



ORMISTON SIX VILLAGES ACADEMY

What is special consideration? As defined by the Joint Council for Qualifications

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition 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 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.

All examinations are measuring what a candidate knows and can do. **The overall grades awarded must reflect the level of attainment demonstrated in the examination.** The grades awarded do not necessarily reflect the candidate's true level of ability if attainment has been considerably affected over a long period of time.

It is not necessarily the case that the grade issued will match the estimated/forecast grade. Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the competence standards it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

There are minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence.

In all cases, candidates must have covered the whole course.

GCSE: at least 50% of the total assessment must be completed.

Which candidates will be eligible for special consideration?

Special consideration must be applied for following a specific examination series.

Candidates will be eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course but performance in the examination or in the production of controlled assessment/coursework is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. These include:

- temporary illness or accident/injury **at the time of the assessment**;
- bereavement **at the time of the assessment** (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible);
- domestic crisis arising **at the time of the assessment**;
- serious disturbance **during an examination**, particularly where recorded material is being used;
- other accidental events **at the time of the assessment** such as being given the wrong examination paper, being given a defective examination paper or tape, failure of practical equipment, failure of materials to arrive on time;
- participation in **sporting events or other competitions at an international level at the time of certification, e.g. representing their country at an international level in football or hockey**;
- failure by the centre to implement previously approved access arrangements.

When candidates have been fully prepared for the specification but the wrong texts have been chosen, special consideration may be given at the discretion of the awarding body.

Centres are advised that it is their responsibility to ensure that the correct texts are taught. Where this has not happened there can be no guarantee that a candidate will receive special consideration. Such instances will be investigated by the awarding body on a case-by-case basis.

Where the wrong texts have been taught, it is essential that the texts studied must have been examined in the current specification in a previous examination series.

Candidates will NOT be eligible for special consideration if preparation for or performance in the examination is affected by:

- long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of the assessment;
- bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are ongoing implications such as an inquest or court case;
- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (including school/exchange visits and field trips) at the time of the assessment;

- minor disturbance in the examination caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing;
- the consequences of committing a crime or being charged with an offence;
- the consequences of taking alcohol or any other non-prescribed drugs;
- the consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- the failure by the centre to prepare candidates properly for the examination for whatever reason;
- staff shortages, building work or lack of facilities;
- misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- misreading the instructions of the question paper and answering the wrong questions;
- making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the examination timetable;
- submitting no controlled assessment/coursework at all, unless controlled assessment/coursework is scheduled for a restricted period of time, rather than during the course;
- missing all examinations and internally assessed components/units;
- failure to cover the course as a consequence of joining the class part way through;
- permanent disability unless illness affects the candidate at the time of the assessment or where the disability exacerbates what would otherwise be a minor issue - (difficulties over and above those that previously approved access arrangements would have alleviated;)
- failure by the centre to process access arrangements on time.

Candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged

Special consideration will normally be given by applying an allowance of marks to each component affected within a specification. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total raw marks available in the component concerned, including controlled assessment/coursework.

The decision made by the awarding body will be based on various factors which may vary from one subject to another. These may include the severity of the circumstances, the date of the examination in relation to the circumstances, the nature of the assessment, for instance whether the written papers are affected as opposed to controlled assessment/coursework, whether an oral or practical is involved.

Special consideration cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion, e.g. on the basis of a domestic crisis at the time of the examination and the candidate suffering from a viral illness.

The following circumstances must apply at the time of the assessment. Awarding bodies will not enter into discussion with candidates or their parents as to how much special consideration should be applied. The examples listed below are provided for illustrative purposes only.

5% This is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:

- terminal illness of the candidate;
- terminal illness of a parent/carer;
- very recent death of a member of the immediate family;
- very serious and disruptive domestic crisis leading to acute anxiety about the family.

4% Very serious problems such as:

- life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family;
- major surgery at or near the time of the examination;
- severe disease;
- severe injury arising from a car accident;
- very recent death of member of extended family;
- severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examinations;
- serious domestic crisis at time of examinations.

3% A more common category, (more cases will fall into this category) including:

- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative;
- recent illness of a more serious nature;
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack;
- recently broken limbs;
- organ disease;
- physical assault trauma before an examination;

- recent domestic crisis;
- witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination.

2% The most common category of allowance - the majority of cases will fall within this category:

- illness at the time of the assessment;
- broken limb on the mend;
- recent viral illness;
- concussion;
- effects of pregnancy (not pregnancy per se);
- hay fever on the day of an examination;
- extreme distress on day of examination; (not simply exam related stress)
- allowance on last paper taken in a day when a candidate has been entered for three or more examinations timetabled for the same day and the total duration of those papers is more than 5 hours 30 minutes (GCSE examinations) or more than 6 hours (GCE examinations).

1% Reserved for more minor problems:

- noise during examination which is more than momentary;
- illness of another candidate which leads to disruption in the examination room;
- stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed;
- minor ailments;
- headache;
- minor upset arising from administrative problems, such as wrong time allocated.

0% The application was reviewed but the addition of marks was deemed inappropriate.
(Where the request fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected.)

Candidates who are absent from a timetabled component/unit for acceptable reasons

When a candidate has missed a time-tabled component/unit for acceptable reasons and the centre is prepared to support an application for special consideration, an adjustment may

be made to the terminal grade. **However, the component/unit must have been missed in the terminal series and the minimum requirements of section below must be met.**

Awarding bodies cannot give advice as to whether a candidate is fit to take an examination. Centre staff should follow their internal procedures for dealing with candidates who feel unwell on the day of an examination.

For unitised examinations taken in an examination series prior to certification, candidates should 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.

This principle also applies where entire cohorts miss units due to adverse weather conditions or for any other reason, or where individual candidates miss units as a result of a change of centre.

Minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence

In all cases, candidates must have covered the whole course.

GCSE: at least 50% of the total assessment must be completed.

Other Issues

Honorary certificate

Where a candidate, who has been entered for a specification, has died before completing the minimum amount of assessment required, or has been entered and is terminally ill and unable to complete the minimum amount of assessment, the centre may request an honorary certificate from the awarding body. Where the minimum requirement is met, an award will be issued.

A letter on centre headed paper should be written to the relevant awarding body.

Controlled assessment/coursework extensions

Where a candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration, i.e. **a temporary illness, temporary injury or other indisposition prior to the submission of their work**, it may be possible to allow a short extension to the deadline.

An extension of no more than ten days to the deadline for the submission of coursework or controlled assessment may enable the candidate to complete his/her work. **The centre must contact the relevant awarding body to request this arrangement.**

Where a centre has been affected by circumstances beyond its control it may, in **exceptional cases**, be possible to grant a short extension of no more than ten days for a whole cohort of candidates.

This is at the discretion of the awarding body and the centre **must** contact the awarding body as soon as possible to request such an arrangement.

† **OCR centres must submit applications on-line using OCR Interchange. AQA centres must apply by e-mail to courseworkadmin@aqa.org.uk**

‡ **Edexcel centres must apply for an extension by e-mail to the relevant subject team.**

Shortfall in work (controlled assessments/coursework)

If a candidate has been subject to an unforeseen prolonged illness or other misfortune during the period when the work was produced, it may, in some subjects, be possible to accept a reduced quantity of work without penalty, **as long as all of the assessment objectives have been covered at least once**. This will not be possible if the specification requires only one piece.

Where several pieces of work are required, the reduction will only be accepted if those pieces are testing the same criteria. **It will not be possible to give this consideration in every case, for example, if work has not been submitted, the assessment objectives have not been satisfied or the candidate joined the course late.**

No adjustment to the marks should be made by the centre. **Form 10 – JCQ/SC† should be submitted to the awarding body, attached to a breakdown of marks across the assessment objectives.**

Candidates must have been fully prepared for the course but unable to finish the work. Awarding bodies will not normally agree a reduced amount of work in advance.

† **AQA and OCR centres must not submit Form 10 – JCQ/SC.**

Applications must be submitted on-line using eAQA or OCR Interchange as appropriate.

Lost or damaged work

If a candidate's work has been **lost within the examination centre** and despite every effort it cannot be found, or it has been accidentally destroyed, the circumstances should be reported immediately to the awarding body using **Form 15 – JCQ/LCW†**. This form is available on the JCQ website – <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/forms>

The awarding body will consider whether it is appropriate to accept a mark for which there is no available evidence of attainment. This may occur in the following circumstances:

- The centre **must** be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress.
- The loss **is not** the consequence of negligence on the part of the candidate, for example work being left on a bus.
- **If only part of the work is lost and part of the work is available**, further guidance must be sought from the awarding body.
- **If the work was marked before it was lost or damaged**, marks should be submitted in the usual way. Form 15 - JCQ/LCW[†] must be submitted both to the moderator and the awarding body by the deadline for the submission of internally assessed marks or by the date by which the work should be despatched for moderation. **No marks will be accepted after the issue of results.**
- **If the work was not marked before it was lost or damaged**, an estimated mark may be submitted on **Form 15 - JCQ/LCW[†]**, based on the teacher's knowledge of the work up to the point where it was lost. Estimates must not include any supposition as to what the candidate may have achieved if the work had been finished. Estimates must not be submitted on mark sheets, only on **Form 15 - JCQ/LCW[†]**. **No estimated marks will be accepted after the issue of results.**

† AQA and OCR centres must not submit Form 15 – JCQ/LCW.

Applications must be submitted on-line using eAQA or OCR Interchange as appropriate.

Other problems

There are circumstances which arise by accident and where specialist input may be required. Such circumstances may involve question papers, where an incorrect question paper has been handed to the candidate or a question paper is defective in some way; for example an incorrectly printed page.

These cases are given special consideration by other means than those quoted so far. They may need to be referred to a subject officer or a senior examiner for a subject specific decision as to how special consideration should be awarded. This means that the results may not immediately show the enhancement, but an adjustment of marks may have been done to take into account the problem which has arisen.

Centres may not realise that a candidate has been given an incorrect question paper. Awarding bodies will notify centres of any discrepancies. If the centre is aware of the error at the time of the examination the candidate should, where possible, be given the correct question paper as long as he or she is still under centre supervision and is able to continue with the examination.

An application for special consideration should be submitted to the relevant awarding body both when the incorrect paper has been taken, and when the incorrect paper has been replaced by the correct paper, and the candidate has taken both. There are circumstances where it is not possible for an awarding body to grant special consideration to candidates who have attempted an incorrect paper.

Where candidates have taken the wrong controlled assessment assignment, the centre may submit an application for special consideration if it is not possible to enter candidates at the next assessment opportunity.