

Appendix A – Examples of exam allowances

This series of examples demonstrate the remedies that would be available to students in a variety of circumstances.

Example 1 – Gastroenteritis during exams

Scenario:

Student has gastroenteritis the night before and the day of an exam. They are unable to attend the exam, they have an appointment with the College nurse on the day of the exam who confirms the symptoms. Their supervision reports/academic evidence indicate they would have passed the exam. The student is well enough to sit the rest of their exams. The student's transcript includes a 0 for the exam absence and the Examiners produce an overall outcome for the student based on the 0.

Outcome:

Student initiates the exam allowance application to College three days after the end of the exam period. The College submits an application to the EAMC two weeks later, including a letter from the College nurse and all supervision reports/academic evidence. The circumstances meet the requirements for 'illness or grave cause', and the following allowance would be put in place – depending on the student's course and overall outcome.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: fail, due to the 0

- Student is 'Allowed to Progress' to the next Tripos Part.
- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"
- If the student is in second year and the results would ordinarily be used to calculate the ODC, these results will not be used, and the ODC will be based 100% on the final year's results.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: pass overall, despite the 0

- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"
- If the student is in second year and the results would ordinarily be used to calculate the ODC, these results will not be used, and the ODC will be based 100% on the final year's results.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: fail, due to other marks as well as the 0

Unless there are other circumstances involved, an allowance will not be awarded as the student does not have sufficient academic evidence that they would have passed the Tripos Part were it not for the illness or grave cause. The student's failure will stand, and they will be unable to continue on the course.

Course: final year of Tripos

Outcome: all outcomes - the exam is worth 20% of the final year's assessments

- The Examiners are required to recalculate the student's results without using the 0. The updated result will provide a different overall average and ranking, it might produce a change to the Part Class or the Overall Degree Class. All updated results will be displayed on the student's transcript, but the '0' will still be included on the transcript.
- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"

Course: MPhil

Outcome: pass overall - the exam's weighting is 5% of the course

Degree Committee decision: to permit the Examiners to disregard the assessment

- The Examiners are required to recalculate the student's results without using the 0. The updated result may provide a different overall average and ranking (if ranking is recorded). All updated results will be displayed on the student's transcript, but the '0' will still be included on the transcript.
- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"

Course: MPhil

Outcome: all components of the course are required and therefore the absence will result in a fail overall - the exam's weighting is 5% of the course

Degree Committee decision: to not permit the Examiners to disregard the assessment

The Examiners are required to reassess the student. Dependent on the course the options are:

- *Provide an in-year reassessment*
 - The student has the option to take the exam again while the course is ongoing, this is most relevant for exams taking place earlier in the course – when the student will have applied for an allowance prior to the final Examining Board meeting.
 - The reassessment and marking will take place before the Examining Board takes place and the student's new mark will be included in the transcript.
 - No reference on the transcript will be made to the original missed exam;
- *Provide a bespoke assessment:*
 - following the Examining Board's meeting provide a reassessment opportunity, either the same format or different format from the missed exam in the next 3 months, use this to assess whether the student has met the learning outcomes for the course and should be awarded the MPhil.
Where the reassessment takes the same form as the missed exam, the Examiners have the discretion to recalculate the student's results based on the new mark and include the new mark on a further transcript, the 0 will remain on the original transcript with the statement "These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause".

Where the reassessment takes a different form from the original or where the Examiners choose not to recalculate the student's results based on the new mark, the 0 will remain on the student's transcript, alongside the statement "These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause" and the overall outcome will be updated to confirm the student has received the award, where the student passes the reassessment.

- *Reassessment at the next planned opportunity:*
 - the student returns to be reassessed when the following cohort take the exam for which the student was absent.
 - The student has revised in their own time with access to the VLE and attends (if the exam is in an invigilated setting) to take the exam only.
 - The student will be provided with a reassessment opportunity that only relates to the material they were taught, and the reassessment is marked on the basis of the taught content. This may result in the reassessment being different to the one provided to the following cohort.
 - The student's reassessment will be marked and the mark will be used to provide the student's overall course result, overall average and ranking (if ranking is recorded). All updated results will be displayed on the student's new transcript
 - The '0' will still be included on the original transcript, with a statement on the transcript stating, "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause*".

Example 2 – bereavement during exams

Scenario:

Student's parent is in a serious accident the day after the student's first exam and is unlikely to survive. The student returns home and the following day the parent passes away. The student decides not to return to complete their exams. Their supervision reports/academic evidence indicate they would have passed the exams. The student's transcript includes a 0 for each of the missed exams and the Examiners produce an overall outcome for the student based on the 0s.

Outcome:

Student initiates the exam allowance application to College two days after the first missed exam. The College submits an application to the EAMC three weeks later, including the death certificate of the parent and all supervision reports/academic evidence. The circumstances meet the requirements for 'illness or grave cause', and the following allowance would be put in place – depending on the student's course and overall outcome.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: fail – the student missed three out of four exams but passed the exam attended

- Student is 'Allowed to Progress' to the next Tripos Part.

- There is a statement on the transcript confirming “*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*”
- If the student is in second year and the results would ordinarily be used to calculate the ODC, these results will not be used, and the ODC will be based 100% on the final year’s results.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: fail – the student missed three out of four exams but had a borderline fail in the exam attended

- The EAMC consider all of the academic evidence and determine whether it would have been likely that the student would have passed overall. The student had received a 2.i in a summative coursework and supervision reports identified the paper the student sat as their weakest paper. The EAMC considers that there is sufficient academic evidence to permit the student to be ‘allowed to progress’.
- There is a statement on the transcript confirming “*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*”
- If the student is in second year and the results would ordinarily be used to calculate the ODC, these results will not be used, and the ODC will be based 100% on the final year’s results.

Course: final year of Tripos

Outcome: fail – there are five papers, all weighted 20%, the student completed the dissertation with a mark of 70 and the exam with a mark of 64, three exams were missed. In the student’s first year they had an overall mark of 71 and 1 Class; in the second year the student has an overall mark of 67 and received a 2.i Class. The student wants a Classed Degree.

- To ensure all the learning outcomes are met, the Examiners set assessments to be taken in September:
 - an uninvigilated, open book exam to be taken within a 3 hour period
 - a piece of coursework
 - a viva, online with two Examiners, which will primarily check for originality in relation to the coursework and exam
- The student retains access to the VLE throughout this time.
- The student completes the assessments and the Examiners consider each reassessment, alongside all of the summative assessments already undertaken by the student. The Examiners determine that the student should receive a 2.i Class Overall.
- The transcript is updated to show the new Overall Degree Class. There is a statement on the original transcript confirming “*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*” The 0s next to the original assessments are retained.
- The student does not receive any marks relating to the reassessment.
- The student has the right to raise an Examination Review – as permitted following the publication of any new examination results. Where procedural irregularities are identified, the likely remedy will be Reassessment at the next planned opportunity.

Course: final year of Tripos

Outcome: fail – there are five papers, all weighted 20%, the student completed the dissertation with a mark of 70 and the exam with a mark of 64, three exams were missed. In the student's first year they had an overall mark of 71 and 1 Class; in the second year the student has an overall mark of 67 and received a 2.i Class. The student wants a full transcript and therefore opts to be reassessed at the next planned opportunity.

- The student has access to the VLE from Lent Term and then receives three remote revision sessions during Easter Term, one for each paper.
- The student sits the missed assessment's alongside the next cohort.
 - One paper is not running and therefore, the Examiners have written a bespoke exam for the student.
 - One paper's content is unchanged, so the exam and marking is identical to the rest of the cohort.
 - One paper's content has minor changes, the exam questions remain the same but the marker's need to mark on the basis of the content from the previous year.
- The student receives marks for each of the three papers, and the Examiner's calculate the student's overall Class and results using the dissertation mark and exam mark from the previous year and the three new paper results. The Examiner's calculate the Overall Degree Classification in the usual way, using the new results.
- The student's original transcript still displays the original marks and the statement *"These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause"*.

Course: final year of Tripos

Outcome: fail – there are five papers, all weighted 20%, the student completed the dissertation with a mark of 70 and the exam with a mark of 64, three exams were missed. In the student's first year they had an overall mark of 71 and 1 Class; in the second year the student has an overall mark of 67 and received a 2.i Class. The student does not wish to return to the University to undertake reassessment

- The EAMC consider the student's academic history to date, including the summative assessment results. The student is awarded a 'Deemed to Declare Honours' and graduates from the University with their peers with an Honours BA degree.

Course: MPhil

Outcome: Fail – the student had five exams worth 50% of the award, and a dissertation worth 50%, which is yet to be started. The student needs to receive an overall average of 60 and at least 60 on the dissertation. The student received a mark of 62 on the exam attended.

The Examiners need to provide the student with an opportunity to be reassessed in the taught components of the MPhil. Depending on the course requirements and the preparation required for setting further exams (and whether the student needs to take an intermission from their studies), the options could include:

- Bespoke reassessment – which could happen in a short timeframe, while completing the dissertation, as they will have already prepared for their exams. Alternatively, it could happen following an intermission and prior to them continuing onto the dissertation
- Reassessment at the next planned opportunity –

- the student could take a year out and return to the course, alongside the next cohort to take the re-assessments.
- The student would be permitted a revision session in each paper, if the Course were willing to facilitate it, in any case the student would have access to the VLE.
- The content of the reassessments would be based on the content of the course the student was taught
- The student would be reassessed in all of the assessments that were missed. Following the reassessment, assuming the student's results were sufficient to permit them to continue, the student would continue onto the dissertation element of the course.

Example 3 – migraine during the exam

Scenario:

The student feels a little dizzy before their exam but is able to begin. After thirty minutes of a three hour exam, the student experiences a migraine – they are have intense pain and their vision is impaired. The student informs the invigilator, goes to the toilet and takes a paracetamol. The symptoms continue and therefore, the student leaves the exam. The invigilator documents the circumstances. The student goes to the College nurse, who evidences the symptoms. The migraine continues for 24 hours and the student has never previously had a migraine so the student makes an appointment with their GP. The GP prescribes medication which helps. The student is able to take their next exam, the day after the GP appointment but they have been unable to revise during the time inbetween the two exams.

Outcome:

Student initiates the exam allowance application to College five days after the final exam. The College submits an application to the EAMC a week later, including a letter from the College Nurse, from the GP, and all supervision reports/academic evidence. The circumstances meet the requirements for 'illness or grave cause', and the following allowance would be put in place – depending on the student's course and overall outcome.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: fail, due to a low mark in the exam left part-way through and the following exam

- Student is 'Allowed to Progress' to the next Tripos Part.
- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"
- If the student is in second year and the results would ordinarily be used to calculate the ODC, these results will not be used, and the ODC will be based 100% on the final year's results.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: pass overall, despite a mark of 20 in the exam the student left part-way through

- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"

- If the student is in second year and the results would ordinarily be used to calculate the ODC, these results will not be used, and the ODC will be based 100% on the final year's results.

Course: first or second year of Tripos

Outcome: fail, all but one marks are a fail but the worst mark is the exam the student left part-way through (mark of 5/100) and the next worst is the following exam (mark of 20/100). Other marks range from 30/100 to one of 40/100.

Unless there are other circumstances involved, an allowance will not be awarded as the student does not have sufficient academic evidence that they would have passed the Tripos Part were it not for the illness or grave cause. The student's failure will stand and unless other circumstances have impacted study or exams, they will be unable to continue on the course.

Course: final year of Tripos

Outcome: the student passes the Tripos with a Part II Class and Overall Degree Classification of a 2.ii. The student received a 20/100 in the exam left part-way through and a 55/100 in the following exam. The other exams are in a mark range between 63 and 72.

- The EAMC confirms that the exam the student left part-way through requires an exam allowance. There is no remedy for the following exam, as the student was able to sit the exam unimpacted by the symptoms of a migraine.
- The Examiners are required to recalculate the student's results without using the mark in the impacted exam. The updated result will provide a different overall average and ranking, it might produce a change to the Part Class or the Overall Degree Class. All updated results will be displayed on the student's transcript, but the '20' (and all other marks) will still be included on the transcript.
- There is a statement on the transcript confirming "*These results have been impacted by illness or grave cause.*"

Example 4 – depression during the academic year

Scenario:

The student does not engage with most supervisions during Michaelmas Term and there are academic concerns raised. At the beginning of Lent Term the student attends a fitness to study meeting and an action plan is laid out. The student confirms that they will meet a number of actions. The student does not meet the actions. The student attends some supervisions and submits very little work. Just before the Easter vacation the student sees the GP and receives a diagnosis of depression. The student is prescribed medication and begins counselling. The student is offered intermission but says that they will catch up with work over the Easter vacation period. The student returns in Easter Term and tells everyone they've been working hard, they attend revision lectures. The week before exams the student's anxiety symptoms start to escalate and they begin to experience panic attacks. The student admits that although they have been working hard, the side effects of the medication and their lack of engagement during the academic year means they are not sufficiently prepared for the exams. The College advise the student to intermit.

Option 1

Student intermits before the exam period begins. Depending on the medical and academic evidence the student returns in the following year, either starting in Michaelmas Term or Lent Term and then sits the Easter Term exams for the first time (completing coursework afresh).

Option 2

The student stops sleeping and eating properly and their symptoms escalate further into an agitated state. The student attends their first exam and has a panic attack during the exam. The student cannot complete the exam, this is clear from the student's demeanor and documented by the invigilator. The student immediately goes to their GP to seek treatment and the GP diagnoses the student with anxiety, prescribes treatment (in addition to the current treatment for depression) and confirms that the student is too unwell to sit their exams. The student does not attend any further exams and immediately returns to the family home. The EAMC determine that the student was in a state of such anxiety – and the student was unaware because it was undiagnosed – that they lacked the capacity to decide not to attend the exam. Exceptionally, the EAMC permits the student to return and re-sit the year and the exams.

Option 3

The student attends each of their exams and does their best, hoping to receive a pass mark. The student submits an exam allowance application 2 days after the exams have finished, because they're worried that they have not passed. The College submits the application a week later with evidence from the College nurse and the GP outlining the circumstances during the year. The EAMC do not provide an exam allowance because the student chose to sit the exams, following the choice not to intermit.

If the student passes the exams overall they will be permitted to continue onto the next Part. If the student fails the exams overall, then the College can apply for a retrospective intermission within two weeks of the formal results being published. If granted (because the student did not have capacity to make a decision about sitting exams), this will allow the student to repeat the year of study in the following academic year, or after a period of intermission, if they are not fit to resume studies in Michaelmas Term.

Option 4

The student attends each of their exams and does their best, hoping to receive a pass mark. The student waits to receive their results but finds out they have failed. The College applies on the student's behalf for a retrospective intermission within two weeks of the formal results being published. The contemporaneous evidence supplied by the student confirms they did not have the capacity to make a decision to sit their exams. Consequently, the student is given a retrospective intermission and will repeat the year of study in the following academic year, or after a period of intermission, if they are not fit to resume studies in Michaelmas Term.