

Extenuating circumstances policy

1. Introduction

1.1 IoB students are expected to meet the academic demands of their chosen programme. However, they may experience a range of serious and unanticipated difficulties, which adversely affect their ability to study, complete assessments or attend their required classes and other learning activities.

1.2 The IoB Programme Board will consider such circumstances in reaching decisions about a student's academic performance subject to the impact of those circumstances being described and appropriately verified. To support the Programme Board in fulfilling this responsibility requires the definition of appropriate policy and procedure in respect of extenuating circumstances.

2. Context

2.1 All students need to be treated equitably as part of the assessment process. To assist the Programme Board in its decision-making process, it is necessary to have an appropriate evidence base to inform the judgements which can be made. This paper sets out the definition of extenuating circumstances, policy principles for extenuating circumstances and provides a suggested format and process for the consideration of these circumstances. The process is aligned with the current responsibilities of the IOB Programme Board and the IoB Assessment Appeals procedure.

3. Definition of Extenuating Circumstances

3.1 The definition of extenuating circumstances is the occurrence of unforeseen events which have prevented a student from attending a substantial number of classes, affected their ability to study or complete assessments (both continuous assessment and/or examinations), resulted in assessment deadlines being missed or adversely affected performance in any assessments undertaken.

3.2 Such circumstances include serious illness, hospitalisation, accident, family bereavement or other serious personal or emotional circumstances.

3.3 Extenuating circumstances do not cover events which are foreseen, e.g. sporting or cultural commitments. Where appropriate, the student should follow procedures under the [Policy on Late Submission of Coursework](#).

4. Key Principles

The policy and process for extenuating circumstances is based on the following principles:

4.1 This policy is to be applied to students enrolled on a programme leading to a UCD award.

4.2 All students must be treated equitably.

4.3 All information provided in relation to extenuating circumstances will be treated in strictest confidence and in accordance with the principles of GDPR. Such information will be limited to the personnel directly involved in administering and evaluating the circumstances.

4.4 The application should be dealt with as quickly and as locally as possible. To expedite the processing of applications during a trimester, the Programme Board will delegate authority to a sub-committee¹ or standing committee of its members.

4.5 Applications for extenuating circumstances must be made as close as possible to the assessment(s) affected and within the timeframe set for applications. Retrospective applications may be considered only in exceptional cases where there are valid reasons for non-submission within the usual timeframe.

4.6 IOB reserves the right to investigate the validity of applications. In cases where there is a suspicion that an application may have been submitted fraudulently, the issue may be referred to IoB's disciplinary process.

4.7 The decision on the impact of the extenuating circumstances on the student's performance is a matter of academic judgement on the part of the Programme Board.

4.8 The decision taken by the Programme Board is final.

4.9 A student may only appeal a decision through the IoB Assessment Appeals route if there were extenuating circumstances of which the Programme Board was aware but had rejected because the application was late and the Programme Board did not consider the reason why the application was late to be valid.

5. Process

5.1 Students are required to make a formal statement of circumstances which have affected them, outline the impact of these circumstances and support this statement with appropriate written verification.

5.2 This verification must comprise a statement from an appropriate professional or other recognised person verifying the circumstances described in the application and indicating their impact on the student's ability to meet the demands of the programme.

5.3 Following the submission of an application to the Programme Office, it is processed in accordance with the procedures set out below.

5.4 All decisions are ratified at a meeting of the Governing Board

6. Supporting Documentation is available on iob.ie/info/student-info#exams-and-regulations

- Application Form for Extenuating Circumstances
- Staff Guide to the Policy on Extenuating Circumstances
- Student Guide to the Policy on Extenuating Circumstances

¹ IOB Programme Board Sub-Committee

Process for Dealing with Applications for Extenuating Circumstances

Applications for extenuating circumstances are considered by the Programme Examination Board / Prog Board Sub-Committee (delegated committee). The following process applies in IoB:

