

Special Consideration Policy

1. Purpose of the policy

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities in the special consideration process and confirms that Belmont School will submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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 jeopardise the standard of the examination.

2. Eligibility for special consideration

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated publication by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and guidance related to the special consideration process.
- 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 the JCQ publication 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 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.

2.2 Applying for Special Consideration

- a) Where eligible, special consideration will be 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.

Some examples are provided below to illustrate possible scenarios, and as a point of reference:

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 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.
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 exams or more than 5 hours 30 minutes for GCSE exams including *any approved extra time but not any time taken for supervised rest breaks*, special consideration for an allowance on 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, mobile phone ringing etc.), special consideration cannot be applied for.

- b) If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and the centre can verify 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. 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 will not be applied for.
- c) Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration will be explored in the JCQ guidance, and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:
 - other certification,
 - a short extension to coursework/non-examination assessment deadlines,
 - submitting a reduced quantity of coursework/non-examination assessment (shortfall in work),
 - candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper,
 - candidates undertaking the wrong controlled assessment or non-examination assessment assignment.
- d) Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in a vocational qualification, the centre will follow JCQ guidance and the awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

3. Processing Applications for Special Consideration

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Ensures where a candidate may be a member of the family (which includes step-family, foster family and similar close relationships) or close friend and their immediate family

(e.g. son/daughter) of a member of exams office staff, the application will be authorised by an alternative member of centre staff.

Senior Management Team

- Produce/provide signed evidence in support of an application where this may be requested by an awarding body.

Exams Officer

- Ensures applications will be processed as required by the awarding bodies,
- Keeps evidence to support applications on file until after the publication of results and provides evidence in support of an application where this may be requested by an awarding body,
- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications.

Teaching 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.

4. Submitting Applications for Special Consideration

- 4.1 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 JCQ guidance.

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

Timetabled written exams

- For GCE 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 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 as detailed in JCQ guidance will be followed.
- For other qualifications, applications will be submitted online where the awarding body's secure system accepts these,
- The paper Application Form for Special Consideration will only be completed and submitted to the awarding body where the online system does not accept applications for a particular qualification.
- For groups of candidates, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts group applications or the Application Form for Special Consideration will be completed.
- The paper Self Certification Form 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 knows the candidate was ill.

Internally assessed work

- Where appropriate, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts them or Application Form for Special Consideration will be completed and submitted to the awarding body.
- Where a short extension to a deadline is being requested an application will be submitted online or by direct email, dependent on the awarding body

- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work, this will be submitted online or by completing the Application Form for Special Consideration, dependent on the awarding body

Post assessment adjustments - vocational qualifications

- Where relevant and eligible, the Application for Special Consideration Vocational Qualifications will be completed and submitted to 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 evidence to support a late application.

If a claim is made after the completion of a review of results, the claimant will be informed that an application for special consideration cannot be submitted.

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Appendixes

The following three Forms are included with the Special Consideration Policy:

- **JCQ/SC Form 10**
- **JCQ/ME Form 14**
- **Form VQ/SC**
- **Cambridge International SC (Shortfall in Coursework) Form 2**
- **Cambridge International SC (Lost Coursework) Form 3**
- **Cambridge International SC (Exam Day) Form 7**

If an application for Special Consideration is appropriate, and if the application can't be made online, then the JCQ/SC Form 10 will be submitted by the Exams Officer.

A pupil may need to submit a JCQ/ME Form 14 if they were unwell and missed an exam (though this form is not required if Belmont sent the pupil home due to illness).

For Vocational Qualifications, form VQ/SC should be used.