

Special Consideration Policy

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Special Consideration Policy

1. Scope

This policy is for centres to provide an understanding of the special consideration requirements for candidates where their assessment performance is affected by circumstances outside of their control. This policy applies to all WJEC qualifications, including those under the Eduqas brand, with the exception of Level 3 Foundation Diploma in Art (first teaching from 2017) where the arrangements for special consideration are detailed in the specification.

WJEC, as a member of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), follows the JCQ guidelines for special consideration as detailed in '[A guide to the special consideration process](#)'. This guidance is followed by all JCQ Awarding Organisations and ensures consistent application of the requirements. This policy should be read in conjunction with the JCQ guidance, with the requirement that centres adhere to both documents.

Special consideration can only go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in their assessments. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. This means that there will be some situations where candidates should not be entered for a qualification or a unitised examination. This is because only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded and to make larger adjustments would jeopardise the standard of the qualification.

1.1 Definition and Eligibility

Special Consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade where an adverse issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their normal level of attainment in an assessment. For example, a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their control **at the time of the assessment**. Special consideration can only be awarded where a candidate:

- ✓ has been fully prepared for assessments
- ✓ has covered the entire course
- ✓ cannot fully demonstrate their subject knowledge and understanding due to circumstances beyond their control at the time of the assessment(s)

Special consideration cannot be applied for if the candidate was not able to develop their subject knowledge and understanding due to:

- ✗ absence during the course
- ✗ joining the course late
- ✗ teaching and learning being disrupted for any reason

The JCQ guidance (chapter 2) clearly states the eligibility criteria for special consideration.

There are two categories of special consideration:

- *Present but disadvantaged*
- *Absent*

The Special Consideration process allows either an adjustment to the mark awarded to a candidate in the case of a *present but disadvantaged* assessment (noting grade-based assessments such as pass/fail are ineligible) or an estimated mark or grade (also called an aegrotat) to be applied in the event of an absence from an assessment.

Section 4.3 of the [JCQ Special Consideration guide](#) states: *Centre staff must follow their internal procedures for dealing with candidates who feel unwell on the day of an examination* and therefore it is for the centre to decide if a candidate is not fit on the day to take an assessment.

Where a candidate has a disability that prevents them from undertaking an assessment, and no other reasonable adjustment can be identified to facilitate access, an exemption as an Access Arrangement may be considered in line with section 5.17 [within JCQ's Access Arrangements & Reasonable Adjustments guidance](#): this must be approved by WJEC in advance of the assessment, and not requested at the time of the assessment.

WJEC will consider awarding special consideration *absent* for candidates who are unable to attempt or complete an assessment where a flare-up of a known disability occurs at the time of the assessment. A centre's application for special consideration must demonstrate that appropriate access arrangements/reasonable adjustments have been considered to maximise the opportunity for the candidate to undertake/complete the assessment.

1.2 Minimum Requirements

The minimum requirements for a special consideration *absent* request (also called enhanced grading) are **one whole component/unit, which is a minimum of 15% of the qualification**. The following exceptions apply:

- Unitised A level: one whole component/unit, which is a minimum of 15% of the qualification with at least one A2 unit completed
- T level Building Services and Engineering: one whole sub-component, which can either be an examination or an employer-set project
- National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate: both Challenge components must have been completed
- Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales: the Global Community Project and Future Destinations Project must have been completed, and the first three Specific Skills for the Individual Project

The following qualifications will not be eligible for special consideration *absent* and therefore if an assessment is not completed, a grade cannot be issued:

- Extended Project
- Level 2 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development (CCPLD): Core
- Level 2 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development (CCPLD): Practice & Theory
- Level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development (CCPLD): Practice & Theory

1.3 Absences for candidates not certificating (unitised assessments)

For unitised assessments taken in an examination series prior to the certificating series, candidates must be re-entered for any missed units at the next assessment opportunity. Unless there are specific difficulties arising, e.g. pair/group performances which cannot be repeated, special consideration will not be awarded.

1.4 Absences in non-examination assessments (NEA)

Special consideration *absent* can only be applied for candidates who have valid grounds and where the application is supported by the centre. Candidates who refuse to attempt an NEA, e.g. an oracy assessment, will not be eligible for special consideration *absent*.

Where a candidate's absence also impacts on other candidates, for example within paired or group oracy discussions or performances, the procedure below should be followed.

- i. Centres should make every effort to reschedule an NEA assessment in the first instance, noting that it may still be possible for a group assessment to take place if 1 person is absent, subject to individual specification requirements on minimum numbers within groups, and the centre should consider if this is appropriate at the time of the original assessment.
- ii. Where possible, the centre should explore the use of a non-assessed group member(s), for example using a teacher, teaching assistant or non-assessed actor. This should not be the person who is assessing the NEA task. Centres should refer to the individual subject specification for any specific subject requirements.
- iii. Where the centre has considered the steps above, and if the assessment has still been unable to take place (if not certificating in this series) the centre should consider entry in the subsequent series.
- iv. If entry in the subsequent series (if not certificating in this series) is not feasible, special consideration *absent* may be awarded. Centres must apply via a [JCQ Form 10](#), which can also be used for group applications, i.e. if there are multiple candidates under which the same issue applies. The application should include:
 - the reason for requesting special consideration *absent*
 - details of reattempt(s)
 - why non-assessed members could not be used (where applicable), and
 - a compelling explanation of why re-entering in the subsequent series will not be feasible.

Where approved by WJEC, an application will be held on file and an absence projection applied retrospectively at the end of the certificating series: this is to allow a projection to be calculated on a candidate's performance in all units within the qualification. The centre must also re-enter the candidate for the missed units in the certificating series so that an absence projection can be applied.

Where a candidate's absence does not impact on other candidates, e.g. for individual tasks, centres should still follow the procedure noted above, omitting step ii).

Vocational Qualifications

WJEC's decision to award special consideration in vocational qualifications will be based on factors including the severity of the circumstances, the date of the assessment and the nature of the assessment. The JCQ guidelines for special consideration remain applicable although it is important to note that it may not be possible to apply special consideration where:

- an assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence;
- the assessment criteria must be fully met;
- units or qualifications confer a 'Licence to Practise'

Where an assessment is not timetabled and has been missed (e.g. an on-demand test, or portfolio of evidence), the centre should offer the learner the opportunity to complete the assessment at a later date.

2. How to apply for special consideration

WJEC are unable to accept requests for special consideration from candidates or parents/guardians. All applications must be made by the centre and supported by a member of the senior leadership team. Supporting evidence must be available on request.

Private candidates should liaise with the entering centre so that they can apply for special consideration on the private candidate's behalf.

All applications for special consideration must be made in line with the published deadlines. The special consideration deadlines for each series are published in the [Key Dates](#) document on WJEC's website. Applications received after the deadline are not guaranteed to be processed prior to results issue. Applications received after results day will be considered in exceptional circumstances only.

- For written, timetabled assessments, a centre can apply for special consideration on behalf of a candidate using the special consideration online platform on [WJEC's Portal](#).
- For coursework or a non-examination assessment (NEA), a centre can apply for special consideration via the [JCQ Form 10](#) and send this via email to specialrequirements@wjec.co.uk.
- Where a candidate is sitting multiple assessments, there is no need to submit individual applications each time. If the candidate was affected in the same way in multiple assessments, centres are advised to wait until the last assessment within that series has passed and then submit one application to cover all affected components/units.
- Where multiple candidates are affected by the same issue and to the same extent within the same assessment, there is no need to submit individual applications for each candidate. A group application can be made via WJEC's Portal for timetabled assessments, or via a [JCQ Form 10](#) for coursework or NEA assessments.

3. The status of an application

For online applications, centres can check the status of the application via the online portal. This will state whether it has been accepted, rejected, pending or withdrawn.

Statuses are as follows:

- Accepted: the application has been approved, and the relevant adjustment will be applied
- Rejected: the application has not been approved
- Pending: the application has been received, and a decision will be made by WJEC's Special Requirements Team
- Pending – Evidence Required: the centre must provide further information and/or evidence to support the application
- Withdrawn: the application has been withdrawn

Where special consideration has been applied, an @ symbol will show next to the candidate's grade on the Results section of the WJEC Portal. Printed results slips do not include a special consideration indicator.

4. How additional marks have been applied

When applying special consideration, WJEC cannot use grades/marks which are predicted by the centre. This is to ensure all candidates are assessed according to the same criteria and that the standard of the assessment is upheld when marks/grades are awarded.

WJEC will follow the JCQ guidance which ensures a consistent approach is taken by all JCQ Awarding Organisations. For *present but disadvantaged* requests, a small percentage (also called a tariff) is applied to the mark awarded, with a maximum of 5% of the raw marks of the assessment. The percentage applied is determined by using the guidelines agreed by all JCQ Awarding Organisations. Special consideration tariffs cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion, for example where there are multiple issues affecting a candidate at the time of the assessment. Only one application per candidate and assessment will be accepted.

Where a mark is estimated in the case of a special consideration *absent* request, WJEC will follow the approach outlined in the document: '[Special consideration methodologies for projecting mark based linear and unitised qualifications](#)'. The methodology assumes that the candidate will perform as well (no better, no worse) in the assessment with the missing mark compared to their performance on their other assessments when compared to the national cohort.

Special consideration information will not be shown on results certificates or in information provided to UCAS.

5. Appeals

A centre can appeal against a decision for special consideration on either the tariff awarded in a *present but disadvantaged* application, or on an estimated mark/grade (aegrotat) in an *absent* application.

Appeals must be made in writing and submitted to WJEC in accordance with [JCQ's](#) and [WJEC's Appeals Policy](#).

6. Further advice

Centres should refer to this policy and the [JCQ guidance](#) in the first instance. If further support or advice is required, centres can contact WJEC's Special Requirements Team either via email to specialrequirements@wjec.co.uk, or by telephone on 02920 265 155.

7. Version control and policy review date

Version Control	Date	Owner	Changes	Next Review
1.0	September 2026	Assistant Director: Policy & Regulation	Creation of Policy document	July 2027