

Policy on Requests for Extensions for Assessments and Dissertations

The Edward de Bono Institute for Creative Thinking and Innovation

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This policy sets out the Edward de Bono Institute's approach to managing student requests for extensions to coursework assessments and dissertation submissions within the framework of the University of Malta regulations.

1.2 The policy applies to all students registered with The Edward de Bono Institute for Creative Thinking and Innovation at the University of Malta.

1.3 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure clarity and consistency in the management of extension requests;
- Maintain academic standards and uphold the integrity of assessment procedures;
- Provide guidance on the process for requesting an extension, particularly distinguishing between first and second extension requests for dissertations;
- Deter students from making unwarranted extension requests without imposing financial or academic penalties.

2. Principles

2.1 Fairness and Consistency

The Edward de Bono Institute for Creative Thinking and Innovation is committed to ensuring fairness and consistency in its decision-making processes regarding extensions. All requests shall be considered on their individual merits in line with the University regulations.

2.2 Academic Integrity

Maintaining academic rigour and integrity is paramount. Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and students must demonstrate genuine need supported by appropriate evidence.

2.3 Student Welfare

While the policy aims to deter frivolous requests, it recognises that certain personal, health, or other extenuating circumstances may necessitate an extension. In such cases, the welfare of the student is central to the decision-making process.

3. Types of Assessments

3.1 Coursework Assessments

Coursework assessments include essays, reports, presentations, lab work, and other forms of continuous assessment that contribute to module grades.

3.2 Dissertation

The dissertation comprises a substantial written project or thesis, typically completed in the final year of an undergraduate or postgraduate programme.

4. Request for Extension: Coursework Assessments

4.1 Eligibility

Apart from students who have ACCESS arrangements, others who face unforeseen circumstances including the following—may apply for an extension.

- **Academic Reasons:** Circumstances requiring additional time due to justified academic challenges, such as unforeseen issues during the research project.
- **Medical Reasons:** Conditions that demonstrably affect the student's ability to work effectively over a sustained period. **Medical justifications must be supported by official documentation, preferably a report issued by a medical specialist.**
- **Other Justifiable Reasons:** Any other serious and substantiated reason which the Board of Studies considers valid.

4.2 Application Process

4.2.1 Timing: All extension requests must be submitted as soon as it becomes evident that the student may be unable to meet the assessment deadline. For dissertations, the requests need to be submitted at least one week before the deadline. For assignments, the requests need to be submitted at least two days before the deadline. Requests submitted on or after the deadline will normally not be considered.

4.2.2 Documentation: Students must submit a written request along with relevant supporting documentation (e.g., medical certificates, official letters).

4.2.3 Approval: Extension requests will be considered by the Board of Examiners, in line with [Reg 28 \(b\) of the University Assessment Regulations, 2009](#), whereby:

“When the mode of Assessment is by assignment, and there are reasons for non-submission which the board of examiners considers valid, students shall be allowed an extension of the deadline by a maximum of three weeks, or if this is not sufficient because of their circumstances, they shall be allowed to submit the assignment at the first practicable opportunity, but not later than a maximum of two months, after the initial deadline”.

4.3 Time Management

The Institute encourages students to manage their time effectively and seek academic or pastoral support if they encounter difficulties, rather than relying on extensions. This approach is intended to promote good academic practice and minimise disruptions to learning.

5. Request for Extension: Dissertation Submissions

5.1 Rationale

Dissertation deadlines are set well in advance, allowing students significant time to plan their work. Consequently, only urgent or unforeseeable circumstances will be considered as valid reasons for an extension request.

5.2 First Extension Request

5.2.1 Eligibility: Students are expected to demonstrate genuine extenuating circumstances, such as serious health issues, bereavement, or unavoidable professional commitments, that have significantly impeded progress.

5.2.2 Application Process:

- **Timing:** Applications must be made in good time for the Institute Board to process the requests.
- **Documentation:** Students must submit a [Dissertation Extension Request Form](#) accompanied by appropriate evidence and a progress report from the supervisor
- **Approval:** The request will be reviewed by the Institute Board in line with Reg 19 (1) of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, whereby:

“The Board may grant students registered on Postgraduate Courses an extension of up to six months in order to enable them to complete their studies, irrespective of whether they are registered on a full-time or a part-time basis.”

5.2.3 Duration of Extension: The maximum duration for a first extension request is ordinarily six months.

5.3 Second Extension Request

5.3.1 Eligibility: A second extension request should only be submitted in the most extraordinary of circumstances. Students must provide compelling evidence of why the initial extension was insufficient, alongside updated supporting documentation.

5.3.2 Application Process:

- **Timing:** Applications must be submitted in time for review during an Institute Board Meeting and for the subsequent review of the Student Affairs Committee and Senate.
- **Documentation:** Students must submit a new [Dissertation Extension Request Form](#), clearly outlining the reasons for the second request and attaching relevant documentation as well as a progress report from their supervisor.
- **Approval:** The request will be reviewed by the Institute Board and submitted to the Student Affairs Committee and to Senate for a final decision. The Director of the Institute is normally required to represent the Institute and make the case for the student during the Student Affairs Committee.
- **Second extensions are considered** *“in special circumstances and on the recommendation of the Board, Senate may grant students a further extension of up to two years in order to enable them to complete their studies, irrespective of whether they are registered on a fulltime or a part-time basis.”* (as per Reg 19 (2) of the [General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards](#))

5.3.3 Duration of Extension: The duration of a second extension, if granted, is normally stipulated by Senate, on the recommendation of the Student Affairs Committee.

5.4 Unsubstantiated Requests

5.4.1 Students are strongly advised to avoid unnecessary extensions, as these may adversely affect their academic trajectory. While no formal penalty fee or mark reduction is imposed for approved extensions, students should note that lengthy delays may incur further administrative hurdles and could result in delayed graduation.

5.4.2 Supervisors may refer students to any support services available at the University to facilitate the completion of dissertations within the original timeframe.

6. Grounds for Refusal

6.1 Extension requests may be refused where:

- Documentation is incomplete or insufficient to substantiate the request;
- There is evidence of poor time management rather than genuine extenuating circumstances;
- The request is submitted after the deadline without justifiable explanation.

6.2 In such cases, the original deadline stands, and late submissions will be subject to standard late submission rules as set out in the relevant University regulations.

7. Appeals

7.1 A student whose extension request is refused may appeal the decision in accordance with the University of Malta's appeals procedure.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 The Edward de Bono Institute for Creative Thinking and Innovation will periodically review extension requests and outcomes to ensure adherence to this policy and identify any issues that require further intervention or support.

9. Implementation

9.1 The Director of the Institute, in consultation with the Board of Examiners and relevant academic staff, holds overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

as on 11 June 2025