programme Area Senior Tutor.

It is noted that where reference is made to services by RUSU, this includes equivalent services at international branch campuses.

Research students should seek advice from the Graduate School.]

Introduction

1. Extenuating circumstances are defined as circumstances which are outside the control of the student and negatively affect performance and which can be supported by appropriate evidence.

2. The purpose of this document is to outline the appropriate policy and procedures that staff and students should follow when students experience circumstances which have negatively impacted on their performance. The policy is designed to do four things:

   a) ensure that students are appropriately supported by their Schools and Departments when extenuating circumstances are brought to the attention of Schools/Departments in a timely manner;
b) ensure that all students are treated fairly and equitably in the light of extenuating circumstances;

c) outline the responsibilities of students in informing the University of circumstances which are affecting their performance; and

d) protect the academic integrity of programmes for all students.

This policy should be read alongside the Policy on and procedures for students returning to or repeating study, the Policy and procedures for suspensions and the Policy on and procedures relating to student academic engagement and fitness to study.

3. In order to maintain the standards of scholarship, personal integrity and communal life essential to the existence and good name of the University, students are expected to take responsibility for organising their academic work, their personal lives and their participation in the University community in line with the University’s Regulations for Student Conduct (see Section G of the University Calendar http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/Calendar/).

Further information on the expectations of students’ participation in the University community can be found in the Reading Student Charter http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/student/OnlineStudentHandbook/osh-student-charter.aspx, and the Statement of Learner Responsibilities http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/learnerresponsibilities.pdf

4. Students are required to submit assignments by specified deadlines. Work which is submitted late, without an agreed extension, will be penalised in accordance with the University’s policy on late submission of coursework: http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/penaltiesforlatesubmission.pdf.

5. In following the procedures outlined in this document, staff should at all times ensure that they use the appropriate level of confidentiality.

6. The procedures relating to extenuating circumstances assign principal responsibility for decision-making to: Senior Tutors for decisions in respect of coursework and in-class tests; the University Progression Board Special Cases Sub-Committee for cases relating to examinations and Part results for non-finalist undergraduates, and to the Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee for decisions relating to examinations and final results for Finalists and Masters students.

What is meant by “extenuating circumstances”? 

7. The University deems that an extenuating circumstance is a circumstance which is outside of the control of the student which negatively affects performance and which can be supported by appropriate evidence. Students must describe the impact their circumstances have had on their studies.

8. The University considers the following as extenuating circumstances:

   a) bereavement due to the death of a close family member or friend or if a close family member or friend becomes seriously ill or has a serious accident such that in employment would lead a reasonable employer to grant compassionate leave;

   b) serious short term illness or an accident of a nature that, in employment, would lead a reasonable employer to agree to absence on sick leave;

   c) a recurrence or worsening of a long-term physical or mental health condition;

   d) health problems of a close family member or friend which involves the student caring at home or substantial time visiting the hospital;

   e) court attendance (either as witness, jury member, plaintiff or defendant);
f) a family crisis directly affecting the student;

g) a crime which has had a substantial impact on the student’s ability to undertake their academic work;

h) exceptional and unforeseen financial hardship;

i) statutory parental leave (more information can be found in the Students with Parental Responsibilities Policy http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/cqsd/Studentparentalpolicy.pdf);

j) membership of a sports team at the national or international level.

This list is not exhaustive and other circumstances are considered appropriate so long as circumstances meet the definition above.

9. Where there is a requirement on the University to provide appropriate academic provision and this requirement has not been met and has negatively impacted the performance of the student, the student should inform their School of the issue immediately. If students wish to appeal the decision of the School, they can raise a Stage 1 formal complaint. Circumstances appropriate to this process will include disruption to examinations e.g. due to fire alarms. Please refer to the Student Complaints Procedure for further information: http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/stdserv/Master_copy_-_Student_Complaints_Procedure.pdf.

What is **not** considered “extenuating circumstances” and where can students find support for these matters?

10. The following circumstances **are not** considered extenuating by the University although the University has services in place which can support and advise students who are dealing with some of the difficulties indicated below:

   a) A claimed medical condition or medical circumstances where there is no medical evidence to support it;

   b) A claimed medical condition supported by “retrospective” medical evidence—that is, evidence that is not based on a contemporaneous consultation at the same time as the illness, e.g. a doctor’s note which states that the student was seen (after the illness occurred) and declared they had been ill previously;

   c) A medical condition that relies on evidence that does not relate to the time when the student claims they were affected or does not relate to the same illness the student claims they were affected by;

   d) A self-certified illness or medical circumstances;

   e) Any claimed circumstances for which appropriate adjustments have already been made by the University and where there is no evidence of a worsening of the condition which requires further consideration;

   f) Stress and panic attacks caused by exams that are not diagnosed as an illness or documented in the Disabled Students Allowances agreement;

   g) An illness occurring after an examination/in-class test or the deadline for submission of coursework;

   h) A minor illness such as a cough or cold that would not normally lead a responsible and reasonable employed person to take sick leave;

   i) Pregnancy unless there are complications relating to the pregnancy which
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medical evidence can substantiate;

j) Assessments and examinations scheduled within a short period;

k) Poor working practice such as:
   • Failure to back up electronic documents regularly and securely;
   • Failure on the part of the student to acquaint themselves with the times, dates, and places where assessments were to be submitted or examinations to be sat;
   • Poor time management;

l) Problems with network facilities, personal computers or printers, except those maintained by the University specifically to support students;

m) Financial matters;

n) Where students are studying on a full-time basis, issues relating to paid employment except in cases of work placements which contribute to the programme of study;

o) Job interviews;

p) House moves, renovations or other routine accommodation difficulties;

q) Holidays, including attendance at marriages, festivals and like events including religious festivals. For more information, please see the Code of practice for supporting students relating to religion, belief and teaching and learning; http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/qualitysupport/religionandbelief.pdf;

r) Death or illness of a pet;

s) Circumstances stated to be unforeseen that a reasonable person would view as foreseeable or preventable.

11. This list is not exhaustive and further information on what is not accepted as extenuating circumstances can be found in Annex 1- Further information on evidence required to support extenuating circumstances.

12. The University is committed to offering support and guidance for students on the above matters and therefore students should seek advice from the various student support services available. For a complete list of services and advice centres, students should refer to the Essentials website: http://student.reading.ac.uk/essentials/_support-and-wellbeing.aspx. Students may also wish to seek guidance and support from the RUSU Advice Service: http://www.rusu.co.uk/advice/.

How do students notify the University of extenuating circumstances?

13. Useful definitions:
   a) Deadline assessments- those assessments for which students are required to adhere to a deadline for submission; and

   b) Event assessments—those assessments which are not easily recreated and for which an extension is not appropriate, e.g. centrally organised examinations, practical assessments and in-class tests administered locally by Schools/Departments.

14. Students must inform the University if they believe that they have extenuating circumstances through submission of an Extenuating Circumstances form, normally to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or to the relevant Programme Administrator in Henley Business School
(HBS). In case of joint Honours, the student should go to the School that owns their programme. A single form is used for extension requests for deadline assessments as well as in relation to event assessments. The form can be found here:


15. **Extenuating circumstances** forms will only be given substantive consideration by the University if they are accompanied by suitable relevant evidence. Details of acceptable evidence can be found in Annex 1 - Further information on evidence required to support extenuating circumstances. **Evidence must be received within 5 working days of submission of the form** unless there is an exceptional reason why the evidence could not be provided within the specified timeframe. Students must submit evidence (either electronically or original hard copy) in accordance with information and advice provided by the School.

16. If a student does not wish to disclose their circumstances to their School or Department, they should submit an *Extenuating Circumstances* form to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or to the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS, accompanied by a written request that a decision be taken at University level, without the details of their case being shared with their School or Department. The Student Support Coordinator or Programme Administrator in HBS will inform the student’s School that an *Extenuating Circumstances* form has been submitted and will also inform the School of the decision but will not disclose any details about the circumstances to the School. The student will determine, in private consultation with the Student Support Coordinator or Programme Administrator in HBS, what information will be made available to the decision-making body and what will remain confidential.

**When must students notify the University of extenuating circumstances?**

17. The University has set deadlines by which students are required to notify extenuating circumstances and the mechanism of notification is submission of the *Extenuating Circumstances* form accompanied by suitable relevant evidence.

**Deadline assessments**

18. Students must *normally* submit an *Extenuating Circumstances* form to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS before the deadline for submission of the coursework.

**Event assessments**

19. Separate deadlines apply to centrally organised end of Part examinations and in-class tests administered locally by Schools/Departments.

a) End of Part examinations - The University must have notification of extenuating circumstances from students by specified dates which can be found on the Examinations, Student Records & Graduation Office website:


b) In-class tests – Students must normally submit an *Extenuating Circumstances* form to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS before the date of the in-class test and no later than five working days after the date of the test.

**Late submission of Extenuating Circumstances forms**

20. Forms submitted after the relevant deadline will not normally be considered. If the student was not able to submit the form due to hospitalisation, incarceration or equivalent physical or
mental incapacity, then a statement which details the reason for the lateness must be submitted as well as the Extenuating Circumstances form. Statements must be substantiated with evidence and will follow the normal requirements for relevant evidence.

Advice on completing an Extenuating Circumstances form

21. If necessary, students should seek advice prior to submission of an Extenuating Circumstances form from one or more of the following: the Advice Service at RUSU; the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the Teaching and Learning Officer and relevant Programme Administrator in HBS; the School Senior Tutor; their Personal Tutor, or the School/Department Director of Teaching and Learning.

Decisions in respect of coursework

Responsible body: Senior Tutors

22. When an Extenuating Circumstances form has been submitted by the student in relation to a request for an extension, the normal expectation is that the following will take place at School level.

- Requests for extensions for deadline assessments will be reviewed in line with the evidence received.
- Reasonable adjustments to the deadline of assessed coursework can be made by the Senior Tutor in the School.
- Where appropriate, options should be discussed in relation to the needs of the student and any support that the University can provide.
- The student should be encouraged to consult any relevant support services, in particular Counselling and Wellbeing, the Disability Advisory Service, the University Study Advisers and the Advice Service at RUSU. The student may also be encouraged to consult a medical practitioner.

23. The Senior Tutor, or their alternate, has the authority to make the following decisions regarding an Extenuating Circumstances form in relation to coursework (please note that the Senior Tutor does not have the authority to reconsider a mark awarded to an assessment, except for the removal of a penalty for late submission):

a) Impose an appropriate deadline for submission of evidence but not normally more than 5 working days from the deadline for submission of the Extenuating Circumstances form;

b) Reject on grounds of lack of appropriate evidence;

c) Reject on grounds that the request is made due to an insubstantial event and is not “extenuating” as defined in paragraph 8 above;

d) Removal of a penalty for late submission;

e) Provide reasonable adjustments to the deadline of assessed coursework;

f) Vary the assessment method or the weighting of particular assessed elements in the module. Where the proposed variation is substantial or complex, the Senior Tutor should consult the Teaching and Learning Dean and inform the relevant Student Support Coordinator or Director of Administration and/or Teaching and Learning Officer in HBS;

g) Following discussions with the module convenor and programme director, exempt a student from a minor piece of coursework (contributing 10% or less of the credits of the module). Senior Tutors cannot make exemptions from coursework which would mean that, when taking into account similar exemptions within the academic year, the
student will have been exempt from credits amounting to greater than 5% of total available credits in a given year. It is important to note that the Senior Tutor does not have the authority to reconsider the mark achieved even if circumstances have affected performance;

h) Make a recommendation to the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean to exempt a student from a piece of coursework contributing more than 10% of the credits of the module;

i) In the event that a proposed extension would go beyond the student’s normal period of registration, make a recommendation (with a detailed rationale) to the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean. It should be noted that only the Teaching and Learning Dean has the power to grant such an extension;

j) Authorise absence from lectures, laboratory classes, seminars, workshops and tutorials;

k) [In the following provision, ‘Senior Tutor’ does not include Section Head in branch campuses.] Where a School is responsible for a programme or subject area in a branch campus, the Senior Tutor in the School and Section Head in the branch campus will liaise to ensure that decisions across campuses are consistent and equitable.

24. If appropriate, the possibility of suspension or the possibility of withdrawal from the University should be discussed with the student. The student should be informed of the relevant policies and procedures. For further details of the procedure relating to suspensions, please refer to the Policy on and procedures for suspensions.

25. Students will be informed immediately on their University email address as soon as an action is decided on their submitted Extenuating Circumstances form. Decisions on deadline assessments will not exceed 5 working days from receipt of the form and substantiating evidence, unless the request relates to an extension beyond the student’s normal period of registration.

26. If a student wishes to appeal a School-level decision made on an Extenuating Circumstances form relating to individual assessment within a module, they should submit a written letter of appeal to the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean, copied to the relevant Student Support Centre Manager or to the Director of Administration in HBS, for consideration. If a student wishes to appeal against a decision of the Teaching and Learning Dean in respect of a decision relating to an extension which would go beyond the student’s normal registration, they should submit a letter of appeal to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), copied to the relevant Student Support Centre Manager, or to the Director of Administration in HBS, for consideration.

Decisions in respect of in-class tests

Responsible body: Senior Tutors

27. If a student has extenuating circumstances which they wish to be considered in relation to an in-class test, then an Extenuating Circumstances form must be submitted to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS along with relevant evidence. Senior Tutors are responsible for considering Extenuating Circumstances forms in respect of in-class tests.

28. The Senior Tutor, or their alternate, has the authority to make the following decisions regarding an Extenuating Circumstances form in relation to an in-class test (It is important to note that the Senior Tutor does not have the authority to reconsider the mark awarded for an assessment even if circumstances have affected performance):
a) Impose an appropriate deadline for submission of evidence but not normally more than 5 working days from the deadline for submission of the Extenuating Circumstances form;

b) Reject on grounds of lack of appropriate evidence;

c) Reject on grounds that the request is made due to an insubstantial event and is not “extenuating” as defined in paragraph 8 above;

d) Vary the assessment method or the weighting of particular assessed elements in the module. Where the proposed variation is substantial or complex, the Senior Tutor should consult the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean and inform the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the Director of Administration and/or Teaching and Learning Officer in HBS;

e) Following discussions with the module convenor and programme director, exempt a student from an in-class test contributing 10% or less of the credits of the module. Senior Tutors cannot make exemptions from in-class tests which would mean that, when taking into account similar exemptions within the academic year, the student will have been exempt from credits amounting to greater than 5% of total available credits in a given year;

f) Make a recommendation to the Chair of the relevant Special Cases Sub-Committee (SCSC) to exempt a student from an in-class test contributing more than 10% of the credits of the module. Where the student is a Finalist or a Masters student, the Chair of the SCSC should consult the External Examiner before making a decision;

g) Agree that the student’s circumstances qualify as extenuating circumstances and recommend to the Chair of the relevant SCSC that the student be Deemed Not to have Sat in relevant modules. A decision can be taken by Chair’s action where necessary;

h) [In the following provision, ‘Senior Tutor’ does not include Section Head in branch campuses] Where a School is responsible for a programme or subject area in a branch campus, the Senior Tutor in the School and Section Head in the branch campus will liaise to ensure that decisions across campuses are consistent and equitable.

29. Where appropriate, options should be discussed in relation to the needs of the student and any support that the University can provide.

30. If appropriate, the possibility of suspension or the possibility of withdrawal from the University should be discussed with the student. The student should be informed of the relevant policies and procedures. For further details of the procedure relating to suspensions, please refer to the Policy on and procedures for suspensions.

31. The student should be encouraged to consult any relevant support services, in particular Counselling and Wellbeing, the Disability Advisory Service, the University Study Advisers and the Advice Service at RUSU. The student may also be encouraged to consult a medical practitioner.

32. Students will be informed immediately on their University email address as soon as an action is decided on their submitted Extenuating Circumstances form. Decisions will not exceed 5 working days from receipt of the form and substantiating evidence, except where consultation with a Teaching and Learning Dean or External Examiner is required (in which case, the student will be informed, not later than 5 working days following submission of the form, of the process being followed and the anticipated timeframe for a decision).

33. If a student wishes to appeal a School-level decision made on an Extenuating Circumstances form relating to individual assessment within a module, they should submit a written letter of
appeal to the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean, copied to the relevant Student Support Centre Manager, or to the Director of Administration in HBS, for consideration. If a student wishes to appeal against a decision of the Chair of the SCSC, they should submit a letter of appeal to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), copied to the relevant Student Support Centre Manager, or to the Director of Administration in HBS, for consideration.

34. Further information in respect of the operation and responsibilities of University Progression Board and Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committees, including their membership, is provided below, along with further information on the implications of a student being Deemed Not to have Sat in a particular module(s).

Non-finalist undergraduates: decisions in respect of examinations and Part results

Responsible body: University Progression Board Special Cases Sub-Committee

35. If a non-Finalist undergraduate student has extenuating circumstances which they wish to be considered in relation to examinations or overall performance in the year, then an Extenuating Circumstances form must be submitted to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS along with relevant evidence. The Student Support Coordinator/Programme Administrator will submit to the Secretary of the relevant University Progression Board Special Cases Sub-Committee all such Extenuating Circumstances forms and evidence received. Schools or Sections at international branch campuses are invited to provide a view of the case under consideration to the University Progression Board Special Cases Sub-Committee in order to allow an opportunity for staff to provide any relevant cultural context to cases under consideration.

36. For non-Finalist undergraduate students, the University Progression Board Special Cases Sub-Committee (SCSC) is responsible for considering candidates’ Extenuating Circumstances forms in respect of examinations and overall performance in the year.

37. The membership of the University Progression Board Special Cases Sub-Committee comprises:

- The relevant Teaching and Learning Dean (Chair)
- The Head of Counselling and Wellbeing
- A Representative of the University Medical Practice
- A second Teaching and Learning Dean
- The Student Support and Advice Manager or the Programme Manager, or the Director of Administration and the Teaching and Learning Officer for HBS
- The Head of Examinations, Student Records & Graduation

The Head of Wellbeing and/or Representative of the University Medical Practice will contribute to the discussion as appropriate in order to evaluate any evidence presented by the student regarding his/her physical or mental health.

38. The University Progression Board SCSC can make the following decisions on submitted cases:

a) Reject on grounds of insufficient evidence;

b) Reject on grounds of insufficient impact on studies;

c) Agree that the student’s circumstances qualify as extenuating circumstances and recommend that the student be Deemed Not to have Sat in relevant modules, in which case paragraphs 39-44 apply.

39. In those cases where the University Progression Board SCSC concludes, on the basis of
evidence, that the student’s circumstances in respect of modules examined in the current academic year qualify as extenuating circumstances, the University Progression Board SCSC must recommend to the University Progression Board that the candidate be offered the opportunity to be Deemed Not to have Sat (DNS) in those modules which have been negatively impacted by the extenuating circumstance. This applies equally to students who have met the requirements to pass and to those who have not.

40. **Students are not required to take up a DNS and if they choose not to, the original mark will stand and, for those Parts which contribute to classification, their case will be referred to the Programme Special Cases Sub-Committee for consideration at final degree classification.**

41. A student who has been DNSed will be allowed to take the assessment again without an increment in the attempt number. If the assessment is an examination, the student will sit the examination in the next examination period. When a student is DNSed in a module, the mark for the relevant assessment component is cancelled and the assessment for the module is incomplete.

42. Students need to be aware that, if the next examination period falls after teaching has commenced on the next Part of study, then a student granted DNS must suspend until the next University examination period. Students are not allowed to progress to the next Part of study until they have completed the assessment for the Part and have met the relevant progression requirements.

43. Following the meeting of the University Progression Board, the Examinations, Student Records & Graduation Office will e-mail all students who are agreed to have had extenuating circumstances, advising them of their options. The students are then required to reply to the Examinations, Student Records and Graduation Office providing the information requested.

44. It should be noted that students can only be granted DNS on two occasions per Part of study.

45. In exceptional cases, the University Progression Board SCSC can determine that the student’s circumstances are severe enough to determine that they have not had the benefit of formal tuition and therefore can be allowed to repeat the previous Part of study. It should be noted that, where a student is offered the opportunity to repeat the Part, the student will be required to submit a statement from a medical professional that they are fit to undertake their studies. If this cannot be provided then the student must suspend until such time that they are fit to resume their studies.

**Finalists and Masters students: decisions in respect of examinations and final results**

**Responsible body: Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee**

46. If a Finalist undergraduate or a Masters student has extenuating circumstances which they wish to be considered in relation to examinations or overall performance in the year, then an Extenuating Circumstances form must be submitted to the relevant Student Support Coordinator or the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS along with relevant evidence. The Student Support Coordinator/Programme Administrator will submit to the Secretary of the relevant Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee all such Extenuating Circumstances forms and evidence received. Schools or Sections at international branch campuses are invited to provide a view of the case under consideration to the Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee in order to allow an opportunity for staff to provide any relevant cultural context to cases under consideration.

47. For Finalists and Masters students, the Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee
is responsible for considering candidates’ *Extenuating Circumstances* forms in respect of examinations and overall performance in the year, and for considering extenuating circumstances which have been referred for consideration from previous Parts.

48. The membership of the Programme Examiners’ SCSC comprises:
   - Internal Examiners (from among whom the Heads of the relevant Schools/Departments should appoint a Chair)
   - School Director of Teaching and Learning
   - Senior Tutor
   - A School Director of Teaching and Learning from another School (normally in a non-cognate area)
   - External Examiners.

   The Programme Examiners may appoint further members, but the membership should be restricted to a small group given the sensitive nature of the information under consideration.

49. Schools are required to consult Student Wellbeing Services, in advance of Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee meetings, about cases where they have particular concerns in relation to appropriate decision making, and Student Wellbeing Services shall provide appropriate guidance, liaising where appropriate with the Medical Centre.

   A member of the Student Wellbeing team should be asked to attend Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee meetings exceptionally where (a) case(s) of particular complexity might warrant their attendance at discussions.

50. The Programme Examiners’ SCSC can make the following decisions on submitted cases:
   a) Reject on grounds of insufficient evidence;
   b) Reject on grounds of insufficient impact on studies;
   c) Agree that the student’s circumstances qualify as extenuating circumstances in which case paragraphs 51-58 apply.

51. In those cases where the Programme Examiners’ SCSC concludes, on the basis of evidence, that the student’s circumstances in respect of modules examined in the current academic year qualify as extenuating circumstances, the Programme Examiners’ SCSC must recommend to the Programme Examiners that the candidate be offered the opportunity to be Deemed Not to have Sat (DNS) in those modules which have been affected by the extenuating circumstances. This applies equally to students who have met the requirements for a Pass or classified Honours and to those who have not.

   In addition, the Programme Examiners’ SCSC may recommend to the Programme Examiners’ Meeting that:
   a) a candidate be given a higher classification than that implied by the set of marks achieved, in which case the recommended result should be specified;
   b) a candidate be awarded an Aegrotat degree, in which case the recommendation, if accepted by the Programme Examiners, will be referred onward to the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean to consider and, if appropriate, approve on behalf of the University Awarding Board. The award of an Aegrotat will normally have been discussed with the Teaching and Learning Dean in advance of the Programme Examiners’ SCSC; or
   c) a candidate exceptionally be allowed to repeat the previous Part or year of study in cases where the candidate’s circumstances are so severe that they have not had the benefit of formal tuition during the academic year. In such cases, the recommendation, if accepted by the Programme Examiners, will be referred onward to the relevant Teaching and Learning Dean to consider and, if appropriate, approve.
Where a student is offered the opportunity to repeat the Part, the student should be advised to consult Student Services on the financial implications of repeating a Part. It should be noted that a student who is offered the opportunity to repeat a Part will be required to submit a statement from a medical professional that they are fit to undertake their studies. If this cannot be provided then the student must suspend until such time that they are fit to resume their studies.

52. In considering (51(a)) above, the Programme Examiners’ Special Cases Sub-Committee should consider carefully the evidence of a candidate’s performance and the basis for a recommendation, which might include: deriving a result from a reduced number of modules, excluding a limited number of modules affected by adverse circumstances; attaching greater weight to exit velocity; or deeming criteria to have been met where the shortfall is marginal.

53. In those cases where the Programme Examiners’ SCSC has agreed that the student has extenuating circumstances and their recommendation has been approved by the Programme Examiners’ Meeting, the student will be offered a choice. The student may:

   a) Accept one or more of the DNSs offered in relevant modules and take the examinations at the next opportunity without increment of the attempt number. Students who choose this option will not have a final result and will not be able to graduate at this stage; OR

   b) Accept the result as agreed provisionally by the Programme Examiners’ Meeting, which will be the result calculated on the basis of the marks or a classification agreed under (51(a)) above or an Aegrotat; OR

   c) (In those cases, where the exceptional allowance has been agreed) accept the allowance to repeat the Part or Year.

54. **Students are not required to take up a DNS and if they choose not to, the original mark will stand.**

55. Following the decisions of the Programme Examiners’ Meeting(s), the relevant Student Advice and Support Manager or the relevant Programme Administrator in HBS will e-mail all students who are agreed to have had an extenuating circumstance, advising them of their alternative courses of action (as indicated above) and requiring them to respond by a date to be specified annually by the Examinations, Student Records & Graduation Office. **Students who have not responded by the specified date will, by default, be deemed to have accepted the result as agreed provisionally by the Programme Examiners’ Meeting and will graduate.**

56. Where a student who has fulfilled the requirements for a Pass or classified Honours is offered a DNS, s/he is strongly encouraged to seek advice from the School Senior Tutor, School or Department Director of Teaching and Learning or other named member of academic staff.

57. The relevant Student Advice and Support Manager or the Teaching and Learning Officer in HBS must report candidates’ decisions to the University Awarding Board. For Masters candidates who have not reached the end of their programme, a list of decisions should be sent to the Examinations, Student Records & Graduation Office.

58. A student who has been DNSed will be allowed to take the assessment again without an increment in the attempt number. If the assessment is an examination, the student will sit the examination in the next examination period. When a student is DNSed in a module, the mark for the relevant assessment component is cancelled and the assessment for the module is incomplete.

59. Finalist undergraduates and Masters students need to be aware that, if the next examination period falls after the end of their normal period of registration, their registration will be
suspended and they will return at the next University examination period to take examinations only.

60. Extenuating circumstances in respect of a previous Part may be referred to the Programme Examiners’ SCSC, typically either because a student had passed the Part and had not been granted a DNS (which was the normal practice prior to 2014/5) or the student had declined a DNS (from 2014/5 onwards). In such cases, the Programme Examiners’ SCSC must consider whether the extenuating circumstances had a material impact on the student’s mark profile and calculated classification and whether, in consequence, the student should be given a higher classification than that implied by the set of marks achieved, in which case the recommended result should be specified.

Appeals – Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results

61. The Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results will consider appeals by students against examination results.

62. The Committee delegates to a panel its powers and responsibilities for considering appeals of results. The panel shall be drawn from the membership of the Committee and shall comprise:
   - A Pro-Vice-Chancellor designated by the Vice-Chancellor (Chair);
   - One Student Officer from Reading University Students’ Union (RUSU);
   - Three other members to be selected by the Chair from the membership of the Committee as published in the Calendar.

63. A student who is considering appealing against his/her result is advised to consult with the Head of School and an Advisor at the Students’ Union (RUSU).

64. A student who wishes to appeal against his or her result is required to submit a completed Appeal of Results form (with appropriate supporting documentation) before the specified date which shall be published in advance online by the Examinations, Student Records & Graduation Office.

65. A student who has submitted notice of intention to submit a case shall not be permitted to graduate until the Congregation following the settlement of the case. Where a student has submitted notice to submit a case and is currently ineligible to proceed to the next Part of their programme, the student shall not be permitted to proceed until the relevant progression requirements have been fulfilled.

66. The detailed procedures of the Committee are described in the Procedures for considering appeals of results at [www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/exa-appeal.aspx](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/exa-appeal.aspx).

67. The decision of the Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results shall be final subject to the right of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

Support services available to students

68. Students should be encouraged by their School to consult relevant support services while their cases are being dealt with under the extenuating circumstances procedures. These support services may include, as appropriate, Counselling and Wellbeing, the Disability Advisory Service, the University Study Advisers and the Advisory Service at RUSU. Students may also be encouraged to consult a medical practitioner.

69. For details of the entitlement of suspended students to access support services, please refer to the [Policy on and procedures for suspensions](http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/suspensions.aspx)
Policy on and procedures relating to extenuating circumstances


Monitoring

70. A panel comprising two Teaching and Learning Deans, the Director of Administration, HBS, and a Student Advice and Support Manager will meet annually to monitor the consistency of Programme Examiners’ decisions in respect of extenuating circumstances for Finalist undergraduates and Masters students by means of sampling and statistical analysis. They will also monitor decisions of the University Progression Board in respect of extenuating circumstances for non-Finalist undergraduates.
Annex 1: Further information on evidence required to support extenuating circumstances

1. Where a student encounters unforeseen circumstances that are beyond the student’s control and have negatively impacted on their performance, they must notify the University of their circumstances via the Extenuating Circumstances form.

2. All forms (with the exception of self-certified extensions) must be accompanied by corroborating evidence and the evidence must be provided in English. Where the original document is in another language, then a certified translation must accompany the evidence. It is the student’s responsibility to incur any fees associated with providing evidence in support of an extenuating circumstances case.

3. The nature of the evidence required includes:
   a) For bereavement, a death certificate or a signed and dated letter from a minister of religion, medical practitioner, police officer, solicitor, magistrate or other officer of the law or a person with equivalent professional standing, or an order of service;
   b) For illness, a signed and dated letter from a medical practitioner (GP, clinical specialist, or registered professional in psychiatric practice) that states the dates when the illness affected the student and how, without breaching confidence, the circumstances affected or are likely to affect the student’s ability to prepare for an assessment, submit or attend for an assessment or recognise and deal with their circumstances;
   c) For a student awaiting a diagnosis of an illness or condition, a signed and dated letter from a medical practitioner that states the dates when the student attended for treatment, when tests were undertaken, and when a diagnosis is expected;
   d) For accident or injury, a copy of an accident report provided by a police officer, Magistrate, or Magistrate’s Clerk; or a signed and dated letter from a medical practitioner. In all cases where a letter is provided it must state the dates when the accident or injury occurred, how the student was affected, the position and qualification(s) of the person providing the letter and their contact details;
   e) For significant adverse personal or family circumstances encountered by a student, a signed and dated letter from one or more of the following: a medical practitioner, a
social worker (stating their position with respect to the student), a registered psychological therapist, a registered professional in psychiatric practice, an officer of the law, or a minister of religion. The letter must provide the signatory’s position and qualifications(s) and their contact details and must provide information on the time when the circumstances occurred, whether they are continuing and an opinion on the severity and effect the circumstances are having on the student;

f) For students who are members of sports teams at the national or international level, a letter must be provided from the supporting sports body indicating the dates when the student is required for training and for competitions;

g) For part-time and distance learning students in full-time employment only, who have experienced an increase in their workload due to circumstances beyond their control, or have been required by their employer or a client to work through normal periods available for study and/or assessment:

   i. Where they are in employment, a signed and dated letter from their employer, or their employer’s authorised representative, stating that the student has been required by them to undertake work in the interests of the employer and that this was in time that had previously been agreed would be available to the student to study, prepare for assessment or take an assessment;

   ii. Where they are self-employed, evidence from their client or the client’s authorised representative stating that they have required the student to undertake unforeseen work that was necessary in the interests of the client’s business, together with the dates and times when the student had been required to attend the client or undertake the previously unforeseen work;

   iii. For military service, the individual’s call-up papers (translated where necessary) together with evidence to show that the service cannot be deferred.

4. A list of circumstances which the University does not consider extenuating circumstances is given in paragraph 10 (above).