

Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner Programme Extenuating Circumstances Policy

Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) is committed to providing a fair and transparent route to achieving chartered status.

During the course of their programme practitioners might be faced with personal, medical or family problems that are outside of their control and which could negatively affect their ability to complete the programme or impact their performance in the assessment.

This extenuating circumstance policy is intended to provide practitioners with the information required to formally apply for reasonable adjustment or special consideration.

Reasonable adjustments – These are approved by CIEH before an assessment or submission date

Special considerations – These are different to reasonable adjustments as they apply to a disadvantage that occurs to the practitioner either just before or during the assessment.

This policy applies to all practitioners on the Chartered Practitioner Programme.

The Learning and Qualifications Advisory Group Panel is authorised to consider and make judgement in any cases of doubt or where clarification is needed concerning these regulations.

CIEH aims to:

- Treat all practitioners equally and fairly in the consideration of their extenuating circumstances
- Provide practitioners with a consistent experience of the extenuating circumstances process
- Deal with any requests in a timely manner

Definition of Extenuating Circumstances

CIEH considers an extenuating circumstance to be a recognisably unexpected serious or major event which is beyond the practitioner's control that might have a significant and adverse effect on their ability to complete the programme or affect their performance in the assessment.

Ongoing conditions and other disabilities that affect practitioners do not fall in this definition. CIEH will make accommodations to mitigate the effect on individuals of such ongoing conditions. Where allowance has been made for a continuing condition, a further allowance should not be made through the consideration of mitigating circumstances except as described below.

Some practitioners affected by ongoing conditions may encounter specific difficulties related to their condition that impact upon their completion of the programme. Such circumstances may be legitimately considered as meeting the definition of mitigating circumstances above. For example, a candidate who suffers from a long-term illness, e.g. Multiple Sclerosis (MS), rheumatoid arthritis, or Crohn's disease, may or may not need constant Reasonable Adjustments in order to undertake the Chartered Practitioner Programme; but if they had a 'flare-up' immediately prior to their assessment or final programme submission, they may also need to be considered under these extenuating circumstances procedures.

In such situations CIEH will need to receive information concerning any Reasonable Adjustments that are in place. This is to ensure that no practitioner will receive double allowances.

Criteria for Submitting a Claim

The claim submitted should demonstrate that it meets all the following criteria:

Beyond the control of the candidate: the practitioner must demonstrate that they could not have done anything to prevent the circumstance arising, that they were unforeseen and unpreventable.

Effect on programme completion or assessment: the claim must demonstrate a significant impact on the practitioner's ability to complete the programme or assessment. It must make clear the duration of the circumstances and have documentary evidence to support the claim.

Have timely relevance: typically, the circumstance must have occurred after the programme began and be long term enough to present a significant obstacle to the practitioner's ability to make up the missed time and complete the programme on schedule.

Evidence accepted (includes): GP letter, physiotherapy letter, medical or death certificate, police/emergency services report, employer's letter

Submitting an Application

Practitioners must notify CIEH of extenuating circumstances via an email which details the circumstances and provides supporting evidence using the formal application form provided.

Practitioners should include as much detail as possible in their application to explain how their assessment performance will be or was affected. The Learning and Qualifications Advisory Group will only be able to consider the information and supporting evidence which candidates provide and will not generally ask for further evidence.

Deadline for submitting claims:

- Applications for Special Considerations must be received no later than 7 days from the date on which the assessment was taken.
- Applications for Reasonable Adjustments must be received 3 months from practitioners enrolling on the programme or 1 month from the time the condition requiring the Reasonable Adjustment occurred.

Guidance on Evidence Required to Support Extenuating Circumstances

The following table provides examples of the kinds of circumstances that would normally be considered acceptable extenuating circumstances, with information on what evidence would be required in each case. This list of required evidence is provided as a guide and is not exhaustive; each application will be assessed on its own merits and will consider the specific circumstances and evidence presented in each case.

CIEH recognises that it can be difficult to disclose sensitive, personal information to other parties. As such, please note that all documentation provided in support of an application will remain confidential to the relevant members of the Learning and Qualifications Advisory Group.

Circumstance	What is likely to be accepted and what evidence is required?
<p>Serious illness</p>	<p>Confirmation of the illness, the impact the illness has on completing the programme and the dates concerned. Letters stating that the candidate informed them that they were unwell will not be accepted. Minor illnesses such as colds, sore throats, headaches, digestive problems etc. would not normally be acceptable grounds.</p> <p>Evidence</p> <p>There should be a confirmed diagnosis by a registered doctor specifying the nature of the illness in writing. If currently undergoing assessment and no diagnosis has been reached, then documentation by a registered doctor specifying symptoms will be considered.</p>

Circumstance	What is likely to be accepted and what evidence is required?
<p>Long-standing medical condition or disability</p>	<p>Diagnosed condition that is normally supported through reasonable adjustments (access arrangements) that flares up unexpectedly, and the reasonable adjustments are not sufficient to make it possible to complete the programme on schedule. Or a previously undiagnosed/recently diagnosed condition that prevents the practitioner from completing the programme on schedule.</p> <p>Evidence There should be a confirmed diagnosis by a registered doctor specifying the nature of the illness. Letters stating that the candidate informed them that they were unwell will not be accepted.</p>
<p>Hospitalisation</p>	<p>Confirmation of the illness, the impact the illness has on completing the programme and the dates concerned.</p> <p>Evidence This should be provided on an original medical certificate/letter.</p>
<p>Serious illness or death of a member of the candidate's immediate family (e.g. parent, sibling, child, grandparent, spouse, guardian)</p>	<p>Where a candidate's immediate family member has a serious illness, independent confirmation of both the illness and how the illness affected the practitioner's assessment(s) should be provided. A diagnosis of the family member is not required, specifying symptoms will be considered. It is more important that CIEH receive independent confirmation of the effect of the situation on programme completion.</p> <p>Evidence A medical report from a qualified medical practitioner or a copy of a death certificate, coroner's report, letter from medical professional. Accompanied if necessary, by formal documentation confirming relationship with deceased.</p> <p>Whilst a death certificate is a sensitive and often difficult document to obtain it is required to prevent fraudulent claims. Other relationships may be considered subject to there being sufficient evidence of the closeness and impact.</p>
<p>Severe adverse personal/family difficulties</p>	<p>Confirmation of the circumstances, the impact that these had on the affected assessment(s) and the dates concerned. This can include a whole range of issues, such as separation from spouse/partner, conflict with others, caring duties that couldn't be done by anyone else, etc.</p> <p>Evidence A report from a suitable qualified professional such as a GP or counsellor.</p>

Circumstance	What is likely to be accepted and what evidence is required?
<p>Pregnancy-related illness</p>	<p>The requirements for illness, hospitalisation etc. should be followed if there is a specific incident during pregnancy.</p> <p>Evidence GP or hospital letter</p>
<p>Assessment Centre related issue</p>	<p>If the candidate experienced disruption that caused significant impact to the candidate's exam performance such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant noise • Disruption during the examination • Significant environmental impact, e.g. heating/lighting <p>Evidence Invigilator report</p>
<p>Victim of crime</p>	<p>Details of the crime</p> <p>Evidence Police report (including a crime reference number). If the incident has resulted in the candidate seeking medical attention, then the requirements for illness should be followed.</p>
<p>Legal proceedings requiring attendance at court as a witness or jury service</p>	<p>Evidence Documentary evidence from the court or a solicitor including the dates of the legal proceedings and the requirement for the candidate to attend.</p>
<p>Road Traffic Incident</p>	<p>If the candidate has been involved in a road traffic incident, either as a passenger or as the driver</p> <p>Evidence The time and place that the incident occurred including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A police report (including a crime reference number); or • Insurance reference number/record of the event.

Outcome

Practitioners who have applied for mitigating circumstances will be informed within 10 working days as to the outcome of their application.

The decision of the Learning and Qualifications Advisory Group is final, and no further correspondence will be entered into. If a practitioner wishes to pursue the matter and can evidence that a procedural irregularity has occurred during the mitigating circumstances process, they can consider applying through the appeals process.