



BORD OIDEACHAIS
AGUS OILIÚNA CHIARRAÍ
KERRY EDUCATION
AND TRAINING BOARD



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6.3 COMPASSIONATE CONSIDERATION IN EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

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1. Principles of Assessment in Relation to Compassionate Consideration

Assessment is underpinned by the **principles of assessment** including the *fair* principle (equal opportunity for all learners) and **consistent** principle (consistency in approach to assessment across ETBs, programmes and modules). As such, in order to ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following procedure should be followed in relation to compassionate consideration in extenuating circumstances. Kerry ETB's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

In order to ensure *fairness* and *consistency* across all assessment activities learners may apply for compassionate consideration in relation to their assessment. Such compassionate consideration could include deferring an assessment activity or providing an extension to an assessment deadline **and will only be granted in extenuating circumstances with supporting relevant evidence/documentation (see 2.2)**. In these circumstances, the learner must not be unfairly disadvantaged as a result of extenuating circumstances. Furthermore, the learner must not gain significant advantage when compared with other learners.

2. Definitions

2.1. Compassionate Consideration

The Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator can enable learners who:

- **Have been prevented from undertaking a specific assessment activity** because of extenuating circumstances, to apply to defer the assessment, i.e. to be allowed to complete the assessment activity on another occasion.

Or

- **Felt their performance has been seriously impaired** because of extenuating circumstances, to apply to repeat the assessment, i.e. to be allowed to sit the assessment activity on at an alternative sitting. In extenuating circumstances, a learner may feel that his/her performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, supporting relevant evidence/documentation must accompany the application (see 2.2). The application is then processed and either granted or declined. Where the application has been declined, the original result of the assessment will apply. Learners have the right to appeal this decision (see Section 5).

2.2. Examples of extenuating circumstances (Compassionate Consideration)

Extenuating circumstances are situations or events which unexpectedly interfere with a learner's ability to complete or sit an element of assessment. Extenuating circumstances under which **may** be conserved include, but are not limited to:

- Recent physical injury or emotional trauma
- physical disability or chronic/disabling condition such as epilepsy, glandular fever, severe effects of pregnancy or other incapacitating illness of the learner
- recent bereavement of close family member or close friend
- personal injury certified by a medical practitioner
- domestic crisis
- certified mental health issue
- serious illness of a close family member
- serious illness of child or other family member for whom the learner is primary carer
- other extenuating circumstances

Examples of circumstances which are **unlikely to be considered** include, but are not limited to:

- typical symptoms associated with exam stress
- minor illnesses such as a common cold
- holidays
- IT and/or computer failure (excluding in an examination)
- English is not the first language of the learner

Any application in relation to compassionate consideration requires the learner to provide supporting relevant evidence/documentation (see 2.3) of the extenuating circumstances.

2.3. Supporting relevant evidence/documentation

Supporting relevant evidence/documentation refers to a:

- **Statement from a qualified professional practitioner.** Examples of statements from a qualified professional practitioner necessary for consideration of compassionate consideration include, but are not limited to:
 - Statement from medical practitioner (e.g. doctor, psychologist, etc.)
 - Statement from An Garda Síochána/legal professional
 - Statement from the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator (in extenuating cases, the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality (Appendix 1)

**All evidence must be on headed paper and must be legible, stamped and dated.
All evidence must relate to the specific application for extenuating circumstances
being made.**

or

- **RIP.ie or other source (if requested)**

3. Compassionate Consideration Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator

The Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator is required to ensure all Teacher/Tutor/Instructors are made aware of their roles in relation to planning, conducting and concluding assessment (*Teacher/Tutor/Instructor Handbook*¹). In the request for compassionate consideration, the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator, or designated person, is responsible for the management of the application process.

3.2. The Teacher/Tutor/Instructor

- The Teacher/Tutor/Instructor is required to inform learners of assessment deadlines in advance (*Teacher/Tutor/Instructor Handbook*, notice boards, etc.). Where a learner misses an assessment deadline, the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor should **not** accept assessment evidence after that date and should inform the learner of the compassionate consideration process in which s/he can engage.
- In the request for compassionate consideration, the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor is required to inform and meet² with the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator in order to process the learner application.

3.3. The Learner

- The learner is required to keep up-to-date with relevant assessment deadlines and consequences for missing same (e.g. *Learner Handbook*³, notice boards, etc.).
- In the event of extenuating circumstances, the learner is required to complete the application for compassionate consideration using the guidelines in this document and the appropriate application form (see Appendix 2).
- The learner is required to provide relevant supporting evidence/documentation (see 2.1) of the extenuating circumstances which they felt:

may have prevented or may prevent him/her from either:

- **completing** an assessment activity (Learner Record, Collection of Work, Project, Assignment or Skills Demonstration), or
- **missing** a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration)

or

seriously impaired or may seriously impair his/her performance) in:

- a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration).

¹ The *Teacher/Tutor/Instructor Handbook* is currently under development

² In the case of Outreach or Distance Learning Programmes, the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor may be unable to meet with the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator and as such may communicate via phone and/or email.

³ The *Learner Handbook* is currently under development

4. Compassionate Consideration Procedure

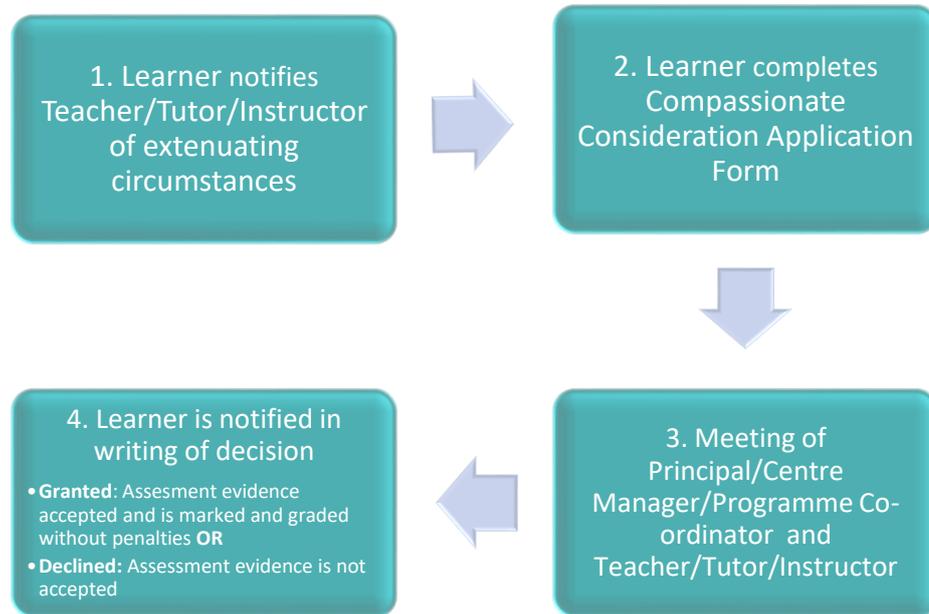


Figure 1.1 Compassionate Consideration Procedure

- 1) The learner notifies the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor of the extenuating circumstances which they felt:
 - a) **may have prevented or may prevent him/her** from either:
 - **completing** an assessment activity (Learner Record, Collection of Work, Project, Assignment or Skills Demonstration), or
 - **attending** a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration)
 - or
 - b) **seriously impaired or may seriously impair his/her performance** in:
 - a practical assessment (Examination or Skills Demonstration).

The Teacher/Tutor/Instructor informs the learner of Compassionate Consideration procedure.

2. The learner completes the **Compassionate Consideration Application Form** (see Appendix 2) and returns it to the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator within one (1) working day and a maximum of three (3) working days⁴. This application **MUST** be accompanied with relevant supporting evidence/documentation (see 2.3) and must state the **extenuating circumstances** that occurred.

⁴ In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator may extend this

Compassionate Consideration in extenuating circumstances

3. A meeting between the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator and the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor is arranged to discuss the application and decide on the outcome. The Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator and Teacher/Tutor/Instructor must judge each application for compassionate consideration or extenuating circumstances on its own merits.

In the event of extenuating circumstances, considerations include:

- Details of extenuating circumstances
- Severity of circumstances
- Application from learner
- Relevant supporting evidence/documentation
- Nature of the assessment activity (Assignment, Project, Learner Record, Collection of Work, Skills Demonstration and Examination)

4. The learner is informed in writing (or other appropriate format) of the outcome of the meeting, granted or declined within one (1) working day and not more than five (5) working days.

a) **Granted:**

- If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been **granted**, the revised schedule for the assessment activity is agreed between the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor and the learner. Every attempt to facilitate this in the current assessment period will be made. However, due to time constraints, the nature of the assessment activity, and/or resources, this revised schedule may roll into a subsequent certification period.
- **Examination:** Where the application is successful, in the event that the assessment activity is an examination, please note that a new examination paper, marking scheme and set of outline solutions is devised. The original examination paper will not be re-used.
- **Learner Evidence (Assignment, Project, Learner Record, Collection of Work and Skills Demonstration):** Where the application is successful, the learner evidence is accepted by the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator or Teacher/Tutor/Instructor and **should be marked and graded in accordance with the standards for the award**. The actual marks and grade awarded are determined solely on the basis of the evidence submitted in accordance with the standards for the award. **There is no mark/grade penalty under this procedure.**

b) **Declined:**

- If the decision is that the compassionate consideration application has been **declined**, the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator or Teacher/Tutor/Instructor will refuse to accept the assessment evidence from the learner (Levels 4-6). The learner has the right to appeal this (see Section 5).

5. Compassionate Consideration Appeals

The learner has the right to appeal the decision in relation to compassionate consideration application decision. Appeals must be made within five (5) working day of the decision. (In exceptional circumstances, the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator may extend this). All appeals must be made in writing using the Appeals Application Form (see Appendix 3). The Appeals process is processed in line with ETB appeals procedures.

Appendix 1: Statement from The Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator

In some cases, the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator may be aware of circumstances whereby the learner may be unable to obtain a statement from another qualified professional (e.g. due to financial constraints) and may complete a statement for the learner while maintaining confidentiality.

To be completed by the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator

Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator Name:	
Learner Name:	
Course/Programme:	
Module(s):	
Declaration:	
I can confirm that there are confidential extenuating circumstances which pertain to this learner which have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> prevented him/her from undertaking a specific assessment activityor<input type="radio"/> seriously impaired his/her performance⁵	
Signed:	
Date:	

⁵ In extenuating circumstances, a learner may feel that their performance has been seriously impaired and may apply for compassionate consideration due to extenuating circumstances. In such cases, **relevant evidence/documentation** must support the application (see 2.1) and the application for same must be **granted**. Where the application has **not** been granted, the original result of the assessment will apply.

Appendix 2: Application Form for Extenuating Circumstances and Short-term Extension of Assessment Deadline

APPLICATION FORM	
Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner	
Centre Name:	
Learner Name:	
Learner Address:	
PPS Number (only if requested for identification purposes):	
Course:	
Module(s):	
Teacher/Tutor/Instructor(s):	
Types of Assessment:	Examination <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> Learner Record <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Collection of Work <input type="checkbox"/>
Assessment Due Date:	
Reasons for requiring the extension:	
Supporting relevant evidence/documentation included:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Details of supporting relevant evidence/documentation:	
Learner Signature:	
Date:	

This application form must be submitted to the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator or designated person

Part B:	
Part B: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator	
Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator Name:	
Receipt date of application:	
Teacher/Tutor/Instructor Name(s):	
Date of meeting with Teacher/Tutor/Instructor(s):	
Application prior to or after the assessment activity/deadline:	Prior to <input type="checkbox"/> After <input type="checkbox"/>

Criteria:	Details:
➤ <i>Details of extenuating circumstances</i>	
➤ <i>Nature of the assessment activity</i>	
Application:	Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>
Declaration:	
I can confirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A meeting with the Teacher/Tutor/Instructor to discuss this application ➤ There is sound evidence to grant or decline the application based on criteria above ➤ If granted, this will not give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the assessment ➤ I will inform the learner immediately of the decision by email or in writing. 	
Signature:	
Date:	

Extenuating Circumstances and Short-term Extension of Assessment Deadline

**Part C: This section must be completed by the Principal/Centre
Manager/Programme Co-ordinator and returned to the Learner**

This section should accompany relevant assessment material when submitted.

Learner Name:	
Date of Decision:	
Outcome:	Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>
If granted, details of extended deadline etc.	

Appendix 3: Appeals Application Form

(Short-term Extension Assessment Deadlines/Compassionate Consideration)

APPEALS APPLICATION FORM	
(Short-term Extension Assessment Deadlines/Compassionate Consideration)	
Part A: This section must be completed by the Learner	
Nature of Appeal:	Compassionate Consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment Deadline <input type="checkbox"/>
Centre Name:	
Learner Name:	
Date of Application:	
Reason for Appeal:	
Reason why decision was declined:	
Details of supporting evidence provided:	

Part B: (Office Use) This section must be completed by the Principal/Centre Manager/Programme Co-ordinator

Name:	
Receipt date of application:	
Application:	I can confirm that a review of the application has been completed and that the Appeal is: Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Declined <input type="checkbox"/>
Reason:	
Signature:	
Date:	