

Special Consideration Policy



BHS Qualifications (BHSQ) is committed to making sure all its activities are conducted fairly, transparently and objectively. BHSQ manages special considerations by working with BHSQ approved centres to ensure there are effective internal procedures for identifying the need to apply for special consideration, to meet the needs of individual learners.

BHSQ will assist approved centres to ensure fairness and accuracy to learners and certification, as well as review these processes as part of BHSQ's ongoing monitoring and review procedures.

This document will:

- Define special consideration
- BHSQ's approach for the application of special consideration
- Identify situations where special consideration can or cannot be applied
- How to apply for special consideration
- Centre responsibilities and requirements.

Date for review: March 2021

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Definition

Ofqual's definition of special consideration is detailed in the General Conditions of Recognition:

“**Special consideration** is consideration to be given to a learner who has temporarily experienced -

- (a) an illness or injury, or
- (b) some other event outside of the learner's control,

which has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.”

SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles defines special consideration as:

“A post assessment adjustment to a learner's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or any other indisposition at the time of assessment.”

BHSQ's approach for the application of special consideration

BHSQ is responsible for ensuring approved centres effectively manage applications for special consideration and that learners are given equality of opportunity, whilst not threatening the integrity of the qualification.

To do this, BHSQ will:

- Ensure all assessors and internal verifiers complete successfully the BHSQ standardisation test, within which an understanding of special considerations is covered
- Maintain, review and analyse a register to ensure that the application of special considerations granted to centres is consistent and appropriate.

These processes are managed by the BHSQ Quality and Operations team with oversight by the Responsible Officer.

For all BHSQ qualifications, there is unlikely to be a need for approved centres to apply for special consideration - learners are generally studying on a mode free qualification that offers flexibility in the assessment process, individual timing and progression.

Each request for special consideration will be unique to that learner or assessment and will be made on an individual basis. BHSQ's decision to award special consideration will be based on sufficient valid evidence provided by the approved centre. In nearly all circumstances it is more appropriate for the approved centre to offer the learner an opportunity to retake an assessment at a later date. BHSQ will provide the approved centre with support and advice if needed.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage, neither should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's result must reflect their achievement in the assessment and not necessarily their potential ability.

Situations where special consideration can or cannot be applied

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment **may be** eligible to apply for special consideration:

- The learner's performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond their control, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment
- Previously agreed reasonable adjustments proved inappropriate or inadequate
- Failure by the approved centre to implement previously agreed reasonable adjustments, putting the learner at a disadvantage during the assessment.

Other examples for when a learner **may be** eligible for special consideration:

- Lost or damaged portfolio work
- Long term physical injury sustained during a scheduled assessment where alternative evidence is available to demonstrate competence.

Examples of when a learner **will not be** eligible for special consideration:

- The assessment criteria have to be fully met
- An assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence
- The qualification is a 'Licence to Practice'
- An assessment has been missed where the learner has the opportunity to take it at a later date
- On demand assessments that can be rescheduled
- Insufficient evidence is supplied by the approved centre that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition
- Preparation for assessments is affected by difficulties during the course, e.g. lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff.

How to apply for special consideration

All requests for special consideration must be submitted for each individual learner to BHSQ on the application form for special consideration. The application should be submitted as soon as possible after the assessment and no later than 15 working days after the assessment.

To ensure effective processing of applications, approved centres must submit sufficient valid evidence to support the application. This may include medical evidence, statements from persons present during the assessment (assessor/IV/venue/centre personnel), or any other appropriate documentation and information. During the processing of an application, BHSQ will only liaise with the approved centre making the application for special consideration on behalf of a learner.

The application should be signed and dated by the Head of Centre, the signatory must declare that the information given is accurate. BHSQ will confirm receipt of the application within 3 working days of receipt. A log of all correspondence, documentation and conversations will be retained by BHSQ.

The application and all supporting evidence will be considered by BHSQ, and a decision will be provided in writing to the approved centre within 10 working days of receipt of the application and all supporting evidence.

If the application for special consideration is successful, the candidate's performance will be reviewed in light of available evidence and may result in a post assessment adjustment to a learners result. It should however be noted that a successful application will not automatically change a learner's result.

Centre responsibilities and requirements

The approved centre is responsible for ensuring it has effective internal procedures for identifying the need to apply for special consideration and that these procedures comply with appropriate legislation. This includes the provision for supporting learner's progression and the opportunity to take/retake assessments at a later date.

It is important that the approved centre records applications for special consideration and these will be reviewed by BHSQ during approved centre visits.

Approved centres should be aware that failing to comply with BHSQ's policy has the potential to constitute malpractice and may lead BHSQ to withholding affected results. Examples of failing to comply:

- The approved centre putting in place arrangements for special consideration without seeking prior approval from BHSQ
- Altering the result of an assessment where an application for special consideration should be submitted to BHSQ
- Failing to maintain records for audit.

If a learner is not satisfied with the management of special consideration then they can subsequently use the appeals or complaints procedure.

Monitoring and Review

This document and its content will be reviewed on a three year cycle, or earlier should it be needed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and reflects the types of special considerations that have arisen.

Document history

Version	Revision date	Reason
2	14/03/2018	Revision of previous policy (30/01/2016) to enhance regulatory compliance

Please note: This document is uncontrolled once printed. Please check with BHSQ for the most up to date version.

Application for Special Consideration

Approved centres will use this form to apply for special consideration. All requests must be applied in line with BHSQ policy. A copy of this form must be retained by the approved centre.

Centre Name			
Learner Name			
Learner ID number			
Qualification			
Reason for application			
Detail the circumstances affecting performance in assessment			
Supporting evidence (please attach)			
<p>DECLARATION</p> <p>I confirm that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information provided on this form is accurate • Any adjustment to the learner's result will not compromise assessment validity or reliability, or give the learner in question an unfair assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments • The special consideration has been made in line with BHSQ policy. 			
Name		Signature	
Position in centre		Date	

Please return to BHS Qualifications, Abbey Park, Stareton, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2XZ