

Reasonable adjustment & special consideration policy – 2020-21



Ifield Community College aims to facilitate open access to all qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in assessments, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured.

This will be achieved through:

- **Reasonable Adjustment** – this is identified by the centre at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor must they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.
- **Special Consideration** – this is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition outside of their control that occurred at the time of assessment, and which has had, or is likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment. Any special consideration granted is not intended to fully compensate for the difficulty the learner faced at the time of assessment and therefore can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised.
- Special consideration may not be possible for "licence to practise" units within a qualification, or to "licence to practise" qualifications.

Recruiting learners with integrity

It is vital that centres recruit with integrity onto Pearson vocational qualifications. Centres must ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on qualifications they may wish to follow and that the qualifications will meet their needs.

The recruitment process should include the centre assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgments about the learner's potential to successfully complete the assessment and achieve the qualification, checking the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of mandatory units as well as selecting the most appropriate route of optional units, where applicable.

Such assessment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the assessment.

Where the recruitment process identifies that the learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment and thus gain achievement in all parts of assessment for the selected qualification, this must be communicated clearly to the learner. A learner may still decide to proceed with studying a particular qualification and not be entered for all or part of the assessment.

Ifield Community College will ensure that learners are aware of:

- the range of options available, including any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary, to enable the demonstration of attainment across all required assessment
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.

Reasonable adjustment

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Reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, but may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in Braille
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner
- changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software
- providing the mechanism to have different colour backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or asking for permission for copying to different coloured paper for paper-based assessments
- providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view assessment papers

Reasonable adjustments for internally assessed units can be approved internally by the centre, in line with the JCQ guidance and supplementary guidance from awarding organisations whose qualifications do not come under the jurisdiction of JCQ. As each learner's circumstances are likely to be different, each case should be reviewed by the centre separately.

Reasonable adjustments should be set in place prior to the learner's assessment commencing.

The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners and be available for external quality assurance, where required. The key to reasonable adjustment is that it must never affect the validity or reliability of assessment, influence the outcome of assessment or give the learner(s) in question an unfair assessment advantage.

Reasonable adjustments procedure for BTEC internally assessed units

The record of the reasonable adjustment that has been made should be recorded via the RA1 form, available at www.edexcel.com, and kept with the learner records for three years. The record should be available for scrutiny by Pearson or the regulator, as appropriate.

Where Ifield Community College is unsure about a learner's ability to achieve the assessment criteria or it is felt that the proposed reasonable adjustment may affect the validity or reliability of assessment, additional guidance and support can be sourced via vocationalqualitystandards@pearson.com.

Reasonable adjustments statement for BCS qualifications

BCS and Ifield Community College are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

Special consideration

Special consideration is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment, and which has had, or is likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration cannot give the learner an unfair advantage, nor must its use cause the user of a certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievement. The learner's results must reflect real achievement in assessment and not potential ability. To this end, special considerations can only be a small post-assessment adjustment to the grade or outcome.

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration if:

- performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement
- alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate.

A learner will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- no evidence is supplied by the centre that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition
- any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence
- preparation for a component is affected by difficulties during the course, e.g. disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.

It is also important to note that it may not be possible to apply special consideration in instances where:

- assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence
- criteria have to be met fully
- units/qualifications confer licence to practise.

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 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 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.”* [\[SC 2\]](#)

Examples of where special considerations may be applied for

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:
 - a. 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
 - b. a judgement will be made on how the candidate’s situation or disposition affected performance in the exam
 - c. where appropriate and where eligible, special consideration is applied for
2. Where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.), special consideration is applied for on behalf of all candidates.
3. Where a candidate takes multiple exams (three or more) timetabled for the same day and the total duration of all papers is more than 5 hours 30 minutes for GCSE exams or more than 6 hours for GCE exams (AS, A2, A-level) 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.

If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and the centre can support this, special consideration is 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 is not applied for

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
- coursework/non-examination assessment extensions
- Shortfall in work (coursework/non-examination assessment)
- lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components)
- candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper
- candidates undertaking the wrong controlled assessment or non-examination assessment assignment

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

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Processing applications for special consideration - Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Ensures that all eligible applications will be supported by signed evidence produced by a member of the senior leadership

Senior leadership team

- Produce signed evidence in support of all eligible applications

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 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

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

- 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

Processes for applying for special consideration for JCQ qualifications

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](#).

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* detailed in [SC 6](#) will be followed
- For other qualifications, applications will be submitted online where the awarding body's secure system accepts these
- The paper [form 10 Application for special](#) 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 form 10 will be completed
- The paper [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 knows the candidate was ill

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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 a short extension to a deadline is being requested, the awarding body will be contacted directly
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work, this will be 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](#) *JCQ/LCW Notification of lost centre assessed work*, dependent on the awarding body

Post assessment adjustments – vocational qualifications

- Where relevant and eligible, form 10 or form [VQ/SC 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 applications 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.

Process for applying for special consideration for BTEC internally assessed units

Ifield Community College realises that they are not able to apply their own special consideration and certification claims should not be made until the outcome of the application has been received.

Given the nature of internally assessed units within vocational qualifications where there is no single fixed assessment date, Ifield Community College will give the learner the opportunity to complete the assessment at a later date. Where circumstances have led to a learner not being able to complete a significant amount of evidence it may be more appropriate for the learner to be certificated on a smaller sized qualification within the same level.

Pearson's decision regarding special consideration will be based on various factors, which may vary from learner to learner, and from one subject to another. These factors may include the severity of the circumstances, the date of the assessment, the nature of the assessment (e.g. practical, oral presentation, etc.).

Pearson expects Ifield Community College to put arrangements in place to enable a learner, in extenuating circumstances, to complete assessment and thus achieve the qualification. Only when this is unsuccessful should an application for special consideration be made. Applications for special consideration can only be made on a case-by-case basis; separate applications must be made for each learner. Applications for special consideration for internally assessed units should be submitted to the Vocational Quality Standards Team via vocationalqualitystandards@pearson.com.

To ensure effective processing of the application the centre should submit:

- form SC1, available at www.edexcel.com

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- evidence to support the application such as a medical certificate, a doctors letter, a statement from the invigilator (if relevant), or any other appropriate information.

Certification claims should not be made for affected learner(s) before the outcome of the application is received by the centre, special consideration cannot be considered once learner achievement has been claimed and certificated.

Applications, or requests for guidance, must be submitted to the Vocational Quality Standards Team as soon as the potential issue is known, this will allow for guidance to be given at an early stage. Following receipt, Pearson will confirm receipt within two working days and will look to give a decision within a further ten working days. Where a case is complex, Pearson will inform the centre if a decision cannot be made within the time scale specified.

During the processing of an application, Pearson will only liaise with the centre making the claim on the learner's behalf and not with the learner or their designated third party.

Applications for posthumous certification must be submitted to Pearson on form SC1 together with details of the units and grades the learner had already achieved along with the units and grades they were expected to achieve. The Principal must authorise this form. Pearson will liaise only with the centre making the claim for the learner. Pearson reserves the right to see a copy of the death certificate prior to granting posthumous certification.

Process for applying for special consideration for BCS qualifications

Requests for special consideration must be made by the Centre Manager (Exams Officer - EO) via email to centresupport@bcs.uk. Sensitive data regarding the physical and/or mental health of a candidate should only be sent to BCS if the EO has the Learner's written consent. A copy of this consent must be retained within the centre for BCS Audit purposes.

Requests must be submitted to BCS no later than five (5) working days after the assessment. Requests for special consideration may only be accepted after the results of assessment have been released in the following circumstances:

- The application has been overlooked at the centre and the oversight is confirmed by the EO
- Medical evidence comes to light about a Learner's condition which demonstrates that the Learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment. For onscreen assessments where results are immediately available.

BCS may require supporting evidence before a final decision is made. Supporting evidence must be sent to the Qualifications Department and must be labelled 'Strictly Private and Confidential'. Alternatively, it can be sent as an email attachment to centresupport@bcs.uk. The attachment must be sent as a password protected zip file.

Where the implications of the disability or need are not apparent, BCS will expect the centre to have supporting evidence of the effect of the impairment on the Learner's performance in an assessment. The EO will securely retain a copy of the supporting evidence documentation until the Learner completes the qualification or leaves the Centre. An External Verifier may request to see this evidence (with the Learner's permission) as part of the Audit.