

Academic Regulations - Supporting Procedures

Rhein-Sieg Institute of Arts & Design (RSIAD)

(in alignment with Middlesex University Academic Regulations)

13. April 2026

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1. Purpose

These procedures form an integral part of the academic regulatory framework governing the validated postgraduate programmes delivered by the Rhein-Sieg Institute of Arts & Design (RSIAD). Their purpose is to ensure that all students are treated in a fair, transparent and consistent manner in matters relating to academic appeals, academic misconduct, deferrals and extenuating circumstances.

The procedures establish clear and accessible processes through which students may seek review of academic decisions, report circumstances affecting their assessment, or respond to concerns regarding academic integrity. In doing so, they support the maintenance of academic standards while safeguarding the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

They also provide clarity for staff involved in the administration of assessments and student support, ensuring that decisions are evidence-based, appropriately documented and subject to suitable academic oversight. The procedures are designed to operate proportionately within the scale of RSIAD's provision while maintaining robust academic governance.

All processes described herein operate in alignment with the Academic Regulations, policies and quality assurance expectations of Middlesex University. Where relevant, decisions taken under these procedures are subject to ratification by the appropriate Programme Assessment Board in accordance with Middlesex University requirements.

RSIAD will apply the same timescales, processes and decision making requirements as set out in the Middlesex University Academic Regulations. Where any discrepancy arises between these procedures and the Middlesex University Academic Regulations, the Middlesex University regulations will take precedence.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to all students registered on Middlesex University validated postgraduate programmes delivered by the Rhein-Sieg Institute of Arts & Design (RSIAD). They cover matters relating to summative assessment and associated academic decisions, including progression and award outcomes determined by the relevant Programme Assessment Board.

The procedures apply to all modes of study and to all forms of summative assessment, including coursework, studio-based assessment, portfolio submission, presentations and examinations, whether delivered on-site or through approved digital platforms.

These procedures do not normally apply to formative assessment or to informal feedback provided during the learning process. Nor do they replace routine academic support mechanisms such as tutorial guidance, supervisory feedback or extensions

granted through informal academic discretion where permitted by programme regulations.

Nothing in these procedures removes the authority of the relevant Programme Assessment Board, which retains ultimate responsibility for academic judgement, progression decisions and the conferment of awards in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

3. Principles

RSIAD is committed to the fair, consistent and transparent operation of its academic processes in alignment with the expectations of Middlesex University. The procedures set out in this document are underpinned by the principles of natural justice, proportionality and academic integrity, and are designed to ensure that students are treated equitably while maintaining the security of academic standards.

All decisions taken under these procedures will be evidence-based, appropriately documented and made by staff with suitable authority and independence from the original decision where required. RSIAD will ensure that students are informed in writing of outcomes within reasonable and clearly defined timescales, and that they are provided with information about any further steps available to them.

The Institute will seek to resolve matters at the earliest appropriate stage while ensuring that students have access to formal review where justified under the stated grounds. Confidentiality will be respected throughout the process, and personal data will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection requirements.

In operating these procedures, RSIAD recognises the authority of the Programme Assessment Board in all matters of academic judgement. Nothing in these procedures permits a review of academic judgement itself, except where a material error or procedural irregularity has been formally established in line with Middlesex University regulations.

SECTION A - ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE

A1. Purpose

The Academic Appeals Procedure provides a formal mechanism through which students may request a review of an academic decision made by a Programme Assessment Board or other authorised academic body. The purpose of the procedure is to ensure that such decisions have been reached fairly, consistently and in accordance with the approved Academic Regulations and associated assessment processes.

The procedure is intended to safeguard students against the possibility of procedural error, material administrative or factual mistake, or the non-consideration of valid extenuating circumstances that, for good reason, were not previously disclosed. It does not provide a mechanism for the reconsideration of academic judgement, which remains the responsibility of the appropriately constituted Programme Assessment Board and the academic staff involved in the original assessment.

Through this procedure, RSIAD seeks to uphold the integrity of its academic standards while ensuring that students have access to a clear, transparent and timely route for the formal review of eligible decisions, in alignment with Middlesex University Academic Regulations and expectations for validated provision.

A2. Grounds for Appeal

An academic appeal will be considered only where the student is able to demonstrate, with appropriate evidence, that one or more of the permitted grounds for appeal applies. The acceptable grounds are strictly limited in order to preserve the integrity of academic judgement and the authority of the Programme Assessment Board.

The recognised grounds for appeal are as follows:

- that there has been a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the assessment or in the decision-making process which may have materially affected the outcome;
- that there has been a material administrative or factual error in the recording, processing or communication of assessment results;
- that valid extenuating circumstances existed which, for good reason, the student was unable to disclose at the appropriate time in accordance with the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure.

For the purposes of this procedure, procedural irregularity refers to a failure to follow the approved Academic Regulations or published assessment processes in a manner that may have had a significant impact on the decision reached.

Appeals submitted outside the permitted grounds, without supporting evidence, or outside the published timescales will normally be rejected at the initial review stage.

Disagreement with academic judgement is not a valid ground for appeal. Academic judgement refers to decisions about the academic quality of work and the level of achievement demonstrated, and these decisions cannot be challenged through the Appeals Procedure.

A3. Stage 1: Local Review

Students wishing to submit an academic appeal must do so by completing the prescribed Academic Appeal Form and submitting it to RSIAD within 10 working days of the formal publication of the relevant results or decision.

Appeals submitted outside this timeframe will normally be rejected unless the student can demonstrate good reason, supported by independent evidence, for the delay.

Upon receipt, the appeal will be subject to an initial review conducted by a senior academic member of staff who has had no prior involvement in the assessment or decision under appeal. The purpose of the Local Review stage is to determine whether the appeal:

- has been submitted within the required timeframe;
- falls within the permitted grounds for appeal;
- is supported by appropriate evidence; and
- demonstrates a prima facie case for further consideration.

Where the appeal does not meet these requirements, it will normally be rejected at this stage and the student will be informed in writing of the reasons for the decision.

Where the appeal is considered to present valid grounds, the reviewer may either uphold the appeal where the outcome is clear, or refer the matter to a formal Appeals Panel for further consideration.

Students will normally receive written notification of the Stage 1 outcome within 20 working days of submission of a complete appeal.

RSIAD will acknowledge receipt of all submissions made under these procedures, including Academic Appeals, Academic Misconduct responses, Deferral Requests, and Extenuating Circumstances claims within five working days. RSIAD will also provide students with indicative timelines for next steps, in line with Middlesex University expectations for transparent and timely communication.

A4. Stage 2: Appeals Panel

Where an appeal is judged at Stage 1 to present valid grounds requiring further investigation, the matter will be referred to a formal Appeals Panel. The purpose of the

Appeals Panel is to review whether the original decision was reached in accordance with the approved Academic Regulations and associated procedures, and whether any procedural irregularity, material error or previously undisclosed extenuating circumstances has been established.

The Appeals Panel does not reassess the academic quality of the student's work and will not substitute its own academic judgement for that of the original examiners or Programme Assessment Board, except where a material error in process or recording has been formally identified.

The Panel will normally comprise:

- a Chair who is a senior member of academic staff independent of the case;
- at least one academic member not previously involved in the assessment or earlier consideration of the appeal;
- a secretary to the Panel, who will maintain a formal record of proceedings.

All members of the Panel must be free from any conflict of interest and must not have had prior involvement in the matters under consideration.

The Panel will review the written evidence submitted and may, where appropriate, request further information from relevant parties. The student will be informed in writing of the Panel's decision and the reasons for it within 20 working days of the Panel meeting, wherever reasonably practicable.

The outcome of the Appeals Panel will be reported to the relevant Programme Assessment Board for formal ratification where required under Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

A5. Outcomes

Following consideration of the evidence, the Appeals Panel will determine whether the appeal is upheld in whole or in part, or rejected. In reaching its decision, the Panel will consider only whether the permitted grounds for appeal have been established and whether the original decision was reached in accordance with the approved Academic Regulations and associated procedures.

Where an appeal is not upheld, the original decision will stand and the student will be notified in writing of the reasons for the outcome.

Where an appeal is upheld, the Panel will determine an appropriate and proportionate remedy. Outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- correction of a material administrative or factual error;
- permitting a further assessment attempt, normally as an uncapped attempt where appropriate;

- setting aside the original decision and referring the matter for reconsideration by the relevant Programme Assessment Board;
- such other remedy as is considered appropriate to address the procedural irregularity identified.

The Appeals Panel does not substitute its own academic judgement for that of the original examiners. Where academic reconsideration is required, the matter will be referred back to the relevant Programme Assessment Board or to appropriately constituted examiners in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

All outcomes of the Appeals Panel will be formally recorded and, where required, reported to the relevant Programme Assessment Board for ratification.

Decisions made under this procedure will be recorded by RSIAD and reported to the relevant RSIAD Programme Assessment Board (PAB) in line with Middlesex University requirements for validated partners. RSIAD will ensure that only the necessary assessment information is provided to the PAB, and that sensitive personal information is not shared.

All records generated through these procedures will be retained in accordance with UK GDPR and Middlesex University records retention requirements for validated partners.

A6. Completion of Procedures

Once the Academic Appeals Procedure has been concluded, RSIAD will issue the student with a formal written outcome. Where the internal procedure has been exhausted, RSIAD will issue a Completion of Procedures (COP) letter that meets Middlesex University requirements. The COP letter will clearly confirm that the internal process is complete and will include the required information about the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). RSIAD will use any standard wording or template provided by Middlesex University, where applicable.

The Completion of Procedures letter will set out the decision reached and inform the student of their right, where applicable, to submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) within the required timeframe. RSIAD will ensure that students are provided with clear information on how to access the OIA scheme.

The issue of a Completion of Procedures letter signifies the end of RSIAD's internal processes. All records relating to the appeal will be retained in accordance with RSIAD's data retention and records management policies and in alignment with Middlesex University requirements.

SECTION B - ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT PROCEDURE

B1. Definition

Academic misconduct is defined as any action, whether deliberate or otherwise, by which a student seeks to gain or attempts to gain an unfair academic advantage, or assists another student in doing so, in relation to any assessed work or academic activity.

RSIAD is committed to upholding the principles of academic integrity, originality and proper scholarly and creative practice. All students are expected to submit work that is their own and to acknowledge appropriately the contributions of others, whether through written citation, visual attribution or other relevant professional conventions appropriate to the discipline.

Academic misconduct may occur in written, practical, studio-based, digital or portfolio work, and may arise through the misuse of sources, inappropriate collaboration, falsification of material, or the unauthorised use of technologies, including artificial intelligence tools, where such use has not been explicitly permitted.

The Institute recognises that academic misconduct can occur at different levels of severity and intent. Suspected cases will therefore be considered on their individual merits, taking into account the nature of the assessment, the level of study, the evidence available and any relevant guidance provided to students in advance.

B2. Examples of Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct may take a variety of forms. The following list is illustrative and not exhaustive:

- Plagiarism: presenting the words, images, ideas, code or creative work of another person as one's own without appropriate acknowledgement. This includes inadequate or misleading citation and the unacknowledged reuse of material.
- Collusion: unauthorised collaboration between students or with third parties in the preparation or production of assessed work that is intended to be completed individually.
- Contract cheating: the commissioning, purchasing or otherwise obtaining of work from a third party and submitting it as one's own original work.
- Fabrication or falsification: the invention, manipulation or misrepresentation of data, research, sources, process documentation or project development evidence.
- Cheating in examinations or time-constrained assessments: including the use of unauthorised materials, devices or assistance.

- Unauthorised use of artificial intelligence or automated tools: where such use has not been explicitly permitted within the assessment brief or programme guidance, or where the extent of such use is not appropriately acknowledged. The use of artificial intelligence tools in learning and assessment is further governed by RSIAD's Institutional Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Assessment.
- Misrepresentation of authorship in creative or portfolio work: including the submission of work substantially produced by another person, or the failure to acknowledge collaborative contributions in studio or project contexts.
- Self-plagiarism: the submission of the same or substantially similar work for multiple assessments without explicit permission.

Where Artificial Intelligence or automated tools are used, students must comply with programme level guidance and Middlesex University expectations regarding declaration and permitted use. Unauthorised or undeclared use will be considered academic misconduct.

The seriousness of the misconduct will be determined with reference to the level of study, the weighting of the assessment, the extent of the breach and any evidence of intent or repeated behaviour.

B3. Initial Investigation

Where academic misconduct is suspected, the concern will be referred to the Programme Leader or an appropriately designated nominee for preliminary review. The purpose of the Initial Investigation stage is to establish whether there is sufficient evidence to indicate that academic misconduct may have occurred and to determine the appropriate level at which the case should be considered.

The student will be notified in writing of the concern at the earliest reasonable opportunity and will be provided with the available evidence supporting the allegation. The notification will clearly outline the nature of the suspected misconduct and the next steps in the process.

Students will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegation, either in writing or, where appropriate, through a meeting. They may be accompanied at any formal meeting by a friend, fellow student or representative in accordance with RSIAD student support arrangements.

Following the Initial Investigation, the Programme Leader or nominee will determine whether:

- no further action is required;

- the matter may be resolved through a minor misconduct outcome in accordance with local authority; or
- the case should be referred to a formal Academic Misconduct Panel due to its seriousness, complexity or level of dispute.

All decisions at this stage will be documented and communicated to the student in writing within a reasonable timeframe. Where the case is referred to a formal panel, the student will be informed of the next stage of the process and the expected timeline.

RSIAD will acknowledge receipt of all submissions made under these procedures, including Academic Appeals, Academic Misconduct responses, Deferral Requests, and Extenuating Circumstances claims within five working days. RSIAD will also provide students with indicative timelines for next steps, in line with Middlesex University expectations for transparent and timely communication.

B4. Academic Misconduct Panel

Where the Initial Investigation determines that a case is sufficiently serious, complex or disputed, the matter will be referred to an Academic Misconduct Panel for formal consideration. The Panel will normally be convened on an ad hoc basis and proportionate to the scale of RSIAD's provision.

The purpose of the Panel is to determine, on the balance of probabilities, whether academic misconduct has occurred and, where appropriate, to recommend a proportionate penalty in line with institutional regulations.

The Panel will normally comprise:

- a Chair who is a senior academic member of staff independent of the case;
- at least one academic member not previously involved in the investigation or assessment concerned;
- a secretary to the Panel, who will maintain an official record of proceedings.

External Examiners are not members of Academic Misconduct Panels.

All Panel members must be free from any conflict of interest and must not have had prior involvement in the case.

The student will be given reasonable written notice of the Panel meeting and will be provided with the evidence to be considered. The student will have the opportunity to submit a written response and, where appropriate, to attend a meeting of the Panel. Students may be accompanied by a friend, fellow student or representative in accordance with RSIAD student support arrangements.

The Panel's decision and the reasons for it will be communicated to the student in writing within a reasonable timeframe and will be formally recorded. Where required,

outcomes will be reported to the relevant Programme Assessment Board in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

All records generated through these procedures will be retained in accordance with UK GDPR and Middlesex University records retention requirements for validated partners.

B5. Penalties

RSIAD will apply penalties in line with the Middlesex University Academic Misconduct framework and tariff. Where a case involves the most serious penalties, RSIAD will ensure MDX is consulted where required under the partnership agreement or where the circumstances warrant MDX involvement.

In determining an appropriate penalty, consideration will also be given to whether the case represents poor academic practice at an early stage of study or a more serious breach of academic integrity.

Penalties may include, but are not limited to:

- a formal written warning;
- requirement to resubmit the assessment, with or without a capped mark;
- mark reduction for the affected assessment;
- award of a mark of zero for the assessment;
- failure of the module, with or without the opportunity for reassessment in accordance with the Academic Regulations;
- termination of studies in cases of serious or repeated misconduct.

Where the misconduct relates to a final-stage assessment or has potential implications for progression or award, the outcome will normally be reported to and considered by the relevant Programme Assessment Board in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

All penalties will be confirmed to the student in writing, together with the reasons for the decision and information about the right of appeal under the Academic Appeals Procedure.

B6. Right of Appeal

Students have the right to appeal against a formal finding of academic misconduct or the penalty imposed, in accordance with the Academic Appeals Procedure set out in Section A of this document.

Any appeal must be submitted within the published timeframe and must clearly state the permitted grounds on which the appeal is based. Appeals against academic misconduct decisions will be considered only where the student can demonstrate that:

- there has been a procedural irregularity in the investigation or decision-making process which may have materially affected the outcome;
- there has been a material administrative or factual error; or
- valid extenuating circumstances existed which, for good reason, could not be disclosed at the appropriate time.

Disagreement with the academic judgement of the Panel or with the severity of the penalty, in itself, does not constitute valid grounds for appeal.

Appeals will be considered in accordance with the staged process defined in the Academic Appeals Procedure. Where the internal process has been exhausted, a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued in line with institutional policy.

SECTION C - DEFERRAL PROCEDURE

C1. Definition

A deferral is a formal, time-limited adjustment to the assessment schedule granted where a student, for valid reasons supported by appropriate evidence, is unable to submit or attend a summative assessment at the scheduled time and where the request is made in advance of the relevant deadline or assessment point.

The purpose of a deferral is to ensure that students are not academically disadvantaged by serious and demonstrable circumstances arising prior to the assessment date, while maintaining the integrity and comparability of assessment standards.

Deferrals normally apply to summative assessments only and result in the assessment being deferred to the next available opportunity. Where a deferral is approved, the deferred attempt is normally treated as a first attempt in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

Requests submitted after the assessment deadline has passed will not normally be considered under the Deferral Procedure and will instead be considered, where appropriate, under the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure.

C2. Application

Students seeking a deferral must submit a formal Deferral Request Form to RSIAD in advance of the relevant assessment deadline or scheduled assessment event. Requests should be made as soon as the student becomes aware of the circumstances affecting their ability to complete the assessment as originally scheduled.

All requests must be supported by appropriate independent evidence. RSIAD reserves the right to request additional documentation where the evidence provided is insufficient to support the claim.

Late applications submitted after the assessment deadline will not normally be considered under this procedure and will instead be considered, where appropriate, under the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their application is complete and submitted within the required timeframe. Submission of a request does not guarantee approval, and students should continue to prepare for the assessment unless and until formal confirmation of the deferral has been received.

RSIAD will acknowledge receipt of all submissions made under these procedures, including Academic Appeals, Academic Misconduct responses, Deferral Requests, and Extenuating Circumstances claims within five working days. RSIAD will also provide

students with indicative timelines for next steps, in line with Middlesex University expectations for transparent and timely communication.

C3. Decision-Making

Deferral requests will be considered by the Programme Leader or an appropriately designated academic nominee acting under delegated authority. Decisions will be based on the evidence provided and on whether the circumstances presented meet the criteria for a deferral under this procedure.

In reaching a decision, RSIAD will consider whether the circumstances are:

- valid and sufficiently evidenced;
- likely to have a material impact on the student's ability to complete the assessment at the scheduled time; and
- presented in advance of the assessment deadline.

The outcome of a deferral request will normally be one of the following:

- deferral approved;
- deferral rejected;
- request for further evidence before a decision can be confirmed.

Students will be notified of the decision in writing, together with a brief explanation of the reasons where a request is not approved. Records of all decisions will be maintained in accordance with RSIAD's records management and data protection requirements.

Where a deferral is approved, the student will be informed of the next available assessment opportunity and any implications for progression, completion timelines or visa status where relevant.

All records generated through these procedures will be retained in accordance with UK GDPR and Middlesex University records retention requirements for validated partners.

C4. Effect of Deferral

Where a deferral is approved, the affected assessment will be deferred to the next available appropriate assessment opportunity as determined by RSIAD in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

If a deferral is approved, the assessment will normally be taken as a first attempt, and the mark will not be capped unless Middlesex University regulations require otherwise.

Students should note that approval of a deferral may result in a delay to progression, module completion or final award. RSIAD will provide information to the student regarding the timing of the deferred assessment and any known implications for their programme of study.

Approval of a deferral does not automatically imply acceptance of any subsequent claim under the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure, and each process will be considered on its own merits.

All approved deferrals will be recorded and, where required, reported to the relevant Programme Assessment Board in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

SECTION D - EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES PROCEDURE

D1. Definition

Extenuating circumstances are defined as serious, unforeseen and unpreventable events outside the student's control which have had a significant adverse impact on the student's ability to complete or perform in a summative assessment.

The purpose of the Extenuating Circumstances Procedure is to ensure that students are not academically disadvantaged by circumstances that they could not reasonably have anticipated, avoided or mitigated, while maintaining the integrity, comparability and fairness of academic standards.

Extenuating circumstances normally apply where the assessment deadline has passed or where the impact of the circumstances could not reasonably have been addressed through the Deferral Procedure. The procedure therefore operates retrospectively and is distinct from the Deferral Procedure, which applies to advance requests made prior to an assessment deadline.

Minor illnesses, short-term discomfort, poor time management, competing deadlines or other circumstances that could reasonably have been anticipated or managed by the student will not normally be considered as valid extenuating circumstances.

Each case will be considered on its individual merits in the light of the evidence provided and in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations and expectations for validated provision.

D2. Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for notifying RSIAD of extenuating circumstances as soon as reasonably practicable once the circumstances arise and for submitting a formal Extenuating Circumstances claim in accordance with the published procedure.

All claims must be supported by appropriate independent evidence that clearly demonstrates the nature, timing and impact of the circumstances on the student's ability to complete or perform in the relevant assessment. RSIAD reserves the right to request additional evidence where the documentation provided is insufficient to support the claim.

Students are expected, wherever possible, to take reasonable steps to mitigate the impact of the circumstances on their studies. Failure to do so may be taken into account when determining the validity of a claim.

Submission of an Extenuating Circumstances claim does not guarantee approval. Students should continue to engage with their studies and submit work where reasonably able unless and until formal confirmation of the outcome has been received.

Late or retrospective claims submitted significantly after the assessment point will not normally be accepted unless the student can demonstrate good reason, supported by independent evidence, for the delay in notification.

RSIAD will acknowledge receipt of all submissions made under these procedures, including Academic Appeals, Academic Misconduct responses, Deferral Requests, and Extenuating Circumstances claims within five working days. RSIAD will also provide students with indicative timelines for next steps, in line with Middlesex University expectations for transparent and timely communication.

D3. Normally Accepted Circumstances

The following categories of circumstance will normally be considered as potentially valid extenuating circumstances, provided that appropriate independent evidence is supplied and that the criteria set out in this procedure are met. The list is indicative and not exhaustive:

- Serious illness or injury affecting the student at the time of the assessment, where this is supported by appropriate medical evidence;
- Hospitalisation or a significant acute medical episode;
- Bereavement involving a close family member or significant person;
- Severe personal or family crisis demonstrably affecting the student's ability to study or complete the assessment;
- Significant and unforeseeable caring responsibilities arising at short notice;
- Traumatic incidents or other serious events outside the student's control with demonstrable impact on academic performance.

In all cases, the Extenuating Circumstances Panel (or designated decision-maker) must be satisfied that the circumstances were:

- beyond the student's control;
- genuinely unforeseen or unavoidable; and
- likely to have had a material adverse impact on the relevant assessment.

Acceptance of a circumstance in principle does not automatically determine the academic outcome, which remains subject to consideration under the Academic Regulations and the authority of the relevant Programme Assessment Board.

D4. Normally Not Accepted

The following circumstances will not normally be accepted as valid extenuating circumstances, as they are generally considered to be foreseeable, preventable or within the student's control. This list is indicative and not exhaustive:

- Poor time management or failure to plan workload appropriately;
- Minor illness or short-term indisposition (for example, common colds, minor infections or temporary discomfort) not supported by appropriate medical evidence of significant impact;
- Routine academic pressure, including multiple deadlines or heavy workload;
- IT or technical difficulties where reasonable back-up and submission precautions could have been taken;
- Transport delays or routine travel disruption, except where caused by exceptional and evidenced circumstances;
- Employment or financial pressures, except in demonstrably exceptional and unforeseen situations;
- Holidays, personal travel or social commitments arranged during the assessment period;
- Claims submitted without appropriate independent evidence, or where the evidence does not support the timing and impact claimed.

In considering any claim, RSIAD will have regard to whether the student could reasonably have taken steps to mitigate the impact of the circumstances. The burden of demonstrating valid extenuating circumstances rests with the student.

D5. Extenuating Circumstances Panel

Valid Extenuating Circumstances claims will be considered by an Extenuating Circumstances Panel or by an appropriately designated academic decision-maker acting under delegated authority, proportionate to the scale of RSIAD's provision. The purpose of this stage is to determine whether the submitted evidence demonstrates that valid extenuating circumstances existed in accordance with the criteria set out in this procedure.

The Panel will normally comprise a senior academic member of staff acting as Chair and at least one additional appropriately experienced academic member who has not been directly involved in the assessment concerned. A formal record of decisions will be maintained.

In determining claims, the Panel will consider the nature, timing and impact of the circumstances in the light of the independent evidence provided. Decisions will be made on the balance of probabilities and in accordance with Middlesex University Academic Regulations and expectations for validated provision.

Where extenuating circumstances are accepted, the relevant Programme Assessment Board will normally be informed that valid circumstances apply. In line with UK good practice and data protection principles, the Programme Assessment Board will not normally be provided with detailed sensitive personal information relating to the student's circumstances.

Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their claim within 10 days. All decisions will be formally recorded and retained in accordance with RSIAD's data protection and records management policies.

Decisions made under this procedure will be recorded by RSIAD and reported to the relevant RSIAD Programme Assessment Board (PAB) in line with Middlesex University requirements for validated partners. RSIAD will ensure that only the necessary assessment information is provided to the PAB, and that sensitive personal information is not shared.

All records generated through these procedures will be retained in accordance with UK GDPR and Middlesex University records retention requirements for validated partners.

D6. Outcomes

Where extenuating circumstances are accepted, the remedy will not involve adjusting marks or making assumptions about the student's performance. Instead, remedies will only provide an opportunity for the student to complete the assessment at the next available point, or as otherwise permitted under the Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

Outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- permission to undertake the assessment at the next available opportunity, normally as an uncapped attempt;
- deferral of the affected assessment to a subsequent assessment point;
- where appropriate under the Academic Regulations, consideration of the circumstances by the relevant Programme Assessment Board in determining progression or award decisions.

Extenuating circumstances do not normally result in the adjustment of marks to reflect assumed performance. Academic judgement regarding the quality of assessed work remains the responsibility of the examiners and the relevant Programme Assessment Board.

Where a claim is not accepted, the original assessment outcome will stand. The student will be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for it, together with information about the right to request a review where applicable under the Academic Appeals Procedure.

All outcomes will be formally recorded and reported to the relevant Programme Assessment Board where required under Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

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