University of Cambridge
Faculty of Law

REQUESTS FOR AN EXTENSION TO SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR DISSERTATIONS AND OTHER FORMS OF SUMMATIVE COURSEWORK

GUIDANCE NOTES

Background

These Guidance Notes explain how requests for an extension to the submission deadline for a dissertation or other form of summative coursework should be made on behalf of Law Tripos, LLM or MCL students. For the remainder of this academic year, these requests will be determined by the Faculty of Law, through its own deadline extension procedure. This is a new procedure. In the past, applications for extensions to deadlines for dissertations and other forms of summative coursework have been dealt with by the University’s Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC). However, it has been agreed by the University that during the current Covid-19 pandemic, it is preferable for any deadline extension requests to be determined at Departmental/Faculty level.

The Faculty’s deadline extension procedure

1. Eligibility

The Faculty will consider deadline extensions in relation to the following categories of student:

(a) where a Law Tripos student is required to submit a dissertation as the mode of summative assessment for a Part II Seminar Paper;
(b) where an LLM or MCL student is required to submit a thesis as the mode of summative assessment for an LLM paper;
(c) where an LLM or MCL student is required to submit a coursework essay as part of the mode of summative assessment for an LLM paper;
(d) where an MCL student is required to submit the ‘Deals Report’ as part of the summative assessment for the MCL Deals Course.

2. The current submission deadlines

The Faculty’s deadline extension procedure is available where a student wishes, in the light of their individual circumstances, to request an extension to their coursework submission deadline.

As a result of the general disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the original submission deadlines for Tripos, LLM and MCL summative coursework have been revised.

The revised submission deadlines, which have been notified to all relevant students, are as follows:

- For Law Tripos Dissertations, Monday 4 May 2020
- For LLM Theses/Coursework Essays, Friday 8 May 2020
- For the MCL Deals Report, Friday 15 May 2020
This Faculty’s deadline extension procedure is only to be used to request a further extension, based on individual circumstances, beyond these revised deadlines.

2. The general overarching aims of the deadline extension procedure

When considering applications for a deadline extension, the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee will be guided by the same overarching aims as the University’s EAMC. In particular, it will:

- endeavour to ensure parity of treatment between applicants for extensions who share similar circumstances, whilst recognising that each case is individual;
- be mindful of the interests of students taking the same paper but who are not applying for an extension; and
- ensure that, taking due allowance of the applicant’s individual circumstances, the applicant is neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in comparison with other students.

3. The specific purposes of the deadline extension procedure

The Faculty’s deadline extension process operates for the benefit of Law Tripos, LLM or MCL students where due to medical or other grave cause (including caring responsibilities arising as a result of the current Covid-19 pandemic), the student is unable to complete their summative coursework by the scheduled submission date.

The following further points should be noted:

1. Applications should demonstrate that there has been an unexpected development in the student’s circumstances.

2. The current submission deadlines have already been adjusted to afford all students an extension of one week to their original submission deadline, in order to address the general disruption that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused to the work of all students.

3. Only in exceptional circumstances will a further extension be granted for more than fourteen days.

4. Extensions granted through this procedure will not normally be granted for such a length as to prevent the coursework being marked in time for the meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners in Easter Term 2020. Where a longer deadline is exceptionally necessary, then the classing of the student will not be possible (and the student will not be in a position to graduate) until a further Board of Examiners can be convened following the second assessment period.

5. No extension will be granted through this procedure merely because of difficulties which the student has encountered in accessing certain resources since the University closed during the Easter vacation. As explained in the Part II and LLM FAQs on the Faculty’s webpages, students who have experienced such difficulties are required to produce a bibliography of items that they have not been able to consult, which can be taken into account by the coursework markers.
4. Deadlines for applications for submission deadline extensions

Applications for a coursework deadline extension must be completed and sent to the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee by no later than the following deadlines:

- For Law Tripos Dissertations, 12 noon UK time on Friday 24 April 2020
- For LLM Theses/Coursework Essays, 12 noon UK time on Thursday 30 April 2020
- For the MCL Deals Report, 12 noon UK time on Thursday 30 April 2020

5. How to make an application

The following principles apply:

1. Applications should be made by completing the Faculty of Law’s Coursework Deadline Extension Application Form.

2. The application must be complete.

3. The completed Application Form must be submitted in electronic form, and sent to the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee, by email to dissertations@law.cam.ac.uk.

4. The completed Application Form must be received by the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee by no later than the application deadline specified in section 4 above.

5. The Application Form should be completed by the applicant’s College and should be submitted by the applicant’s College Tutor or Director of Studies. An application will not be accepted if submitted directly by the student.

6. Applications are not required to be supported by medical or other evidence, and medical evidence should not be submitted with the application. However, it is essential for the success of any application that:

   (i) a full and clear specification of the reason(s) for the deadline extension is given in the Application Form;
   (ii) a new proposed submission date is clearly specified;
   (iii) the student’s College Tutor or Director of Studies gives a full and clear supporting statement, which includes a confirmation that they have discussed the student’s circumstances with them, that they are satisfied by the account given, and that they consider those circumstances to be sufficient to justify an application for a deadline extension.

7. The Faculty’s Mitigation Committee reserves the right to request for further information and/or evidence as necessary.

8. It is good practice that the student should be fully aware of all documentation submitted by his/her College in connection with the application.

6. Communication of extension decisions

The decision of the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee will be communicated by email to the student, his/her College Tutor, his/her Director of Studies and his/her College’s Senior Tutor. Where the
extension is declined, or a shorter extension is given than is requested, then reasons will be given by the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee for its decision.

7. Review of extension decisions

A student for whom a coursework deadline extension has been sought from the Faculty’s Mitigation Committee can request a Review of the Committee’s decision using the University’s ‘Review of Decisions by University Bodies’ procedure. Such a Review may be requested on the basis that the student considers that (a) there have been procedural irregularities in the decision-making process, (b) the decision is unreasonable, or (c) there is new material evidence that the student could not have previously submitted. Further details of this Review procedure will be included in the communication of the decision of the Faculty's Mitigation Committee.