**Guidance on Extenuating/Mitigating Circumstances**

Extenuating or mitigating circumstances are those events which have had a detrimental effect on your study, to the point that it is in your interest to draw your department’s attention to them and ask for them to be considered in mitigation of poor performance. Such circumstances include (but are not limited to) illness, both bodily and emotional; the severe illness or death of a close family member; a shocking or traumatic personal experience. In addition, sudden, unexpected changes in family circumstances might affect your ability to make academic progress as a consequence of their demonstrable emotional impact upon you, and may also be considered as mitigation.

The University is aware that in some cultures it is considered shameful or embarrassing to disclose the details of these kinds of circumstances to those outside one’s family. This is not the case in the prevailing UK culture and you should be aware that your department and the University are fully supportive of students in difficult circumstances and want to assist if at all possible. If you feel inhibited from talking to a tutor or other member of staff in the first instance, you may also consider talking to a member of your SSLC, the Students’ Union, the University Senior Tutor or a member of staff in Student Support for initial, informal advice.

Clearly, though, in order for your circumstances to be considered as mitigating by your department, they must be conveyed formally to someone in your department (a tutor, the Director of Graduate/Undergraduate Studies, a course/module convenor, for instance). The University expects that you will discuss your circumstances before Exam Boards meet, so that they may be taken into account in good time. You should be aware that, in the event you feel you need to appeal the outcome of an Exam Board, offering extenuating or mitigating circumstances at that point will need to be accompanied by a good reason why you withheld the information earlier. Without wanting to invade your privacy, the University does expect that you bring such circumstances to your department’s attention in a timely manner, despite the discomfort you might feel in so doing. Failure to disclose such circumstances at a time when you could have done so may subsequently be problematic. Your department will do all it can to support you in difficult situations.