



## **EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

### **1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1. This policy describes how the Notting Hill Academy of Music (NHAM) looks upon the issue of Extenuating Circumstances
- 1.2. This policy applies to all students, whichever programme or course they are undertaking
- 1.3. The Principal is responsible for managing and reviewing this policy and the Education Administrator/Registrar is responsible for the effective administration of the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedures outlined below
- 1.4. The content of this policy aligns with the regulations of NHAM's awarding partner and other external stakeholders to whom NHAM must make reference
- 1.5. Extenuating Circumstances have a direct link with
  - 1.5.1. Academic Appeals
  - 1.5.2. Assessment
  - 1.5.3. Attendance
  - 1.5.4. Deferral of Assessment
  - 1.5.5. Equality and Diversity

### **2. Objectives**

- 2.1. To explain in an open, transparent and accessible way, how NHAM will treat students who wish to submit a request for Extenuating Circumstances
- 2.2. To describe the steps of the Extenuating Circumstances process

### **3. Extenuating Circumstances**

- 3.1. Extenuating circumstances are the reporting and recording of one or more personal difficulties, such as ill health, submitted by a student and supported by acceptable evidence and will be considered and may be taken into account by the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Award Boards in determining the classification of awards and the progression of students.
- 3.2. Extenuating circumstances will not normally include:
  - 3.2.1. Proximity or number of assessments or examinations



- 3.2.2. Pressure of paid or unpaid employment
- 3.2.3. Misreading of examination timetables
- 3.2.4. Poor time management
- 3.2.5. Scheduling of holidays or time abroad
- 3.3. No student shall be put in a position of unfair advantage over other candidates; the aim should be to enable all students to be assessed on equal terms
- 3.4. All work submitted by students for assessment will be graded on its merits without consideration of any extenuating circumstances known to the marker. Extenuating circumstances will not be used by the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Award Boards to alter the grades of students
- 3.5. Students must submit extenuating circumstances to the Education Administrator/Registrar/Registrar, with documentary evidence, by the deadline of the last day of the assessment period for the term in which the assessment is due
- 3.6. Normally, extenuating circumstances shall not be taken into account where the circumstances have already been allowed for (for example, by special assessment arrangements). Special assessment arrangements should be agreed at enrolment in cases of known disability and in any case agreed with the student before an examination period begins
- 3.7. Extenuating circumstances brought to the attention of the Chair of the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee or Final Award Board after the deadline specified in 3.5 should normally be considered only if the student was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling, to disclose them before deadline
- 3.8. Due to the inner-city teaching environment in which NHAM operates, many students have confidential circumstances which sometimes do not generate the type of official documentation (e.g. doctor's note, police records) but are nevertheless serious enough to affect a student's learning and progression. Under these circumstances, students are to book to see the Student Support Adviser who will evaluate the student's circumstances confidentially and write an assessment, which can be evaluated at the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee or Final Award Boards.
- 3.9. The student's extenuating circumstances will be recorded by the Education Administrator/Registrar/Registrar at the time of the affected assessment, noting what documentary evidence has been supplied and the summary will be made available to the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Assessment Boards in the comments section of the results spreadsheet. Access to the original evidence is restricted to the Chair and External Assessor of the Final Assessment Board, unless the student declares otherwise
- 3.10. Only extenuating circumstances submitted directly by the student to the Education Administrator/Registrar will be recorded and considered by the Teaching Learning



and Assessment Committee and Final Assessment Boards. Lecturers and other staff should advise students accordingly

3.11. The Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Award Boards will consider the full history of summarised extenuating circumstances. Where necessary, the Chair will obtain the original evidence from the Education Administrator/Registrar prior to the meeting.

3.12. In considering extenuating circumstances the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Exam Board may wish to:

3.12.1. Note whether acceptable evidence has been supplied

3.12.2. Consider whether the student has performed unexpectedly badly in a given unit or units; whether there is a significant difference between the student's performance in the year in which they experienced difficulties and their previous or later performance; and whether it correlates with the evidence provided

3.13. Where a Chair considers extenuating circumstances submitted under 3.7 and which have not been considered by the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Award Boards, the Chair will follow the procedure in 3.11 and may make a decision in the student's favour or advise the student to submit an academic appeal to the Registry

#### 4. Academic Appeals

4.1. Students have the right to appeal the decision on an Extenuating Circumstances submission. Please refer to the Academic Appeals policy for details.

#### PROCEDURES (Extenuating Circumstances)

1. Student completes Extenuating Circumstances form attaching supporting evidence as required:

**Illness or injury** – an original medical certificate must be provided and be signed, dated and stamped by an approved Doctor/Surgery/Hospital. It must state what you are suffering from, the period of time affected and how it may affect your academic performance

**Death of a relative or friend** – a copy of the death certificate is normally required

**Burglary of theft** – a Police crime report or case reference number is required

**Public transport delay of over 1 hour** – a letter from the Operating company is required

**Private transport problem** – will only be considered if acceptable authoritative evidence is supplied

**NHAM student support evaluation** – where serious confidential circumstances apply, the student will see the student support adviser, who will write an evaluation and recommendation for consideration by the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and/or Final Award Board.



2. Student submits Extenuating Circumstances form and supporting evidence to the Education Administrator/Registrar no later than 5pm on the day of the deadline specified in 3.5. Supporting evidence should be submitted no later than 20 working days after submission of the Extenuating Circumstances form, otherwise the request may be rejected
3. The Education Administrator/Registrar logs Extenuating Circumstances form and supporting evidence
4. The Education Administrator/Registrar passes the summary of Extenuating Circumstances and supporting evidence to the Chair of the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and/or Final Award Board
5. The Education Administrator/Registrar will not inform the student directly about the result of the Extenuating Circumstances submission as the information is used only in the case of considering a student's progress each term. The result of the Extenuating Circumstances will therefore be apparent in the results that the student receives in the normal process of results dissemination
6. At this stage the student is entitled to appeal the decision of the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee and Final Award Board – please refer to the Academic Appeals policy for details.