

A Guide to the Access to HE to making a claim for Mitigating Circumstances

Key information regarding mitigating circumstances when considering the award of an Access to HE Diploma can be found online in the QAA Grading Scheme Handbook E.

QAA Grading Scheme Handbook Section E
http://www.accesstohe.ac.uk/AboutUs/Publications/Pages/Grading-scheme-E.aspx

Here's what you need to know:

1. What are mitigating circumstances?

Mitigating circumstances are exceptional extenuating personal or certified medical circumstances, whereby a learner may be awarded a QAA Access to HE Diploma for achievement which is less than that specified in the course Rules of Combination for successful completion.

In such cases, the Access to HE Diploma can be awarded without full credits and the unit and grade profile will be incomplete. The Diploma awarded must state that it is an aegrotat award.

2. When can mitigating circumstances be claimed?

Mitigating circumstances may result in an aegrotat award, approved by the Final Awards Board, where a) there are exceptional extenuating certified medical circumstances which have resulted in the learner being unable to complete the course requirements and b) the learner has achieved at least 30 of the credits required for the Access to HE Diploma. (*QAA Grading Booklet Section E p4*)

Mitigating circumstances may be claimed to address unforeseen circumstances beyond the learners' control which prevent them from successfully completing the Access programme for the foreseeable future, in accordance with the expectations of their personal tutor and the Access Coordinator. These situations may include certified serious long-term illness of the learner or a close family member, a close family bereavement causing long-term consequences for the learner, or other similarly serious long-term situation which rules out a return to complete the course.

Consideration should always be given as to whether it is possible and appropriate to grant an extension to enable completion to take place, and whenever this is possible, Gateway Qualifications expects this course to be followed. The Gateway Qualifications NR form should be used to request an extension and the Centre Moderator must be consulted to agree to the extension and deadline date set.

3. How to make an application for Mitigating Circumstances?

To be considered for the award of the Access to HE Diploma with mitigating circumstances, providers must be able to demonstrate through the learner's evidence, tutor notes and internal moderation records that the learner has achieved the appropriate level of academic performance to be considered ready for study at Higher Education. The learner must have achieved at least 30 credits required within the course Rules of Combination for successful completion.

1. The Mitigating Circumstances form should be completed by the Personal Tutor and Access Course Coordinator for cases where the provider wishes to support the award of the Access Certificate with mitigating circumstances, resulting in an aegrotat award.
2. The completed form should be submitted to Gateway Qualifications (for the attention of the Director of Quality) at least 2 weeks before the Final Exam Board/Final Awards Board. A copy must be sent to the Access Centre Moderator.
3. The Application for Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances will be considered at the Final Exam Board and Final Awards Board (FAB), where evidence of the mitigating circumstances and of the learner's achievement will be considered. Evidence should include a detailed personal statement or report from a tutor in support of the application and may be supplied to the moderator in a closed session in order to respect confidentiality.
4. The Access Centre Moderator will consider the evidence and make a recommendation to the Final Awards Board on whether the application should be agreed. The Moderator's decision will be recorded in the minutes of the Final Awards Board meeting, and on the Application for Mitigation Form.
5. The completed Application for Mitigation Form, signed by the Access Centre Moderator, must be returned to Gateway Qualifications and the completed Recommendation for Award of Credit forms (RACs) uploaded to Quartzweb.
6. All Applications for Mitigation will be reported to the Gateway Qualifications Access to HE Committee, respecting confidentiality.

Centre Name			
Course Title		Course Code	
Name of Learner			
<p>A. Statement by Personal Tutor</p> <hr/> <p>Please provide information on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant individual circumstances of the learner • Supporting documentary evidence should be attached. • The reasons why the learner is unable to complete components of the assessment requirements • The reasons why an extension is not possible • Any other relevant information may be added 			
<p>I confirm that the details recorded above are truthful and accurate.</p>			
Tutor's name:		Date:	
Tutor's signature:			

B. Profile of Learner's Achievement

Has the learner achieved at least 30 of the credits required for completion of the course?

YES / NO (delete as appropriate)

- Please attach a list of the units which the learner has achieved.
- Please give details of the Units / other requirements which the learner has not achieved.
- Describe evidence of partial achievement available for the non-completed items

C. Supporting Statement from Access Coordinator

Please explain why you are supporting this application: comment specifically on the learner's potential to succeed in HE. Internal Moderation records should be attached to confirm the standard of the learner's work.

Name of Access Coordinator:

Signature of Access Coordinator:

Date:

Date evidence sent to Access Centre Moderator:

D. Comments and Recommendations of Access Centre Moderator

To be completed at/after the Final Awards Board

Date of Final Awards Board

I have been provided with full information relevant to the application that this learner be awarded the QAA Access to HE Diploma with mitigating circumstances.

YES / NO

I confirm that I support this application

YES / NO

COMMENTS:

Name of Access Centre Moderator:

Signature of Access Centre Moderator:

Date:

Please submit this pro-forma to Gateway Qualifications (FAO Director of Quality) with sections A, B and C completed **at least 2 weeks before the Final Exam Board.**

The Access Centre Moderator should complete section D, and the pro-forma submitted to Gateway Qualifications.

Office use only:

<i>Date received by Gateway Qualifications</i>		<i>Date received by Access Committee</i>	
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Contact details

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this policy and/or have a related query please contact the support team by:

Email: quality@gatewayqualifications.org.uk

Post: Gateway Qualifications
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3 Tollgate Business Park
Colchester
CO3 8AB