

## Policy on Extenuating Circumstances and Assessment Lateness or Absence

### 5.2.1.1.3: Complete and Submit Assessments Before the Relevant Deadline

- Students must complete assignments according to deadlines set out by ICD and by ICD staff (e.g. relevant lecturers for modules).
- Deadline extensions will not be granted unless students have extenuating circumstances officially recognised by ICD staff and/or lecturers)
- Excerpt from ICD Student Handbook: “All assignments must be completed by the appointed deadline. You must keep a copy of any assignment submitted. It is college policy not to grant assignment extensions other than in exceptional circumstances. This ensures the fairness of the challenge set for all students on the programme...From September 2017, ICD will be implementing the Moodle system for assignment submission, students will be given training/instruction on same...Failure to submit an assignment by the due date, except in the case of extenuating circumstances, **will result in your grade being less than would be the case if submitted on time.**”
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#### 5.2.1.1.3.1 Late Assignment Penalties Policy

A lecturer may refuse to accept late assignments. This depends on the specific lecturer and they should notify students of the late assignments policy via the dedicated module Moodle page. Example cases where lecturers may refuse to accept late assignment (except in cases of extenuating circumstances) include (but are not limited to):

- In-class tests/exams (due to scheduling difficulties)
- Presentations (due to scheduling difficulties)
- Moodle tests
- Any lecturer may refuse to accept late assignments for any assessment element [provided all students are treated equally in this regard] (in such cases, students will be afforded an opportunity to repeat the assignment or the module or to sit the repeat examination, but will be considered as a repeat candidate, **not** as a first sitting candidate [unless they have extenuating circumstances officially approved])

In the absence of a specific policy for a module regarding assignment lateness, the following rules apply by default:

- **Default Penalty for Lateness:** For each day late, or part thereof, late assignment grades will be reduced by a penalty of 10 percentage points (for each day).
  - o This means that if an assignment is submitted 1 day late and is graded as a 55% performance, then the penalty (of 10 percentage points) reduces the grade for this assignment to 45%. Please note, this is not 10% of 55%; it is a 10 percentage point reduction. If penalties are applied as percentage reductions rather than percentage point reductions, then better performing grades would receive higher penalties than lower performing grades, which is counter to student equality and goes against the principle of consistency in assessment.
- **Lecturers may alter the lateness policy for their specific module** (such that it is different to the official ICD default lateness policy), provided they notify students via Moodle in advance of the submission dates. However, it is intended that lecturer changes should not apply less severe penalties unless there is a specific rationale for doing so.
- **Students may apply for extenuating circumstances** in order to be granted official assignment submission date extensions. As a smaller institution, ICD also operates an 'open door' policy at its reception and administrative office, and actively encourages to learners to approach staff members about any matter pertaining to their study or personal circumstances.

#### 5.2.1.1.3.2 Policy on Learner from an Assessment or Non-Submission

##### **What will happen if a student does not submit an assignment or does not attend an examination?**

The policy is very clear regarding this issue. If a student does not submit an assignment, it is **not** the lecturer's responsibility to 'follow-up' with this student. If a student does not attend an examination, it is **not** the lecturer's responsibility to 'follow-up' with this student. It is the student's responsibility to make contact with ICD and/or a lecturer if they fail to submit an assignment or if they fail to attend an examination, and wish to query what to do next. In the interest of pastoral care, ICD staff **may** contact such a student, potentially to discuss retention or failure to progress in their programme. However, while ICD takes its pastoral duties very seriously, it also expects students to be autonomous,

independently learning and completing assessments, and following the principle of student-self-directed education as much as possible.

#### 5.2.1.1.3.3 Extenuating Circumstances Policy

Students who fail to attend for examination, or who fail to submit an assignment on schedule, are advised to notify the college Registrar of any extenuating circumstances that might apply to their situation. Such exceptional circumstances are limited to:

- certified illnesses,
- family bereavement
- Involvement in an accident
- Victim of a crime
- Serious family illness
- Bereavement of a partner
- Domestic emergency (e.g. fire, burglary)
- or other similar significant adverse influences (which will be dealt with compassionately, confidentially, and on a case by case basis).

In such cases, the college may permit the student to resubmit the assignment(s) or retake the examination at the next available sitting as a first attempt. Supporting documentation must be submitted where applicable (e.g. illness certificate from a medical practitioner).

#### Circumstances that are unlikely to be approved as extenuating circumstances:

- Exam stress
- Stress or standard anxiety relating to completing assignments
- Disrupted sleep patterns due to worry about assessments
- Relationship difficulties
- Financial difficulties
- Going on holidays
- Travelling of any kind
- Transportation issues (e.g., ones which make a student late for an exam)
- Getting mixed up about the exam timetable or the submission date for an assignment
- Loss of data (relating to an assignment) on a computer
- Being in work or having to work when an assignment is due (or at exam time)
- Sporting commitments of any kind

- Weddings or other similar social events
- Forgetting about an assignment
- Not knowing about an assignment
- Being busy
- Delaying an assignment submission to improve it
- A printer 'breaking' while printing an assignment 'at the last minute'

The process to apply for extenuating circumstances:

- i. **the student should contact the Registrar**
- ii. **the student may be requested to provide supporting documentation:** The Registrar will assess the case and may request supporting documentation for verification purposes (e.g. illness certificate from a medical practitioner).
- iii. **Approval or rejection of extenuating circumstances application:** The Registrar will decide whether extenuating circumstances apply in each case. While ICD wishes to protect all learners who find themselves in difficult personal circumstances, and this will typically lead to reasonable accommodations, it is important to note that extenuating circumstances applications will not be approved lightly. This is in order to maintain consistency in assessment and to provide every learner with equal treatment in assessment (equal opportunity and time [no greater or lesser]) to demonstrate learning outcome achievement. Equal and consistent treatment of all learners is paramount. Therefore, extenuating circumstances applications will be treated confidentially but will, as appropriate, be carefully considered before approval to protect learner equality. Extenuating circumstances applications will be rejected if the learner's circumstances are not deemed to be extenuating.
- iv. **Notification of approval or rejection to the student:** The Registrar will inform the student that their application has been approved, or rejected with a reason for same
- v. **Notification of approval to ICD Staff:** If the Registrar verifies and approves a learner's extenuating circumstances application, it is the Registrar's responsibility to inform the relevant lecturers/assessors, confidentially. Learners are advised that they may choose to contact specific lecturers about their extenuating circumstances application, in confidence, but only if they so choose. Doing so will ensure that a lecturer can maintain awareness of the situation.