

A STUDENT'S GUIDE TO

EXCEPTIONAL

CIRCUMSTANCES

GET IN TOUCH

0121 204 4848

advice@aston.ac.uk

10:00am - 4:00pm

DROP IN

10:30am - 12:30pm weekdays

No appointment needed at this time

LOCATION

Ground floor of Students' Union building



EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES



Exceptional Circumstances are unexpected events that may hinder your performance.

WHAT ARE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES?

Exceptional Circumstances are unexpected events that may hinder your ability to meet deadlines, attend assessments, or perform well academically. These could include:

- Missing submission deadlines.
- Being unable to attend or complete timed assessments.
- Being unable to attend or complete timed assessments.

These circumstances are typically acute (sudden and short-term) and verifiable with independent evidence like medical reports.

Situations that Might Qualify for an EC Application (with Examples of Evidence).

Circumstances Likely to be Accepted:

- **Physical or mental illness:** Provide a letter from a healthcare professional detailing your condition and its impact. Include hospital appointment letters, prescriptions, or medication labels.
- **Technical issues with submission:** Submit service outage notifications or emails from Digital Services confirming the issue.
- **Legal Matters:** Submit letters or documents from the court or solicitor confirming your involvement.
- **Personal or Domestic Problems:** Provide supporting letters from relevant individuals or services, including medical notes or appointment letters.
- **Bereavement:** Submit death certificates and letters from family members or counsellors.
- **Mandatory National Service or Jury Duty:** Provide official documentation or letters confirming your involvement.

Ensure to provide accurate and relevant evidence to support your EC application.

Circumstances Not Likely to be Accepted:

- Completing and submitting coursework late due to missed deadlines.
- Late submissions due to printing/binding/copying delays.
- Not following submission instructions, leading to incorrect, incomplete, or non-submission.
- Losing coursework due to poor backup practices.

- Work or religious commitments reducing study time.
- General study pressures, workload, anxiety, or stress.
- Minor ailments like a cold.
- Long-standing conditions (e.g., hay fever or migraines) unless experiencing a sudden and temporary flare-up.
- Planned support for family members or partners with minor illnesses or surgeries.
- Misreading assessment timetables or oversleeping.
- Complaints against staff or programme delivery issues.
- Holidays or travel (excluding exceptional circumstances).
- Chronic illnesses unless experiencing a sudden and temporary flare-up.
- Prolonged personal difficulties or anticipated disruptions.
- Death of a pet (excluding assistance animals).

BEFORE APPLYING FOR ECs

Before submitting an EC application, consider these steps:

- **Review criteria:** Check if your situation meets the criteria outlined in the University's Guide to Exceptional Circumstances.
- **Fit to sit policy:** Understand that attending an assessment signifies you're fit to participate. Consider if you're well enough to proceed.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR ECs?

- **Deadline:** Submit your EC application after the assessment date/deadline but before the EC deadline (check your School's webpage for specific deadlines). Late submissions may not be accepted.
- **Application method:** Applications must be submitted online via MAP Task. The University's Guide to Exceptional Circumstances provides details on qualifying circumstances and required evidence.
- Submit your EC application online via MAP task.
- Consult the University's Guide to Exceptional Circumstances for detailed instructions and required evidence.
- Describe your exceptional circumstances, their impact on your academic work, and the relevant time period.
- Provide supporting evidence.

WE CAN HELP...

EXPLAIN THE PROCESS. PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON YOUR APPLICATION. HELP AND SUPPORT YOU THROUGH THE JOURNEY. AND MORE.

Please visit: astonsu.com/support

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WHERE TO SUBMIT THE EC APPLICATION?

Submit your application online via MAP Task. For assistance or information, refer to your School's contact email listed on the University's Exceptional Circumstances webpage.

AFTER SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

- **Review Process:** The Exceptional Circumstances or Absence Panel will review your application and evidence.
- **Decision:** They'll determine if your circumstances meet University regulations and have affected your assessments.
- **Outcome:**
 - a) **Accepted:** You may receive a replacement attempt without penalty or have late work marked without a penalty.
 - b) **Rejected:** Your original mark or a zero for non-completion will stand, with limited resubmission opportunities.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

Student Union Advice Service. THAT'S US!

We provide confidential, independent advice on submitting an EC application.

Personal Tutors/Advisors Programme Directors:

Your school's staff members who can offer support and potentially allow a break from studies until issues are resolved.

The Student Hub:

Provide access to support for various issues, including student finance, fees, funding, and visas. They provide access to **Student Welfare Services** such as:

- a) **Mental Health & Wellbeing Team**
Offers specialised support to meet student mental health and wellbeing needs.
- b) **Counselling Team**
Qualified counsellors/psychotherapists supporting.
- c) **Disability & Academic Support**
Offers advice and support for students with disabilities, including ongoing health conditions and learning disabilities.

- d) **Chaplaincy (MLK Multi-faith Centre)**
Provides pastoral and spiritual guidance, and support for those of all faiths or none.
- e) **Residence Advisors (Aston Student Village)**
Postgraduate students offering pastoral and welfare support to residents.

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

The Students' Union Advice Service is here to support you throughout the EC application process.

Have a look below at how we can help:

- **Understanding the process**
We can guide you through the EC application process and help you determine if your situation meets the University's criteria for exceptional circumstances.
- **Feedback and Advice**
We can provide feedback on your EC application form before submission and offer advice on the evidence required to support your application.
- **Exploring options**
If you're unhappy with the outcome of your EC application, we can discuss alternative options and potential next steps.
- **Support and guidance**
We offer confidential and independent support, ensuring you have the information and assistance you need during this process.
- **Additional Resources**
We can connect you with other support services within the university, such as the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, Counselling Team, Disability and Academic Support, Chaplaincy, and Residence Advisors.

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