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**Wrexham** University

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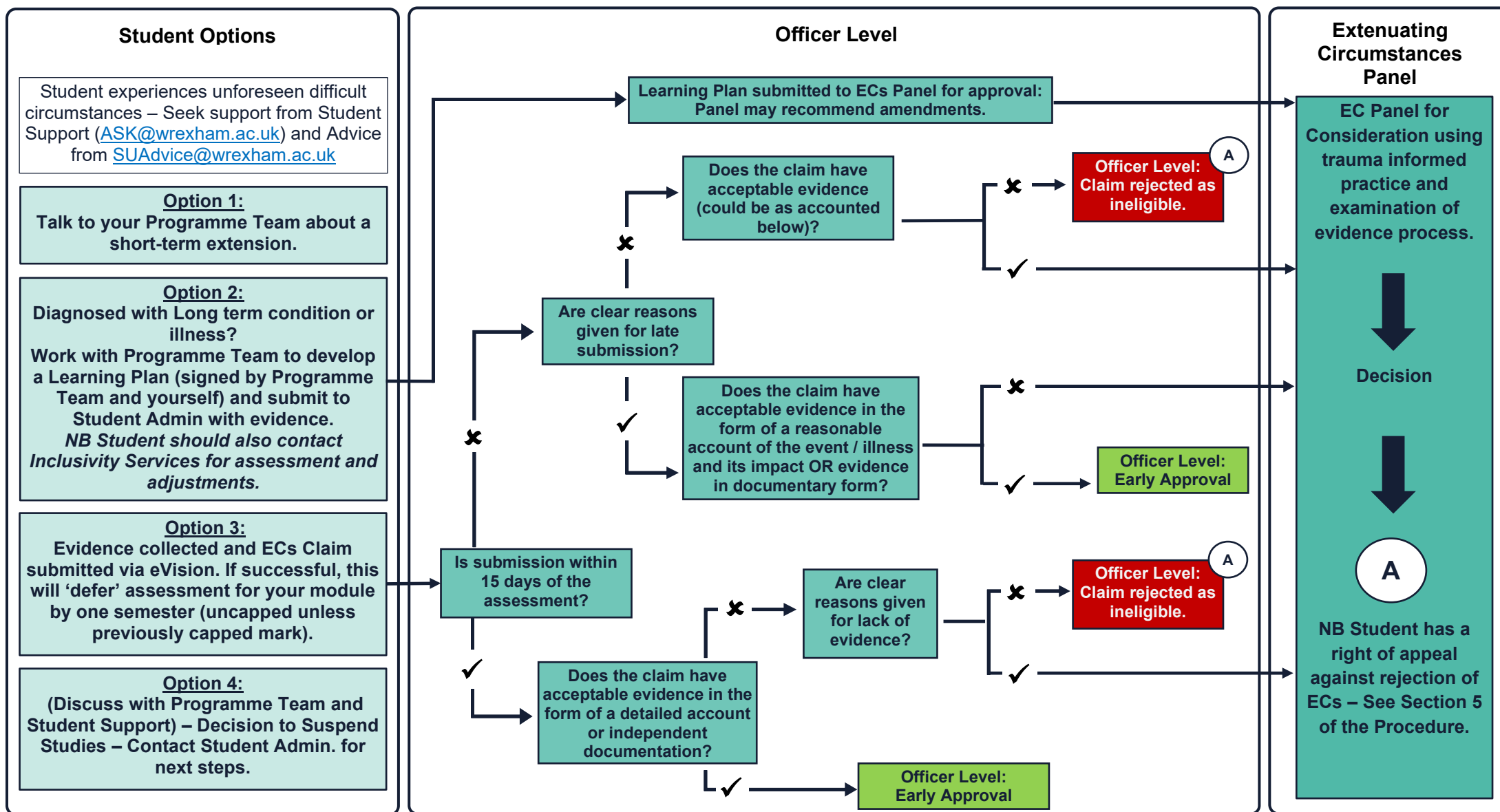
# Extenuating Circumstances Procedure

2024/25

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Figure 1: How the EC process works



## 1. Purpose of this Procedure

1.1 Extenuating Circumstances are generally short-term, unforeseen circumstances that have an impact on your ability to complete your work or meet a deadline; or complete/attend an examination. They may include (but are not limited to) illness; bereavement; illness of a close family member; unexpected caring responsibilities; or other issues that you believe have had a negative impact on your learning.

1.2 This procedure is for all enrolled students who are registered on taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes or taught elements of research programmes including and those studying wholly online, via distance learning or with partner organisations.

1.3 If you are registered for Wrexham University awards which are delivered wholly online or via distance learning, you should note where exceptional requirements are stipulated due to the delivery pattern of your programme of study.

1.4 The EC procedure is designed to lessen the burden for you during times of unforeseen, exceptional, short-term circumstances that impact your ability to study / undertake assessments.

1.5 Generally, the unforeseen circumstances will be beyond your control, have a significant adverse impact on you and be within a period relevant to the study / assessment for which the EC claim is being submitted.

1.6 You may submit extenuating circumstances for any form of assessment you undertake whilst on your programme of study; this includes all forms of coursework, in-class tests, presentations as well as examinations. This is not an exhaustive list of assessment types, and you are permitted to submit extenuating circumstances applications across assessment types.

1.7 It is your responsibility to undertake the Extenuating Circumstances (EC) claim process within the published deadline, ensuring all applications are supported with appropriate evidence.

1.8 If you present with a **long-term condition or disability** as defined by the Equality Act (2010), you may benefit from a Learning Plan. Learning Plans are developed by you and your Programme Leader. This Learning Plan does not replace the services and support provided by the University's Inclusion Team and it is highly recommended that you discuss your needs with that team, also. Please approach your Programme Leader if you believe this would be helpful to you.

## 2. Advice and Support

### 2.1 Recommended Advice and Support

- i. You are encouraged to seek impartial support and advice from the Students' Union by emailing: [suadvice@wrexham.ac.uk](mailto:suadvice@wrexham.ac.uk) or calling: 01978 293371. Details on the Students'



Union advice centre can also be found by visiting the Students' Union website: [www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk](http://www.wrexhamglyndwrsu.org.uk).

- ii. Help and advice is available to you via ASK for all student support related enquiries, advice and information. You are able to access support and assistance from a wide range of areas via ASK, and further details can be found via the Student Intranet (Myuni portal) here: <https://students.Wrexham.ac.uk/>. You can complete a referral form to access Student and Campus Life services by heading to <https://wxm.ac.uk/ask>.
- iii. Personal Tutors (Student Success Coordinators for Online students) are also there to support you, and you may wish to make them aware of your extenuating circumstances to discuss ongoing support if needed.

## 2.2 Evidential Standards

- i. The University understands that there will be some difficulties that are more readily evidenced than others. It is recommended you consult with the [SUAdvice@wrexham.ac.uk](mailto:SUAdvice@wrexham.ac.uk) before submitting your ECs application if you are in doubt about your account and/or your evidence.
- ii. Your account of what has happened to you (illness / event / other significant occurrence) is in itself evidence. You are advised to ensure that you detail what has happened; the impact it has had on you; and how it has affected your work.
- iii. You must always provide a full account of your ECs, giving details of what has happened and the impact it has had upon you. If you can, independent documentary evidence will enhance the chances of approval for your EC claim. Documentary evidence is not required for a short-term, self-managed exacerbation of a long-term condition / inclusion need that is already registered with the University, unless this occurs repeatedly in which case you may be asked for additional evidence around your engagement with appropriate services to manage your condition.
- iv. Please note: while you are able to apply for ECs, the University would advise extreme caution in the use of ECs across more than 1-2 modules. The deferral of work means that you will have more deadlines accumulating at similar times, thus leading to greater pressure upon you. **Please seek advice and use this facility with caution.**
- v. If you are found to have mis-used the ECs process, you will be subject to the University's usual disciplinary procedures, including [Suitability for Practice](#) where appropriate.
- vi. See the evidential guidelines ([Evidential Requirements Guidance](#)).

## 3. Submission of your Extenuating Circumstances Claim / Learning Plan

3.1 If you wish to submit an EC claim, you must complete the online claim process via e:Vision and provide the following information:

- i. The module/s code and title
- ii. Element(s) of assessment affected



- iii. Dates of assessment missed or affected
- iv. Explicit reasons why you are claiming extenuating circumstances, the impact upon you, and how the assessment has been affected.
- v. If you have it, additional evidence as outlined in the [Evidential Requirements Guidance](#).

3.2 EC claims must normally be made by you and not by others acting on your behalf, unless written authorisation and an explanation is provided, usually on the grounds of individual student needs.

3.3 EC claims must be submitted within 15 working days either side of the date of assessment, and via the online submission process on e:Vision. Evidence provided must include a detailed account of your situation and could also include independent documentation.

3.4 Should an alternative form of EC claim submission be required, you are advised to contact [ec@wrexham.ac.uk](mailto:ec@wrexham.ac.uk) to discuss requirements and options available.

3.5 The University will publish deadlines for the receipt of all Extenuating Circumstances claims prior to the University's Assessment Boards. If there is good reason why you did not submit your extenuating circumstances claim prior to the Award/Progression Board, you should refer to the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#) to see if you meet the grounds to submit an Academic Appeal.

3.6 You will need to provide additional details and / or evidence and show good reason for lateness if:

- i. Your claim is submitted after the 15-day deadline<sup>1</sup>
- ii. Your claim is submitted by the deadline, but you have not been able to provide appropriate evidence.

The University reserves the right to reject EC claims which have not been completed fully or accurately.

3.7 If you submit a claim in respect of a module/element which has already been considered by an assessment board, then you will be advised that the University's [Academic Appeals Procedure](#) is the appropriate procedure.

3.8 Support can be provided by the Students' Union to enable you to complete the necessary documentation. As part of your claim, you will need to provide good and reasonable cause for not submitting the claim in accordance with the deadline specified in the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure.

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<sup>1</sup> This is defined as the date of submission or extended deadline in the case of assignments or the date of the examination/in class test.

3.9 If you attend an assessment conducted under the regulations for examinations or in class tests, you are declaring that you are fit to sit that assessment. Any subsequent claim that performance in that assessment was affected by extenuating circumstances or illness will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and must be evidenced by a full account of the occurrence and if at all possible, independent documentary evidence. However, this will not apply if you are taken ill during the examination/in class test, and as a result do not complete the assessment.

3.10 Should you be taken ill during an examination/in class test, you will be required to obtain a medical note as soon as possible. The medical note should be submitted in support of a formal EC claim within 15 working days of the date of the examination/in class test. Such claims will only be considered exceptionally, if you can provide evidence to show that you were not in a fit state of mind to determine your capability to undertake the assessment at the point that the University's Fit to Sit policy was announced at the start of the examination/in class test.

## 4. Extenuating Circumstances Panel

### 4.1 Duties and Membership

- i. The Panel will have the authority to:
  - a. Approve a claim on the basis of the evidence provided;
  - b. Reject a claim if, in its opinion there are insufficient or no grounds for the claim;

The Panel may adjourn the decision awaiting further information from other teams within the University or from you, if this is necessary to ensure a fair consideration of the claim. Any adjournment will be as short as possible and concluded within ten working days.

- ii. The Panel may recommend to your programme team that you should be advised to suspend studies until the effect of the extenuating circumstances has passed; this recommendation does not prevent the Panel from approving your claim and is advisory in nature. You should discuss options with the services listed in Section 2.1 of this procedure, and your Programme Team /Personal Tutor if you decide to explore suspending studies.
- iii. Membership of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall comprise:
  - a. Two academic staff members with appropriate expertise (Pool comprises a number of staff from each Faculty); NB If Chair or Vice Chairs wish to observe other EC's panels, this should be facilitated as a further aid to consistency.
  - b. An officer from Strategic Planning and Student Administration with appropriate expertise.

A representative of Student and Campus Life will be in attendance wherever possible to provide additional information where needed. The representative is not a Panel member and is there in an advisory capacity.

A Chair and Vice Chair will be appointed from the academic membership

- iv. The Panel will be quorate if the following are present:
  - a. The Chair or Vice Chair; (drawn from the 2 academic staff members)
  - b. Strategic Planning and Student Administration Officer;
- v. The Student Administration Manager will be responsible for appointing an officer who will advise on academic regulations and also act as secretary to the Panel.
- vi. Members of the Panel must declare any conflicts of interest where applicable and they will then be excluded from the decision making in respect of the conflict of interest. All conflicts of interests will be noted and recorded by the Officer.
- vii. This Panel meets in closed session. This means that you are not permitted to attend an EC panel meeting or send a representative to attend the meeting.

#### 4.2 Consideration of an Extenuating Circumstances Claim

- i. EC claims will be initially reviewed by an Officer with appropriate expertise. Claims may be approved by the Officer, without the need to progress to the EC Panel. These will typically be straightforward claims which meet evidential standards specified in the Evidential Guidelines document.
- ii. EC claims cannot be rejected by an Officer unless evidential or timeliness standards have not been met. Any EC claims not approved by an Officer will be considered by the EC Panel. At times of high pressure, the Chair / Vice Chair is able to make an acceptance decision without recourse to full Panel. Proposals to decline ECs will be considered by the full panel.
- iii. If you submit a claim which could be dealt with by the Extension to Deadline process, your claim will be referred to the Programme Team for consideration (in such cases the evidence provided will be shared with the programme team on a confidential, need to know basis). The University will let you know that your claim has been sent to the programme team.

#### 4.3 Outcome of an Extenuating Circumstances Claim

- i. The normal outcome for an extenuating circumstance claim which is upheld will be to allow you a deferral for the relevant module/element. Individual marks will not be altered/ amended based upon extenuating circumstances, instead, any marks already received will be reverted to 0:
  - a. To be allowed to miss an element of assessment (including examinations) and to be permitted to attempt that element at the next available opportunity as defined by the University's Awards and Progression Assessment Board, without loss of attempt, and normally at the next available opportunity; or being given the opportunity to retake the year without capped marks. (NB this is a purely academic decision (not related to funding), and you should always seek advice regarding your funding, where this is the desired outcome.)

It may be appropriate to consider other outcomes to ensure that you have a full opportunity to demonstrate your performance; and to recognise your individual circumstances.



Please note that an outcome that is not compliant with the Regulations or with Professional Body requirements will not be considered.

- ii. If you have received a mark for an element/ module you have applied and been granted extenuating circumstances for, then this mark will be cancelled, and you will be given a mark of 0 for that attempt. You will not be able to accept any marks for any element/module for which an EC claim has been approved. This attempt at the module will be protected and the Assessment Board will advise you when you will be able to re-attempt the element/module. Please note if you have previous capped attempts at the module then your mark will still be capped. This means, for example, if you were capped after assessment 1; and applied for ECs in place of assessment 2, your mark will still be capped.
- iii. Approved EC claims will be recorded as appropriate on the university student record system. Approved Extenuating Circumstances claims expire on conclusion of the subsequent Assessment Board (or the Board agreed with your Programme Team), and a new application must be submitted to cover the next Assessment Board(s) if required.
- iv. If an extenuating circumstances claim is not upheld, the University will advise you of this and your original mark will stand. If you have missed an element of assessment, and the claim for extenuating circumstances regarding that assessment is subsequently not upheld, then you will be awarded a mark of 0 for that element.
- v. The outcome of the EC Panel will be reported to you, and your Programme Leader or your Partner College (where applicable) by the secretary of the panel via email / e:Vision. Details and evidence relating to your claim will not be reported and will be treated as confidential.
- vi. If your claim has been rejected, you will be able to submit an appeal under this procedure (within ten working days of the date of the outcome notification of the EC claim) or subsequent to the meeting of an Assessment Board, an Academic Appeal (within 10 working days of your Progression Board decision notification) against the decision of the Assessment Board at the end of the level or stage of your programme of study, provided that:
  - a. Relevant evidence is available which was not submitted at the time, in accordance with this procedure

AND

  - b. Evidence can be provided to show that there is good or reasonable cause why the evidence was not submitted at the appropriate time.
- vii. If, following the meeting of the EC Panel, it is discovered that you have deliberately misled the panel, the panel will have the right to revoke any decision made. This may also result in action being taken under the [University's disciplinary and/or Fitness to Practice procedures](#).
- viii. If a case of academic misconduct is found proven for the same module/element for which you have been granted extenuating circumstances, the approved deferral will

not be processed and summary information about your claim will be made available to the [Academic Integrity Committee of Enquiry](#).

## 5. Appeals against the decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel

5.1 Appeals against decisions of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel will only be accepted where the appeal is based upon both of the following grounds:

- i. New evidence in the form of significant further detail or documentary evidence in support of the Extenuating Circumstances claim has been provided

AND

- ii. You can show good reason why this evidence was not made available to the EC Panel before its meeting.

5.2 Any appeal against a decision of a panel should be submitted via email to [studentadministration@wrexham.ac.uk](mailto:studentadministration@wrexham.ac.uk), within 10 working days after the panel outcome notification date.

5.3 The case will be presented to an independent member of the EC Panel (with no prior involvement in the considerations) who will evaluate the claim in light of the evidence provided, and who may choose to consult with others (not previously involved in the case at hand) as appropriate. The member of the panel will have the authority to decide whether: your claim should be upheld, that there are insufficient or no grounds for the appeal and your claim should be rejected or you were not at a point of assessment.

5.4 The decision of the Appeal Decision Maker of the EC Panel will be final, and you will not be able to submit an appeal on these grounds using the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

5.5 The decision of the Appeal Decision Maker of the EC Panel will be conveyed to the relevant assessment board and to you by the Officer to the Panel.

## 6. Data Storage and Confidentiality

6.1 All claims are confidential. Your EC claim and supporting evidence will be considered by members of the appropriate panel solely for the purpose of processing your claim and, if necessary, any subsequent appeal against the decision of the EC Panel.

6.2 The outcome decision of and claim will be communicated to your personal tutor, but the detail of the claim will remain confidential.

6.3 All claims will be processed and stored in accordance with the University's [Data Protection policies and Privacy Notices](#).

## **7. Monitoring**

7.1 An annual report containing statistical information on the numbers of claims received, upheld and rejected and any recommendations in respect of the review of the policy and procedure or that might enhance the quality of provision will be provided at least annually to Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.

## **8. Accessibility**

8.1 Wrexham University strives to be a supportive and trauma-informed university in the design and operation of all our processes and procedures. If you need adjustments to access this procedure or have any other comments to make on the accessibility, wording or any part of this procedure, please do email us on [ec@wrexham.ac.uk](mailto:ec@wrexham.ac.uk).