

The Late Assignment

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Name:

Student Identification number:

Background and Instructions: Testing for relevance primarily involves testing a relation between two sentences (statements or claims) in an argument, either two premises or a premise and a conclusion or sub-conclusion. The following exercise is designed to give you some experience testing the set of claims made in 1-20 to determine whether or not they are acceptable or plausible claims on their own and/or whether they are relevant to the conclusion that the student should be allowed to hand an assignment in late without any academic penalty. In your evaluation of each example you are producing an argument to justify your conclusion that the excuse should be accepted or rejected. With this in mind, you should be careful to produce a good argument in your evaluation that is as free as possible from any mistake in reasoning. This assignment is valued at 20%, with your explanations valued at one (1) mark for each example. We will discuss your responses after all the assignments have been submitted so please keep a copy of your responses to this assignment. Brief written comments will be provided by the marker at the end of this assignment. These comments are intended to help you understand your evaluation and grade on this assignment.

Situation: A student hands in a late assignment in your course. S/he gives you one or more of the following reasons why s/he was unable to submit the assignment in on time. S/he hopes that you will reach the conclusion that s/he has reached: S/he should be allowed to submit the assignment in late without any penalty. Your principal, chair or supervisor and the student are interested in knowing how you decide which (if any) of the following reasons or arguments are acceptable. So, you need to indicate whether or not the excuse provided is acceptable and/or relevant and explain yourself.

1. My dog ate my glasses, which meant that I was unable to read the instructions for the assignment. So, I was unable to write a response and submit it on time, since I couldn't even read the questions.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

2. I contracted mononucleosis and was unable to concentrate well enough to get the assignment in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

3. My husband, who was so jealous of my attempts to complete my degree (he does not have a degree), broke into my apartment and stole all the course material. So, I couldn't complete the assignment on time.

- Acceptable because
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

4. My parents surprised me with airline tickets for a trip to Europe for my birthday. So, I left on the trip and did not have the time to complete the assignment on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

5. My computer broke last night so I was unable to get the copy of my assignment out of the hard drive to the printer. So, I could not hand the assignment in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

6. I had three other papers due at the same time as the assignment for your course. So, I knew that you would understand that I was unable to get the assignment in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

7. I lost my only copy of the textbook. So, I couldn't read the assignment and get it in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

8. It was a rainy, cloudy day yesterday and I decided that I was so depressed that I couldn't do any work. So, obviously I was unable to get the assignment in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

9. A student from your course two years ago told me that you weren't really strict on timelines. So, knowing this, I didn't think that I needed to worry about doing the assignment on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

10. The schedule changed in my part-time job. This meant that I had to work two extra shifts. Unfortunately, I did not have the time to get the assignment completed on schedule.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

11. The instructor in one of my other courses told us that no one has the right to penalize someone else for something that is not their fault. Since what happened to me was beyond my control, it was not my fault. So, obviously I should not be penalized for handing the assignment in late.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

12. As you know, I am slightly balding, much older than the average student and have a difficult time forming any personal relationships. So, you can see why I was unable to get the assignment in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

13. If you understood my situation, you would agree that I couldn't get the assignment in on time. I am a single parent and the sole support of three small children. I barely survive on social assistance and I may be evicted from my apartment very soon.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

14. You are such an unapproachable, aloof and demanding teacher that I became so depressed that I couldn't get the assignment in on time.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

15. If you do not allow me to hand this assignment in late, I will probably fail this course. If I fail this course, I will be kicked out of college. If I am kicked out of college, I will become so depressed that I could do something crazy. Since neither one of us wants this to happen, I know you will agree I should be allowed to hand the assignment in late without any penalty.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

16. It is well known across this campus that you are an exceptionally good, caring, understanding and sensitive teacher. So I knew that you probably wouldn't mind if I handed the assignment in late.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

17. Since it is impossible to know all the factors that influence any individual's decision to do anything, it is impossible to prove that someone didn't have a good reason for handing in an assignment late. It clearly follows that I could have a good reason for not handing the assignment in on time. So, I shouldn't suffer any penalty for this late submission.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

18. Before I give you my reasons for handing the assignment in late, let me respond to the objections that I know you will offer. Students are generally lazy, uncaring and not dedicated to making any effort to enhance their own knowledge. They do not care about meeting deadlines. I can tell you, though, that none of these characteristics apply to me. So, I believe that you should let me hand in the assignment late without penalty.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

19. I know that as a teacher you work on some kind of solidarity with your colleagues. You all push the line that students should be required to meet deadlines in all courses. So, each of you steadfastly holds fast to the collective, conventional line that no exceptions should be permitted in any course in this college. You justify this line by claiming that once one exception is admitted, then the floodgates are opened. You all believe this, but I think you are all just wrong. I should be permitted to hand in a late assignment without penalty.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

20. I pay my tuition fees to this institution. These fees are the basis for your salary. Since I determine your salary, I should have some say in the decisions you make, especially as they affect me. So, I should be allowed to hand the assignment in late without penalty.

- Acceptable because:
- Unacceptable because:
- Relevant because:
- Irrelevant because:

In this assignment you need to decide which of the preceding excuses are both relevant and acceptable reasons to permit the student to hand the assignment in late without academic penalty. On separate sheets of paper, you should provide a brief explanation and justification for your decisions to each of the twenty possibilities listed above. Your critical responses should be brief but also reflect an understanding of the defining conditions of any of the faults in reasoning which you apply in your evaluations. Remember that any excuse which fails to be acceptable or plausible need not be tested for relevance. If you do find that any particular example contains a specific fault in reasoning, then be sure to identify and clearly define this fault in your explanation and evaluation. Demonstrate clearly how the fault occurs in the example by matching the defining conditions to specific components in the example. Given the brevity of each of the examples, it will often be the case that lack of sufficient information about each context makes rendering a good decision difficult. You may note this difficulty but you should render a decision despite this issue.

Post Assignment Assessment

1. The material in this assignment was clear.
Yes [] Somewhat [] No [] Because:
 2. If your response to 1. was "Somewhat", then briefly indicate what areas you suggest were clear, and which ones were not clear. Because:
 3. The material in this assignment was informative.
Yes [] Somewhat [] No [] Because:
 4. If your response to 3. was "Somewhat", then briefly indicate what areas you believe were informative, and which ones were not informative. Because:
 5. Using your responses to 1-4, determine whether or not the assignment was
Helpful [] Somewhat helpful [] Not helpful [] Because:
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