

<b>Committee Title</b>	Student Voice					
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	24/10/2022					
<b>Title/Subject</b>	Fit to Sit policy					
<b>Paper Presenter</b>	Laiba Tareen					
<b>Brief Summary of Issues/Topic</b>	<p>For more information please refer to The Fit to Sit Policy and the information provided on the University website</p> <p>For the academic Year 2022/23, GCU is introducing a Fit to Sit policy that replaces Mitigating Circumstances (MITS). The policy operates on the assumption that any student undertaking a piece of assessment is declaring that they are fit to do so. Any mark and/or attempt at an assessment will stand, unless a student has indicated that they were not 'Fit to Sit/Submit'.</p> <p>Where exceptional circumstances or serious problems occur and a student believes that they are not fit to sit, the policy allows them to make a simple declaration from five days prior to the date of the assessment, and up to two days after they have sat/submitted a piece of assessment. Applications are made via an online form. Where the student does notify the University within the defined period, the student's attempt for that assessment will be preserved on one occasion and thereafter, the number of attempts remaining will count down and will not exceed the maximum number set by the University's Assessment Regulations.</p> <p>Unlike MITS, students do not have to provide details of the circumstances affecting their performance and no evidence needs to be included in support of their declaration. However, the declaration form will give students the opportunity to provide impact details, if they wish to do so, to be provided to the Student Wellbeing Team.</p>					
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	Information		Discussion	X	Approval	
	<p><b><i>Any member can ask a question by raising their voting card and being recognised by the Chair to speak.</i></b></p> <p><i>Student Voice are asked to have a discussion about fit to sit policy and identify the new policy changes. Moreover, the purpose of this discussion is to make everyone aware about the new changes of fit to sit policy.</i></p>					
<b>Who have you consulted when developing the paper?</b>	University Senate.					
<b>Staff/Student Protocol</b>	Yes		No		N/A	X
<b>Will any decision approved directly affect the work of staff?</b>						
<b>Should the paper be submitted to any</b>	N/A					

other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting?

If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.



**FIT TO SIT**

**POLICY**

**Version 1**  
**July 2022**

<b>Prepared By</b>	Quality Assurance and Enhancement
<b>Approved By</b>	APPC May 2022, Senate August 2022
<b>Published Location</b>	<a href="https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/supportservices/qualityassuranceandenhancement/regulationsandpolicies/universityassessmentregulationsandpolicies">https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/supportservices/qualityassuranceandenhancement/regulationsandpolicies/universityassessmentregulationsandpolicies</a>
<b>Other documents referenced</b>	
<b>Related documents</b>	<a href="#">University Assessment Regulations</a>

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date issued</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Update information</b>
V1.0	September 2022	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	First published version

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR STUDENTS**

**MITS (the [Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#)) is still in operations for 2021/22 assessments. Any student undertaking an assessment during the Trimester C/Re-sit diet for 2021/22, should use the existing MITs process. This includes nursing students, utilising the 12-week re-assessment window for academic year 2021/22 (undertaken in the first Trimester of 2022/23).**

**The Fit to Sit Policy applies to all other students from September 2022.**

**Fit to Sit is a new policy, implemented from September 2022 and students will use new declaration forms to advise the University of problems or events which are deemed to have impacted on assessment.**

**To be able to complete Fit to Sit declaration forms, students will need to have required information ready to enter onto the form; specifically, details of the module in question (Module Code, Module Title, Module Leader, Module Leader's email address) and the date of assessment/coursework hand-in.**

## 1. Fit to Sit

- 1.1 In the normal course of events, the University operates a 'Fit to Sit/Submit' approach to student assessment and coursework submission, with a default assumption that any student undertaking a piece of assessment and/or submitting a coursework assignment, is declaring that they are fit to do so. Any mark and/or attempt at assessment will stand, unless a student has indicated that they were not 'Fit to Sit/Submit'.
- 1.2 The University recognises that circumstances which are exceptional, serious, acute and lead to unforeseen problems or events can genuinely affect preparation for an assessment or a student's ability to undertake an assessment and/or submit a coursework on time.
- 1.3 Where a student believes that they are not 'Fit to Sit/Submit', they can advise the University **up to five days prior to an exam/coursework submission date and up to two days after the date, allowing for a period of reflection**<sup>1</sup>. All applications will be made using an online [form](#). Students will have the opportunity to provide an impact statement, which will be shared with the Student Wellbeing Team (See Section 3, for further details).
- 1.4 Where a student advises the University within the period outlined in Section 1.3 there will be no requirement to provide evidence<sup>2</sup>. However, where the declaration is submitted post sit/submission (i.e. up to two days after the exam/coursework submission date), students will be required to state the reason for late declaration advising that they were not fit to sit.
- 1.5 Where the student does notify the University within the defined period, the student's attempt for that assessment will be preserved on one occasion and thereafter, the number of attempts remaining will count down and will not exceed the maximum number set by the University's Assessment Regulations. Students are reminded that the opportunity to re-enter outstanding elements of assessment is at the discretion of the corresponding Progression and Award Board, in line with Section 4 of this policy and Section 8 of the Assessment Regulations.
- 1.6 Any declaration to advise that a student is not fit to sit/submit, will render any submitted assessment void; no mark will be provided and no feedback will be given. For the purposes of record keeping, a 'non-submission' will be recorded against the student's academic profile for the assessment in question.
- 1.7 Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 1.3, this policy is distinct from extension requests and must not be used to request an extension or to provide an explanation for the late submission of an assessment. Requests for an extension or explanations for the late submission of an assessment must be made via direct contact with the module

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<sup>1</sup> A student can use the policy to cover all impacted assessment – with one application required for each,

<sup>2</sup> Students should not confuse this normal period of reflection with procedures for extreme circumstances – see Section 2 for Extreme Circumstances.

leader/programme leader. Section 10 of the University Assessment Regulations (taught programmes), provides further detail of the procedures for late submission of coursework. **Students are advised that the reflection period referred to in this policy does not constitute an extension to submission deadlines.**

- 1.8 This policy is not intended for use where students have long-term health and/or support needs; advice for such cases should be sought from Student Wellbeing services, to ensure more targeted and appropriate support.

## **2. Extreme & Exceptional Extenuating Circumstances**

- 2.1 It is accepted that in extreme & exceptional circumstances where a student has been hospitalized or has been severely impacted by a situation which prevents them from engaging in any manner with the University, it may not be possible to advise the University of impactful circumstances within the set time period outlined in Section 1.
- 2.2 Where students have been impacted by circumstances as outlined in Section 2.1, **there will be no set time limit within which students must make contact with the University, subject to observing the University's standard period of maximum registration (Section 7 of the Assessment Regulations).** Students must, however, make contact with the University as soon as is practical to do so, when circumstances permit. In such cases, students are strongly recommended to make contact with appropriate University staff, prior to the submission of an [Extreme Extenuating Circumstances Form](#). This recommendation is intended to ensure that students in such situations can be counselled appropriately and with due regard to the University's duty of care. Students are advised that this initial contact can be with a Personal Tutor, the Programme Leader, Level Tutor, or the Student Wellbeing team. Students can also seek advice from a Students' Association Advisor.
- 2.3 Following initial discussion with University staff as outlined in Section 2.2, students should complete and submit the [Extreme Extenuating Circumstances Form](#), including evidence which outlines the circumstances preventing earlier engagement with the University.
- 2.4 Accompanying evidence in such cases must normally be independent and verifiable, such as a letter or certificate from a GP or other medical professional or other appropriate third party evidence. It is the applicant's responsibility to arrange and submit supporting evidence.
- 2.5 Where evidence originates from a student's home country and is not provided in English, it is the responsibility of the student to provide both the original document and a verified translation to English.
- 2.6 On receipt, such cases will be reviewed by the appropriate Head of Academic Department, in consultation with the Associate Dean of Learning, Teaching and Quality (or equivalent, for academic units), to ensure a consistency of approach.
- 2.7 In addition to recording a decision for each student, the decision (and supporting rationale

for the decision) will be recorded on the submitted form, which should be kept with the student's record. (Note: The declaration form must be kept until at least six months after the date of completion of the programme by the student, or six months after their withdrawal).

### **3. Duty of Care**

- 3.1 Where a student discloses complex mental or physical health challenges and/or severe and complex life circumstances through completion of an [Extreme Extenuating Circumstances Form](#), this information will be shared with the Student Wellbeing Team. Where there is no existing relationship with the student, the team will contact the student to offer follow-up support. Students have the opportunity to decline referral to the Student Wellbeing Team on completion of the appropriate application form. Further details for students are available via a Student Help Sheet published on the web.
- 3.2 Where students consider that there has been a procedural irregularity in the consideration of their application, this should be addressed by submitting an Academic Appeal.

### **4. PABs and Student Fit to Sit Declarations**

- 4.1 Where a student has declared that they were unfit to sit/submit within the timescales outlined in Section 1, the PAB will consider:
- I. Whether this is the student's first declaration of being unfit to sit/submit a specific piece of assessment; and if so, the attempt will be declared void and the attempt preserved for the next available assessment period.
  - II. Whether this is the student's second or subsequent declaration of being unfit to undertake the same piece of assessment. In such cases, the student should proceed with second, or subsequent attempt as appropriate, to a maximum permitted number of attempts, as outlined in Section 14 of the Assessment Regulations. Where it is evident that a student has repeated submissions against the same assessment, the circumstances should be reviewed and the student should be counselled appropriately.
  - III. If, on the basis of overall performance in a particular year and, if appropriate, in previous years, that the student would not have passed, notwithstanding the fact that they had been affected by circumstances outwith their control. In such circumstances, the PAB may consider the student under Section 8 of the Assessment Regulations.
- 4.2 Where a student has notified the University of extreme extenuating circumstances, as outlined in Section 2, it may be necessary for a PAB decision to be revisited. In such cases, discussion with the School Associate Academic Registrar, to identify the most appropriate course of action, may be required.

### **5. Suspension of Studies**

- 5.1 In line with the, '[Regulations for Taught Student Registration, Suspension of Studies](#)



[and Withdrawal](#)', students who suspend their studies after the midway point of a module delivery will be deemed to have attempted the module assessments. Students can make an extenuating circumstances submission to their host Department to request that an attempt is not counted in such circumstances. Such requests will be considered by the Head of Department in consultation with the School's Associate Academic Registrar.

## **6. Exceptions**

- 6.1** Due to either a Professional Statutory Body requirement or the practical nature of an assessment where there is a requirement for immediate feedback on performance, an exception may be required to any post-assessment reflection period declaration. Any such requests to deviate from this policy must be approved by the University's Exceptions Sub-Committee. Any alternative approach will be fully outlined for students in Module Handbooks and as appropriate on GCU Learn for programmes with an approved exception to this policy.