



Special Consideration Policy

2025/2026

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Lisa Richards, April 2026	
Date of next review	February 2027

Key staff involved in the policy

Role	Name(s)
Principal	Lisa Richards
Vice Principal/Senior leader	Sheridan Lewis
Inclusive Learning Manager	Jane Martin
Examinations Manager	Cyanne Holt

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What is special consideration?

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade. This is to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside of the candidate's control at the time of the assessment. It is applied when the 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 his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration can go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in their examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate. This means that there will be some situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. This is because only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. To make larger adjustments would jeopardize the standard of the examination. (JCQ's **A guide to the special consideration process**, chapter 1)

This document is further referred to in this policy as SC

A Reasonable Adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places a learner at a substantial disadvantage in an assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments are made to an assessment for a qualification (prior to the assessment date) to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification. (See Access Arrangements Policy)

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities in the special consideration and reasonable adjustments process and confirms that Ashton Sixth Form College will... *submit any applications for special consideration and/or reasonable adjustments where candidates meet the published criteria.* (JCQ's General regulations for approved centres, section 5.9 I and AIM)

Eligibility for special consideration

Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre/Principal

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication SC
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies by the examinations manager

Examinations Manager

- Understands the criteria as detailed in SC to determine where candidates will/will not be eligible for special consideration
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies

Teaching staff, Senior Tutors and/or Inclusive Learning (IL) staff

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to determine a candidate's eligibility for special consideration.

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Provide any medical or other evidence that may be required to determine eligibility for special consideration

Applying for special consideration

Where eligible, special consideration will be applied for in a specific exam series where candidates... 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. (SC 2)

Examples where Special Consideration could be applied:

1. Where a candidate may arrive for an exam and is clearly unwell, extremely distressed and/or may have sustained an injury that requires emergency access arrangements to be put in place:
 - the candidate will be kept comfortable and under supervision from the required time while appropriate arrangements are put in place for the candidate to take the exam in the best possible conditions
 - a judgement will be made on how the candidate's situation or disposition affected performance in the exam
 - where appropriate and where eligible, special consideration will be applied for
2. Where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.), special consideration will be applied for on behalf of all candidates.
3. Where a candidate takes multiple exams (three or more exams) timetabled for the same day and the total duration for those papers is more than 6 hours for GCE exams including any approved extra time but not any time taken for supervised rest breaks, special consideration for an allowance on the last paper taken will be applied for.

NOTE: Where a candidate may be affected by a minor disturbance in the exam room caused by another candidate (momentary bad behaviour, mobile phone ringing etc.), special consideration cannot be applied for.

If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and the centre can support this, special consideration will be applied for if the exam missed is in the terminal series and the minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence can be met. (4.3) If there is an opportunity to re-enter the candidate in the next available exam series, the centre will make the entry and special consideration will not be applied for.

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration will be explored in SC 5 and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:

- other certification
- coursework/non-examination assessment extensions
- shortfall in work (coursework/non-examination assessment)
- lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components)
- candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper
- candidates undertaking the wrong controlled assessment or non-examination assessment assignment

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in a vocational qualification, the centre will follow SC 7 and awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

Applying for reasonable adjustments

Where eligible, reasonable adjustments/access arrangements will be applied for in a specific exam series where... adjustments/arrangements are made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a learner to

demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the

4. Revising usual assessment arrangements, e.g., allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment, including making up time if rest breaks are taken
5. Adapting assessment materials, e.g., providing materials in Braille
6. Providing assistance during assessment, e.g., a sign language interpreter or a reader, scribe
7. Reorganising the assessment room, e.g., removing adverse visual stimuli for an autistic learner
8. Changing the assessment method, e.g., from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
9. Using assistive technology, e.g., screen/computer reading or voice activated software
10. Providing different coloured backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or using different coloured paper for paper-based assessments

specification for that qualification

Examples where Reasonable Adjustments could be applied:

Processing applications for special consideration and/or access arrangements

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Ensures that all eligible applications for Special Consideration and Reasonable Adjustments will be supported by signed evidence produced by a member of the senior leadership
- Ensures that there are appropriate resources in place at the time of examinations/assessment to meet candidates' need, e.g. sufficient readers and scribes.
- Ensures that there is a written process in place to not only check the qualification(s) of their assessor(s) but that the correct procedures are followed as per JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable

Senior leadership team

- Produce signed evidence in support of all eligible applications. (for Special Consideration and Reasonable Adjustments, respectively)

Examinations Manager

- Understands that special consideration must be applied for **at the time of the assessment**
- Understands that special consideration cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion and that where a candidate may be affected by different indispositions, special consideration should only be applied for the most serious indisposition.
- Ensures applications will be processed as required by the awarding bodies
- Keeps evidence to support all applications on file until after the publication of results and provides the signed evidence provided by a member of the senior leadership to support an application

where this may be requested by an awarding body with respect to special consideration or reasonable adjustment applications

- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications
- Will be guided by Higher Education Manager with respect to Special Considerations and/or Reasonable Adjustments required for candidates accessing qualifications via AIM and follow AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group procedures for requesting reasonable adjustment or special consideration within the timeframes that align with AIM's requirements

Teaching staff, Senior Tutors and/or Inclusive Learning (IL) staff

- Provide any appropriate evidence or information that may be required to support a candidate's application for special consideration / examination access arrangement
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Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Candidates are advised at point of admission to College to advise whether they have previously had or think they are entitled to examination access arrangements. Candidates are responsible to make an appointment with the Inclusive Learning department, who can assess and determine what (if any) reasonable adjustments are required prior for external assessments
- Will be required to submit a Special Consideration request via the Examinations Department and Access Arrangements via Inclusive Learning Department.
- Will be asked to provide any required medical or other evidence that may be required to support an application for special consideration or reasonable adjustments
- Will be informed that all cases must be dealt with by the centre

Submitting applications for special consideration

Where a candidate or group of candidates is/are eligible for special consideration, applications will be submitted to the relevant awarding body following the published processes of each awarding body.

Evidence to support all applications will be kept on file until after the publication of results.

Timetabled written exams

- For GCE qualifications, applications for individual candidates will be submitted online by logging into the relevant awarding body secure extranet site and following the links to special consideration
- The processes for submitting a single application to cover all exams where a candidate is present but disadvantaged and a separate application for each day where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason detailed in SC 6 will be followed
- For other qualifications, applications will be submitted online where the awarding body's secure system accepts these
- The paper form 10 Application for special consideration will only be completed and submitted to the awarding body where a paper application is specifically required by the awarding body
- For groups of candidates, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts group applications or form 10 will be completed
- The paper form 14 Self certification form (Self certification for candidates who have missed an examination) will only be completed by a candidate where circumstances warrant this and will not be used where the centre knows the candidate was ill

Internally assessed work

- Where appropriate, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts them or form 10 will be completed and submitted to the awarding body
- Where an extension to a deadline is being requested, the awarding body will be contacted directly
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work, this will be submitted online or by completing form 10, dependent on the awarding body

Post assessment adjustments – vocational qualifications

- Where relevant and eligible, form 10 will be completed and submitted to the awarding body

Late applications

If, after the publication of results for a particular exam series, a claim is made that special consideration was not applied for at the time of an assessment where a candidate was eligible, the claimant will be informed that late applications will only be accepted by an awarding body in the most exceptional circumstances and where a member of the senior leadership team is able to produce evidence to support a late application.

If a claim is made after the completion of a review of results, the claimant will be informed that an application for special consideration cannot be submitted.