



SDC Mitigating Circumstances Policy

The following policy lays out the process and procedures surrounding the presentation of mitigating circumstances with respect to students undertaking education programmes with the Society of Dyers and Colourists.

Section 1: Grounds for Mitigating Circumstances

These are defined as, “*unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances that could have, or did have, a significant adverse effect on the academic performance of a student*”.

Examples

1. Suffering a serious illness (physical or mental) or injury.
2. An unexpected change in, or impact of, a disability.
3. The death or critical illness of a close family member.
4. A significant family crisis leading to acute stress.
5. A significant change in family circumstances which cause barriers to independent study.
6. Absence arising from jury service, maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
7. Absence due to conflicts between employment / employer and the course of study followed.
– examples are disagreements and / or time pressures in the student’s workplace.

Section 2: Possible Outcomes of Consideration

Special consideration in general is the assessment of the impact of the ‘unpreventable circumstances’ which may be affecting a student’s academic performance. A variety of outcomes **may** result; these include the following:

1. An adjustment of exam grades.
2. An adjustment of coursework grades.
3. The opportunity to re-sit a failed examination without penalty.
4. Adjustment of coursework deadlines.
5. The decision that the circumstances were non-mitigating so no action is taken or the candidate fails the examination or assessment, accepts a lower grade or a resit with penalties.

Special consideration will be most commonly be given by the tutor(s) concerned but certain cases may require resolution by the Mitigating Circumstances Committee, a sub group of the Examination and Qualifications Accreditation Board (EQAB).

Section 3: Mitigating Circumstances: Attendance

1. FTCC and TCC students must attend all live on-line and face to face sessions unless a request for mitigating circumstances is made in advance – advance includes on the day of but prior to the relevant session.
2. ASDC students who participate in self-paced study are expected to complete a particular course prior to the date of the examination. Students must make tutor(s) aware at the earliest opportunity of any circumstances which might prevent them from doing so and affect their ability to sit that examination.

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Section 4: Mitigating Circumstances: Coursework and Assessments (Examined and Non-Examined).

1. Short Term Coursework or Assessments - Special consideration, in this case, can be an adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside of the candidate's control at the time of the assessment which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a detrimental effect on a candidate's ability to perform the assessment or demonstrate his or her normal, or target, level of attainment. Extensions may be provided to hand in reports, essays and independent studies, for example, which can be at the jurisdiction of the course tutor in the first instance.
2. Long Term Coursework and Assessments – a temporary illness or other disruption should not have a major negative effect on attainment in coursework or assessments which are produced over, for example, a term or academic year. Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching either the competence standards in an assessment or coursework it may not be possible to make a grading assessment. In this case a repeat without penalty or an extension should be sanctioned. If neither of these is appropriate due to the student having been absent from teaching sessions, a resit of the course / year as appropriate should be sanctioned.

Section 5: Mitigating Circumstances: Examinations

Special consideration, in this case, is a post examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside of the candidate's control at the time of the assessment which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a detrimental effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal, or target, level of attainment.

There are minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence as laid out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). It should be remembered that the final grades awarded may not ultimately reflect a candidate's true ability level if attainment has been considerably affected over a long period of time; in which case there are 2 courses of action:

1. Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching either the competence standards in an assessment or an examination result is very much below expected, it may not be possible to make an adjustment. In this case a resit without penalty should be sanctioned.
2. Where circumstances have prevented a candidate from sitting an examination a resit without penalty should be sanctioned.

Section 6: Proof of Mitigating Circumstances.

1. Where a request for mitigating circumstances involves illness, medical appointment cards and /or a fit note should be supplied.
2. Confirmation from mentors may also be required particularly for short term illness where the above evidence might be unavailable.
3. Where mitigating circumstances involve work pressures (Section 1, Example 7) confirmation of the same will be required from mentors / line managers. Spoken or written confirmation may be required depending on the nature of the problem.

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Section 7: Mitigating Circumstances and Confidentiality.

1. Mitigating circumstances should be submitted to the tutor(s) concerned with the required proof (Section 6) and confidentiality will be maintained unless significant risk to the student's well-being is indicated.
2. Should a mitigating circumstance request require submission to the Mitigating Circumstances Committee, confidentiality will be maintained by tutors unless significant risk to the student's well-being is indicated.

Section 8: Circumstances Not Eligible for Consideration (*Modified from JCQ, 2018*)

1. Short term illness or other difficulties during a course of study or which affect revision time, unless the illness or other circumstances manifest themselves at the time of an assessment.
2. Bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless there are on-going implications such as an inquest or court case.
3. Domestic inconvenience, such as a house move, lack of facilities and neighbourly disputes.
4. Technical issues with hard- or software required for course access.
5. Minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing.
6. The consequences of committing a crime, where formally charged or found guilty; although a retrospective application for special consideration may be considered where the charge is later dropped or the candidate is found not guilty.
7. The consequences of taking alcohol or recreational drugs.
8. The consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations.
9. The failure of the centre to prepare candidates properly for the examination for whatever reason.
10. Misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place.
11. Misreading the instructions of the question paper and/or answering the wrong questions.
12. Making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday which conflict with the lecture or examination timetable.
13. Failure to cover the course as a consequence of joining a teaching session or course part way through.
14. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), whether diagnosed or undiagnosed, unless illness affects the candidate at the time of the assessment or where the disability exacerbates what would otherwise be a minor issue.
15. Failure by the centre to process access arrangements by the published deadline.

Section 9: Responsibilities.

1. It is the student's sole responsibility to request mitigating circumstances.
2. Only in cases of severe illness or injury is it permitted for a third party to inform the Society of the situation.
3. Requests may be made verbally in the first instance but must be accompanied as soon as is practically possible by a completed Mitigation Request Form (Appendix 1) and the required proof (Section 6).
4. Students are required to update tutors on a regular basis should difficulties persist.

[Type here]

Appendix 1: Request for Mitigation: Application Form

NAME:

STUDENT REGISTRATION NUMBER:

PROGRAMME OF STUDY:

YEAR OF STUDY:

Please consult the SDC Mitigating Circumstances Policy before completing this form with particular reference to the grounds for mitigation (Section 1) and the timing requirements for submission (Sections 3 and 9). Deadlines for submission of this form are also detailed below.

Please note that an accepted request will not automatically result in the changing of assessment and or examination marks. Please see the Mitigating Circumstances Policy Section 2 for examples of possible outcomes.

The SDC Mitigating Circumstances Policy defines the grounds for mitigation as “unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances that could have, or did have, a significant adverse effect on the academic performance of a student”.

1. Please **fully explain** the nature of the circumstances or events that you believe have affected, or are affecting, your performance or ability to complete assessments by the due date.

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2. Dates of periods affected:

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3. Deadlines for submission of this form

It is commonly expected that this form will be submitted as soon as possible and certainly before deadline for an assessed piece of work or an examination and in advance of live taught sessions on-line or otherwise. Students are again referred to Sections 3 and 6 of the Mitigating Circumstances Policy for detail in this respect. Late requests for mitigation will not be considered without a credible and compelling explanation as to why the request was not made within the required timescales. If necessary, please provide your explanation as to your late submission below, and attach any evidence to support your explanation:

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[Type here]

4. Affected Assessments (Please complete all relevant sections)

A. Assessed Coursework Affected Where Results are Summative

Unit Code	Title	Have you submitted the work? If so was it on time or late	Due submission date
		YES/NO ON TIME/LATE	

B. Examinations

Examination Code	Title	Date of examination	Did you attend your exam (if it has taken place already)?	If you are applying before your exam, do you think you will be able to attend it?
			YES/NO	YES/NO

C. Formative Assessments (e.g. group work; independent studies, presentations)

Course Unit Code	Course Unit Title	Date of assessment	Type of assessment e.g. presentation	Did you attend/submit?
			YES/NO	YES/NO

[Type here]

5. Supporting Documentation

A. General

To allow for a thorough consideration of your request, it is essential that supporting documentation is attached; failure to do so may affect the outcome of your request. Supporting documentation should be independent and time-specific to the circumstances for which you are requesting mitigation. Please tick the relevant box below.

- Evidence of medical intervention
- Letter from Counselling Service
- Police Report
- Supporting letter from Mentor
- Other (please specify)

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Please ensure that any hard copy supporting documentation is contained in a sealed envelope which is clearly labelled with your name and details or scanned and emailed with this form.

B. If you are unable to provide supporting documentation

Should you be unable to provide supporting documentation please provide the reason why, and indicate when such documentation will be available:

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C. Declaration and important notes

I confirm that all information given or referred to above is true and that I believe there has been a significant adverse effect on my performance as a result of the circumstances and/or events described. I consent to the Society sharing any relevant personal data about me between relevant tutors and the Mitigating Circumstances Committee, based on the information disclosed on this form, which may be necessary to allow for the consideration of my request.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

THIS FORM SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO YOUR TUTOR

PLEASE NOTE: Should your request be accepted, you will be informed about what mitigation has been granted, e.g. a new deadline. While you are awaiting the outcome of your request for mitigation, you should continue to work to any assessment deadlines that have been set, unless your circumstances completely prevent you from doing so.

For office use

RECEIVED BY:

DATE OF RECEIPT:

DATE OF MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES PANEL:

OUTCOME:

RECOMMENDATION MADE: