



**Cheshire College
South & West**

CCSW Academic Regulations – Part H

Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances (EECs)

Principles

The policy is built around the following key principles:

- Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances (EECs) are serious unforeseeable events which can be shown to have had a significant impact on students' academic performance, in particular the assessment(s) which a student is undertaking.
- All students are given a fair opportunity to demonstrate their learning achievements through assessment.
- In the event of a significant incident, not of the student's own making, which results in the student not being able to complete an assessment, or the performance of the student is adversely affected, there shall be a process by which the College will be able to give the student an opportunity to complete a new assessment.
- No student should gain an unfair advantage over other students through the exceptional extenuating circumstance process. The grade and outcome should be no more and no less than is merited through the student's performance in normal circumstances.
- As a consequence of this policy, the standards of the College's awards are safeguarded, for the benefit of current and prospective students, employers and public agencies.
- Where circumstances beyond a student's control impact negatively on an assessment opportunity the student may submit a claim for exceptional extenuating circumstances.
- Exceptional extenuating circumstances may apply in one of the following circumstances:
 - Where severe circumstances prevent a student from taking or completing a module properly
 - Where a student is unable to attend a formal examination due to exceptional extenuating circumstances
 - Where exceptional extenuating circumstances can be shown to have affected a student's performance in assessment.

- In such circumstances as outlined above, the policy allows for one of the following solutions, as appropriate:
 - The student is allowed to repeat the module
 - A deferred assessment/examination is allowed
 - An opportunity to undertake a fresh assessment at the next assessment point. In such circumstances, the assessment undertaken will be different to the original assessment.
 - For partner HEI provision and in accordance with partner HEI regulations, in exceptional cases for students completing their studies in that academic year it may be appropriate to discount the affected assessment in the student's overall profile.

- Exceptions to the need to submit a fresh assessment, as indicated above, exist in the following circumstances:
 - The assessment consists of multiple components completed across a period of time where only the latter components were affected by the exceptional extenuating circumstance such that new assessments would need to be devised for the latter impacted components only
 - The assessment is an Independent Study, a personal portfolio, a work-based learning project or employer negotiated assessment.

- Under no circumstances will a successful EEC claimant be allowed to submit the same assessment component as previously submitted by other students.

- This policy does not apply where a student has a disability or ongoing medical condition as this should be reported to Learner Services at application stage, on enrolment, or as soon as possible thereafter, so that it can be properly recorded and appropriate arrangements to support the student put in place to ensure that the student is not disadvantaged. It does, however, apply to a claim for a circumstance not covered by their support plan covering for example disability or maternity arrangements.

- Claims for exceptional extenuating circumstances will not normally be approved if they arise from matters which are evidently for them to control:
 - A student's failure to organise her/his time appropriately
 - A student's own negligence or carelessness
 - Circumstances for which a student has had ample opportunity to plan
 - Circumstances which a student did not disclose at the appropriate time (unless they were unable to do so due to circumstance e.g. their mental capacity was impaired)
 - Circumstances already addressed in a student's support plan
 - Any failure of computer related equipment.

- All claims for exceptional extenuating circumstances must be submitted on the appropriate form available from the HE@CCSW VLE portal and /or CCSW Higher Education webpages, which must be completed in full by the student and accompanied by the required evidence.

- In relation to coursework, claims must normally be submitted in advance of the handing-in date. In some cases a claim may be accepted after that date, provided there is a good reason why it could not be submitted prior to the handing in date.
 - In relation to examinations, claims must be submitted no later than seven days after the date of the examination, unless there is good reason why the evidence to support the claim was not yet available.
 - In all cases it is the student's responsibility to submit the form by the specified deadline.
- All evidence must be provided by either a professional who has specialist knowledge of the circumstances or by an independent source that is able to verify matters of a personal nature.
 - When a claim for exceptional extenuating circumstances is submitted against coursework, where possible the student should hand in any work (part-completed coursework, notes, etc.) that has been completed to date. If no work is submitted then the mark recorded will be a non-submission and the appropriate penalty will be applied. In the event that the claim is unsuccessful, the submitted work will be marked as a completed submission. Exceptions to this will only apply where it would have been impossible to hand in any work by the deadline. Examples may include: student in hospital; unable to return to country through flight disruption/disaster; student's mental capacity is impaired.
 - Where an EEC claim is upheld, in the solution outlined above, the work submitted by the original deadline will be marked as normal. The student will be informed of the grade awarded and given the opportunity to either accept that grade or to take up the offer of a fresh assessment. Students taking up the offer of submitting a fresh assessment will be informed of a new assessment deadline and the new work will be marked as if it had been submitted at the original deadline. The new deadline will normally be the next available assessment opportunity.
 - In the circumstances outlined above the EEC panel will offer an extension in accordance with the circumstances documented in the claim. The student will submit the work for the new deadline and it will be marked as if it was submitted by the original deadline.
 - Where the panel rejects the claim, no fresh opportunity to submit work or undertake a different assessment will be given to the student and the original mark will stand.
 - The EEC panel should normally be chaired by the relevant Assistant Principal, or nominee. It is expected that the relevant Assistant Director will also normally attend the panel, as will the Dean of Higher Education or nominee. The panel should also have a member from another Curriculum Area to ensure consistency of approach and decision making between panels.
 - The frequency of panel meetings should ensure that no students are kept waiting for a decision for an unreasonable period of time. The panel will be required to provide a judgement on each claim within 5 working days of its meeting. It will be the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that the student is notified of the decision.
 - In clear-cut cases where an urgent response is required, EECs can be approved by Chair's action and noted at the next formal EEC panel meeting.

- Where a student is declined an EEC, the student may be given 10 days in which to produce further information/evidence to support their claim. Students who have concerns regarding the outcome should seek advice from their personal tutor. The personal tutor will be able to:
 - Assist with the understanding of the outcome
 - Assist the student in responding to additional requirements from the panel
 - Identify what options are available to the student in light of the panel outcome
 - Support with referrals to other specialist areas in College.

Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances Procedure

- Students should apply for an EEC using the appropriate form available via the HE@CCSW VLE portal and / or CCSW Higher Education webpages. The form should be submitted to the Dean of Higher Education. Once all information and evidence has been received the Dean of Higher Education will forward it to the appropriate EEC Panel which will make a decision on the EEC application based on the evidence. Types of evidence that may be required include doctor's notes, crime reports, and death certificates, as appropriate.
- Non-confidential evidence is expected to be submitted with the application but students may identify evidence of a sensitive or personal nature which they wish only to be seen by the chair of the panel. Any such evidence should be placed in a sealed envelope and clearly marked 'Confidential'. Only the chair of the panel will read the confidential evidence. It will be his/her responsibility to provide a judgement for the panel on the seriousness or relevance of the evidence.
- EEC panels can be convened by the Dean of Higher Education as required and are normally chaired by the relevant Assistant Director, or nominee. It is the responsibility of the EEC panel to ensure that any claim is upheld appropriately and the evidence is sufficient and relevant. Students will be informed of the outcome of their EEC application within five working days of the panel.
- Where a student is granted an EEC, s/he will normally be offered the opportunity to sit a fresh assessment at the next opportunity.

Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances Procedure (Collaborative Partner HEIs)

- Awards operating under collaborative HEI partnerships are required to act within the requirements of the HEI policies and regulations. However, it is recognised that local procedures will need to be utilised to ensure the efficient processing of claims under the EEC policy. Where appropriate, the partner HEI forms should be used in accordance with their regulations.