

Postgraduate Taught Dissertation Extension Policy

1. Introduction

Postgraduate Taught dissertations are not counted as coursework and are therefore not covered by the **Late Submission of Coursework** policy. Students can request a short extension (usually no more than 4 weeks) to submit their dissertation if they find that, due to extenuating circumstances, they will be unable to submit the dissertation by the published deadline.

This policy does not cover problems affecting your performance across the whole dissertation module; if you encounter such difficulties please contact the Student Support Team and consult the **Extenuating Circumstances for Performance Policy** on the Learning Platform.

This policy does not apply to Undergraduate dissertations and such students should consult the **Late Submission of Coursework** policy and contact the Student Support Team for further information.

2. About Dissertation Extension Requests

Dissertation extension requests may be submitted for different reasons relating to a student's ability to complete their work by the published deadline. Dissertation extension requests will only be considered in cases where the circumstances or events could not reasonably have been anticipated.

A delay in obtaining Ethical Approval for your work will only be considered as possible grounds for extension where there is sufficient evidence to illustrate the following:

- 2.1 You started the process in good time, and;
- 2.2 You adequately managed and monitored the progress of the application, and;
- 2.3 The process was solely delayed by a third party, the event of which you could not reasonably have anticipated.

The following are examples of circumstances which are NOT considered to be extenuating:

2.4 Minor ailments and illnesses; such as colds, coughs, sprains, headaches.

2.5 Personal disruptions or events which could have been anticipated; such as holidays, weddings, scheduled work related events such as conferences and training courses, changing address or employment, religious holidays or festivals which are usually known in advance.

2.6 General pressure of work is not taken to be circumstances beyond your control, as you are expected to plan your work schedule.

2.7 Financial constraints commonly experienced by students.

2.8 Misreading/confusing the coursework deadline.

2.9 Oversleeping on the day of the deadline.

It is not appropriate, nor possible, to list all of the potential extenuating circumstances that you may encounter which would be accepted. The list above should give you an indication of the types of circumstance that are not accepted.

3. Submitting a Dissertation Extension Request

Students should continue to work to the original published deadline whilst they are awaiting the outcome of their Dissertation Extension Request to ensure they have suitable work available to submit should their request be declined.

To request an extension to the dissertation deadline of up to 4 weeks, a **Postgraduate Taught Dissertation Extension Request Form** must be fully completed and submitted to the Student Support Team at least 2 weeks prior to the published deadline. Wherever possible, requests should be supported by original and authenticated documentary evidence. The request will then be considered by the Head of Department.

In exceptional circumstances students may wish to request an extension request of more than 4 weeks (up to a maximum of 3 months). Such requests will be considered by the Deputy Dean of Academic Partnerships at the University of Essex.



4. Outcome of a Dissertation Extension Request

Any extension to the dissertation will usually be confirmed in writing by the Student Support Team within 10 working days and only this official written notification of the outcome can be considered authorisation of an extension to the dissertation deadline. Occasionally there will be circumstances where, for good reason, we will need to extend the timeframe. Where this is the case, the student will be notified and kept regularly informed of progress.

It is the student's own responsibility to manage the impact any authorised extension to their dissertation will have on their studies, including but not limited to:

4.1 Fees and funding

4.2 Graduation Date

4.3 Maximum Period of Study

Please contact the Student Support Team at the earliest opportunity if you require advice regarding the impact an extension may have on your studies.

5. False Claims

You should note that submitting a false claim or false documentation is a serious matter and would be regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage. This would be an academic offence and would be dealt with under the Academic Offences Procedures. The University of Essex Online reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) you submit by contacting the third party directly.

6. Data Protection Act 2018

By submitting the **Postgraduate Taught Dissertation Extension Request Form** you are agreeing to the University of Essex Online holding this personal data for the purposes of processing your claim. The University of Essex Online will hold this data in accordance with its notification under the 2018 Data Protection Act.

7. Equality Act 2010

If you are providing information about your disability on your **Postgraduate Taught Dissertation Extension Request Form**, please note that this does not count as disclosure to the University of Essex Online as these forms are intended for use only by the Board of Examiners. We strongly urge you to disclose any persistent medical condition, specific learning difficulty or disability to the Student Support Team.

Responsible Manager	Name	Date approved	Related Policies
Head of Quality	Megan Hofmann	August 2025	<u>Late Submission of Coursework Policy</u> <u>Extenuating Circumstances for Performance Policy</u> <u>Rules of Assessment</u>