Special Consideration Policy 2026-2027

Horizons Elevate

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Centre name	Horizons Elevate
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Key staff involved in the policy

Role	**Name**
Head of centre	Claire Willmott
Senior leader(s)	Claire Willmott - Executive head Charlotte Baggley - Head Ashley Sparks - Deputy
Exams officer	Elodie Fuller
SENCo (or equivalent role)	Carol Johnson
Other staff (if applicable)	

This policy is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that the special consideration process at Horizons Elevate is managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations and reflects centre practice.

References in this policy to GR, SC and ICE refer to the JCQ documents **General Regulations for Approved Centres**, **A guide to the special consideration process** and **Instructions for conducting examinations**.

Introduction

Special consideration can only be awarded where a candidate has been fully prepared for assessments and covered the entire course but their ability to demonstrate their subject knowledge and understanding is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of the assessment(s).

A centre must decide whether the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration. An awarding body cannot determine the candidate's eligibility and make the decision for the centre.

Applications must only be processed where they are supported by the centre and the candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration with evidence in place.

If the centre does not support an online application for special consideration, then it must not be submitted to the relevant awarding body or bodies. Speculative applications for special consideration cannot be accepted.

Where a candidate does not meet the published criteria for special consideration, the awarding body will reject the application and provide clear reasons for doing so.

Centres must not submit applications for special consideration for trivial cases.

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. To make larger adjustments would jeopardize the standard of the qualification. (SC 1)

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities within the special consideration process and confirms Horizons Elevate will submit any applicationa for special consideration where candidates meets the published criteria. (GR 5.9)

Eligibility for special consideration

- 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 (SC 2)
- Special consideration must be applied for at the time of the assessment (SC 2)
- Candidates will not be eligible for special consideration if preparation for, or performance in the examination is affected by the reasons detailed in the JCQ document **A guide to the special consideration process** (SC 2)

Roles and responsibilities

The role of the head of centre

- Be familiar with, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ publication **A guide to the special consideration process**
- Ensure where a candidate meets the published criteria, an application for special consideration will be submitted to the relevant awarding body by the exams office

Additional responsibilities:

Not applicable.

The role of the exams office

- Refer to the criteria detailed in the JCQ document **A guide to the special consideration process** to determine where a candidate is/is not eligible for special consideration

- Where a candidate meets the published criteria, submit an application for special consideration to the relevant awarding body

Additional responsibilities:

Not applicable.

The role of the senior leader

- Authorise appropriate evidence to support all eligible applications (SC 6)
- Ensure that if the centre does not support an application for special consideration, it will not be submitted to the relevant awarding body

Additional responsibilities:

Not applicable.

The role of other staff

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

Additional responsibilities:

Not applicable.

The role of an affected candidate (or parent/carer)

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

Additional responsibilities:

Not applicable.

Applying for special consideration

At Horizons Elevate, where a candidate is eligible, special consideration will be applied for at the time of the assessment in accordance with the regulations as detailed in the JCQ document **A guide to the special consideration process**.

For candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged Horizons Elevate must be satisfied that there has been a material detrimental effect on candidate examination performance or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment.

Examples where a candidate/candidates may be eligible for special consideration include:

A candidate arrives for the examination 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 is kept under centre supervision (from 30 minutes after the published starting time for that examination until they begin it) while appropriate arrangements are put in place for the candidate to take the examination (ICE 6)
- special consideration is applied if this indisposition has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on the candidate's ability to demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in the examination (SC 1)
- Application for an allowance on the 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 6 hours (GCE and Level 3 exams) or more than 5 hours 30 minutes (GCSE, Level 1 and Level 2 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 (SC 3)

- Serious disturbance during the examination (SC 2)
- Candidates will not be eligible for special consideration if preparation for, or performance in the examination is affected by a minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour, a mobile phone ringing, or a momentary fire alarm (SC 2)

  (In accordance with SC 1: A centre **must not** submit applications for special consideration for trivial cases. Examples of trivial cases which **would not** warrant special consideration include, but are not limited to: 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 short, momentary noise from, for example, aeroplanes, helicopters, lawn mowers)

Additional examples:

Not applicable.

Candidates who are absent from a timetabled component or unit for acceptable reasons

If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and Horizons Elevate is prepared to support an application for special consideration, special consideration will be applied for if the examination missed is in the terminal series and the minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence can be met. (SC 4)

For unitised examinations taken in an examination series prior to certification, candidates must be re-entered for any missed units at the next assessment opportunity. Unless there are difficulties arising, e.g. group performances which cannot be repeated, special consideration will not be awarded. (SC 4)

Other issues

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration will be explored in **A guide to the special consideration process** and applied for where eligible. This may include, for example:

- Other certification (SC 5)
- Shortfall in work (coursework/non-examination assessment) (SC 5)
- Lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components) (SC 5)
- Candidates issued with an incorrect or incomplete question paper, set the wrong coursework or non-examination assessment task or taught the wrong set text (SC 5)

Additional issues:

Not applicable.

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post-assessment adjustment) in other vocational qualifications, Horizons Elevate will follow **A guide to special consideration** (7) and awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

Processing applications for special consideration

The role of the head of centre

- Ensure, before any applications are processed, that the centre is satisfied that the candidates' circumstances warrant special consideration, as set out within the JCQ document **A guide to the special consideration process** (SC 6)
- Ensure that any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria and are sufficiently evidenced will be submitted to the relevant awarding body (SC 6)

Additional responsibilities:

Not applicable.

The role of the exams office

- Ensure applications are processed as required by the awarding bodies
- Ensure a candidate/candidates (or a parent/carer) understands that all cases must be dealt with by the centre (SC 6)
- Ensure that special consideration is applied for at the time of the assessment
- Ensure special consideration is not applied for in a cumulative fashion and where a candidate may be affected by different indispositions, ensure special consideration is only applied for the most serious indisposition
- Keep evidence to support all applications on file until after the publication of results and provide the appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team to support an application where this may be requested by an awarding body (SC 6)
- Meet the awarding body deadline(s) for submitting applications

Other responsibilities:

Not applicable.

Submitting applications for special consideration

At Horizons Elevate, 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 in **A guide to the special consideration process**.

In cases of online applications for special consideration, the candidate/candidates will be informed when an application for special consideration is submitted to the awarding body (to ensure compliance with the UK GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018).

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

Timetabled written examinations

- 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 (where the awarding body's secure site accepts applications online)
- A single application to cover all examinations affected where a candidate is present but disadvantaged and a separate application for each day on which examinations are missed where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason will be submitted
- Form 14 **Self certification form** (Self certification for candidates who have missed an examination) will only be completed by a candidate/parent/carer 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 (**Application for special consideration**) will be completed and submitted to the awarding body
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work for an individual candidate, this will be submitted by completing Form 10, attached to a breakdown of marks across the assessment objectives

Applications post-publication of results

If, after the publication of results for a particular examination 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 senior leader is able to produce compelling evidence to support a late application.

The application must be submitted before the deadline for reviews of results for the respective exam series.

Changes effective from 1 September 2026

In terms of JCQ regulations (effective from 1 September 2026), no changes are currently applicable to this policy. The JCQ document A guide to the special consideration process (Effective from 1 September 2025) currently (September 2026) continues to apply.

Centre-specific changes

New Exam officer in post - Elodie Fuller

Centre name change - Horizons Elevate