



Policy Document

Special Consideration Policy

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What is special consideration?

“Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate’s mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside of the candidate’s control at the time of the assessment, which 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 seek to go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. There will be situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardize the standard of the examination.”

[JCQ A guide to the special consideration process Chapter 1]

This document 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 READ College agrees to *“submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria.”* [JCQ General regulations for approved centres Chapter 5]

Eligibility for special consideration

Roles and responsibilities

Course Leaders

- Are familiar with the contents, refer to and direct relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication SC
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration are 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 are submitted to awarding bodies.

Head of Course/Joint Chief Executives

- Provides any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to determine a candidate’s eligibility for special consideration.

Senior Invigilator/Invigilator

- Provides information to the EO in cases where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.), and may therefore be eligible for special consideration.

Candidate (or parents/carers)

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

Applying for special consideration

Where eligible, special consideration is applied for in a specific exam series where candidates *“have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination, or in the production of controlled assessment, coursework or non-examination assessment is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.”* [SC 2]

If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and the centre can verify this, special consideration is applied for if the exam missed is in the final relevant examination session and the **“minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence”** can be met (*details attached at the end of this document*). If there is an opportunity to re-enter the candidate in the next available exam series, the centre will make the entry and special consideration is not applied for.

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration is explored in SC 5 and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:

- requesting an honorary certificate
- a short extension to controlled assessment/coursework/non-examination assessment deadlines
- submitting a reduced quantity of controlled assessment/coursework/non-examination assessment (shortfall in work)
- lost or damaged work
- candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper
- candidates undertaking the wrong controlled assessment assignment

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in a vocational qualification, the centre follows 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

Joint Chief Executives

- Chairs a formal review process which will involve any senior staff members, especially the College Counsellor and/or Chaplain College Counsellor and/or Chaplain and other relevant teachers as appropriate so that a decision can be made as to whether candidate should be entered for special consideration (candidate present but disadvantaged). It is expected that there will be at least two standard meetings, in order to accommodate exam board deadlines, per examination session per year group.
- Ensures where a candidate may be a relative of the exams officer, the application is authorised by an alternative member of centre staff.

Exams officer

- Ensures applications are processed as required by the awarding bodies and by the published deadlines
- Keeps evidence to support applications on file until after the publication of results
- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications

Parents/carers will

- Provide any required medical or other evidence that may be required to support an application for special Consideration.

Head of Course

- Informs candidate and parents about the special consideration process and the decision taken by the school during this process.
- Should make it clear that applying for special consideration is not a guarantee of receiving it. We will know the outcome of the application but will not be told the amount/percentage applied by the exam board.

Submitting applications for special consideration

Where a candidate or group of candidates is/are eligible for special consideration applications are submitted to the relevant awarding body following the published processes in SC.

Evidence to support applications is kept on file.

Timetabled written exams

- For OCR qualifications, applications for individual candidates are 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 *where a candidate is present but disadvantaged* and a separate application for each day *where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason* detailed in SC 6 are followed (EO responsibility).
- (For other qualifications, applications are submitted online where the awarding body's secure system accepts these)
- The paper form 10 Jcq/SC *Application for special consideration* is only completed and submitted where the online system does not accept applications for a particular qualification.
- For groups of candidates, applications are made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts group applications or form 10 will be completed.
- The paper form 14 Jcq/ME *Self certification for candidates who have missed an examination* is only completed by a candidate where circumstances warrant this and is not used where the centre knows the candidate was ill.

Internally assessed work

- Where appropriate, applications are made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts them or form 10 is completed and submitted.
- Where a short extension to a deadline is being requested an application is submitted online or by direct email, dependent on the awarding body.
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work, this is submitted online or by completing form 10, dependent on the awarding body.
- Where an application relates to lost or damaged work, this is submitted online or by completing form 15 JQC/LCW *Notification of lost centre assessed work*, dependent on the awarding body