

Rainey Endowed School

A guide for parents of pupils doing external examinations, with information taken from document:

JCQ A guide to the special consideration process (available online)



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.

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(s).** 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.

Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the competence standards it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

2.1 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 coursework or non-examination assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. Some examples include: (further examples in document)

2.1.1 temporary illness or accident/injury **at the time of the assessment;**

2.1.2 bereavement **at the time of the assessment** (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible);

2.1.3 domestic crisis arising **at the time of the assessment;**

Candidates will NOT be eligible for special consideration if preparation for or performance in the examination is affected by: (further examples in document)

2.3.1 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;**

2.3.2 bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, **unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are on-going implications** such as an inquest or court case;

2.3.3 domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays etc.

2.3.16 a disability or learning difficulties (diagnosed or undiagnosed) 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);**

The following are examples of circumstances which must apply AT THE TIME OF THE ASSESSMENT.

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;
- death of a member of the immediate family **within three months** of the examination;
- very serious and disruptive crisis/incident **at or near the time of the examination.**

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;
- very recent death of member of extended family;
- severe or permanent bodily injury occurring **at the time of the examination**;
- serious crisis/incident **at the time of the examination**.

N.B. 'Very recent' is defined as within one month of the examination(s) taking place.

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 a severe congenital/medical condition or a psychological condition;
- broken limbs;
- organ disease;
- physical assault trauma before an examination;
- recent crisis/incident;
- witnessing a distressing event **on the day** of the examination involved.

N.B. 'Recent' is defined as four months prior to the examination(s) taking place.

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

- illness **at the time of the examination**;
- broken limb on the mend;
- concussion;
- effects of pregnancy (**not pregnancy per se**);
- extreme distress **on the day of an 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)**.

(Where extra time has been used following formal approval, this should be included in the calculation.)

(Supervised rest breaks **must not** be included in the total duration of the papers when applying for special consideration.)

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;
- hay fever **on the day** of an examination;
- minor upset arising from administrative problems.

Where the request for special consideration fails to meet the criteria it will be rejected.

If you believe, that your son/daughter is eligible for Special Consideration, a completed form (available from the school website) should be completed and submitted, together with a **Doctor's letter**, giving details of disadvantage and date problem occurred. Forms and doctor's letters should be left in the school office in an envelope marked FAO. Mrs Ferguson by the date shown on the form. Please note that forms must be signed by both the candidate and parent/guardian to be accepted.

Submission of an application form will not guarantee a successful application for Special Consideration. Advice will be sought from the Examining Board, where appropriate. The adjustment of marks is at the Examining Board's discretion and is not the decision of the school. Applications received after the date on the form or without medical evidence will not be accepted or submitted.