

Policy Title	HE Mitigation Policy and Process	
Policy Category	Compliant	
Owner	Deputy Director HE Quality and Standards	
Group Executive Lead	Deputy Principal Newcastle College, Executive Lead HE	
Date Written	August 2023	
Considered By		
Approved By	NCG HE Academic Board	
Date Approved	October 2023	
Equality Impact Assessment	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics.	
Freedom of Information	This document will be publicly available through the Groups Publication Scheme.	
Review Date	July 2026	
Policy Summary	This policy sets out NCG's approach to academic misconduct and unfair practices within our higher education provision.	
Applicability of Policy	Consultation Undertaken	Applicable To
Newcastle	Yes	Yes
Newcastle 6th Form	No	No
Carlisle	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster	Yes	Yes
Lewisham	No	No
West Lancashire	No	Yes
Southwark	Yes	Yes
Group Services	No	No
HE Partnerships (*partner may have an equivalent policy)	No	Yes
Changes to Earlier Versions		
Previous Approval Date	Summarise Changes Made Here	
April 2019	Merged existing guidance documents in one Policy and Process. Edited to reflect current practice and removal of ambiguity.	
Linked Documents		
Document Title	Relevance	

Equality Impact Assessment

	Judgement
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in 2.0?	Yes
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?	
Age	No
Disability / Difficulty	No
Gender Reassignment	No
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No
Race	No
Religion or Belief	No
Sex	No
Sexual Orientation	No
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/ phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	No
EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	No
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	No
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	No
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	Consultation has been carried out with relevant colleagues within NCG and with a higher education (HE) committee within our HE deliberative structure, which includes HE student representation.

1.0 Introduction and Context

During their studies, students may experience circumstances which affect their ability to complete assessments or perform to their usual standard.

It is a basic principle of the NCG that all students should be treated alike and given equal opportunity to succeed. NCG recognises that through unforeseeable and unpreventable circumstances students might be unable to complete or submit an assignment; might have missed an examination or presentation; or have not performed to the best of their ability in one or more of these assessments. These are called **extenuating circumstances**.

In such cases the College operates **Mitigation** in line with the NCG Higher Education Academic Regulations to enable students to request that their extenuating circumstances are taken into consideration.

There are two options available to students. The first is a 5 day extension (5 working days). This must be requested prior to the submission deadline. The second is an application to the mitigation panel, with supporting evidence, for a longer extension or to request retrospective consideration.

Mitigation applications are considered by a panel and if approved action taken, which typically involves a new assessment hand-in date, is agreed.

Approval of mitigation applications can only be confirmed by the mitigation panel, or the chair of the panel acting on their behalf.

2.0 5 Day Extensions

Typically, this is for students who are having short term difficulties in completing assessment by the submission date.

Students need to discuss this with their programme leader who will support the student to record their extension. No evidence is needed for this extension.

Students will be set a new submission date. There will be no penalty for submitting within the extension period. If the student subsequently fails to submit by the new submission date, the normal lateness rules will apply.

Students can only request a single 5 day extension for each assessment.

3.0 Mitigation Applications (requiring longer than 5 working days)

This process supports students where longer than 5 working days is required to complete an assessment. The mitigation panel will consider information which supports extenuating circumstances leading to:

- Late submission of coursework/assessment.
- Non-submission of coursework.
- Failure to attend one or more examinations or failure to submit work for other scheduled assessments.
- Under-performance in assessment.

Each mitigation application is unique and individual to the student. As such the mitigation panel will consider applications on a case-by-case basis. Typically, the type of circumstances considered as part of mitigation are (the list is indicative, and not exhaustive):

- Serious illness (which may include an acute episode, a disability or a chronic condition).
- Personal accident or injury.
- Acute personal or emotional trauma (which may include acute anxiety or depression, family breakdown, breakdown of a personal relationship, death or serious illness of family member, significant other).
- Complications in a pregnancy.
- Victim of crime.
- Additional impact of a disability.
- Car accident/other type of accident.
- Attendance at Court/Involvement in legal proceedings.
- Mental health conditions.

Circumstances that will not normally be regarded as suitable grounds for mitigation include (but not limited to):

- Personal holidays.
- Moving house.
- Planned life events.
- Time management issues.
- Citing no awareness of assessment submission dates.
- Lost or deleted work.

4.0 Submitting a Mitigation Application

Timely submission of mitigation applications is important. Students should submit application for mitigation at the earliest opportunity. Where significant time has passed before a mitigation application has been submitted without good cause, the mitigation panel may reject the application.

For students studying at an NCG College applications for mitigation must be submitted online via the Mitigation Portal <https://mitigation.ncgrp.co.uk/dashboard>.

The Mitigation Portal web page contains a student user guide which takes students through each stage of the process.

For students studying at an NCG Partner College, applications may be submitted using a Microsoft Word version of the Mitigation form. This is available via NCGHEMitigation@ncgrp.co.uk.

If the student extenuating circumstances prevents the student being able to submit a mitigation application themselves, the Microsoft Word version of the Mitigation Form may be submitted on their behalf by a programme leader (or other suitable staff member).

5.0 Mitigation Evidence

Alongside a statement of circumstances, students are required to provide appropriate evidence to support their application for mitigation. It is important the information students provide is accurate, authentic and supports the application.

Typically, students may submit one or more of the following as evidence of their extenuating circumstances (the list is indicative, and not exhaustive):

- Medical certificate or letter.
- A 'Fit Note' to confirm inability to work during a set time period.
- Letter from a medical professional treating yourself or a family member.
- Death certificate.
- Letter from employer confirming that you have had to undertake additional work duties beyond your normal workload (e.g. to cover for a sick colleague).
- Police report and crime number.
- Statement from a member of academic staff – student must request the staff member to provide this.
- Statement of attendance from a counsellor or if personal problems are affecting your work.
- Medical appointment evidence.
- Evidence of disability support requirements.

It is important the evidence provides information/dates that corresponds with the time when students are/were expected to submit assessment (examination date or assignment hand-in). Requests will not be accepted where there is a significant difference in the dates that cannot reasonably be explained.

6.0 The Mitigation Panel

Dates when the mitigation panels are held, alongside dates for submitting applications for review at each panel, can be accessed in the HE Student Handbook.

The mitigation panel is typically comprised of the following members:

- Deputy Director HE Quality and Standards (Chair).
- Assistant Director HE Student Records (Vice Chair).
- Head of HE at NCUC.
- HE Quality Improvement Manager.
- Representative from Central Support Services.
- HE Academic Coordinator.

7.0 Mitigation Panel Outcomes

The Mitigation Panel will discuss individual student applications and make decisions based on the available evidence within the mitigation application. The Mitigation Panel will make one of the following decisions:

- **Approved** – where the extenuating circumstances are clearly presented to the panel with appropriate supporting evidence.
- **Further Information Required** – where students are asked to provide additional appropriate supporting evidence.
- **Rejected** – where extenuating circumstances are not appropriate, or where additional evidence has not been provided within the timeframe provided.

Where a mitigation application is approved, the length of extended time given is at the discretion of the Mitigation Panel. The panel will consider each student's extenuating circumstances, and the volume of assessment applied for.

Students will be notified of the mitigation outcomes via the Mitigation portal, and also via their student email accounts. The programme leaders and curriculum management team will be able to view outcomes of mitigation panels.

8.0 Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student to complete and submit a mitigation application with appropriate supporting evidence. It is the responsibility of the student to check for updates on their application and respond to any requests for further evidence in a timely manner.

Where mitigation is approved, it is the responsibility of the student to submit by the new assessment submission dates.

9.0 Student Support

As part of the process of applying for mitigation, it may be reasonable and supportive for students to be directed to support service teams to discuss support arrangements. Disclosing a support need to the college will not hinder a student's study, it will in fact:

- Ensure that staff are aware of your individual needs and can provide you with the appropriate support.
- Ensure that you have access to the right resources.
- Maximise your opportunity to succeed and achieving optimum grades.

10.0 Confidentiality

All submission evidence and reasons for mitigation will be confidential to NCG staff authorised to receive and consider them except:

- Where the written requirements of a programme of study accredited by a Professional Statutory Body and accepted at the validation of that programme of study, require a wider disclosure.
- Where a student requests and is subsequently granted, an Appeal Hearing.

11.0 Mitigation Appeal

If your mitigation application is declined you may appeal to the NCG Director of Higher Education, in writing, for a final decision. You must cite the grounds and reasons for your appeal, and you must provide all relevant supporting evidence.

The appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the outcome of the Mitigation panel. The NCG Director of Higher Education's decision is final and is not subject to further appeal within the institution.