

Appendix 1: A guide to identifying Exceptional Circumstances

BU defines **Exceptional Circumstances** as:

- short-term, sudden and/ or unforeseen events or circumstances that impacts your ability to study or complete your assessment
- provable - you need to be able to provide evidence of what happened and describe how this disadvantaged you
- beyond your control
- something that you have not already declared to us on Admission or registered with the Additional Learning Support (ALS) service

What is an Exceptional Circumstance?

Examples of Exceptional Circumstances	Examples of Supporting Evidence
An illness (including mental health) that impacted your ability to attend an exam or meet an assessment deadline or adversely affected your performance in an assessment (including group work, placements or adherence to professional standards where applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of illness of up to 5 days via a self-certification form; • A letter from GP* who has been actively supporting you; • Medical certificate • Hospital appointment letter • Copy of prescription/medicine labelling • A letter from a BU staff member or /external support services who have been actively supporting you (this may include a letter from a member of your programme team)
Family illness or bereavement (staff may exercise discretion as to whether evidence detailing the impact of serious circumstances, such as bereavement, is required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter from GP* who has been actively supporting your family; • Medical certificate • Hospital appointment letter • A letter from a BU staff member or external support services who have been actively supporting you this may include a letter from a member of your programme team)
Pregnancy-related illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical certificate or GP* note explaining illness or requirement for hospitalisation in case of unforeseen complications in pregnancy
Unforeseen travel disruption normally causing delays of over an hour, for example industrial action or road traffic accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from travel company
Acute personal difficulties/Domestic Disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter from GP* who has been actively supporting your family; • A letter from a BU staff member or external support services who have been actively supporting you (this may include a letter from a member of your programme team) • A letter from independent authority supporting you (e.g. social worker, counsellor); • Police report and crime reference number;
Jury Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter from the Court.

**Student should be aware that there may be a cost associated with such letters*

The following are examples of things which are **not** normally considered as valid Exceptional Circumstances:

Computer IT/failure	It is your responsibility to ensure that all work is electronically stored and/or submitted and the correct piece of work is submitted. Enough time should be allowed to submit the work to meet the deadline.
Transport problems	Routine delays to buses and trains will not be accepted.
Misreading assessment dates and times	It is your responsibility to ensure you understand when and how your assessment will be taking place.
Holidays or expeditions	All holidays and vacations should take place at a time that does not impact your availability to study or prepare for or undertake an assessment.
Inadequate planning, organisation or time management	You are expected to plan your time to manage assessments schedules and the study time required to support your own learning.
Timetabling of coursework/examinations	Exams being too close together will not be accepted as valid Exceptional Circumstances claim.
Paid employment or voluntary work	You are responsible for managing your other commitments so that they do not adversely interfere with your studies. If you are experiencing acute personal difficulties that require you to undertake unexpected levels of paid work this might be considered under the definition of Exceptional Circumstances.
Restricted access to University IT systems such as Brightspace	Your access to University IT systems or facilities has been restricted or removed as a result of non-payment of fees
Not disclosing circumstances	The University can only consider Exceptional Circumstances claims if they are disclosed in accordance with the policy. If you feel that you have a valid reason for not disclosing circumstances by the published deadlines you should speak to your Academic Advisor, Unit Leader or Programme Leader as soon as possible.