


The logo is a white outline of a house shape with a pointed top. Inside the house, the text 'SU SKILLS CAFÉ' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked in three lines.

**SU  
SKILLS  
CAFÉ**

**SUPPORT ON ISSUES  
THAT MATTER TO YOU**

# **A Guide to Extenuating Circumstances and Late Submissions**

The logo is a white outline of a house shape with a pointed top. Inside the house, the text 'SU ADVICE' is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked in two lines.

**SU  
ADVICE**

**Remember, we've got your back.  
Email [suadvice@essex.ac.uk](mailto:suadvice@essex.ac.uk) if you're  
ever unsure or want more guidance.**

# FIRST THINGS FIRST, WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Extenuating Circumstance (EC) is the term used by the University to describe when a situation or incident outside your control has prevented you from submitting work, attending an assessment, or from completing work to your normal academic standard.

A Late Submission (LS) is where something happened outside of your control which prevented you from submitting your work by the published submission deadline, but where you were able to submit within the Late Submission period.

# WHAT TYPE OF CLAIM SHOULD I SUBMIT?



Depending on your situation and how your studies have been impacted, you can submit either an 'Extenuating Circumstance' (EC), a 'Late Submission', or a 'Both' claim.

Submit a LS Claim if:	Submit an EC Claim if:	Submit a claim for Both if:
The circumstances affecting you were outside of your control	The circumstances affecting you were outside of your control	The circumstances affecting you were outside of your control
You were unable to submit the work by the published deadline	You have missed an exam /assessment event OR you were unable to submit work within the relevant timeframe for Late Submission	You were unable to submit the work by the published deadline
You were able to submit the work within the relevant timeframe for Late Submission	You have submitted work (or completed an exam/assessment) but you feel the academic quality of your work is lower than your normal standard	You were able to submit the work within the relevant timeframe for Late Submission and feel that the academic quality of your work is lower than your normal standard

# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I SUBMIT A CLAIM?



The Extenuating Circumstances Committees (ECC) typically meet at least twice a year in each department to accept and reject all EC and LS claims submitted.

If an EC claim is submitted before the EC deadline, the ECC will then review the claim to understand how your situation may have affected your work. If your circumstances are accepted, the ECC will notify the Board of Examiners, who will then determine the appropriate outcomes that can be applied.

When a LS claim is made, and the assignment submitted within the relevant LS timeframe, the ECC will assess if your mark can be instated. However, you won't be informed until after the LS deadline of whether your claim has been accepted. There is still a possibility that the work you have submitted may not be marked, or that if it is this will only be formative.

Once your claim has been considered by the ECC, your department will then email you to let you know if your claim has been accepted and provide information on any further steps you need to take. If the ECC rejects your claim, you may still appeal this decision provided that your appeal meets the legitimate grounds of appeal; either further information is now available which you could not reasonably have been expected to provide previously, or there has been a procedural irregularity. To appeal a rejected claim, you should send your appeal information to your department by deadline stated in your rejection email.



# WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF I CLAIM?

Where an LS claim is accepted, the only possible action is for the mark of the late work to be instated. Where an EC, or 'Both' claim, is accepted, the Board of Examiners will consider what actions may be appropriate to try to ensure you have a fair opportunity to succeed.



Possible Outcomes	Outcomes which are not possible
Offering further reassessment options	Allowing a student to start the next year of study if they have not met the necessary requirements to pass
Allowing uncapped reassessment where normally a capped pass mark would apply	Allowing a student to fail a core module
Offering voluntary reassessment opportunities (where an assessment has been passed but there is evidence performance has been affected)	Adding additional marks or amending previous marks in recognition of an extenuating circumstance
Amending the weighting of particular units of assessment – only when the assessment is for less than 1/3 of the module and the assessment is not key to meeting the learning outcomes of the module	Annotating results transcripts with comments about the extenuating circumstances



# HOW DO I EXPLAIN MY CIRCUMSTANCES?

There are two sections on the claim form where you will need to provide further details of your claim.

First, you will be asked to give a short description of your claim. This should provide a brief overview of your circumstances but doesn't need to include lots of detail. Explain concisely the circumstances that affected you, and why you are submitting the claim.



## GOOD EXAMPLES

### Extenuating Circumstances:

I had surgery two weeks before my deadline and had not recovered fully before it was due. This affected the quality of my work.

### Late Submission:

I was unexpectedly admitted to the hospital for 5 days, so I missed my assignment deadline.

## BAD EXAMPLES

Too vague:  
I was unwell.



It's important to be very specific.  
It makes it a lot easier to understand.

Doesn't explain the claim:  
I couldn't do it in time.

Too long:  
In a horrendous turn of events, I was rushed into hospital in order to deal with a devastating incident. A reckless and inconsiderate person stepped on my foot, and this dislocated my small toe and I soon discovered that this caused another issue which led to...



# HOW DO I EXPLAIN MY CIRCUMSTANCES?

The second part of the form will ask for more details about what happened and here you can explain things further. Try to be clear and concise in your explanation. Include information about any relevant dates when you were impacted and why this meant your work was affected. Try to explain the impact of the circumstances - if you were ill, when did you fall ill, what symptoms did you experience and how did these symptoms affect your ability to complete your work to your normal standard.

## WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Clear, concise language
- Details such as dates
- Explaining specifically how this situation affected your assignment
- Mentioning when you started work on your assignment
- Focusing only on the claim, and not moving onto other topics such as the content of an essay (unless relevant, e.g., if your research was affected)



## GOOD EXAMPLE

My HR206 assignment was due on 25th January, and I had started working on it three weeks before but on the 17th I had a medical emergency which stopped me making any more progress. I have provided evidence of my admission to hospital, and I was only released on the 24th which was not enough time to finish my assignment. I submitted my coursework 5 days late as a result and would like this late submission to be accepted and for my Extenuating Circumstances to be recorded as affecting the quality of my work.



You can submit one claim for multiple assessments, but you cannot submit a claim in advance of the deadline for the assessment. ECs and LSs cannot be planned for and it is expected that you will do what you can to submit your work on time and to the best of your ability.

# WHAT EVIDENCE SHOULD I INCLUDE?



Wherever possible you should submit relevant evidence to support your claim. Whilst it is possible to 'self-certify' a claim without evidence, this should only be used when it is for a medical situation where you would not normally seek medical help (e.g. Covid-19 or a minor illness).

Think about what might be helpful to someone assessing your claim and whether it can provide verifiable confirmation of your circumstances. Any documents not written in English will need to be officially translated.

Type of Claim	Helpful Types of Evidence	Unhelpful Types of Evidence
Illness/medical issue/long term condition/disability	Medical reports/certificates from an appropriate medical professional	A picture of a medication you have been prescribed without the associated prescription Pictures of injuries
Domestic disruption/relationship problems and/or breakdown/Serious or significant personal incidents: including house fire, homelessness, direct experience of natural disaster	Dated documents from an appropriate independent person confirming the circumstances you have stated A change of address/bank account/tenancy agreement Insurance claims	A letter from a close family member rather than an independent person Pictures of injuries Pictures of damage to property
Bereavement	A death certificate or letter from an independent person confirming the death Funeral service booklets, newspaper obituary, letter from a minister	Pictures which might cause distress to those viewing them

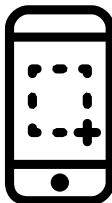
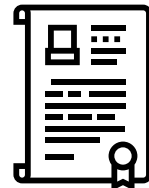
# WHAT EVIDENCE SHOULD I INCLUDE?



Type of Claim	Helpful Types of Evidence	Unhelpful Types of Evidence
Major and exceptional travel disruption	News and weather reports that confirm major incidents or travel disruption Correspondence from the travel provider if there have been delays/cancellations	Pictures of traffic incidents without dated proof
Crime – including being the victim of crime or being investigated by the police	Police Report confirming a police reference number	Pictures which might cause distress to those viewing them
Technical issues	Evidence of technical issues from your internet provider or dated receipts detailing repairs to a laptop etc.	Generic documents that cannot be verified Pictures of broken laptops or screens not loading



**CANCELLED**





# CHECKLIST



Action	Information
<input type="checkbox"/> Read the policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carefully read the <u>Extenuating Circumstances and Late Submissions Policies</u></li> <li>• If any part is unclear, contact your <u>department</u> or <u>SU Advice</u> for guidance</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Check what things can be considered as ECs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General work pressure, personal disruptions (holidays, weddings), and misreading an exam timetable are not generally accepted circumstances</li> <li>• Be aware that falsifying a circumstance or evidence is a <u>student conduct offence</u></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Check the <u>Deadline</u> for submitting your claim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The deadlines for submitting EC claims can be found on the University's webpages and your department admin team should also be able to confirm this</li> <li>• Try to avoid making last-minute submissions – it's best to submit a claim as close to the event as possible</li> <li>• Claims submitted after a deadline are unlikely to be considered</li> <li>• If you are still waiting on evidence, you can submit your claim and note on the form what evidence is being waited for and when you hope to provide it</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Think about your evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide all possible evidence related to your claim</li> <li>• Refer to the University's <u>guidance on evidence</u></li> <li>• Remember failing to provide relevant evidence may lead to your claim being rejected</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Extenuating Circumstances Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember that only serious circumstances which significantly impact overall performance will be considered</li> <li>• Be clear about how your circumstances have impacted your work, the period of time affected and what assessments have been affected</li> <li>• If you are submitting a Late Submission claim, has your performance in the work also been impacted? Would it be appropriate to also submit it as an EC?</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Get further support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The University and SU support services are there to help</li> <li>• You may wish to speak to the <u>SIT</u>, <u>SU Advice</u>, your department or <u>Wellbeing</u></li> </ul>



# TOP TIPS

**Tip 1:** If you think something may have impacted your studies, submit it for the University to consider before the EC deadline. You can't retrospectively report ECs after you get the Exam Board outcomes; appeals based on circumstances that could have been reported before the EC deadline will usually be rejected. It is important to notify the University in advance.

**Tip 2:** Don't assume the Committee will know the impact something has had on your work. Think about what information is relevant for the EC Committee to be able to assess your claim – lots of intricate details about what happened may not be needed, but the impact they have had on your work is key. Don't leave out anything that could be important!

**Tip 3:** Be aware of the possible outcomes that could be offered. There is no point asking for extra marks to be added as this is not something the University can do.

**Tip 4:** Work can only be submitted within the Late Submission deadline. If you are unable to submit your work within the late submission deadline then it is very unlikely the work will be accepted. You can still explain why it could not be submitted through the EC process, but continuing to work on the same assignment after the late submission deadline has passed is unlikely to be a worthwhile use of your time.

**Tip 5:** Don't wait for your Late Submission claim to be accepted before you submit your work. You must submit both your claim and the work within the Late Submission deadline – the University will later decide if it can be accepted and marked. The Late Submission process is not the same as requesting a deadline extension – the University does not allow extension requests (except for PGT dissertations).

Remember, we've got your back.  
Email [suadvice@essex.ac.uk](mailto:suadvice@essex.ac.uk) if you're ever unsure or want more guidance.

