

INFORMATION SHEET

Document Title:	Extenuating Circumstances Policy
Document Type:	Policy / Procedure
Document Owner:	Director of Quality and Curriculum
Responsible Executive Director:	Academic Services
Purpose:	Students enrolled in Higher Education programmes at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai are expected to be fit to study and meet assessment deadlines as set by the programme team. They are also expected to complete their programme within the designated timeframe. However, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai acknowledges that students may encounter unforeseen difficulties that could impact their academic progress. The proper management of extenuating circumstances that impact students' study and assessment is crucial in maintaining academic standards and ensuring that students feel they are being treated fairly.
Review Cycle:	Biennial

Links to Strategic Plan (please delete those that do not apply):	
Leading the way in a Modern World / Our place in the Community / Learner opportunity and success	
Link to Risk Register (please delete those that do not apply):	
STR0002 Lack of effective safeguarding and prevent management. STR0004 Lack of staff capacity/capability in all key specialist areas STR0005 Data confidentiality and compliance is not maintained. STR0007 Non-compliance with health and safety (H & S) regulations and wellbeing strategies STR0008 Concerns re. quality of learning experience. STR0009 Lacking positive relationships with key stakeholders and the community STR0010 Inability in achieving the Welsh Language Standards and curriculum expectations STR0017 Lack of diversity and inclusion impacts negatively on learners, employees and stakeholders perception of GLLM	
Link to our Values (please delete those that do not apply):	Equality / Trust / Fairness / Respect / Honesty / Ambition

Approval Checklist – (to be instigated by Owner):	Date:
• First draft uploaded to GrŴp Portal for initial consultation with staff (via RL)	24/03/24
• First draft sent to JCC for initial 2 week consultation (via RL)	24/03/25
• Impact Assessments completed	20/05/25
• Final draft presented to HEQASG	09/04/25
• Final draft presented to JCC (if applicable)	21/05/25
• Final draft presented to SHE (if applicable)	N/A
• Union Approval at JCC	21/05/25
• Policy presented to CSSC Committee	03/06/25
• Policy presented to Board	26/06/25
• Policy translated and uploaded to GrŴp Portal	

Section	Description of change
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 16	Simplified language
7.4	Included signposting to DSA / ALN support
7.5	Clarity that misuse of the EC policy will be referred to the Unfair Practice Policy
8	Section on Evidence Requirements updated to include a list of acceptable evidence
9	Section on Application Procedure updated for clarity and simplicity
9.4	Confirmation that staff can make applications on students behalf
11	Section on EC Panel Procedure updated to current process and for clarity and simplicity
12	A new section outlining a new process of early approval
-	Retrospective Claims section removed and integrated into Section 10
16	New procedure flowchart

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1. Who does this Policy Apply to?

- 1.1 This policy applies to students undertaking HE programmes which GLLM have been validated to deliver by the following HE awarding organisations;
- HE programmes validated by Bangor University for delivery by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
 - Edexcel/Pearson
- 1.2 Students undertaking HE programmes awarded by other institutions should review the policies and procedures which are available in the Programme VLE, GLLM website or awarding organisation website.

2. Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1 Students enrolled in Higher Education programmes at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai are expected to be fit to study and meet assessment deadlines as set by the programme team. They are also expected to complete their programme within the designated timeframe. However, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai acknowledges that students may encounter unforeseen difficulties that could impact their academic progress.
- 2.2 The proper management of extenuating circumstances that impact students' study and assessment is crucial in maintaining academic standards and ensuring that students feel they are being treated fairly.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 Students are responsible for reporting any extenuating circumstances that may affect their results in a timely manner. Grŵp Llandrillo Menai follows an evidence-based approach, with claims assessed through an Extenuating Circumstances Panel to ensure all cases are treated fairly and consistently. Students with extenuating circumstances should not be unfairly disadvantaged or advantaged compared to others. The timing of the circumstances must be relevant to their claimed impact. Where possible, reasonable adjustments should be made to help students attend teaching activities and complete coursework.

4. Implementation

- 4.1 The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will meet regularly throughout the academic year. Students will be notified of the panel dates on their VLE page. The Panel will use this policy to guide their decisions based on the evidence provided. The decision of the Panel will be communicated to students within 5 working days following the panel meeting.

5. Monitoring and Impact Measurement

- 5.1 The Extenuating Circumstances policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years in accordance with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai HE Policies approval process and those of the awarding body.

6. Purpose of this Procedure

- 6.1 This procedure outlines the process for students to report extenuating circumstances that may affect their academic performance. Students are responsible for reporting any extenuating circumstances as soon as possible, such as ill health, bereavement, or personal challenges, that may affect their results. Where necessary, students should also seek professional support to help manage their situation. This procedure ensures a fair and consistent approach to handling extenuating circumstances while maintaining academic standards.

7. Extenuating Circumstances

- 7.1 Extenuating Circumstances are defined as temporary / short-term circumstances that:

1. Have occurred during or shortly before the assessment or examination in question.
2. Affect the student's ability to attend or complete an assessment or a number of assessments.
3. Affect the student's ability to attend or complete an examination or a number of examinations.
4. Affect the student's ability to complete a level or the number of modules they are enrolled on in an academic year (e.g. when a student requests to transfer their mode of study, such as from full-time to part-time).
5. Are exceptional and outside the student's control.
6. Can be corroborated by independent evidence.

7.2 Examples of circumstances that might be considered valid include:

- a. Hospitalisation, including operations.
- b. Health problems that affect the student's ability to study or attend assessments.
- c. Personal or psychological problems for which the student is undergoing counselling or has been referred to a counsellor or other qualified practitioner.
- d. Childbirth (including a partner in labour).
- e. Bereavement causing significant emotional impact.
- f. Major accident or injury, acute ailments or conditions that coincide with an assessment deadline or an examination, or that are long-lasting enough to impact a significant part of a term.
- g. Clinical depression or other mental health problems.
- h. Recent burglary, theft, or serious car accident.
- i. Jury service that cannot be deferred.
- j. Late diagnosis of learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, resulting in lack of support or examination accommodations.
- k. Separation or divorce, either personal or parental (with corroborating evidence).
- l. Accidents or illness affecting immediate relatives.

This list is provided for guidance purposes and should not be considered an exhaustive list of valid circumstances. The Panel will review each application on a case by case basis.

7.3 Examples of circumstances that would not normally be considered valid include:

- a. Car breakdowns, train/bus delays or cancellations, or other public transport issues (unless the student can demonstrate they allowed adequate time to compensate for such problems that could reasonably have been anticipated).
- b. Child care problems that could have been anticipated.
- c. Accidents or illness affecting friends (unless serious, or the student is a sole carer).
- d. Unspecified anxiety, mild depression, or general examination stress.
- e. Coughs, colds, upper respiratory tract infections, sore throats, minor viral infections, unless the illness was at its peak at the time of an examination, end-of-module test, or in-class test, and the corroborating evidence shows its impact on the student's performance.
- f. Financial problems (other than cases of exceptional hardship).
- g. Holidays, house moves, family celebrations, or other events where the student either has control over the date or could choose not to participate.
- h. Computer issues, corrupt data, disk or printer failure, or similar, including internet and Wi-Fi problems.
- i. Problems with postal delivery of work (unless recorded delivery or registered mail is used).

- j. Time management problems (e.g., failing to meet deadlines).
- k. Appointments (legal, medical, etc.) that could be rearranged.
- l. Territorial Army commitments or similar (unless unavoidable).
- m. Sporting or recreational commitments (unless the student is representing GLLM in national competition or their country in international competition).
- n. De-registration.

This list is provided for guidance purposes and should not be considered an exhaustive list of invalid circumstances. The Panel will review each application on a case by case basis.

- 7.4 For long-term conditions, students are encouraged to make use of the DSA / ALN support provided by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai.
- 7.5 If students are found to have misused the Extenuating Circumstances process, they will be subject to disciplinary proceedings under the Unfair Practice policy.

8. Evidence Requirements

- 8.1 For equity and transparency, applications for extenuating circumstances must be evidence-based and assessed by a panel within clearly defined guidelines.
- 8.2 The evidence should confirm that the circumstances:
 - 1. were unavoidable
 - 2. had an impact on your ability to complete an assignment or exam
 - 3. occurred at the time of the affected period of study / assessment
- 8.3 Examples of acceptable evidence include:
 - a. Sick note
 - b. A medical letter / certificate from an appropriate medical professional.
 - c. Letter from Social Services or a Solicitor
 - d. Death certificate
 - e. Police report or crime reference number
 - f. Official correspondence from a court or tribunal authority
 - g. Solicitor letter
 - h. A letter from your line manager or placement supervisor
 - i. Insurance documentation

Note: This list is provided for guidance purposes and should not be considered an exhaustive list of valid evidence.

- 8.4 A statement from a parent, guardian, spouse, or partner will not normally be accepted as independent corroboration. Similarly, a statement from an academic member of staff will not normally be accepted without additional supporting documentary evidence, except in exceptional circumstances.
- 8.5 Medical certificates signed by family members are not acceptable.
- 8.6 The Panel has the right to ask for additional information about extenuating circumstances if original documentation is not adequate or if the circumstances reported are not considered serious enough to warrant consideration.

9. Application Procedure

- 9.1 The student is encouraged to inform their Programme Leader if they will be unable to meet their deadline. The Programme Leader can then provide support to ensure the student understands the process, the possible outcomes, and, where feasible, help identify resources to assist with completing the assessment. The student will be referred to the Student Support Services at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and will be informed of the available services by a member of the Student Support Team, who can assist them independently with the Extenuating Circumstances procedure, if required.
- 9.2 The student can apply for Extenuating Circumstances independently from their Programme Leader by completing the Extenuating Circumstances form.
- 9.3 Students can apply for either a late submission or poor performance. In exceptional circumstances, the student may be allowed to apply for a combination of both.
1. Late submission. A student requests an extension to their original submission deadline and seeks to have the work marked without a late penalty applied.
 2. Poor performance. A student requests that their circumstances be noted and considered by the Board of Examiners.
- 9.4 In exceptional circumstances, the Programme Leader may submit an application on the student's behalf, provided they have the student's expressed permission.
- 9.5 Students have the right to make applications through the medium of Welsh or English.

10. Application Deadlines

- 10.1 Wherever possible, students must submit their applications at the earliest opportunity. If applications are received that reference assessments due more than a month prior to the Panel meeting, the student will be required to provide an explanation for why the application was not submitted on time. In such cases, the Panel may decline the application or impose a late penalty.
- 10.2 The student must apply by filling in the Extenuating Circumstances Form, accessed from their VLE page and the HE Policies website. The deadlines for applications are communicated to students via their programme Moodle page and via the course teaching teams. Deadlines are usually set one week prior to any Extenuating Circumstances Panel meeting.
- 10.3 Retrospective claims of extenuating circumstances will not normally be considered unless there are the most exceptional reasons for not submitting them in advance. This would typically only apply if the student was unable to disclose the circumstances earlier due to a medical condition that has only just been diagnosed. Please note that unless such exceptional circumstances apply, extenuating circumstance claims submitted retrospectively will be deemed invalid.
- 10.4 Students are required to submit Extenuating Circumstances requests prior to the Examination Boards. If there is a valid reason for not submitting a claim before the Board, students should refer to the GLLM HE Appeals policy.

11. Extenuating Circumstances Panel Procedure

- 11.1 Membership of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel shall comprise:
- The Director for Quality & Curriculum (who will act as chair)

- HE Quality Manager (who may act as Chair if required)
- A Learner Services Manager
- Quality Assurance Coordinator
- The appropriate Programme Leader
- ALN Team Member (where appropriate)

11.2 The Panel will have the authority to:

- Approve a claim on the basis of the evidence provided
- Reject a claim if, in its opinion, there are insufficient or no grounds for the claim.

The Panel may adjourn the decision awaiting further information from other teams within GLLM or from the student, if this is necessary to ensure a fair consideration of the claim. Any adjournment will be as short as possible.

11.3 The applications will be considered by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel based on the following factors:

1. The amount of work affected by the circumstances;
2. The length of time the circumstances will affect the student's work
3. Whether the student requires additional support to complete outstanding work.
4. Any request by the student to change their mode of study.

11.4 Members of the Panel must declare any conflicts of interest where applicable and they will then be excluded from the decision making in respect of the conflict of interest. All conflicts of interests will be noted and recorded by the Quality Assurance Coordinator.

11.5 The panel meets in a closed session. Students are not permitted to attend an Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

12. Consideration of an Extenuating Circumstances Claim Procedure

12.1 EC claims will be initially reviewed by the HE Quality department. Claims may be approved by the HE Quality department, without the need to progress to the EC Panel. These typically include straightforward claims that meet all of the following criteria:

1. The student is applying for a Late Submission only.
2. The student has not previously applied for ECs.
3. The student has submitted acceptable evidence.
4. The extension requested is 2 weeks or less.

EC claims cannot be rejected by the HE Quality department. Any EC claims that are not approved will be referred to the EC Panel for consideration. A record of all claims approved by the HE Quality department will be reviewed by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

12.2 The following claims will be reviewed by the Extenuating Circumstances panel:

1. The student has applied for Poor Performance
2. The student has applied for both Late Submission and Poor Performance.
3. The student has applied for ECs previously, regardless of whether the claim was approved or rejected.
4. The student has not submitted evidence with their application.
5. The student is making a claim for more than one assessment.

6. The student is requesting an extension of more than 2 weeks.
7. Any claim that the HE Quality Department deems appropriate for review by the Panel.

12.3 The Extenuating Circumstances Panel will make recommendations to the Examination Board, which must be satisfied that the specific learning outcomes have been achieved before allowing a student to progress to the next stage or making an award. The decision of the Examination Board will be categorised as follows:

1. **No Action:** ECs are not related to the student's studies, or the ECs are deemed invalid, or allowances for ECs have already been made (e.g., extra time or modified forms of assessment have already been provided).
2. **Extension to Submission Dates:** ECs are deemed valid and result in the student being given new submission deadlines. If marked work has already been returned to students and the student requesting ECs would benefit from assessment feedback, the student may be asked to complete a different assessment.
3. **Resubmission:** Allowances for ECs have not already been made for assessments within specific module(s). ECs apply only to specific modules, and there is no evidence to suggest they impacted any modules beyond those.
4. **Poor Performance:** ECs are deemed valid, and the student submitted work by the agreed deadlines. The student requests that the ECs be considered by the Examination Board when reviewing their academic progress.

12.4 The Board of Examiners may decide to increase the award class or defer a decision on academic achievement where the following conditions apply:

1. **Increase Degree Class:** Allowances for ECs cannot be made retrospectively at the module level, for example, due to the form of assessment, if the student has a borderline mark, or if there is evidence that the ECs had an impact beyond the specific modules where allowances were made.
2. **Defer Decision:** Further details or confirmation of the ECs have been requested. A decision can be deferred to another Board of Examiners meeting (e.g., deferral from a Level 5 Board to a Level 6 (final) Board of Examiners).

12.5 As a result of an approved extenuating circumstances the action taken will be in accordance with the University Partner/Awarding Bodies rules and regulations.

12.6 Students will receive the outcome of the Extenuating Circumstances Panel within 5 working days.

12.7 A summary of the Panel meetings will form part of the documentation that Chairs and External Moderators and Examiners receive prior to the Examination Boards.

13. Staff Applications

13.1 Programme Leaders should encourage students to discuss their circumstances with their manager, where appropriate, so that suitable support can be put in place. If necessary, the EC Panel will refer the applicant to CareFirst and inform their Manager and HR if additional support is required from GLLM.

14. Appeals

14.1 Where a case has been reviewed by the Extenuating Circumstances Panel and the student wishes to appeal the decision, they must submit a full written appeal to the Quality Assurance Coordinator. The appeal must be

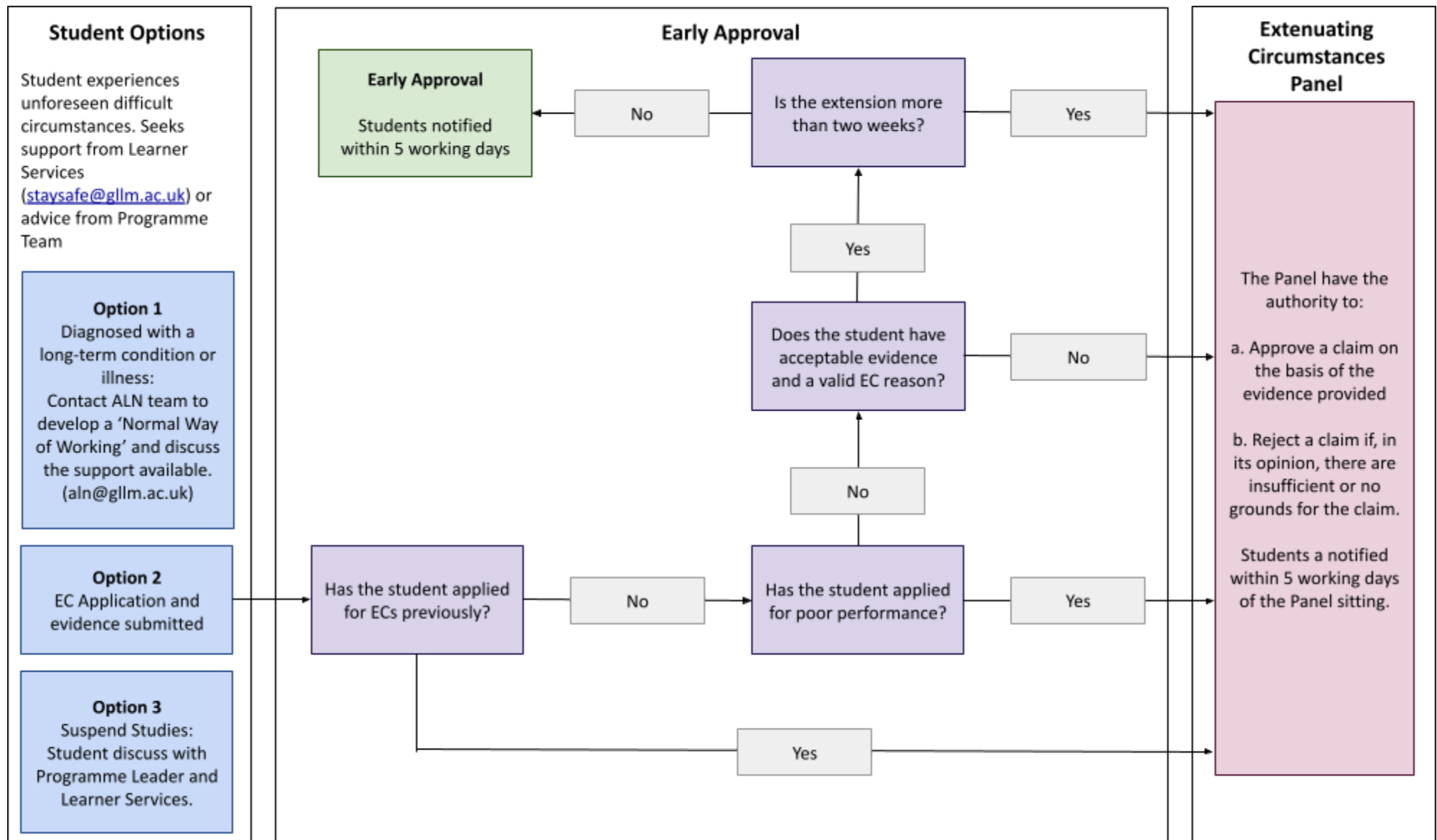
received no later than ten working days from the date of the letter notifying the student of the Panel's decision. A simple notice of appeal, submitted in writing within the deadline, will not be considered a valid appeal and will not be accepted.

- 14.2 On receipt of an appeal, the Director for Higher Education or an Assistant Principal, who has not been previously involved in the case, shall, where appropriate to the circumstances of the case, consult with the Chair of the Panel concerned.
- 14.3 The Director for Higher Education or an Assistant Principal, who will be a person not previously involved in the case, is required to disallow an appeal which:
 - i. Is based on factors which were known to the Panel when the decision to reject the application was made;
 - ii. Introduces information which was known to, and could have been reported by the student prior to the meeting of the Panel.
- 14.4 If the appeal is accepted, it shall be dealt with under the awarding institution's Appeal procedure.
- 14.5 If the student is still not satisfied, they may pursue the matter through the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Complaints Procedure.
- 14.6 Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.

15. Resit Assessments

- 15.1 If a student is required to undertake resit assessments during the summer period and are affected by extenuating circumstances during this time, they must submit a new claim form to cover this period.

16. Extenuating Circumstances Procedure Flowchart



18. Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

Assessment completed by:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	28/02/2025
Assessment approved by:		Dated:	

Consideration	Response	Special requirements / controls
Which protected groups might be disadvantaged by the policy/process?	This policy is relevant to the whole HE student body and therefore, will ensure that no student is disadvantaged as a result of extenuating circumstances which may impact their performance . The policy clearly states that ‘students with extenuating circumstances should not be unfairly disadvantaged or advantaged compared to others’. (3.1) Policy reassessment 20/05/2025- policy has been amended 11.1 now confirms that where appropriate, a member of the ALN Team will attend the extenuating circumstances panel.	
Which protected groups might benefit from the policy/process?	Section 7.2 clearly outlines circumstances which may be considered valid when applying for extenuating circumstances. As such, individuals with additional learning needs, physical and mental health conditions which require hospitalisation or which affect an individual’s ability to study or attend assessments, individuals in childbirth or those with a partner in labour or individuals experiencing separation or divorce may benefit from this policy. (Protected characteristics- disability, gender, pregnancy and maternity,	No provision is made in the policy for individuals who may be fasting during a cultural or religious festival such as Ramadan. Fasting can result in additional fatigue, poor or reduced concentration and/ or reduced ability or inability to complete practical assessments. Considerations should be given to the timing of assessments for individuals who may be affected. Guidelines or a policy amendment related to this would support and promote staff and student understanding.

	marriage and civil partnership,) Policy reassessment 20/05/2025- policy has been amended and now states 7.2 'This list is provided for guidance purposes and should not be considered an exhaustive list of valid circumstances. The Panel will review each application on a case by case basis.'	Policy reassessment 20/05/2025- policy has been amended and now states 7.2 'This list is provided for guidance purposes and should not be considered an exhaustive list of valid circumstances. The Panel will review each application on a case by case basis.'
Does the policy advance equality and foster good relations?	The policy endeavours to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by unforeseen or in some case, emergent, life events including illness, childbirth, newly diagnosed additional learning needs and divorce/ separation. The implementation of this policy will endeavour to advance equality.	
Could any part of the process discriminate unlawfully?	Not if followed appropriately.	Consideration should be given to individuals' participation in religious and cultural rituals which may impact their performance during assessment. However, it is acknowledged that the student must share appropriate events/ dates with their tutor to facilitate fair assessment where possible. Guidelines or a policy amendment related to this would support and promote staff and student understanding. Policy reassessment 20/05/2025- policy has been amended and now states 7.2 'This list is provided for guidance purposes and should not be considered an exhaustive list of valid circumstances. The Panel will review each application on a case by case basis.'

Are there any other policies that need to change to support the effectiveness of this one?	No.	
Conclusion	Amend the policy to include consideration of the effects of religious/ cultural ritual participation on assessment- can this be considered a valid reason for extenuating circumstances? Reassessment 20/05/2025- Continue the policy	

SIGNED:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	28/02/2025, 20/05/2025
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Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Assessment completed by:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	28/02/2025
Assessment approved by:		Dated:	

Consideration	Response	Special requirements / controls
What positive effects will the implementation of the policy or procedure have on the use of Welsh language?	There is no reference made to the Welsh language within the policy. However, GLIM appeals and complaints procedures provide clear guidance around individuals' rights to make a complaint through the medium of Welsh and for this to be responded to in Welsh. 03/04/2025- Policy amended following recommendations and now states 'Students have the right to make applications through the	The policy should be amended to include a statement relating to an individual's right to appeal or make a complaint through the medium of Welsh. As per the Welsh Language Standards, students also have the right to discuss personal matters which may affect their studies with a Welsh speaking personal tutor or learner services. Where staff are not able to facilitate this, individuals should be reminded of their rights and arrangements made for simultaneous translation during any meetings. Trosi can support with the translation of written documentation to individual students as required. 03/04/2025- Policy amended following recommendations and now states 'Students have the right to make applications through the medium of Welsh or English.' and

	medium of Welsh or English.’ and ‘Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.’	‘Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.’
What negative effects will the implementation of the policy or procedure have on the use of Welsh language?	There is no reference made to the Welsh language within the policy. 03/04/2025- Policy amended following recommendations and now states ‘Students have the right to make applications through the medium of Welsh or English.’ and ‘Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.’	The policy should be amended to include a statement relating to an individual’s right to appeal or make a complaint through the medium of Welsh. As per the Welsh Language Standards, students also have the right to discuss personal matters which may affect their studies with a Welsh speaking personal tutor or learner services. Where staff are not able to facilitate this, individuals should be reminded of their rights and arrangements made for simultaneous translation during any meetings. Trosi can support with the translation of written documentation to individual students as required. 03/04/2025- Policy amended following recommendations and now states ‘Students have the right to make applications through the medium of Welsh or English.’ and ‘Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.’
Are there sufficient Welsh-speaking staff available to implement the policy or procedure?	There are Welsh speaking staff available to support the implementation of this policy. Where there are insufficient Welsh speaking staff available, simultaneous and text translation services can be provided. In addition, support may be provided by another, Welsh speaking, senior manager.	The Grŵp’s translation team will provide support, where necessary and appropriate, or an additional Welsh speaking member of the senior management team, to facilitate and extenuating circumstances applications through the medium of Welsh.

If not, what steps will be taken to ensure that sufficient staff are available, and by when?	The Grŵp's translation team will provide support, where necessary and appropriate, or an additional Welsh speaking member of the senior management team, to facilitate any extenuating circumstances applications through the medium of Welsh.	
Does the policy or procedure comply with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's Welsh Language Schemes/Language Strategy?	There is no reference to the Welsh language within the policy currently, however, supporting policies including the complaints procedure will enable this policy to be semi-compliant. 03/04/2025- Policy amended following recommendations and now states 'Students have the right to make applications through the medium of Welsh or English.' and 'Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.'	The policy should be amended to include a statement relating to an individual's right to appeal or make a complaint through the medium of Welsh. As per the Welsh Language Standards, students also have the right to discuss personal matters which may affect their studies with a Welsh speaking personal tutor or learner services. Where staff are not able to facilitate this, individuals should be reminded of their rights and arrangements made for simultaneous translation during any meetings. Trosi can support with the translation of written documentation to individual students as required. 03/04/2025- Policy amended following recommendations and now states 'Students have the right to make applications through the medium of Welsh or English.' and 'Students have the right to appeal through the medium of Welsh or English.'
Conclusion	Amend the policy 03/04/2025- Continue the policy following amendments.	

SIGNED:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	28/02/2025/ 03/04/2025
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Assessment completed by:	Lisa Fowlie	Dated:	19/03/2025
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Consideration	Response	Special requirements / controls
How will this policy impact upon the Grŵp's sustainability strategy?	This policy will not have an impact on the Grŵp Sustainability and Environmental Policy.	
Conclusion	Continue the Policy and process	

SIGNED:	Lisa Fowlie	Dated:	19/03/2025
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