

## Adverse Circumstances and Mitigation

Common Awards students at the Cambridge Theological Federation are expected to attend classes, study in their own time, and submit assignments. **If you experience health or personal circumstances which affect any aspect of your studies, please contact your Director of Studies as soon as possible** for advice about support and mitigation options. You are also advised to keep notes of any adverse circumstances, including when they happened, and copies of documents such as doctor's letters.

The Federation offers mitigation for circumstances which are 'outside your control', such as illness, bereavement, employment issues, or other significant causes. Mitigation is not granted for IT issues or to manage deadlines. Details of the Federation's mitigation procedures are given below. Please see also Durham's guidance for Common Awards students at [Absence, Illness and Other Adverse Circumstances](#).

The Federation has separate procedures to support students with Specific Learning Differences and longer-term disabilities. For details of these, contact the Learning Support Tutor at your House and see [Support for Specific Learning Differences](#) on Hedwig.

**Please note that marks are never changed because of adverse circumstances or mitigation.**

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes for their programme of study. If you cannot attend a class because of illness or other circumstances, let your module tutor or Director of Studies know as soon as possible. They can advise you on catching up with anything you have missed, but please note that it is your responsibility to arrange this – the Federation is not obliged to repeat teaching of any classes.

For further details on attendance expectations, see the Common Awards Student Handbook under [Information for Common Awards Students](#).

## Extensions

If you are unable to complete an assessment because of adverse circumstances, you can request an extension to the submission deadline. **Extensions can only be given for adverse circumstances which are outside your control**, such as illness or other significant causes.

Complete the request form at [Durham Forms](#) and send it to your Director of Studies (Dos) or Academic Team at the earliest opportunity. Requests should be approved before the submission deadline: requests received after the deadline has passed can only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

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Please attach supporting evidence if your request is for more than 10 days, or ask your DoS for advice if you do not have any evidence.

The form may be completed on your behalf by your DoS, and they can indicate that the reason for your request is confidential, if you do not wish to share this on the form.

Extension requests are considered as below:

<p><b>Short Extensions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 10 calendar days</li> <li>• Granted at the discretion of your DoS</li> <li>• Supporting evidence is not usually required</li> </ul>
<p><b>Long Extensions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 11 calendar days up to a maximum of 4 months</li> <li>• Granted at the discretion of the Chair of Examiners, on your DoS's recommendation</li> <li>• Supporting evidence is usually required. Contact your DoS if this is not available</li> <li>• Repeat extensions (a longer extension to a previous extension). <b>Talk to your DoS about the best options for your circumstances before submitting the request.</b> Tick the box on the form to confirm you have done this</li> </ul>
<p><b>Extensions into the next Academic Year</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granted at the discretion of the Durham Common Awards Management Board, on your DoS's recommendation</li> <li>• Supporting evidence is usually required. Contact your DoS if this is not available</li> <li>• <b>Talk to your DoS about the best options for your circumstances before submitting the request.</b> Tick the box on the form to confirm you have done this</li> </ul>

Your House will inform you whether your extension request is approved and confirm your new deadline. To view the new deadline on Hedwig, click through to the assignment submission area and scroll down to 'extension due date' – it will not be shown on your Hedwig dashboard.

## Temporary Adjustments to Learning and Assessment

In some circumstances, it may be possible to arrange temporary adjustments for your studies. For example, if you are temporarily unable to write assignments, it may be possible to complete a different type of assessment. Contact your Director of Studies at the earliest opportunity if you think you require a temporary adjustment to your course work or assessment.

Please note that temporary adjustments are usually considered only when other types of mitigation, such as an extension, are not sufficient to mitigate your circumstances. Alternative assessments must still meet the learning outcomes for a module.

For longer term health problems or disabilities, contact your Director of Studies and the Learning Support Tutor at your Federation House for advice.

## Serious Adverse Circumstances Procedure (SACs)

Please contact your Director of Studies as soon as you experience adverse circumstances, so you can discuss support and mitigation at the earliest opportunity. The Serious Adverse Circumstances Procedure applies only when other mitigation is not sufficient, in the following situations:

- Adverse circumstances occur during or immediately before an assessment, so there is no time to take action in advance. (Please note: in many cases, this can still be dealt with by other mitigation, such as an extension to the date for a presentation).
- The effect of adverse circumstances goes beyond the mitigations already in place.
- You did not request support in advance to help mitigate your circumstances.

In these circumstances, contact your DoS and read the further guidance at: [Absence, Illness or Other Adverse Circumstances](#) and [Serious Adverse Circumstances](#).

Then complete the SAC form at [Durham Forms](#), with advice from your DoS. You will normally be asked to supply supporting evidence with the form. The SAC form can be completed on your behalf, if there are reasons why it is difficult for you to do this.

SACs are considered by a small sub-committee of the Federation's Board of Examiners and information sent to this committee is treated as strictly confidential. The committee will assess the impact the SACs had on your studies and assign an 'impact grade' to reflect this. The impact grade is shared with the Federation Board of Examiners, but other confidential information is not shared.

SAC impact grades are taken into account by the Federation's Board of Examiners, and the Durham University Overarching Common Awards Board of Examiners, when considering

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progress in your qualification or your final results. Please note that SACs are considered on a case-by-case basis, and the outcome of SAC procedures cannot be guaranteed in advance. **Please note that marks are never changed because of the SAC procedure.**

### Suspension of Studies

If you need to take time away from your course, please talk to your Director of Studies about arranging a suspension of studies. Your DoS can help you to decide if this is the best option and how long the suspension should last. Then complete the suspension form at [Student Forms](#). Your DoS will get in touch with the Federation Office and Durham to confirm the suspension of studies.

Suspensions of studies are usually for a maximum of one academic year. If you are unable to return to study as planned and need more time, a further suspension may be possible with the approval of Durham University. Contact your DoS for further advice.

### Withdrawal from Studies

The Federation will not withdraw you from your studies because of adverse circumstances only, unless you request this, or you have stopped attending your course without contacting your House to explain the reason. Support and advice are available for all students from staff at your House: it is important to get in touch as soon as you can, to discuss the options available.

Students may also be required to withdraw for failure to make satisfactory academic progress, or for non-academic misconduct: for further information, see the Common Awards Student Handbook and [CTF Policies and Procedures](#).

If you wish to withdraw from your course, please contact your House, who will send you a form to complete. The Federation will notify Durham University and keep a record of any credits you have completed. Depending on how many credits you have completed, you may be eligible for an exit award, and it may be possible for you to return to study later. Please see [Absence, Illness or Other Adverse Circumstances](#) for further details.