

What is Special Consideration?

Special consideration is given to a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their control **at the time of the assessment**. It is applied when the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration can only be awarded where a candidate has been fully prepared for assessments and covered the entire course but their ability to demonstrate their subject knowledge and understanding is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of the assessment(s).

A centre must decide whether the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration. An awarding body cannot determine the candidate's eligibility and make the decision for the centre.

Applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration with evidence in place.

If the centre does not support an online application for special consideration, then it must not be submitted to the relevant awarding body or bodies. Speculative applications for special consideration cannot be accepted.

Where a candidate does not meet the published criteria for special consideration, the awarding body will reject the application and provide clear reasons for doing so.

Centres must not submit applications for special consideration for trivial cases

Special consideration can go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in their examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. This means that there will be some situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. This is because only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. To make larger adjustments would jeopardize the standard of the examination. (JCQ's **A guide to the special consideration process**, section 1)

This publication is further referred to in this policy as [SC](#)

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities in the special consideration process and confirms that Fullbrook will submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria. (JCQ's [General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), section 5.9)

Eligibility for special consideration

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication [SC](#)
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies by the Exams Officer

Exams Officer

- Understands the criteria as detailed in [SC](#) to determine where candidates will/will not be eligible for special consideration
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies

Teaching/Pastoral staff and/or SENCo

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to determine a candidate's eligibility for special consideration

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Provide any medical or other evidence that may be required to determine eligibility for special consideration

Applying for special consideration

Where eligible, special consideration will be applied for at the time of the assessment/exam where candidates; have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination, or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. ([SC](#), section 2)

For candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged Fullbrook must be satisfied that there has been a material detrimental effect on candidate examination performance or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment. ([SC](#), section 3)

1. Where a candidate may arrive for an exam and is clearly unwell, extremely distressed and/or may have sustained an injury that requires emergency access arrangements to be put in place:
 - the candidate will be kept comfortable and under centre supervision from the required time while appropriate arrangements are put in place for the candidate to take the exam in the best possible conditions
 - a judgement will be made on how the candidate's situation or disposition affected performance in the exam
 - where appropriate and where eligible, special consideration will be applied for
2. Where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.), special consideration will be applied for on behalf of all candidates that have been disadvantaged.
3. Where a candidate takes multiple exams (three or more exams) timetabled for the same day and the total duration for those papers is more than 6 hours for GCE (A Level and Level 3) exams or more than 5 hours 30 minutes for GCSE (and Level 1/Level 2) exams including any approved extra time but not any time taken for supervised rest breaks, special consideration for an allowance on the last paper taken will be applied for.
4. Where a candidate may be affected by a minor disturbance in the exam room caused by another candidate (momentary bad behaviour, phone ringing etc.), special consideration **cannot** be applied for.

The centre must not submit applications for special consideration for trivial cases.

Examples of trivial cases which would not warrant special consideration include, but are not limited to:

- A bird tweeting outside the examination room
- A lorry reversing
- A toilet being flushed
- Doors in a corridor adjacent to the examination room opening and closing
- Very short, momentary noise from, for example, aeroplanes, helicopters or lawn mowers ([SC](#) 1)

If a candidate is absent from a timetabled component/unit for acceptable reasons, and the centre can support this, special consideration will be applied for if the exam missed is in the terminal series and the minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence can be met. For unitised examinations taken in an examination series prior to certification, candidates must be re-entered for any missed units at the next assessment opportunity. Unless there are difficulties arising, e.g. group performances which cannot be repeated, special consideration will not be awarded. ([SC](#), section 4).

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration will be explored in [SC 5](#) and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:

- other certification
- shortfall in work (coursework/non-examination assessment)
- lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components)
- candidates issued with an incorrect or incomplete question paper, set the wrong coursework or non-examination assessment task or taught the wrong set text

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in other vocational qualifications, the centre will follow [SC 7](#) and awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

Processing applications for special consideration

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Ensures, before any applications are processed, that the centre is satisfied that the candidates' circumstances warrant special consideration, as set out within the JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process
- Ensures that any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria and are sufficiently evidenced will be submitted to the relevant awarding body
- Ensures that all eligible applications will be supported by signed evidence produced by a member of the senior leadership team

Senior Leadership Team

- Produce signed evidence in support of all eligible applications
- Authorises appropriate evidence to support all eligible applications
- Ensures that if the centre does not support an application for special consideration, it will not be submitted to the relevant awarding body

Exams Officer

- Understands that special consideration must be applied for at the time of the assessment
- Understands that special consideration cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion and that where a candidate may be affected by different indispositions, special consideration should only be applied for the most serious indisposition
- Ensures applications will be processed as required by the awarding bodies
- Keeps evidence to support all applications on file until after the publication of results and provides the signed evidence authorised/provided by a member of the senior leadership team to support an application where this may be requested by an awarding body
- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications
- Informs candidates when an application for special consideration is submitted to the awarding body

Teaching/Pastoral staff and/or SENCo

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to support a candidate's application for special consideration

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Will be asked to provide any required medical or other evidence that may be required to support an application for special consideration
- Will be informed that all cases must be dealt with by the centre

Submitting applications for special consideration

Where a candidate or group of candidates is/are eligible for special consideration, applications will be submitted to the relevant awarding body following the published processes in [SC](#).

The candidate/candidates will be informed when an application for special consideration is submitted to the awarding body (to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018).

Evidence to support all applications will be kept on file until after the publication of results.

Timetabled written exams

- For GCE (a-Level) and GCSE qualifications, applications for individual candidates will be submitted online by logging into the relevant awarding body secure extranet site and following the links to special consideration

- The processes for submitting a single application to cover all exams affected where a candidate is present but disadvantaged and a separate application for each day on which exams are missed where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason detailed in [SC 6](#) will be followed
- The [form 14 Self certification form](#) (Self certification for candidates who have missed an examination) will only be completed by a candidate where circumstances warrant this and will not be used where the centre already has evidence demonstrating that the candidate was ill

Internally assessed work

- Where appropriate, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts them or form 10 will be completed and submitted to the awarding body
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work for an individual candidate, this will be submitted online or by completing form 10, dependent on the awarding body

Private candidates

- Any private candidate entered by the centre must liaise with the Exams Officer (not the awarding body) regarding any application for special consideration

Late applications

If, after the publication of results for a particular exam series, a claim is made that special consideration was not applied for at the time of an assessment where a candidate was eligible, the claimant will be informed that late applications will only be accepted by an awarding body in the most exceptional circumstances and where a member of the senior leadership team is able to produce compelling evidence to support a late application.

The application must be submitted before the deadline for reviews of results for the respective exam series.