

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Policy on Mitigating Circumstances, Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels and DASS Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related Requests for Mitigation</b>
<b>Author/Enquiries:</b>	Miriam Graham (Teaching and Learning Adviser, Policies and Procedures), TLSO email: <a href="mailto:m.graham@manchester.ac.uk">m.graham@manchester.ac.uk</a>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016</b>
<b>Circulation:</b>	<b>Faculty Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) [or equivalent] and Faculty Teaching and Learning Managers</b>
<b>Action Required:</b>	For consultation/discussion at Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees

---

## Background

1. The *Policy on Mitigating Circumstances* was revised in June 2014 following a review. Following feedback from colleagues within the University since the implementation of the June 2014 version of the Policy, some minor amendments were agreed to the *Policy* and to the associated *Mitigating Circumstances Panels: Terms of Reference* document, for implementation from September 2015.
2. Further feedback during the 2015/16 academic year resulted in a number of suggested revisions to both documents, including suggested renaming of the *Mitigating Circumstances Panels: Terms of Reference* to *Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels*. Discussion took place at the Teaching and Learning Management Group (TLMG) in March 2016 regarding the suggested updates, and some consultation took place within Faculties.
3. Following further feedback received, TLSO staff members have since worked with colleagues from DASS to provide additional updates to both documents, and details of the major updates to the documents can be found in Appendix A. DASS have also produced an accompanying document (*Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related Requests for Mitigation*). This document has been approved by Chair's Action by the Doctoral College Group (DCG).

## For action

4. As requested at the October TLG meeting, Faculty ADs (or equivalent) for Teaching and Learning are asked to take the proposed updates to the TLSO-owned documents and the new draft DASS-owned *Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related Requests for Mitigation* to their Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees for discussion/consultation. Any comments/feedback is requested to be returned to Miriam Graham ([m.graham@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:m.graham@manchester.ac.uk)) by **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2016**.

5. Once approved, the amendments to the *Policy on Mitigating Circumstances* will need to be formally approved by Senate. (The *Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels* and the DASS-owned document *Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related Requests for Mitigation* would not require Senate approval).
6. The suggested 'tracked changes' versions of both TLSO-owned documents, and the DASS document, can be found in appendices B, C and D of this paper. The current versions of the TLSO documents are available on the TLSO website at:

<http://www.tlso.manchester.ac.uk/map/teachinglearningassessment/assessment/sectionc-reachingdecisionsfromassessment/policyonmitigatingcircumstances/>

**Attached:**

- Appendix A: Main updates to the *Policy on Mitigating Circumstances* and the *Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels*
- Appendix B: Suggested Updates to the *Policy on Mitigating Circumstances*
- Appendix C: Suggested updates to the *Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels*
- Appendix D: New DASS *Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related Requests for Mitigation*

## Appendix A:

### Main updates to the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances and the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels

#### Policy on Mitigating Circumstances

- Replacement of some instances of the word 'should' with 'will' or 'must' throughout the document.
- Clarification in paragraph 9 of the responsibility of different types of staff who make to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel and the Examination Board in terms of recommending/applying mitigation.
- Confirmation in paragraph 15 that requests for mitigation references circumstances relation to religious observance would normally be dealt with under the Policy on Religious Observance and Guidance for Students rather than through this Policy.
- Amending of the name of the University 'Notification of Mitigating Circumstances Form' to 'Request for Mitigation Form' (paragraph 16).
- Removal of the word 'normally' in paragraph 18: "Requests should (~~normally~~) be accompanied by appropriate, independent, third-part supporting or collaborative documentation, which will be subject to verification".
- A new paragraph 19 regarding students registered with DASS who have stated a disability-related reason for their mitigation should not routinely to asked to provide medical evidence to support their application. However, if students have stated external factors that have e.g. exacerbated their disability, evidence of these external factors should still be provided. DASS will advise the School if they feel that further disability-related evidence should be provided. DASS registered students applying for the reasons above must provide a detailed explanation of how their disability is affecting their studies.
- Clarification in paragraph 21 of DASS input into procedures.
- Updating of paragraph 25 regarding Mitigating Circumstances Panels recommending mitigation to be applied in a certain way, according to the alphanumeric codes listed in the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels, and the fact that the Examination Board may not necessarily accept this, as they have a more holistic view of the student's performance across the programme as a whole.
- Removal of old paragraphs 24 and 25 which included possible recommendations for mitigation, to ensure that all recommendations are, instead, listed in detail in the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels.

#### Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels (formerly called the Mitigating Circumstances Panels Terms of Reference)

##### 'Introduction and Scope' section

- Clarification of the scope of the document and listing of the supplementary documents.

##### 'Handling Mitigation, Acceptance and Application' section

- Clarification of DASS involvement in any requests for mitigation that mention disability support, lack of disability support or where a student has disclosed a possible disability (paragraph 7 under 'Handling Mitigation Requests').
- Confirmation that code 'N' is a single code which signifies a request for mitigation not being accepted as the circumstances are not regarded as grounds for mitigation under the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances (in the table under 'Accepting Mitigation').
- A new code of N8 to signify a request for mitigation not being accepted due to a missed deadline, with provision of no credible or compelling reason (in the table under 'Accepting Mitigation').
- The old code N8 has consequently been amended to N9 'Not accepted – other stated reason'.
- A new paragraph 10 regarding students registered with DASS who have stated a disability-related reason for their mitigation should not routinely to asked to provide medical evidence to support their application.

However, if students have stated external factors that have e.g. exacerbated their disability, evidence of these external factors should still be provided. DASS will advise the School if they feel that further disability-related evidence should be provided. DASS registered students applying for the reasons above must provide a detailed explanation of how their disability is affecting their studies – duplicated from paragraph 19 in the Policy.

- Confirmation that, if requests for mitigation are accepted, Mitigating Circumstances Panels should use the alphanumeric codes details in 'Applying Mitigation' to make recommendations to the Examination Board (paragraphs 12 and 14).
- Under 'Applying Mitigation', a new code C4 has been added to the possible recommendations for coursework to 'Exclude the coursework assessment mark from the calculation of the unit average if it is 30% or less of the unit assessment'.
- The code recommendations for assessments where resit opportunities exist have been extended to provide more clarity so that there are now codes A1 to A6.
- The code recommendations for assessments where resit opportunities do not exist have had the addition of a new code (A8) "A percentage mark may be awarded where there is sufficient evidence of attainment at least half the assessment has been completed", to mirror wording which was already in the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances.
- Confirmation in code A9 (formerly A8 in the original version) that, when recommending extending limit of the boundary zone for students falling between degree classifications, this relates only to consideration at final classification stage, rather than at individual assessment stage.
- Confirmation in paragraph 17 that and Examination Board may, in some circumstances, not adopt the recommendations of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

**Policy Introduction and Scope**

1. During the course of their studies, students may suffer from some illness or misfortune that adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment or the results they obtain for an assessment. This Policy sets out the University's arrangements for considering requests for mitigation.
2. This Policy applies to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students. It will only apply to Postgraduate Research students when they are studying the taught elements of a doctoral programme of study. The policy referring to mitigating circumstances affecting Postgraduate Research students is the Policy on the Circumstances Leading to Changes to Postgraduate Research Study (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=8162>).
- ~~1. Students may suffer from some illness or misfortune that adversely affects their ability to complete an assessment or the results they obtain for an assessment.~~

**Policy**

- ~~2.3.~~ Requests for mitigation submitted after the published date for the beginning of an assessment period (except those requests made as a result of circumstances that have arisen during the course of that assessment period) ~~should will~~ not be considered without a credible and compelling explanation as to why the circumstances were not known, or could not have been shown, before the beginning of the assessment period.
- ~~3.4.~~ Procedures for handling mitigating circumstances need to be clear and easily understood by both staff and students. Requests for mitigation ~~should must~~ be processed formally and judged impartially. Schools ~~should must~~ develop processes that properly document each case. The procedures need to be applied consistently, but with enough flexibility to apply equally to undergraduate and ~~taught~~ postgraduate taught students and to allow Schools to meet any discipline-specific or professional requirements. Arrangements ~~should must~~ also be proportionate, so that, where necessary, requests for mitigation can be dealt with quickly with a minimum of bureaucracy, such as through sub-panels on the delegated authority of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel through their agreed terms of reference. ~~A Mitigating Circumstances Panel: Terms of Reference Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels~~ document (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=23163>) ~~is are~~ also available to provide further guidance to this Policy.
- ~~4. This Policy applies to Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students. It will only apply to Postgraduate Research students when they are studying the taught elements of a doctoral programme of study. The policy referring to mitigating circumstances affecting Postgraduate Research students is the Policy on the Circumstances Leading to Changes to Postgraduate Research Study (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=8162>).~~
5. Mitigating Circumstances Panels ~~should must~~ meet prior to the Examination Board and should not consider the marks or profile of the individual students concerned. The purpose of the Panels is to determine whether there is substantiated evidence of circumstances eligible for mitigation and, if so, to determine if they might, or did, have an adverse effect on the student's performance and, if so, it will judge how

significant that effect was or would have been. It is then the role of an Examination Board to consider the effects of this and apply the recommendations of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

6. Students are responsible for submitting their own requests for consideration of mitigating circumstances. As such, they ~~should~~ must be made aware by Schools of the University's definition of mitigating circumstances and of the procedures for submitting a request for mitigation. Schools ~~should~~ must also ensure that students have a realistic appreciation of the range of actions or remedies available to deal with the circumstances in relation to which they claim mitigation. To this end, information about the consideration of mitigating circumstances ~~should~~ must be included in programme handbooks, and staff responsible for advising students need to be fully aware of what circumstances might warrant consideration under this ~~pp~~Policy.
7. Deadlines for the submission of requests for mitigation mitigating circumstances prior to an assessment period and the procedure for ~~doing so~~ submitting such requests ~~should~~ must be documented to students in the programme handbook, on School websites, by email and on notice boards, etc.

### Stages for considering requests for mitigation

8. Mitigating circumstances are considered in three stages. The first stage, dealt with by Schools and Faculties, identifies all the cases that were received after the published date for the beginning of an assessment period. If there is no credible and compelling explanation for mitigating circumstances not being submitted prior to the published date for the beginning of an assessment period, these students ~~should~~ must be advised that their claims cannot be considered and be referred to this policy and the section in their programme handbook which refers to the submission of mitigating circumstances. The second stage ('accepting mitigation', carried out by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel) will establish whether those cases received and which have passed the first stage have sufficient grounds for mitigation (see Paragraph ~~231~~), and, if they have, the final stage ('applying mitigation', carried out by the Examination Board) determines what mitigation should be applied to the outcomes of the students' assessments (see Paragraph ~~254~~ onwards).
9. The second ~~stage and final stages are~~ is the responsibility of any academic and administrative/Professional Support sStaff (PSS) who make up the Mitigating Circumstances Panel and the final stage is the responsibility of academic staff through the Examination Board applying mitigation. ~~but, subject to this,~~ Schools should designate a member of ~~administrative~~ PSS staff to take overall responsibility for handling mitigating circumstances cases. Duties would include making information available to staff and to students, observing the deadlines for submission, advising students and academic colleagues, receiving submissions and servicing the School Mitigating Circumstances Panel (see Handling Requests for Mitigation, starting from paragraph ~~165~~). Mitigating circumstances should be dealt with on a School-wide basis to facilitate consistent and equitable treatment, but it may be appropriate to deal with undergraduates and ~~taught~~ postgraduates taught students separately.
10. Where reasonably possible, accepted mitigating circumstances should be handled by flexibility in the arrangements for assessment, *e.g.*, by extending a coursework deadline (including an extension of time to submit a dissertation as governed by Regulations), ~~rescheduling a presentation, setting a special examination paper, or allowing an examination to be sat outside the normal examination period~~ permitting a student to sit a paper copy of an eLearning assessment or to sit an alternative assessment method (see codes C3, C5 and C6 under the Applying Mitigation section of the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels). Such arrangements are often convenient for the School and the student alike, but are always at the discretion of the School: students have no automatic right to individual assessment. In the interests of speed and efficiency, Schools should agree guidelines for standard arrangements like these to be handled as

administrative matters outside the full procedure described below, but subject to the same principles in order to ensure consistent treatment of students e.g. through the use of sub-panels.

## Grounds for mitigation

11. Grounds for mitigation are unforeseeable or unpreventable circumstances that could have, or did have, a significant adverse effect on the academic performance of a student. Possible mitigating circumstances include:
  - significant illness or injury;
  - the death or critical/significant illness of a close family member/dependant;
  - significant family crises or major financial problems leading to acute stress; and
  - absence [from the University](#) for public service e.g., jury service.
12. Circumstances that will not normally be regarded as grounds for mitigation include:
  - holidays, moving house and events that were planned or could reasonably have been expected;
  - assessments that are scheduled close together;
  - misreading the timetable or misunderstanding the requirements for assessments;
  - inadequate planning and time management;
  - failure, loss or theft of a computer or printer that prevents submission of work on time; students should back up work regularly and not leave completion so late that they cannot find another computer or printer;
  - consequences of paid employment (except in some special cases for part-time students);
  - exam stress or panic attacks not diagnosed as illness or supported by medical evidence; and
  - disruption in an examination room during the course of an assessment which has not been recorded by the invigilators.
13. Events may arise during pregnancy that may constitute mitigating circumstances, and these need to be judged on an individual basis. Note that U.K. legislation does not allow a woman to work in the first two weeks following the birth.
14. Absence from the University during a semester for any period of no more than five consecutive working days will not normally be regarded as grounds for mitigation.
15. Requests for mitigation referencing circumstances relating to religious observance would normally be dealt with under the Policy on Religious Observance and Guidance for Students rather than through this Policy, as issues of religious observance do not normally meet the grounds for mitigation in terms of being unforeseeable or unpreventable. Schools must have systems in place to be able to give due consideration to cases where students' religious observance practices clash with assessments or other compulsory activities, to ascertain whether they can accommodate the students' strict religious observance requirements. The Student Services Centre (SSC) provides a Religious Observers' form for cases relating to exams arranged centrally.

14.-

## Handling requests for mitigation

15.16. It is the sole responsibility of the student to submit a request for ~~consideration of mitigating circumstances~~ [mitigation](#) according to the published procedures and deadlines. Students may wish to consult the Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=23886>) for further advice about the process. Prompt submission makes it easier, for example, to offer flexibility in the arrangements for assessment as envisaged under Paragraph 10 of this Policy. All requests for consideration of mitigation by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel should be submitted by the student on a University ~~Notification of Request for Mitigation Circumstances~~ Form (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=23160>) via an electronic method or in hard copy to their School. It should be noted that some Schools have their own versions of the form or system for submission so students ~~should~~ must check (e.g. in programme handbooks or their School intranet) regarding the version and format of the form that needs to be completed.

~~16-17.~~ Requests for mitigation submitted after the published date for the beginning of an assessment period (except as a result of circumstances that have arisen during the course of that assessment period which should be submitted within one working day of the end of that assessment period) will not be considered without a credible and compelling explanation as to why the circumstances were not, or could not, have been shown before the beginning of the assessment period. Requests submitted as a result of circumstances that arose during that course of assessment ~~should~~ must be submitted in time for the relevant meeting of the Examination Board if possible, or for subsequent Chair's action on behalf of the Examination Board (subject to consultation with the External Examiners). Not informing the University of circumstances due to personal feelings, e.g., shame, embarrassment and pride, or having concerns over the confidential treatment of requests for mitigation, are not considered to be credible and compelling explanations as to why the circumstances could not be made known or shown before the beginning of the assessment period. ~~Students are advised to consult Mitigating Circumstances: Guidance for Students which directs them to seek advice and support before and whilst submitting a request for mitigation.~~

18. Requests should ~~normally~~ be accompanied by appropriate, independent, third-party supporting or collaborative documentation, which will be subject to verification (see [Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances](#); paragraph ~~10-9~~ of 'Handling Mitigation, Acceptance and Application' in the [Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels; Appendix 1](#), or seek advice from the relevant School). If the information, and details of the mitigating circumstances, are considered to be highly confidential, students should submit these in a sealed envelope attached to the [Notification of Mitigating Circumstances Form \(or School equivalent\)](#), together with the supporting documentary evidence. Mitigating Circumstances Panels ~~should~~ must have due regard for the confidentiality of any application they receive.

~~17-19.~~ [Students registered with the Disability Advisory and Support Service \(DASS\)](#) ~~DASS~~ who have stated a [disability-related reason for their mitigation \(where this is the same as the disability they are registered with DASS for\)](#), should not routinely be asked to provide medical evidence to support their application. However, [if students have stated external factors that have e.g. exacerbated their disability, evidence of these external factors should still be provided. DASS will advise the School if they feel that further disability-related evidence should be provided. DASS registered students applying for the reasons above must still provide a detailed explanation of how their disability is affecting their studies](#)".

20. A specifically constituted Mitigating Circumstances Panel will deal with requests for consideration of mitigating circumstances. Its membership will be taken from and approved by the Examination Board; it will be chaired by a member of the Board and serviced by the member of ~~administrative PSS~~ staff responsible for dealing with mitigating circumstances, plus others as necessary. In the Faculty of ~~Medical and Human Sciences~~ [Biology, Medicine and Health \(formerly Medical and Human Sciences\)](#), Progress Committees may act in this way and fulfill the same role as a Mitigating Circumstances Panel. In large Schools, it may be appropriate for sub-panels, with appropriate academic input and approval from Mitigating Circumstances

Panels, to handle different groups of programmes separately. Mitigating Circumstances Panels ~~should~~must ensure that decisions are consistent across the School.

~~18-21.~~ Panels will operate by considering documentary evidence, and students ~~are~~should not ~~required to~~ attend meetings. Panels may at their discretion consult with University support services where a student has indicated that he/she is receiving support and has consented to the Panel making contact. In regards to any requests for mitigation that mention disability support, lack of disability support, ~~or~~ the impact of a disability or where a student has disclosed a possible disability, these should be referred to ~~the Disability Support Office~~DASS. DASS will provide for confirmation of the individual circumstances and veracity of information provided and specialist advice on disability-related applications before ~~consideration by~~ the Panel reaches a decision (see paragraph ~~8-7~~ of the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels, Appendix 1 under 'Handling Mitigation, Acceptance and Application'). Since Panels will operate under delegated powers from the Examination Board (as defined in the Procedure for Mitigating Circumstances Panels under the Panel terms of reference), their decisions will not normally be subject to review unless some procedural irregularity has occurred. Students have no right of appeal against the decision of a Mitigating Circumstances Panel, although they can appeal against the final decision of an Examination Board, or equivalent body, under Regulation XIX (Academic Appeals Procedure) (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=1872>), if appropriate.

~~19-22.~~ Mitigating Circumstances Panels are reasonably expected to be convened for each significant assessment period, at a minimum of three per academic year (Semester One, Semester Two, Resit Period). Mitigating Circumstances Panels (and Examination Boards as necessary to fulfil the requirements of this policy) ~~should~~must maintain a written record of the minutes from their meetings, which Schools are able to report on and which are held by Schools in accordance with the University's Records Retention Schedule.

~~20-23.~~ Arrangements for dealing with mitigating circumstances should be coordinated with procedures for related student matters including disability support and the certification of ill health, e.g., as under Regulation XX, Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=1895>) (for which specific procedures should be outlined locally in programme handbooks).

### Accepting mitigation

~~21-24.~~ The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will determine whether there is substantiated evidence of circumstances eligible for mitigation. It will then decide whether the circumstances will have had, or could have had, an adverse effect on the student's performance, and, if so, it will judge how significant the effect was likely to have been. If the Mitigating Circumstances Panel judges that the effect was or would have been significant, the mitigation request will be accepted. Mitigation requests may be accepted for a specific assessment, or more general impairment over a number of assessments, or for both.

### Applying mitigation

~~25.~~ If a mitigation request is accepted by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, they should recommend mitigation to be applied in a certain way, according to the alpha numeric codes listed in the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels (pages 6 to 8). It is envisaged that these recommendations will be adopted in the majority of cases. However, a Mitigating Circumstances Panel's remit is to establish the severity of mitigating circumstances and to determine whether such circumstances have had a significant effect on the outcomes of an assessment. An Examination Board will have a more holistic view of the student's performance across the whole programme; therefore ~~then~~ the Examination Board will determine how to

apply ~~it~~mitigation, given the student's assessment results as a whole, and can therefore apply other codes as they see fit, documenting their decision.

~~22-26.~~ Where a preliminary internal meeting of the Examination Board is held to review the results before they are sent to External Examiners, that meeting may conveniently be used for applying mitigation. Otherwise, the whole Board may meet, with or without External Examiners, or it may delegate the task to a sub-group of the Board. Whatever arrangements are adopted, they ~~should~~must be clearly defined in advance and acceptable to the External Examiners.

~~23-27.~~ For each case, the Examination Board will start from the available assessment results and the assessment outcome that they imply. It will receive a recommendation on mitigation from the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, who will convey the Panel's view of the severity of the impairment suffered by the student. Students will not be granted mitigation more than once for any one attempt at an assessment. However, a student may be granted specific mitigation (*e.g.*, for an illness or operation that prevents completion of an assessment) as well as more general mitigation (*e.g.*, because of prior symptoms or after-effects).

~~24.~~ ~~The Examination Board may agree that, notwithstanding the accepted mitigating circumstances, the available results provide insufficient evidence of achievement to judge whether the student would have demonstrated appropriate learning outcomes. The remedies available may then be restricted to granting permission to take any missing assessments on a subsequent occasion or to re-take an assessment in which performance was severely impaired. Such further assessment would be equivalent to the one affected by the mitigating circumstances, so that the student would not forfeit any re-assessment opportunities.~~

~~25.~~ ~~When mitigating circumstances mean that assessment has been completed only partially for some units and no further attempt is available, the Examination Board will judge whether it has sufficient evidence to award the percentage mark (if at least half the assessment has been completed) or a pass (if less than half the assessment has been completed). A pass is not included in calculating the average mark, and has the same effect as giving that unit the average mark for the other units. If any results are revised in this way in the absence of any general mitigation, the Examination Board will simply adopt the decision that the revised results imply.~~

~~26-28.~~ ~~When assessment has been only partially completed for some units or where resit opportunities do not exist, and no further attempt is available, the Examination Board may judge that it has insufficient evidence to award the percentage mark or a pass despite mitigating circumstances.~~ The Examination Board may ~~also~~ agree to apply general mitigation to the overall performance of the student. In such cases, the Examination Board will judge, in the light of the severity of the impairment and of other available evidence such as prior performance, whether without the impairment the student would have reached higher overall marks sufficient to demonstrate appropriate learning outcomes. It will then determine in the light of the available results whether the student satisfies the published requirements for progression, for a given degree award or classification, or for treatment under its usual procedures for a borderline candidate. The Examination Board will not adjust the mark of the student in individual units or overall, but will flag marks in respect of which mitigation has been applied so that this can be taken into account by the Examination Board in a subsequent year. (For example, when using that year's marks in computing the overall average for the programme in a subsequent year, the Examination Board will need to allow for the consequent reduction in the overall average if it falls close to a borderline.)

~~27-29.~~ In some programmes of study, discipline-specific or professional requirements may mean that the options available to the Examination Board for dealing with mitigation are very restricted, *e.g.*, permission to

re-sit an examination or to re-submit a piece of assessed coursework. In such instances, students must be informed clearly and unambiguously in the relevant programme handbook.

~~28-30.~~ If there is a credible and compelling explanation as to why the circumstances were not brought to the attention of the School at an earlier stage, requests made after the publication of results may be considered under [Regulation XIX: Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

~~29-31.~~ Schools ~~should~~ must inform students of the outcome and progress, as appropriate, of their request for mitigation, in a timely manner.

Document Control Box	
Policy / Procedure title	Policy on Mitigating Circumstances
Date approved	June 2014 (Senate), <a href="#">revised September 2016</a>
Approving Body	Senate / Teaching and Learning Group (TLG)
Version	June 2015 (TLG) (with effect from <a href="#">September 2015 TBC</a> )
Supersedes	June <del>2014</del> <a href="#">2015</a> version
Previous review dates	<a href="#">June 2014</a> , June 2009, February 2009, April 2006
Related information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances</li> <li>• Notification of Mitigating Circumstances Form</li> <li>• <a href="#">Procedure for Mitigating Circumstances Panels</a> <del>Mitigating Circumstances Panels: Terms of Reference</del></li> </ul>
Policy owner	Emma Hilton Wood, Head of Academic Policy, <a href="#">TLSO</a>
Lead contact	Miriam Graham, Teaching and Learning Adviser (Policies and Procedures), <a href="#">TLSO</a>

Appendix C:  
Suggested updates to the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels

Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels ~~Terms of Reference~~

Introduction and Scope

1. This document sets out the procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels and the application of their recommendations, and should be read in conjunction with the *Policy on Mitigating Circumstances* and, where appropriate, the *Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related requests for Mitigation (produced by the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS))*.
2. The procedures apply to Mitigating Circumstances Panels set up for consideration of mitigation in respect of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students.

Composition and Membership of Panels

- ~~2.~~ 3. All Schools are required to have at least one constituted Mitigating Circumstances Panel whose decisions are ratified by the Examination Board. (Schools may wish to have more depending on student cohort and staffing numbers).
- ~~3-4.~~ 3-4. The Mitigating Circumstances Panel must be composed of appropriate members of both academic (e.g. lecturer, Programme Director) and PSS staff (e.g. Student Support Officer, Assessment Officer) and will normally be chaired by the Head of School/Director of Teaching and Learning, or a delegated nominee of appropriate seniority.
  - a. Membership will be taken from the School's Examination Board.
  - b. A Mitigating Circumstances Panel shall have a quorum of five members.
5. In the case of both summative (please see Role-paragraph 9 below) and non-summative assessments, when proportionate to do so, requests for mitigation may be referred to a Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Panel acting on delegated authority of the full Mitigating Circumstances Panel. The role of both panels is the same.
  - a. A Sub-Panel will be comprised of PSS staff in conjunction with a member of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, who will usually be the Chair, alongside other appropriate academic colleagues (e.g. unit coordinators, programme directors) as may be considered necessary.
  - b. A Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Panel shall have a quorum of two members.

Role of Panels

6. Mitigating Circumstances Panels should determine:
  - a. Whether a student has presented substantiated evidence of circumstances eligible for mitigation;
  - b. Whether the circumstances could have had an effect on the student's performance;
  - c. How significant the effect of any mitigating circumstances would likely have been.
7. Mitigating Circumstances Panels should make a recommendation to the Examination Board for proposed mitigation for an accepted request using the alpha-numeric codes below.

8. Mitigating Circumstances Panels should refer to Appendix 1 (Mitigating Circumstances: Handling Mitigation Acceptance and Application) for the mechanism by which requests for mitigation should be handled by Schools and the fundamental tenets upon which cases should be decided upon.

9. For summative assessments falling outside of key assessment periods, it is acceptable for Sub-Panels to be used to ensure the timely consideration of requests for mitigation, for example, where a student requests an extension. However Sub-Panels are only empowered to make recommendations C3, C5 and C6 and these recommendations still require ratification by an Examination Board (or through use of Chair's Action).

### **Meeting frequency**

10. Paragraph 19-22 of the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances states that Mitigating Circumstances Panels should be convened for each significant assessment period with a minimum of three per academic year (Semester One, Semester Two, Resit Period).

11. Mitigating Circumstances Panels should meet prior to the assessment period Examination Board.

12. Mitigating Circumstances Panels may wish to hold more meetings than the minimum requirement, which may depend on:

- a. The number of requests for mitigation that Schools receive;
- b. The timing in which it is felt necessary to respond to or consider the impact of request for mitigation;
- c. The use of Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Panels.

## Appendix 1: Mitigating Circumstances Panels Terms of Reference: Appendix 1

### ~~Mitigating Circumstances: Handling Mitigation, Acceptance and Application~~

#### Handling Mitigation Requests

The process below outlines the ~~proposed~~ mechanism by which requests for mitigation should be handled by Schools and the fundamental tenets upon which cases should be decided upon.

1. Requests for mitigation should be submitted by a student to his/her Programme owning School only; even if the student is submitting a request for mitigation for a unit managed by another School. All cases will be considered and decided upon by the Programme owning School, although external Schools may be consulted at the discretion of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.
2. All Schools must have a constituted Mitigating Circumstances Panel. The Panel should meet prior to the Examination Board and should not consider the marks or profile of the individual student concerned. The purpose of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel is to establish the severity of the mitigating circumstances and to determine whether such circumstances have had a significant effect on the outcomes of the assessment.
- ~~3. The Mitigating Circumstances Panel must be composed of appropriate members of both academic (e.g. lecturer, Programme Director) and PSS staff (e.g. Student Support Officer, Assessment Officer) and will normally be chaired by the Head of School/Director of Teaching and Learning, or a delegated nominee of appropriate seniority. In the case of non-summative assessments, when proportionate to do so requests for mitigation may be referred to the Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Panel (see paragraph 5). The Mitigating Circumstances Panel should be constituted in line with its terms of reference.~~
- 4.3. Requests for mitigation must be submitted prior to the outcome of any assessment being known. For most practical purposes, this will mean the submission of a request in sufficient time (at least 5 working days depending on the application of paragraph 5.4 below) prior to the meeting of an Examination Board to allow for decisions on academic progress to be made. Schools should publish the deadlines for the submission of requests for mitigation in programme handbooks, websites, by email and on notice boards.
- 5.4. Requests for mitigation submitted after the published date for the beginning of an assessment period (except as a result of circumstances that have arisen during the course of that assessment period which should be submitted within one working day of the end of the assessment period) will not be considered without a credible and compelling explanation as to why the circumstances were not known, or could not have been shown, before the beginning of the assessment period. Requests submitted as a result of circumstances that arose during the course of an assessment should be submitted in time for the relevant meeting of the Examination Board or for subsequent Chair's action on behalf of the Examination Board.
- 6.5. Requests for mitigation that do not involve summative assessments may be considered by a Sub-Panel of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel which will be comprised of PSS staff in conjunction with a member of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, who will usually be the Chair, alongside other appropriate academic colleagues (e.g. unit coordinators, programme directors) without recourse to a full meeting of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. All decisions made by the Mitigating Circumstances Sub-Panel must be suitably documented, and be available to the full Mitigating Circumstances Panel.
- 7.6. Requests for mitigation of a summative assessment must be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, and any recommendations made passed on to the Examination Board for consideration.

8.7. Any requests for mitigation that mention disability support, lack of disability support, ~~or~~ the impact of a disability<sup>1</sup> or where a student has disclosed a possible disability should must be referred to the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS, formerly DSO). DASS will provide confirmation of the individual circumstances and veracity of information provided and specialist advice on disability-related applications before the Panel reaches a decision for confirmation of the individual circumstances and veracity of information provided before consideration by the panel. This should apply regardless of whether or not the student is registered with the DASS, as legislative duties may still apply.

9.8. The table below (Accepting Mitigation) outlines potential outcomes from the Mitigating Circumstances Panel that should normally be applied to each individual student claim following appropriate consideration.

#### Accepting Mitigation

Code	Outcome
A	Accepted – circumstances meet the grounds for mitigation and the Mitigating Circumstances Panel is satisfied with the supporting evidence. A recommendation based on the severity of the impairment suffered by the student is indicated by the alpha-numeric codes described <u>below under Applying Mitigation.</u>
PA	Provisionally accepted – student has referred to difficulties in obtaining evidence, but based on the description of the circumstances the request is approved pending the evidence being provided (submission date must be before the Examination Board in which the mitigation is considered). A recommendation based on the severity of the impairment suffered by the student is indicated by the alpha-numeric codes described <u>in Section 10 under Applying Mitigation</u> below but it would not be applied if the requested evidence is not presented to support the claim.
<u>N codes</u>	<u>Not accepted – circumstances provided by the student are not regarded as grounds for mitigation under the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances. The following codes may be helpful as part of the process of providing feedback to students. The following codes indicate when mitigating circumstances are not accepted by Mitigating Circumstances Panels, with the codes being helpful as part of the process of providing feedback to students.</u> .
<u>N</u>	<u>Not accepted – circumstances provided by the student are not regarded as grounds for mitigation under the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances. The following codes may be helpful as part of the process of providing feedback to students.</u>
N1	Not accepted - supporting evidence does not cover the relevant period.
N2	Not accepted - supporting evidence not supplied by an appropriate source
N3	Not accepted - evidence is deemed insufficient to support the student's claim of seriousness of impact on their assessment performance.
N4	Not accepted - wording of evidence supplied does not support the student's claim e.g. the material does not provide a medical diagnosis.
N5	Not accepted – no evidence is provided, and the student has not given any

<sup>1</sup> A 'disability' can include long-standing health conditions, long-standing or severe mental health conditions including depression and anxiety, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and physical impairments or a combination of any or all of these.

		explanation as to the reasons why nor indicated when evidence could be available.
N6		Not accepted - the evidence relates to a chronic condition which the student is already in receipt of support from the <del>Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS, formerly DSO)</del> . This decision should always be confirmed by the DASS, as there are occasions when the support available will not be able to fully mitigate the student's need.
N7		Not accepted - evidence relates to a condition or circumstance previously used to claim mitigation where the Panel, on the earlier occasion, instructed the student that this mitigation could not be used again and may have instructed the student to obtain support from the <del>Disability Advisory and Support Service</del> DASS. This decision should always be confirmed by the DASS as some conditions will inevitably recur, sometimes without warning and mitigation may still be relevant.
N8		<del>Not accepted – missed deadline and provided no credible or compelling reason.</del>
N8N9		Not accepted - other stated reason. [Note: Must be recorded.]

**Note:** ~~In principle, all that needs to go forward to the Examination Boards need only be informed of accepted, or provisionally accepted, requests for mitigation. The above codes should be used to provide an outcome of the decision to the student, where mitigation is not accepted. is whether there is mitigation to be applied (i.e. accepted – or not) although it is felt the codes above will be helpful in giving an outcome to the student if the mitigation is not accepted.~~ The Mitigating Circumstances Panel minutes and communication with the student may require detail further explanation as to why a code is allocated.

~~10.9.~~ Students are advised to submit independent and time-specific evidence to support a request for mitigation. Mitigating Circumstances Panels should be satisfied that any evidence is sufficiently independent and contemporaneous to confirm the veracity and impact of the circumstances that the student is describing. Any evidence should allow for a Mitigating Circumstances Panel to verify that it is accurate e.g. provided on letter headed paper, written in English (or certifiably translated), clearly state the name and signature of the author of the material, include relevant dates, have the student's name visible etc.

10. Students registered with DASS who have stated a disability-related reason for their mitigation (where this is the same as the disability they are registered with DASS for), should not routinely be asked to provide medical evidence to support their application. However, if students have stated external factors that have e.g. exacerbated their disability, evidence of these external factors should still be provided. DASS will advise the School if they feel that further disability-related evidence should be provided. DASS registered students applying for the reasons above must provide a detailed explanation of how their disability is affecting their studies.

11. As soon as possible after the meeting of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, the decision as to whether or not the request for mitigation has been accepted or not accepted should be conveyed to the student. In instances where a student has disclosed a disability or a possible health concern then the student should be directed to an appropriate University support service. It is essential that Schools seek consent for a referral to DASS, rather than just signposting the student by following the referral guidelines and form –in the same communication. (A referral form for staff members to refer students to “Referral to University support services for \_\_\_\_\_ medical \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ mental \_\_\_\_\_ health \_\_\_\_\_ reasons”, \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ available \_\_\_\_\_ at: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=647>. This includes referrals to the University Counselling Service, the Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) and the Student Occupational Health Service.)

12. The acceptance of a request for mitigation by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel should be accompanied by a recommendation on mitigation, (using the alphanumeric codes detailed below under 'Applying Mitigation') from the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel, which will assist in conveying the Panel's view of the severity of the impairment suffered by the student, to the Examination Board. This recommendation, which must be made in the absence of any knowledge of a student's assessment results, may or may not be adopted by the Examination Board which has the final say in all matters. A preliminary internal meeting of an Examination Board may also be conveniently used for applying mitigation.
13. In accordance with the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Degree Regulations, as reassessment cannot be undertaken by final year undergraduate or penultimate year integrated masters students, the recommendations available to Mitigating Circumstances Panels take into account distinct year groups alongside the types of assessment. The exception to this is Schools which have alternative progression and assessment regulations where these are required by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).
14. The coding below (Applying Mitigation) outlines potential recommendations which ~~could-should~~ be provided by the Chair of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel to the Examination Board. Such a recommendation should be forwarded to the Examination Board for individual students with approved mitigation for summative assessments. One or more of the codes below ~~may-should~~ be recommended and may depend on the intended learning outcomes for a Programme.

#### Applying Mitigation

##### i. Coursework (including dissertations)

#### **Code Recommendation**

- C1. Coursework to be submitted as a first attempt (deferral) in the next possible reassessment period appropriate to the programme.
- C2. Coursework to be submitted as a reassessment (referral) in the next possible reassessment period appropriate to the programme.
- C3. A reasonable extension to coursework to be granted within an assessment period (new deadline will need to be stated). This would include the removal of any late submission penalties imposed.
- C4. Exclude the coursework assessment mark from the calculation of the unit average if it is 30% or less of the unit assessment.

If feedback for coursework has been provided to a programme cohort Mitigating Circumstances Panels ~~may~~ should request that the programme lead sets a new coursework question.

##### ii. Coursework (including dissertations), where reassessment is not practicable

Students may be unable to access or undertake some assessments once the deadline for the assessment has passed ~~It is recognised that the ability to complete some assessments close for students once the date for the assessment has passed-~~ (e.g. an eLearning assessment in Blackboard or carrying out some laboratory work). In such cases where there ~~will be~~ is no opportunity to ~~award a student an extension~~ recommend codes C1 - C3 (above); Mitigating Circumstances Panels should, ~~therefore,~~ consider ~~whether the assessment forms a core component of the programme in terms of learning outcomes~~ recommendations C45 – C67 (below).

#### **Code Recommendation**

- ~~C4~~C5. Student to sit paper copy version of the e-learning assessment at a date set by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

~~€5C6.~~ Student to sit ~~an~~ using an alternative assessment method, to be agreed with the unit co-ordinator, either as a referral or deferral, but the assessment must meet the same intended learning outcomes (ILOs) as the original.

~~€6C7.~~ Exclude the coursework assessment mark from the calculation of the unit average if it is 30% or less of the unit assessment.

~~ii.iii.~~ Assessments (where resit opportunities exist e.g. at level 4 and 5 and programmes with PSRB requirements)

#### **Code Recommendation**

~~A1.~~ If affected assessments have been passed at first attempt (i.e. attaining the pass mark without compensation) the Examination Board may exclude the results from the degree classification calculation if there is evidence of underperformance compared to unaffected assessments/units.

A1. If affected assessments have been passed at first attempt, but the student has significantly underperformed in relation to other assessments, the assessment(s) may be taken as a first attempt (deferral) in the next possible assessment period.

A2. If affected reassessments have been passed, but the student has significantly underperformed in relation to other assessments, the assessment(s) may be taken as a reassessment (referral) in the next possible assessment period.

A3. If affected assessments or reassessments have been passed, the results of the affected assessments may be excluded from the degree classification calculation if there is evidence of underperformance compared to unaffected assessments/units.

A4. Alternatively if assessment(s) have been failed or missed, the assessment(s) they is/are to may be taken as a first attempt (deferral) in the next possible reassessment period.

A5. If reassessment(s) have been failed or missed, or they may be taken as a reassessment (referral) in the next possible reassessment period. (When making this recommendation, the Mitigating Circumstances Panel/Exam Board should consider the required workload).

~~A2A6.~~ In exceptional circumstances, only if the Examination Board it is determined that more evidence (e.g. other assessment results) is required to conduct a result comparison, the Examination Board may it could be recommended that the mitigation is carried forward to be evaluated in a future year/Examination Board.

~~iii.iv.~~ Assessments ([including coursework] where resit opportunities do not exist e.g. at level 6 or 7 for Integrated Masters)

#### **Code Recommendation**

~~A3A7.~~ The affected assessment(s) should be disregarded from the degree classification calculation if there is evidence of underperformance compared to unaffected assessments (to a limit of 45 credits for the academic year).

A4A8. A percentage mark may be awarded where there is sufficient evidence of attainment and at least half the assessment has been completed.

A9. Extend the limit of the boundary zone for students falling between degree classifications at final classification stage to by a maximum of 2%. The Mitigating Circumstances Panel will determine the extent of this depending on their assessment of evidence relating to severity, duration, timing and impact of the mitigating circumstance.

~~A5A910.~~ In exceptional circumstances for scenarios not addressed in a recommendation above a Mitigating Circumstances Panel may make an alternative recommendation considered to be reasonable; however an explanation of the reasons must be fully documented.

~~15.~~—Where a request for mitigation covers a significant number of units which the Mitigating Circumstances Panel feels unable to mitigate, rather than a specific component of assessment, then it may be more appropriate for the student to be directed by the School on the advice of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel to the [Principles Policy on for Granting Interruptions to an Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught Programme of Study](#) (<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=4779>). [~~Note: a student can only carry forward 20 failed credits to their next year of study under their programme degree regulations.~~]

~~16-15.~~

~~17-16.~~ When a student who is registered with the DASS misses the first sit of an assessment citing ‘disability’ reasons, but the level of assessment means resit opportunities are not available, [e.g. level 6 or 7 for Integrated Masters](#), Schools should enquire with the DASS to see if the reasons can be substantiated. If so, the DASS’s likely recommendation would be to allow the student an opportunity to take the assessment as a first sit in a subsequent assessment period, but NOT to discount the assessment altogether without the student having the opportunity to sit it as a first sit.

~~17.~~ [As per paragraphs 245-29 of the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances, an Examination Board may, in some circumstances, not adopt the recommendation of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. In those cases a code of EBA \(Examination Board Alternative\) should be recorded on the student’s file to indicate a different action has been recommended by the Examination Board.](#)

18. As soon as possible after the meeting of the Examination Board, the final decisions made should be conveyed by the School to students who have applied for mitigation.

19. The decision of the Examination Board is final. Students may however choose to submit a formal academic appeal in accordance with Regulation XIX (Academic Appeals Procedure).

20. Students who submit a request for mitigation after the publication of results should be referred to the Regulation XIX (Academic Appeals Procedure) and are required to include a statement explaining the reason for the delay with their submission.

Document Control Box	
Policy / Procedure title	<a href="#">Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels</a> <a href="#">Mitigating Circumstances Panels: Terms of Reference</a>
Date approved	September 2014 ( <a href="#">revised October 2016, TBC</a> )
Approving Body	Teaching and Learning Group (TLG)
Version	<del>June 2015</del> <a href="#">March June 2016</a> (with effect from <del>September 2015</del> <a href="#">May September</a> , TBC)
Supersedes	<del>September 2014</del> <a href="#">June 2015 version of the Mitigating Circumstances Panels: Terms of Reference</a>
Previous review dates	N/A
Related information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy on Mitigating Circumstances</li> <li>• Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances</li> <li>• Notification of Mitigating Circumstances Form</li> </ul>
Policy owner	Emma Hilton-Wood, Head of Academic Policy
Lead contact	Miriam Graham, Teaching and Learning Adviser (Policies and Procedures)

**Appendix D:  
New DASS Guidance for Dealing with Disability-Related Requests for Mitigation**

**DASS/School Mitigating Circumstances Procedures**

**General information about disabled students applying for Mitigating Circumstances**

1. The Disability Advisory and Support Services (DASS) has had some anecdotal feedback that some disabled students are being discouraged from submitting requests for mitigation because they have support in place or they have previously requested mitigation.
2. DASS appreciates this may not apply to your area, but would like to highlight to all Schools that this should not be the case, as the Policy on Mitigating Circumstances refers to 'unforeseeable' or 'unpreventable' circumstances.
3. Additionally, the provision of support from DASS does not automatically mean that, when considering whether to accept a request for mitigation, codes N6 or N7 should be used by Mitigating Circumstances Panels. As stated in the Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels, these particular codes should only be used when DASS has confirmed that it is appropriate to do so.

**Which requests for mitigation should be shared with DASS?**

4. Students who are registered with DASS and who have stated a disability-related reason for their request for mitigation.
5. Students who are not registered with DASS but have stated a disability-related reason for their request for mitigation.

**When should supporting medical evidence be provided by students?**

6. Students registered with DASS who have stated a disability-related reason for their request for mitigation should not be routinely asked to provide medical evidence to support their request. The exception to this is when a student discloses a different disability on their request to the one(s) for which they are registered with DASS.
7. However, if students have stated external factors that have, for example, exacerbated their disability, evidence of these external factors should still be provided (*e.g.*, if an exacerbation of disability is due to a bereavement, a medication change or financial issues, evidence of these issues should still be provided). DASS will advise the School if it feels that further disability-related evidence should be provided.
8. Students who are not registered with DASS but have stated a disability-related reason for their request for mitigation will still need to provide medical evidence of their difficulties to support their request.
9. In cases where no further medical evidence is required, the evidence and professional advice from DASS acts as evidence for the Mitigating Circumstances Panel.

**How should the School share applications with DASS?**

10. The DASS caseworker based in the School will contact ITS to set up a shared access area for DASS/your School. Please provide the DASS caseworker with the University usernames of School staff who will require access to this area as soon as possible.

11. The School can then save all disability-related requests for mitigation in the shared area for each period of consideration and inform the DASS caseworker when this has been done. If the DASS caseworker is out of office, please send the request for mitigation to [dass@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dass@manchester.ac.uk) and mark the message as urgent.
12. The use of a shared space means that confidential information is not routinely sent by email. There is also no need for the School/DASS to encrypt/decrypt the documentation each time.
13. Please note, if you get early requests for mitigation, please do save these to the shared area when received, and notify the DASS caseworker. Again, if they are out of office, please send to [dass@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dass@manchester.ac.uk) and mark the message as urgent.

#### **How should the School save documents within the shared area?**

14. DASS will set up a folder for each academic year within the shared area. A further set of folders will be set up within this for February, June and Resit panels. If you have separate Mitigating Circumstances Panel meetings for, for example, final year or PGT students, then please set up further appropriate folders to reflect this.
15. Please save all requests for mitigation by Surname, First name – UID. Please note that we will also require any evidence that the student has submitted. If you need to save this as a separate document, please save it in the same format including 'evidence' in the document title.

#### **What other information does DASS need and when?**

16. Because DASS works with all Schools in relation to disability-related mitigating circumstances, it will need some information from the School in advance to manage its workloads so that it can provide a timely response. At the start of each academic year colleagues in Schools should provide their DASS caseworker with:
  - a. The dates of the Mitigating Circumstances Panels for each of the three main assessment periods (or other dates if this applies).
  - b. If DASS attend a pre-meeting rather than the main Mitigating Circumstances Panel, it will also need to receive the dates for each of the pre-meetings.
  - c. All annual deadlines for students to requests for mitigation.
17. DASS has to do a significant amount of preparation prior to attending the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. This includes checking support take up with outside agencies and reading students' records. We therefore need access to all requests for mitigation and evidence by 10am the day before any meeting between DASS/the School.
18. If the School decides to pursue a pre-meeting with DASS, rather than Mitigating Circumstances Panel attendance, then please ensure that there is sufficient time between your deadlines/panel to both hold the pre-meeting and to ensure that DASS can be provided with the information we need by 10am the day before that pre-meeting.
19. To ensure that DASS can advise the School on reasonableness of any adjustment, we will always need to know the following if this is not clear on the request for mitigation:
  - a. Whether or not the request for mitigation relates to an examination(s) or an assignment(s) or both;
  - b. Whether or not assessments have been submitted, and whether or not these have been submitted on time or late;
  - c. Whether or not the student attended the examination.

### Late requests for mitigation

20. It is important that there is a consistent approach to late requests for mitigation across the University. An inconsistent approach leaves the University open to challenge. Credible and compelling reasons need to be presented by the student for late requests for mitigation.
21. If the reasons presented for a late request are disability-related, please ask DASS to advise on whether the stated reasons seem to be credible and compelling.
22. If the reasons presented for a late request are not disability-related (but the content of the request is), and the request is rejected for being late, the request need not be sent to DASS. However if a late request is accepted, and the request is disability related, then comments should be sought from DASS as outlined above.
23. DASS will make every effort to provide feedback on late requests at Mitigating Circumstances Panel meetings where the School has received the request after 10am the day before the meeting. However, please ensure that other requests received before these times are sent through to DASS straight away.

### After the Mitigating Circumstances Panel meeting

24. The Policy on Mitigating Circumstances requires that students are informed about the outcome of their request for mitigation. Please copy [dass@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dass@manchester.ac.uk) in to School responses to students informing them about the outcome of disability-related requests.
25. DASS may advise the inclusion of text in the response to the student to demonstrate a joined up approach between the School/DASS. This may, for example, advise the student that there is support available to them that they are not using and that future requests may be compromised if they do not engage with support or discuss further with DASS.

Document Control Box	
Policy / Procedure title	Guidance for Dealing with Disability-related requests for Mitigation
Date approved	September 2016, TBC
Approving Body	DCG / TLG
Version	1.0
Supersedes	N/A
Previous review dates	N/A
Related information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy on Mitigating Circumstances</li><li>• Procedures for Mitigating Circumstances Panels</li></ul>
Policy owner	Elaine Shillcock, Head of Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS)
Lead contact	Louise Pepper-Kernot, Senior Disability Adviser and Deputy Head of DASS