

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Special Consideration Policy



Contents Page

1. Introduction	3
2. Definition.....	3
3. Scope.....	3
4. Special Consideration Adjustments	4
5. Making an Application	4
6. Evidence Requirements.....	5
7. Special Consideration Process	5
8. Timescales	5
9. Continuous Improvement	6
Appendix One – Example Categories for Circumstances	7
Appendix Two – Special Consideration Request Process	9

Special Consideration Policy

1. Introduction

As an Ofqual regulated awarding body, ABBE must abide by its regulators' Conditions of Recognition. In terms of special consideration, ABBE must meet the following conditions:

G7.1 An awarding organisation must have in place clear arrangements for Special Consideration to be given to learners in relation to qualifications which it makes available.

G7.2 An awarding organisation must publish details of its arrangements for giving Special Consideration, which must include details as to:

- (a) how a learner qualifies for Special Consideration
- (b) what Special Consideration will be given

To ensure compliance with these conditions, ABBE has put in place a clear process for applying for special consideration which is outlined in this document. This policy also explains under what circumstances a learner can apply for special consideration and what special consideration can be given, if granted.

2. Definition

Special consideration is a change to an assessment outcome, mark or grade applied after an assessment, where a learner has been disadvantaged by adverse circumstances beyond their control, which had an effect on their ability to take the assessment.

3. Scope

Learners can only apply for special consideration where they have been fully prepared and present for the assessment, have completed the training and have covered the whole course, but performance in the assessment was affected by adverse circumstances. Examples of circumstances where a learner could be eligible for special consideration include:

- ❖ Serious temporary illness or accident/injury of the learner at the time of the assessment
- ❖ Serious temporary illness or accident/injury of an immediate family member at the time of the assessment
- ❖ Bereavement of an immediate family member at the time of the assessment
- ❖ Trauma caused by a recent event or experience
- ❖ Domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment
- ❖ Serious disturbance during an assessment
- ❖ Disadvantage due to the centre failing to provide adequate provisions or previously approved access arrangements

Special Consideration Policy

Please note, ABBE will not give advice as to whether a candidate is fit to take an assessment. Centre staff must follow their own internal procedures for dealing with learners who feel unwell on the day of an assessment.

Learners cannot apply for special consideration on the grounds of a disability or learning difficulty. In these cases, a reasonable adjustment request should be made in advance of the assessment – Please see ABBE’s Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

4. Special Consideration Adjustments

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage, the learner’s end result must reflect their achievement in the assessment, not their potential ability. Where a special consideration request is granted, it will usually be given by applying an allowance of additional marks to each component affected.

The size of the adjustment will always be a minor modification and will reflect various factors, such as:

- ❖ The severity of the circumstances
- ❖ The date of the assessment in relation to the circumstances
- ❖ The level of difficulty faced by the learner
- ❖ The type of assessment

The maximum post-assessment adjustment for special consideration is 5%, this maximum allowance is reserved for the most exceptional cases. Examples of which circumstances fall into which categories are given in Appendix One.

Please note, where an assessment requires a competence, criterion or standard to be met fully, or in the case of License to Practise, it may not be possible to apply any special consideration. Instead, a re-take may be offered as a more appropriate alternative.

5. Making an Application

Applications for special consideration requests should be made in writing, using a “Special Consideration Request Form”. A separate form should be completed for each learner, for each unit or qualification. However, where a group of learners have been disadvantaged by a particular event, a single form can be submitted, with the names of the learners affected attached to the form.

The application must be signed and submitted by a member of staff at the centre with the appropriate authority. This is usually the Head of Centre (or designated nominee), with input from the member of staff at the centre who is dealing with the learner’s request. Any supporting evidence should also be submitted for consideration along with the application.

Special Consideration Policy

The application must be made within five working days of the assessment date, or within five working days from when the assessment window closed, and before the results of the assessment have been released.

Applications should be sent to ABBE Enquiries at abbeenquiries@bcu.ac.uk

6. Evidence Requirements

Appropriate evidence must be submitted to ABBE in support of special consideration. This may include medical evidence, a statement from an exam invigilator or any other appropriate information.

7. Special Consideration Process

Step One

Once an application for special consideration has been received, ABBE will review the request and the learner's performance in light of the evidence provided.

Step Two

ABBE will approve or decline the request and will put forward a recommended percentage adjustment to the mark or a suggested amendment to the grade, using precedents, guidance published by JCQ and specialist advice from others where appropriate.

Step Three

ABBE will communicate the outcome to the centre according to the timetable stated below. If this is not possible, ABBE will contact the centre, providing an outline of what actions need to be taken and the timelines involved.

Step Four

The EQA will review all decisions annually to ensure fairness, consistency and comparability.

Step Five

In the case of an appeal, all evidence and decisions will be kept as per the guidance in ABBE's Data Retention Policy

A flow chart detailing this process can be found in Appendix Two.

8. Timescales

Applications for special consideration requests must be made within five working days of the assessment date, or within five working days from when the assessment window closed, and before the results of the assessment have been released.

Special Consideration Policy

In certain circumstances ABBE may accept requests for special consideration after the results of the assessment have been released, this may include situations where medical evidence relating to a learner's condition has come to light. This evidence must demonstrate that the learner has been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment. ABBE may also accept requests for special consideration for assessments, where results are immediately available.

ABBE aim to review requests within five working days of it being received. If this is not possible, it'll be acknowledged within two working days of receipt, giving an outline of what action will be taken and the timelines involved.

Please note that an approved application for a special consideration would not necessarily change a learner's result.

9. Continuous Improvement

To ensure that this policy remains fit for purpose and that the procedures and its outcomes are achievable, it is subject to a three-year review cycle, or earlier should any feedback or concern be brought to the attention of ABBE. This policy is also reviewed as part of ABBE continuous improvement monitoring through its annual self-assessment arrangements.

Special Consideration Policy

Appendix One – Example Categories for Circumstances

<p style="text-align: center;">% Adjustment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Example of Circumstance</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5%</p>	<p>This is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Terminal illness of the candidate ❖ Terminal illness of a parent/carer, brother or sister ❖ Death of a member of the immediate family within three months of the assessment ❖ Very serious and disruptive crisis/incident at or near the time of the assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">4%</p>	<p>Very serious problems, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family ❖ Major surgery at or near the time of the assessment ❖ Severe disease ❖ Very recent* death of member of extended family ❖ Severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the assessment ❖ Serious crisis/incident at the time of the assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">3%</p>	<p>A more common category, including circumstances such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Recent** traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative ❖ Recent illness of a more serious nature ❖ Flare-up of a severe congenital/medical condition or a psychological condition ❖ Broken limbs ❖ Organ disease ❖ Physical assault trauma before an assessment ❖ Recent crisis/incident ❖ Witnessing a distressing event on the day of the assessment
<p style="text-align: center;">2%</p>	<p>The most common category of allowance, including circumstances such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Illness at the time of the assessment ❖ Broken limb on the mend ❖ Concussion ❖ Effects of pregnancy ❖ Extreme distress on the day of an assessment

Special Consideration Policy

1%	Reserved for more minor problems, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ On-going noise during an assessment❖ Illness of another candidate which leads to minor disruption during the assessment❖ Stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed❖ Hay fever on the day of an assessment❖ Minor upset arising from administrative problems
----	---

Notes

**Very recent is defined as being within one month of the assessment taking place.*

***Recent is defined as up to four months prior to the assessment taking place.*

Special Consideration Policy

Appendix Two – Special Consideration Request Process



Special Consideration Policy

This document is copyright under the Berne Convention. All rights are reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1998, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, electrical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the copy owner.

Requests for permission should be sent to ABBE Enquiries at abbeenquiries@bcu.ac.uk

Copyright © ABBE – Awarding Body for the Built Environment 2024