

Why did you not submit an exceptional circumstances claim in relation to these circumstances within one week of your assessment deadlines?

This is a very important question. If you do not have good reason for failing to disclose your circumstances at the time, your appeal will not be upheld on the basis of exceptional circumstances.

What is a ‘good reason’ for not submitting your exceptional circumstances earlier?

Examples of ‘good reasons’ (which must also be clearly evidenced*):

- A genuine medical emergency which would have clearly prevented you from submitting an exceptional circumstances claim, such as hospitalisation;
- Severe issues outside your control which meant you were unavoidably prevented from submitting an exceptional circumstances claim.

*There are some instances where evidence is not required - see **Exceptions** below for further information.

Examples of reasons which are not considered to be ‘good reasons’:

- A belief that the University would not take your concerns seriously;
- Ignorance of the exceptional circumstances procedures;
- Believing or hoping that you would do well enough in the assessments not to need exceptional circumstances;
- General embarrassment / a reluctance to disclose your circumstances.
- Deciding not to disclose your circumstances because you wanted to demonstrate that you could succeed without help.
- That you belong to or grew up in a culture in which problems are not openly discussed or disclosed to others. *This is not accepted as a good reason for non-disclosure of exceptional circumstances because it would be unjust to accept claims from some students but not others on the basis of assumptions about cultural norms based on a student’s nationality, ethnicity or religious faith. The University does not discriminate against students on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, faith or any other protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.*

If you make a conscious decision not to **self-certify** for short-term, acute illnesses or short-term unforeseen circumstances prior to submission of an open assessment or commencement of an examination, or **submit an exceptional circumstances claim** where this is more appropriate at the time of the assessment(s) you believe to have been affected by your circumstances, you have chosen to accept the risk of failure or poorer performance. The University will expect you to accept the responsibility for having taken that risk and to accept the consequences, as demonstrated by the examples in the boxes outlined above.

Many appeals are rejected on the basis that the student does not have good reason for failing to have self-certified/ exceptional circumstances or submitted an exceptional circumstances claim to their department at the time of the assessment they now believe has been affected.

Evidence

The evidence you submit with your appeal should demonstrate that you could not have engaged with the exceptional circumstances process at the appropriate time. If the evidence can address this directly, this is ideal. Alternatively, it may make some reference to your ability to address your academic studies or some other related issue. If in doubt about this, contact asc@yusu.org (for undergraduates) or advice@yorkgsa.org (for postgraduates) for further information.

Exceptions to Evidence Requirements - Covid-19

There are certain limited instances where students are not *required* to provide evidence of 'good reason' for failure to declare Exceptional Circumstances at time of the affected assessments, depending on when they occurred (although it is usually helpful to provide evidence if you can).

The evidence requirements for exceptional circumstances have changed three times since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Please consider when each of your affected assessments took place and apply the following rules depending on that date.

You are required to provide evidence of your circumstances and good reason for failure to declare those circumstances via an Exceptional Circumstances claim at the time of the affected assessments, if:

- You are citing exceptional circumstances affecting assessments that took place or were due before **23 March 2020**;
- You are citing exceptional circumstances affecting assessments that took place or were due after **27 September 2021 (and ongoing)**;
- You are citing exceptional circumstances affecting assessments that took place or were due between **30 September 2020 and 6 January 2021**, UNLESS you have a 'good reason' for being unable to provide this evidence now. You should therefore provide evidence in this case, or provide a detailed explanation of your 'good reason' for being unable to do so, if you are appealing in relation to assessments that took place in this period.

You are not required to provide evidence of your circumstances and good reason for failure to declare those circumstances via an Exceptional Circumstances claim at the time of the affected assessment(s), if:

- You are citing exceptional circumstances affecting assessments that took place or were due between **23 March 2020 and 29 September 2020**, although you will need to provide detail in your appeal about the circumstances that affected you at the time of those assessments and why you could not submit a claim. You are encouraged to provide any evidence you may have to demonstrate that your circumstances prevented you from submitting a claim at the time of the affected assessments.
- you are citing exceptional circumstances affecting assessments that took place or were due between **6 January 2021 and 27 September 2021**, **you are *not* required to provide supporting evidence** of your exceptional circumstances and good reason for failure to declare your circumstances at the time of the assessments, although you should still provide a detailed explanation as to what your circumstances were at the time of the affected assessments, and you are encouraged to provide any evidence that might support your explanation.

Appeals which relate to assessments that took place in the periods outlined above *where evidence is **not** required*, must still be supported by appropriate evidence where the evidence has already been obtained, e.g. medical or Open Door evidence if acquired in support of EC claims or for other reasons.

For circumstances that occurred in the periods above where evidence is not required, students will not be required to evidence 'good reason' for failure to use the exceptional circumstances process, but must still provide a good explanation as to why they could not submit a claim at the time. 'Good reason' will not automatically be accepted, especially in light of the fact that the exceptional circumstances claims were easier to make because no evidence to support claims was required in those periods.

If you do not have good reason for failing to engage with the exceptional circumstances process, it is highly unlikely that your appeal will be upheld. You may therefore wish to consider whether or not you still wish to continue with the appeal process.