

Fit to Sit Policy

A. Introduction

1. The Arts Educational Schools (ArtsEd) operates a 'Fit to Sit' Policy, which means it is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they sit or submit their assessments only if they are fit to do so. Being 'fit to sit' means that the student knows of no reason why their performance would be adversely affected during the assessment and are not aware of any '**foreseen**' or '**unforeseen**' mitigating circumstances that could impinge upon their performance. Such adverse and/or extenuating circumstances may include, for example:
 - i. illness of the student
 - ii. an injury that may prevent the student from performing their best
 - iii. a condition which may impair their ability to take the assessment
 - iv. a medical appointment which may impact their ability to take the assessment
2. **Therefore:**
 - i. **By sitting and/or undertaking an assessment, a student is declaring that they are 'fit to sit' their assessment.** In the case of online assessment submission, a student is declaring that they are 'fit to sit' and participate in their assessment by pressing the submit button.
 - ii. Should a student become aware of a circumstance, event or incident during the assessment which impinges on the student's ability to complete the assessment, and/or undermines their performance during the assessment, the student should inform the relevant staff member as soon as practically possible. This is so that the student can be supported, and their options made available to them. Such options include submitting an Extension and Deferral Request form or an Extenuating Circumstance claim.
 - iii. If after an assessment has taken place and a student becomes aware of a circumstance, event or incident which adversely impinged on their ability to sit or undertake their assessment, the student should submit an Extenuating Circumstance claim.
3. For more information, about Extenuating Circumstances and Extensions and Deferrals please see Section D below.

B. Scope

4. This policy sets out the options available to students who for good and valid reason(s) are unable to undertake their assessments. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
 - [City's Assessment Regulations \(Regulation 19\)](#)
 - [Fitness to Study Policy](#)
 - [Extensions and Deferrals Policy](#)
 - [Academic Appeals Procedure](#)
 - [Extenuating Circumstance Policy.](#)
 - [Interruption of Study Policy](#)

- [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)
- [Physical Injury and Recovery Procedure](#)
- [Attendance Policy](#)

5. **The Fit to Sit Policy only applies to** current ArtsEd students studying a programme which will lead to a Higher Education award. The Policy will apply to these students when they are undertaking an assessment during their period of study.
6. **Students requesting reasonable adjustments:** Please note, this policy should not be used by students with disability to request reasonable adjustments in preparation for or during their assessment. Student should ensure that all necessary arrangements for their reasonable adjustments are in place prior to their assessments.
7. Where a student has made a request for reasonable adjustments and undertakes their assessment, the student is declaring that:
 - i. they are 'fit to sit' their assessment; and
 - ii. the relevant reasonable adjustments have been made and accepted by the student.
8. Students should notify their Head of Year or the Student Support Team (studentsupport@artsed.co.uk) where the necessary reasonable adjustments are not in place prior to a student's assessment. This is so that support can be provided for the student and ensure the appropriate adjustments are in place.

C. Definitions

9. **Extension:** An extension is permission to hand in, participate in or undertake an assessed work after the published deadline date without incurring a penalty.
10. **Deferral:** A deferral is permission to delay an attempt at a particular assessment until the next available opportunity or assessment period. In some cases, this may be after the relevant assessment board has met. A deferral normally involves a new but equivalent assessment task. Where it is necessary to defer the assessment until the next scheduled assessment period, the student will be informed.
11. **Extenuating Circumstances:** City's Assessment Regulations defines Extenuating Circumstances as 'Circumstances which are unforeseen and outside a student's control and which can be shown to have had a direct and substantial impact on their academic results. This may include an impact on capacity to study prior to an assessment, on ability to complete an assessment, and/or on performance during an assessment.'
12. **Foreseen circumstance:** An expected incident, event, or circumstance outside of a student's control, which impact their studies and/or assessment.

13. **Unforeseen circumstance:** An unexpected incident, event, or circumstance outside of a student's control, which impact their studies and/or assessment.

D. Policies and Processes for students to use to inform ArtsEd when they are unable to undertake their Assessments.

14. Below are the mechanisms available to students who for good reason(s) are unable to undertake their assessments.

i. Declaring Extenuating Circumstances (EC)

15. Ahead of or following an assessment, where a student believes that they were not 'fit to sit' or have experienced other extenuating circumstances which were **unforeseen and outside of their control**, they must advise ArtsEd using the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and process. A student's declaration that they are 'fit to sit' an assessment does not preclude the possibility of claiming Extenuating Circumstances after the assessment if there is a valid reason to do so. For more information, please refer to the [Extenuating Circumstance Policy](#).

16. In the first instance, a student should inform a member of staff present at the assessment as soon as possible, and before leaving that assessment, if they sustain an injury, are taken ill during an assessment or experience other unexpected or unforeseeable personal circumstances beyond their reasonable control, which are having a material and adverse effect on their performance.

17. An Extenuating Circumstances claim following an assessment, can normally only be requested by a student where:

- i. they have sustained an injury or have been taken ill partway through an assessment and notified a member of staff who is present at the assessment unless it is not reasonably possible to do so.
- ii. the student's judgment was impaired, and they were unable to make a rational decision about whether they were well and capable enough to sit.

18. In line with **paragraph 17 above**, a student who submits an Extenuating Circumstances claim following an assessment and did not inform a member of staff present at the time of the assessment will need to provide a valid and compelling justification as to the reason(s) why they did not do so.

19. **Technical difficulties during an online assessment:** If during an online assessment or an assessment which needs to be submitted online, a student has technical difficulties or other issues with the technology they are using and are unable to complete the assessment, they should notify the relevant member of staff at the first opportunity and submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim. For more information, please refer to the [Extenuating Circumstance Policy](#).

ii. Requesting an Extension or Deferral

20. Ahead of an assessment, where a student believes that they are not 'fit to sit' or have other **foreseen mitigating circumstances** that may impact their ability to sit or participate in the assessment, they must advise ArtsEd using the Extensions and Deferrals Policy and process. For more information, please refer to the [Extensions and Deferrals Policy](#).

iii. Academic Appeals

21. Students who remain dissatisfied by the outcome of their Extenuating Circumstances claim or [Extensions and Deferrals](#) request should refer to the [Academic Appeals Procedure](#) which sets out the grounds for bringing an academic appeal.

E. Support Available for Students

22. ArtsEd has a duty of care to ensure that the necessary guidance and support is available for students.

i. **Student Support:** Students should be directed to the Student Support Team where there is a concern about a student's fitness to sit. The student can contact the Student Support Team by sending an email to studentsupport@artsed.co.uk.

ii. **Student Counselling:** Personal Tutors can encourage students to seek counselling. Students can also self-refer to ArtsEd's Counselling Service. Students can book a session with the Counselling Team by sending an email to Counselling@artsed.co.uk. The Student Counselling Service offers confidential space for students to seek advice about, and discuss matters impacting upon, their psychological wellbeing. Students are offered:

- a. short term 1-2-1 counselling which can help students work on immediate problems.
- b. assistance with developing healthy coping techniques.
- c. support with gaining understanding of underlying issues; and
- d. assistance with developing a longer-term treatment plan, if necessary.

iii. **Togetherall:** Togetherall is a clinically-managed, online community designed to improve mental health. Students can access the 24/7 online support via our Student Services Online Platform or by visiting www.togetherall.com.

23. **Interruption of Study Policy:** The Interruption of Study process may be commenced in line with the requirements of the [Interruption of Study Policy](#).

24. Students who have any questions about this Fit to Sit Policy should contact HECourseOffice@artsed.co.uk.

25. Any member of staff to whom a concern about a student's fitness to sit an assessment is reported, or who themselves has a concern, may wish to discuss those concerns with the

Quality Team. In so doing, the member of staff will remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of the matter being discussed. Staff members can send an e-mail to the Quality Team (HECourseOffice@artsed.co.uk) who will consult with appropriate staff and determine what steps should be taken. Any member of staff who is in doubt about what to do in the event of a concern arising regarding a student's fitness to sit should contact the Assistant Registrar, Quality and Regulatory Compliance promptly.

26. If the student is experiencing a medical or mental health emergency, please contact the relevant emergency services by dialling 999.

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