

Application for consideration of factors affecting performance in examinations

If something goes wrong....

If you have a problem before or during your exams which you think will have seriously affected your performance, you can make a 'factors affecting performance' application so that the examiners are aware of this.

Please be aware that applications should only be made when you have suffered a serious problem, and that most applications do not result in any changes to marks. If your examination preparation, rather than the examinations themselves, was affected, it is only likely to be appropriate to submit an application if the impact on you was very severe.

Independent evidence, such as a medical certificate, should always be supplied to support an application.

Examples of the kind of problem you might mention are acute illness just before or during the exams which severely affected your performance, or unforeseen circumstances such as bereavement or a traffic accident.

If you have a disability or long-term health condition, you should ensure that you apply for [alternative examination arrangements](#) if appropriate. If you think that your performance has still been affected by your disability or condition despite the alternative arrangements, or you suffer another serious problem such as an acute illness just before or during the exams, you can also make a factors affecting performance application.

What to do

You should speak to your college office about making a factors affecting performance application, as they will provide you with the forms you need and will submit them on your behalf.

You should speak to your college office as soon you realise there is a problem, whether this is before, during, or after your exams.

You should ensure that you have appropriate independent evidence, such as a medical certificate, to support the application, and should make arrangements to provide this evidence as soon as possible.

Your college will be able to give you advice on the best course of action, but it is your decision on whether to submit an application, and your responsibility to make sure that you submit the form to your college. The college will submit the form to the Examinations and Assessments team, who will pass it to your examiners.

You, or anyone acting on your behalf, must follow this process and not communicate directly with the examiners.

What to include in your application

You should include as much detail as possible in your application to explain how your performance in exams was affected – please be aware that examiners will only be able to consider the information and supporting evidence which you provide, and will not ask for further evidence.

You will need to include your own statement, accompanied by at least one piece of independent supporting evidence.

Your statement should include a full explanation of how the problem affected your exams. If your performance in particular papers was affected, please give details of these papers.

If you had alternative examination arrangements but are also submitting a factors affecting performance application in relation to the same condition(s) or disability, you need to explain why the alternative arrangements did not fully compensate for the impact of your disability or health condition.

If your performance was affected by any kind of health problem, you will need to include a medical certificate, which should explain how you were affected during the time period of your examinations. If your performance was affected by an acute illness, the certificate can be from the college nurse, but any longer-term condition will need a medical certificate from a doctor or other appropriate health professional.

If appropriate, you can include a statement from someone from the University's Counselling Service or Disability Advisory Service.

If your performance was affected by another problem, you should include other appropriate independent evidence, for example a statement from the police or from a solicitor.

Your college can also include a statement. Your college will not comment on your academic performance, but might include information on what they have done to help you, or on any difficulties there have been in getting supporting evidence (e.g. difficulties in getting a doctor's appointment).

Timing

You should make sure that your application is submitted as soon as possible after you have sat the affected papers, and before your exam results are published.

Applications must be submitted by noon the day before the final meeting of the examiners which will decide the results, so that they have time to consider them – your college will be able to get information on when this is for your exam.

Late applications

Applications received after noon the day before the final meeting of the examiners will not normally be considered, but if there are exceptional circumstances, the Proctors will make a decision on whether to send the application to the examiners.

This will only happen if the application is received within three months of the results being published, and if one of the following applies:

- Your condition prevented you from making an earlier application;
- Your condition was not known or diagnosed until after the final meeting of examiners;
- There was a procedural error which prevented the application being sent in time.

If you disagree with the Proctors' decision on whether to send a late application to the examiners, you can appeal to the Chair of Education Committee (your college will advise on the process for this).

After submitting your application

The examiners will consider your application and supporting evidence very carefully. You will receive confirmation that the examiners have considered your application and a brief statement of any further action they may have taken.

If you have a concern after you have received your results, please see the information on complaints and academic appeals at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>.

What the examiners can do

It is important to be aware that most factors affecting performance applications do not result in any changes to marks. Examiners have limited options when they receive an application, particularly if all exam papers are affected. This is because the examiners' primary job is to mark what they see; they cannot accurately or fairly award marks for a level of performance that they do not see. However, they can take certain actions where the evidence is very persuasive that a candidate has been severely affected.

Examples of actions which examiners **might** take include:

- If there is strong evidence that your performance on one particular paper has been affected and is clearly out of line with your performance in other papers, the examiners might decide to disregard the paper, and decide on your overall result based on all the other papers;

- If your performance is borderline between two classifications, the examiners will consider particularly carefully whether the evidence justifies you being placed in the higher classification.

Please note that these are only examples, and that all applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Getting advice

Your college office can advise you on making a factors affecting performance application, and there will be people available in your college to give both academic and welfare advice. It is however your decision on whether an application should be submitted.

You should seek advice as soon as you realise there is a problem, even if the exams have not started yet. Your college will be able to advise on the options open to you, including the possibility of withdrawal from examinations and returning to take them at a later date.

If you would like to seek advice independent from your college or the University, the OUSU Student Advice Service is available to all students, visit <http://ousu.org/advice/student-advice-service/> or tel.: 01865 288466, e-mail: advice@ousu.ox.ac.uk. Its advisers can help with your application if necessary.

The University's regulations about factors affecting performance can also be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2016-17/rftcoue-p13fapianexam/>.