

Hello

We are continually monitoring government advice about reopening of our services and we are currently planning for the return of some Higher Education students to site. We will be in touch as soon as we are able to clarify which courses are returning in line with the government guidance.

We are writing to you to tell you about changes we are making to your course in order to ensuring that we do everything possible to support yourself and reduce the potential impact of the pandemic on you so they are not disadvantaged, whilst maintaining the value of the degree. In doing so we have to carefully think about the value of your degree at the end of the process and make sure that it meets the standards set by the government for degrees. A basic principle of this is that all modules must be attempted and passed in line with your academic regulations.

Our approach to supporting you is to provide a Safety Net to all students and for final level students make some adjustments to how your degree is calculated.

Mitigating Circumstances Safety Net

We are continuing to deliver teaching and learning albeit using online delivery in line with government guidance. We need to reiterate that mitigating circumstances are for situations that occur suddenly, unexpectedly or are severe in nature that prevent you submitting assessments. However, we are aware that there is a need for some students to have a safety net during the pandemic due to situations out of their control. As such we have developed the following temporary measures as a safety net for students. There is no definitive list of such situations and we recognise that difficulties impact people in different ways. For cases of mitigating circumstances, you will normally be asked to provide evidence to back up your claims.

We appreciate sometimes this evidence is difficult to find so we have reduced our thresholds for evidence for extra safety nets listed below. You will still need to prove you are in the situation but in some circumstances, you will not need to prove impact e.g. You would need to prove you have children of school age but may not need to prove they are affecting your ability to study at home.

What are the new safety nets?

The three new categories below have been created to reflect the particular challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Caring responsibilities – additional caring responsibilities for children and/or other dependants
- Key workers – students who fall under the ‘key worker’ category outlined by the government and are required to work additional hours
- IT failure/unreliability – as we have moved to a partly blended learning approach, the reliability of IT has become critical. Students who experience sudden IT failure or unreliability that has impacted their ability to submit assessments can submit a mitigating circumstance request on this basis. This will only be given as mitigation if reasonable actions have been taken by the student.

Students should ensure they contact their Programme Leader or Success Coach if they have ongoing IT and accessibility issues so that these might be resolved in advance.

Short Extensions

We have adjusted the evidence requirement for short extensions meaning you can apply for short extensions without evidence during this period. This applies immediately.

Late Submission Safety Net

What are the changes to the penalties for late submission?

Penalties will continue to apply to late submissions, but, the changes we have made mean that, work submitted within five working days of the deadline will not be allowed to fail solely because of late penalties.

Why has this change been made?

We have modified our approach to applying penalties for late submission, so that we can support you in demonstrating that your assessed work achieves the required learning outcomes and/or competencies.

What would this look like?

This will mean that a 10% penalty for late submission will not push your mark below 40 for assessments at levels 3-6, or below 50 for assessments at level 7.

Please note this only applies to the original deadline for the piece of work and not to mitigating circumstance deadlines, short extension deadlines and resit deadlines.

Example outcomes where the pass mark is 40 and the maximum mark is 100:

	Student				
	A	B	C	D	E
Pre-penalty mark	100	50	45	40	30
Learning outcomes/competencies met (passed)?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
<u>OLD</u> Outcome after applying the standard penalty					
If the work is submitted up to 24 hours late – 10% penalty	90	40	35	30	20
If the work is submitted more than 24 hours and up to and including 5 working days late – 10% penalty or the mark is reduced to the pass mark, whichever is the lower	40	40	35	30	20
If the work is submitted more than 5 working days late	0	0	0	0	0
<u>NEW</u> COVID-19 Safety net applies where the pre-penalty mark is 40 or higher					
If the work is submitted up to 24 hours late	90	40	40	40	20
If the work is submitted more than 24	40	40	40	40	20

hours and up to and including 5 working days late					
If the work is submitted more than 5 working days late	0	0	0	0	0

For all students on University of Hull and TEC Partnership Degrees Adjustment of module grades

At exam board we will look closely at the grades for your cohort. If the cohort grades (average, range and Standard Deviations) on an assessment show that Covid has had an impact when compared to 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 results we will raise the grades to compensate for this. Grades will only be scaled upwards and only where there is sufficient data to make a decision.

If you have submitted your work this will not slow down you achieving your result but it would be possible that you may receive improved module scores and a new transcript at a later date when more people have submitted.

For Final Level University of Hull 3-year Bachelor Programmes

The University have published their approach to no detriment. We will be working out your grades at exam board in the normal way (including changes promised last year by the university). However, they have chosen to apply a system which looks at your performance from before Covid and compares it to your performance since Covid. If this looks like your performance has been affected they may increase your classification. This decision will be decided by a special committee at the university. For more information please follow this [link](#).

For University of Hull 1 Yr Bachelors Top Up Programmes or for direct entrants onto a final level

The University have decided to calculate your degree classification based on best 100 credits. When we calculate your classification at exam board we will discount your lowest scoring 20 credit module from the calculation. You must still submit and pass the assignments for all modules.

For TEC Partnership Foundation Degrees on final level

We have decided to offer an approach to no detriment which calculates your final classification based on the best 100 credits you have achieved. The decision whether to offer you a Foundation Degree, a Foundation Degree with Merit or a Foundation Degree with Distinction will be based on this calculation. You must still submit and pass the assignments for all modules. For those of you wishing to complete a Top Up Degree with us next year we will use this calculation in your entry requirements.

For Higher National Programmes

We will follow the guidance of the awarding bodies as this emerges. Your Programme Leader will keep you informed.

General Information for all Students

We have made multiple changes to programmes including assessments to ensure there are no barriers in place to stop your cohort achieving. You may wish to complete the original assessments and this is possible (in this situation you should speak to your programme leader).

In addition, you may have personal circumstances that mean you are not able to complete even with the changes made. If you are struggling I encourage you to speak to your tutors or support staff such as a success coach to get advice about mitigating circumstances or extensions.

However, you do have other options available such as:

- Suspension of studies. This means ceasing to be a student on a temporary basis and returning to study, including repeating your stage or part of your stage, next year. This should be completed before Easter break.
- Repeat a period of study. At any point you can apply to repeat part of your study through submitting a student case request to do so.
- Should you feel that you have not been supported by TEC Partnership you have the right of complaint which must follow our Code of Practice and could lead to partial refund should your complaint be upheld by The Office of the Independent Adjudicator. In all circumstances we encourage you to speak to your programme leader or curriculum manager before submitting a complaint so we can deal with your issues as an early resolution.

Academic Support

I would like to remind you of the support available to yourselves through this time.

Your Programme Leader or Module Tutor can also be contacted to discuss any issues you have with the programme or any support you need.

You are still able to seek support with your academic studies through contacting Ella Malton – maltone@grimsby.ac.uk

Pastoral Support

All forms of support are still running albeit through new methods of communication. Please contact a Success Coach (See Below) who will signpost you to the support.

Daniel Huntley: Education, Social Sciences, Access to HE and PGCE

01472311222 ext 2054 Daniel Huntley: huntleyd@grimsby.ac.uk

James Hannah: Commercial Enterprise, Engineering, Construction, Animal Management, Sport, Counselling

01472 311222 ext 2052 James Hannah: hannahj@grimsby.ac.uk

Theresa Cole: Health Care Industries

01472 311222 ext 2055 Theresa Cole: colet@grimsby.ac.uk

Shelina Ahmed: Digital and Creative Industries

01472 311222 ext 1610 Shelina Ahmed: ahmeds@grimsby.ac.uk

Thank you, for taking the time to read this information and I wish you all a successful study period.

Best wishes

Nathan Michael

MA, BA (Hons), PGCE (PCET), SFHEA

Group Academic Registrar

TEC Partnership

Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education

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