

To: All students

Date: Thursday 4 March / Friday 5 March

Subject: Your assessment support package 2020/21: Post-results Extenuating Circumstances

Dear students,

This message is being sent urgently to all students and we recognise that this may include some who have recently completed their studies, as well as our postgraduate research students. Please ignore this message if you are not a current Foundation, undergraduate or taught postgraduate (Master's) student.

We wrote to you last month with further information about the [arrangements for exams and assessments in 2020/21](#), including the steps we are taking to support you to succeed this year. In that email we said we were developing a new post-results Extenuating Circumstances process for the upcoming exam period and we are pleased to share more details about this with you now.

Our enhanced Extenuating Circumstances process

Our enhanced Extenuating Circumstances process is one of a suite of measures to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your current or future academic performances.

There are two core new elements:

1. Relaxation of evidence requirement for specific scenarios

We recognise that in the current context there are situations where it may be impossible or very difficult to obtain evidence, and we have therefore agreed to relax the requirement for evidence where it cannot be obtained. If you are unable to provide supporting evidence on the Extenuating Circumstances form on RISIS you must:

- clearly explain why you are unable to provide evidence;
 - provide a description of your circumstances;
- and
- describe the impact that your circumstances are having on your assessments.

This will help your School to understand how you have been affected when assessing your case, and to decide what mitigation is appropriate or if we can provide other support.

2. Post-results Extenuating Circumstances requests for examinations

We understand that you will be better able to evaluate the impact any adverse circumstances have had on your exam performance after the publication of your results. Therefore this year you will have the opportunity to submit a post-results Extenuating Circumstances form, allowing you to make an informed decision after you receive your exam results.

If you are granted post-results Extenuating Circumstances, you will be allowed to take the exam again. If you were taking the exam for the first time, when you take the exam again it will be considered a 'first attempt' (also known as DNS - 'Deemed Not to have Sat') and your original attempt will not be considered. In some cases the mode of assessment may be different. You must seek advice from your School before requesting a 'Deemed Not to have Sat', as there are some important implications to consider. The mark for your original attempt will be cancelled, pending the

next attempt, which means your overall classification or result for your relevant Part is also cancelled until your new result is published.

Once your results are published on RISIS, **you will have five working days to submit a post-results Extenuating Circumstances request** for our consideration. Evidence should be submitted at the same time, or within ten working days of the publication of results if this is not possible. Any evidence presented after this date will be considered but may not be processed in time for you to resit exams in the August/September period. If you cannot provide evidence, you will have the opportunity to explain this on the form.

Please do not submit an Extenuating Circumstances form for issues relating to exam performance until you have received your results and read the important advice to consider which will soon be published on Essentials, along with the full policy.

Existing arrangements for Extenuating Circumstances

We also wanted to take this opportunity to make sure you are aware of our [existing arrangements for Extenuating Circumstances](#), including these two important provisions:

- we will extend coursework deadlines if you have experienced unforeseen issues that have prevented you from completing your coursework on time; and
- you can delay examinations from April/May to the next examinations period in August/September, if you already know you will not be in a position to successfully complete these exams due to circumstances beyond your control. We hope the introduction of post-results Extenuating Circumstances requests gives you the confidence to take your exams as planned. However, if you are considering requesting a delay, you must first seek advice from your School or Support Centre (or Henley Helpdesk or ISLI Admin Office) because it is important that you understand the implications of delaying your exams.

Your wider assessment support package for 2020/21

Our [assessment support package](#) has been developed to provide flexibility at individual, module, and institutional level while also ensuring that your work is recognised through your academic achievements.

We have done this to achieve three goals - to make sure:

- **assessment is fair** – by making adjustments to respond to the changing circumstances, the impact on specific groups (such as at module or programme level), and to reflect the content that you have been taught;
- **academic attainment is recognised** - by providing you with the opportunity to undertake coursework and exams, with appropriate adjustments in place;
- **specific impacts experienced by individuals are mitigated** – by enhancing our Extenuating Circumstances process to be more flexible with evidence requirements and allow post-results requests.

Publication of April/May exam timetable

As previously communicated, the majority of exams this year will be take-home online exams, regardless of any easing of the national lockdown. We are working to our usual timeframe to publish the exam timetable for April/May by the end of the spring term. You will receive an email when your

timetable is available to view on RISIS. Further advice and information to help you prepare for take-home online exams will be published alongside your timetable.

Further support

If you have any concerns or queries about your teaching or assessments, please do not hesitate to contact us. In the first instance, we recommend that you speak to your Module Convenor, Academic Tutor or School Director of Teaching and Learning. You can also contact your Support Centre (or Henley Helpdesk or ISLI Admin Office).

Our [wider network of specialist support teams](#) continues to be available online to support your welfare, wellbeing and development. Further information is available on Essentials.

Thank you for taking the time to read this message. We wish you the very best with your studies this term.

Best wishes,
Elizabeth & Julian

Professor Elizabeth McCrum & Professor Julian Park
Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Education & Student Experience