The University has approved a new way in which circumstances that may have affected your performance in an assessment will be considered – these are called ‘mitigating circumstances’. The new regulations are designed to make the process easier to understand, be more transparent, and to help you appreciate the way in which the University is able respond to your mitigating circumstances. This short summary describes the way in which the process will operate from 2010/11 onwards.

What are mitigating circumstances?

Mitigating circumstances are circumstances which were beyond your control and which could not be reasonably accommodated by you and which seriously impaired your performance in assessment. All three parts of this definition must be met for the University to agree you were affected by mitigating circumstances. For example, these circumstances could be medical or personal. In all cases you will be required to provide satisfactory documentary evidence to support your claim – if you fail to supply satisfactory documentary evidence your request will be turned down. The only exception is for very short extensions to an assessment deadline (up to one week), where you may be allowed to self-certify your difficulties if there is a valid reason why you cannot provide evidence.

When should I submit my evidence of mitigating circumstances?

In all cases, you should submit your claim and your evidence as soon as possible and in any case always before an assessment deadline or exam. If you miss a deadline you will not only need to demonstrate that you were affected by mitigating circumstances but you will need to provide evidence that you were unable to submit your claim by the deadline. So don’t delay if you wish to claim mitigating circumstances!

What if I miss a deadline without mitigating circumstances?

If you miss an assessment deadline or an exam without approval for valid mitigating circumstances you will receive zero for that assessment. You must not miss deadlines!

If mitigating circumstances are approved, what will happen?

If your claim for mitigating circumstances is approved then you will be granted an extension to your submission deadline of up to four weeks or allowed to re-sit your examination (or, in certain situations only, an entire module). The University does not increase marks on the basis of mitigating circumstances. This is because the University wants you to demonstrate your full potential in assessments – if it is agreed you were affected by mitigating circumstances then we will give you an extension or a re-sit so you can demonstrate your potential unaffected by such circumstances.

Where can I find out more?

In 2010/11 the Academic Management Office and your School will advise you of the exact deadlines and ways in which you must submit evidence of mitigating circumstances. You can view the entire new set of regulations now, they are available on-line:

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/asd/registry/mitcircs.html