RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL

18th November 2026

Re: A Guide to Special Consideration

Dear Parents / Guardians

If you believe your son or daughter may be eligible for Special Consideration, please complete the **Special Consideration Application Form**, available on the school website, and submit it together with a doctor's letter confirming the nature of the circumstances, the impact on the candidate and the date(s) on which the issue occurred.

The completed form and supporting medical evidence should be placed in an envelope marked FAO: Examinations Officer, Mrs L Stockman and handed in to the school office by the deadline stated on the application form. Please note that applications must be signed by both the candidate and their parent/carer in order to be accepted.

Submitting an application does not guarantee that Special Consideration will be awarded. Where appropriate, the school will seek guidance from the relevant Examination Board. The decision to award any adjustment to marks rests solely with the Examination Board and not the school. Applications received after the stated deadline, or those submitted without the required medical evidence, will not be accepted or forwarded to the Examination Board.

The information in this document provides a brief summary of the JCQ guidance, ***A guide to the special consideration process****. The full guidance can be found on the* https://www.jcq.org.uk/knowledge-hub/a-guide-to-the-special-consideration-process-2/

What is Special Consideration?
Special consideration is an adjustment to the marks or grades of a candidate following an examination or assessment. It may be applied where a candidate has been affected by temporary illness, injury or other exceptional circumstances at the time of the assessment, which have disadvantaged them.

Special consideration is only available where a candidate:

- Has been fully prepared for the assessment.
- Has covered the entire course of study.
- Is unable to demonstrate their full knowledge and understanding because of circumstances beyond their control at the time of the assessment.

When can Special Consideration not be applied for?
Special consideration cannot be awarded where a candidate has been unable to develop their subject knowledge and understanding due to:

- Absence during the course.
- Joining the course partway through.
- Disruption to teaching and learning, for whatever reason.

Circumstances that may or may not qualify
Schools and colleges must not submit applications for trivial incidents. Applications should only be made where the circumstances meet the criteria outlined in the JCQ guidance.

Examples of trivial incidents
The following are examples of incidents that would **not** normally warrant special consideration:

- A bird tweeting outside the examination room.
- A lorry reversing.
- A toilet being flushed.
- Doors in a corridor adjacent to the examination room opening and closing.
- Very brief or momentary noise from aircraft, helicopters or lawnmowers.

Circumstances that may qualify
Examples of circumstances in which a candidate **may** be eligible for special consideration include:

- Temporary illness at the time of the assessment.
- A recent bereavement in the immediate family.
- A domestic crisis at the time of the assessment.
- A serious disturbance during an examination.
- An accidental event during an examination.
- International sporting commitments on the day of the assessment.
- Approved access arrangements not being in place.

Circumstances that do not qualify
The following circumstances **would not** normally be eligible for special consideration:

- Long-term illness.
- Bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless it is an anniversary or there are ongoing implications.
- Domestic inconvenience.
- Minor disturbance in the examination by another candidate.
- The consequences of committing a crime, taking alcohol or recreational drugs.
- The consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations.
- The failure of the centre to prepare candidates properly for the examination.
- Quality of teaching, staff shortages, planned building work or lack of facilities.
- Misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend the examination at the right time and in the right place.
- Misreading the instructions on the question paper.
- Conflicting personal arrangements, such as a wedding or holiday, on the day of the examination.
- Not submitting any coursework or non-examination assessment at all.
- Missing all examinations and internally-assessed components or units.
- Failure to cover the course because of joining the class partway through.
- A disability or learning difficulties.
- Failure by the centre to process access arrangements by the published deadline.

Further information about eligible and ineligible circumstances can be found in paragraphs 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the JCQ guidance.

Candidates who attend an assessment but are disadvantaged
A candidate who attends an examination or completes an assessment may be eligible for special consideration if circumstances beyond their control have had a material and detrimental effect on their performance.
The following key points apply:

- The school or college must be satisfied that the candidate has been materially disadvantaged.
- Special consideration is normally applied as an additional mark allowance to each affected component within a qualification.
- The percentage awarded depends on the timing, nature and severity of the illness or circumstances.
- The maximum allowance is 5% of the total raw marks available for the component concerned, including coursework or non-examination assessment.
- Special consideration cannot be accumulated across different circumstances.

Candidates, parents or carers should discuss any potential application for special consideration with the school or college.

Private candidates should contact the school or college that made their examination entries to discuss an application.

How are special consideration percentages determined?
The percentage awarded depends on the individual circumstances and the extent to which the candidate has been disadvantaged. The following categories provide examples of the circumstances that may fall within each percentage band.

5% – Exceptional circumstances
This is the maximum allowance and is reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:

- Terminal illness of the candidate.
- Terminal illness of a parent or carer, brother or sister.
- Death of a member of the immediate family within three months of the examination.
- An exceptional and disruptive crisis or incident at or near the time of the examination, such as an attempted murder against the candidate.

4% – Very serious circumstances
Examples include:

- Life-threatening illness of the candidate or a member of their immediate family.
- Major surgery at or near the time of the examination.
- Severe disease, for example cancer.
- Very recent death of a member of the extended family.
- A life-changing injury occurring at the time of the examination.
- A serious crisis or incident at the time of the examination, such as a severe assault or serious accident.
- Admission to hospital for a mental health condition or eating disorder.

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

3% – Serious circumstances
This is a more common category, and examples include:

- A recent traumatic experience, such as the death of a close friend or distant relative.
- Recent illness or injury of a more serious nature.
- A flare-up of a long-term medical condition, such as Crohn's disease.

- A flare-up of a psychological or mental health condition.
- Deterioration of a candidate's disability.
- Broken limbs.
- Trauma resulting from a physical assault before an examination.
- A recent crisis or incident.
- Witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination.
- Approved access arrangements not being provided to the candidate during the examination.
- A cyber attack that significantly affects the completion of coursework or non-examination assessments.

Note: 'Recent' is defined as up to four months before the examination(s) take place.

2% – Moderate circumstances

This is the most common category. Examples include:

- Illness at the time of the examination.
- Mild depression for which the candidate is receiving treatment.
- A broken limb that is recovering.
- Concussion.
- The effects of pregnancy (rather than pregnancy itself).
- Extreme distress on the day of the examination, beyond normal examination-related stress.
- The final examination of the day where a candidate has been entered for three or more examinations timetabled on the same day, and the total examination time exceeds:
    - 5 hours 30 minutes for GCSE Level 1 and Level 2 examinations.
    - 6 hours for GCE and Level 3 examinations.

For the final examination of the day, any additional time used following formal approval must be included when calculating the total examination duration. Supervised rest breaks must not be included.

1% – Minor circumstances

This allowance is reserved for more minor problems, including:

- Ongoing noise during an examination.
- Illness of another candidate resulting in minor disruption in the examination room.
- Stress or anxiety for which medical advice has been sought and/or medication has been prescribed.
- Hay fever on the day of an examination.
- Minor upset arising from administrative problems, such as initially being issued with the wrong question paper.

Important information

The percentages above are intended as a guide to the types of circumstances that may be considered. They do not guarantee that an application will be successful or that a particular percentage will be awarded. Every application is considered individually and must meet the relevant JCQ criteria. The school or college must be satisfied that the circumstances have had a material and detrimental effect on the candidate's examination performance or assessment.

Where an application does not meet the required criteria, it will be rejected and a clear reason will be provided.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Stockman
Examination Officer