Middlesex’s No Detriment support measures this year

We know that this continues to be a very challenging time for many of you, and we’re continuously listening to concerns and feedback that you have about completing assessments during the pandemic.

To ensure that you are well supported to submit your best work in the upcoming assessments, we have put in place a safety net to protect you from academic disadvantage. We want to make sure that the pandemic doesn’t affect you unfairly, and that you’re still able to demonstrate your full academic potential.

This comprehensive support package, detailed below, is designed to help you to achieve. We have worked closely on these supportive measures in partnership with the Students’ Union who have continued to provide feedback and ideas on what support is most needed.

**Ensuring all teaching and assessments are designed within the context of COVID-19**

Throughout the year, your teaching has been planned to take account of the impact of the pandemic. We have developed adapted forms of assessment to recognise the difficult circumstances in which many of you have been studying. These allow you to demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have developed over the course of the year. These assessments have [flexibility and inclusivity](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/covid-19-updates-faq/adapted-forms-of-assessments-as-a-result-of-covid-19) built into their design, as we know that this was a key concern for you.

We have compiled a [number of resources](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/COVID-19-Latest-MDX-updates-and-FAQs/studying-from-home) to ensure you've got everything you need to successfully complete any assessments, and indeed any online learning, from home. You may have also seen our recent emails about the University’s expanded Emergency Support Fund. If you are struggling financially and this is affecting your ability to study then [please let us know](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/support/fees-payments-funding/financial-support/student-emergency-fund). We also still have [further IT support](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/study/it/laptops-for-loan) available for students who don’t have access to the right equipment at home.

**Providing a 14 day extension for all written coursework deadlines**

You told us this was important for you, so we have agreed that you can have a 14 day extension on written coursework this term if you need it. We want to make this as easy as possible for you, so we have also removed the need for you to provide any supporting evidence. We are introducing a simple process so that you can notify us that you are taking an extension, and will provide details here on [UniHub](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/study/assessment/extenuating-circumstances). In some modules, your Module Leader will have already moved back the coursework date for all students. If this has already occurred then you will not be able to request an additional extension.

**Giving higher degree classifications to borderline students**

Extenuating Circumstances will be taken into account for all students in relation to any assessment taken since March 2020. This means that we will consider your results in the context of the pandemic. If you are a final year student on the borderline between classifications, we will move you to the higher class. If you are a continuing student, you will receive the maximum amount of compensation allowed and you may also be able to progress into the next year of your studies even if you have not achieved the normal amount of credit.

**Providing free re-sit opportunities that will be uncapped**

Normally, if you fail an assessment and have to re-sit it, the marks you can achieve are capped, so you cannot achieve top grades for your work. This year, we are allowing an uncapped resit for all failed assessments. Furthermore, unlike many other universities, we don’t charge you to re-sit an assessment.

**Ensuring our approach to deferrals is flexible**

We strongly encourage you to utilise the above supportive measures and submit your best work in the upcoming assessment period. However, we understand that some students will be going through additional challenges and that completing assessments within the academic year may just not be possible.

Our expanded Extenuating Circumstances provision will allow all students to defer assessments due between March and May 2021 and to submit in July/August 2021. This may be of particular relevance to students who have children or caring responsibilities who have additional childcare challenges at the moment. Logging a deferral can be done via [myUniHub](https://myunihub.mdx.ac.uk/).

Any student who successfully passes any deferred assessments in July/August 2021 will then be able to start the next academic year in September 2021 as normal.

**Maintaining the quality of your degrees for future employers**

We considered whether to apply a new degree algorithm for finalists this year. This would have meant that only some of your module results would contribute towards your degree classification. After careful consideration, we felt that this was not the approach we should take. The University reached agreement with the Students’ Union on all other supportive measures, but on this one issue we differed for the following reasons.

It is critically important that we safeguard the quality and value of your degree for your future employers and your future career prospects, and a new algorithm was likely to undermine that confidence. We implemented a more generous algorithm last year because of the changes we had to make to assessment at very short notice. This year, we have planned adapted assessments to take account of the impact of COVID-19 and to ensure that you are assessed fairly given the difficult circumstances in which you have had to work this year.

We know that many of you will have endured particular hardship this year and if this applies to you, we strongly encourage you to utilise the additional support measures outlined above. Please do contact your Programme Leader if you have any questions about how these supportive measures will be implemented on your programme of study. We would also urge you to consult [UniHub](https://unihub.mdx.ac.uk/coronavirus-covid19#study) further guidance on the arrangements the University has put in place to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on your studies, particularly around assessments.

Professor Nic Beech

Vice-Chancellor