

### 2.3.1 Extenuating Circumstances Procedure Guidelines



#### *Carlow College Extenuating Circumstances Procedure Guidelines*

There are occasions when a student encounters unforeseen circumstances which are beyond their control and which have negatively impacted on their performance. The student may wish to have these circumstances taken into account by assessors and exam boards and can do this by following the procedure outlined below.

The procedure should be followed in the following cases:

1. A student who is prevented from sitting an exam and wishes to request a deferral of the exam so that the repeat exam is treated as a first sitting without a penalty or a cost to the student.
2. A student who is prevented from submitting their Stage 4 dissertation beyond the three-week extension period covered by an academic advisor and seeks to have a no-penalty deferred submission.
3. A student who is prevented from submitting their placement portfolio beyond the three-week extension period covered by an academic advisor and seeks to have a no-penalty deferred submission.
4. A student who is prevented from submitting a number of continuous assessment assignments beyond the three-week period covered by an academic advisor and seeks to have no-penalty deferred submissions.

**The following<sup>1</sup> are examples of valid extenuating circumstances:**

- Acute illness, injury, accident or hospitalisation.
- Serious on-going medical condition.<sup>2</sup>
- Ongoing life-threatening illness of a close family member or partner.
- Bereavement of a close family member or partner.
- Acute or on-going serious personal/emotional circumstances.
- Victim of Crime
- Domestic upheaval at the time of the assessment (e.g. fire, burglary, eviction)

**The following are not considered valid extenuating circumstances:**

- Failure to plan study schedule
- IT or computer failure
- Typical symptoms associated with exam stress (e.g. anxiety, sleeping disturbances etc.)
- Minor illnesses such as a common cold
- Misreading the examination timetable
- Commuting issues
- Holidays and social events such as weddings
- Paid employment or voluntary work
- Sporting commitments

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<sup>1</sup> This list is not definitive

<sup>2</sup> Students who have a disability or learning difficulty should register with the *Academic Resource Office* and will be facilitated through on-going supports.

Students who believe they have extenuating circumstances which impact their ability to complete assessments or attend exams should fill out the *Extenuating Circumstances Form*.

The form should be sent to the relevant person as follows:

Requests for deferral of exams:	Exams Officer. Michael Sherman <a href="mailto:examsofficer@carlowcollege.ie">examsofficer@carlowcollege.ie</a>
Requests for deferral of dissertation:	Dissertation Coordinator (Arts and Humanities/English and History) Dr Elaine Callinan <a href="mailto:ecallinan@carlowcollege.ie">ecallinan@carlowcollege.ie</a>  Dissertation Coordinator (Social Care and SPCS) Dr Catherine O'Sullivan <a href="mailto:cosullivan@carlowcollege.ie">cosullivan@carlowcollege.ie</a>
Requests for deferral of Portfolio:	Placement Coordinator Monica Dowling <a href="mailto:mdowling@carlowcollege.ie">mdowling@carlowcollege.ie</a>
Requests for deferral of other assessments:	Relevant Programme Director

**Please note that only the persons named above can make a decision regarding the requested deferral and the decision will only be made after receipt of a form and supporting evidence.**

The forms and supporting evidence will only be available to the individuals named above. The request may need to be discussed with a small number of other individuals but only relevant details will be shared. Forms and any related documents will be retained by the relevant individual for the remainder of the academic year after which they will be deleted/destroyed.

**It is essential that the form is accompanied by relevant supporting documentation.** Failure to supply this will prevent the form from being considered. The nature of the documentation is detailed on the form.

### **Timing**

Students who are requesting a deferral of an exam should do so before the occurrence of the exam if possible or as soon as possible after the exam has taken place. Students who are requesting deferral of continuous assessments must submit the form and documentation at least three days before the relevant meeting of the internal exam board. These meetings take place in mid-January (Semester 1), late May (Semester 2) and late August (Repeats). The exact dates of the exam board meetings can be found in the Academic Calendar. The decision taken on Extenuating Circumstances applications will be noted in the minutes of the exam board, however, the detailed circumstances will not be recorded in the minutes.

Following the exam board, students will be notified if their request has been granted and will be given full details of revised submission dates and the repeat examination timetable. If an examination is deferred, this means that the next available sitting is regarded as the first attempt at the examination. Learners should be aware that if an exam is deferred to the Autumn sitting, they will not have the opportunity of a second attempt within the academic year and this may have implications for their progression.