



much more than just a school



17 May 2024



Dear Parents and Carers

Special consideration in the summer exam series



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.



However, it should be noted that **long term conditions or illnesses which affect the candidate are not covered** in the special consideration process, unless medical evidence is produced to show how this condition has flared up at the time of the exams. A permanent disability would result in reasonable adjustments to the way in which the exam is sat, not a post exam mark change.



What are the criteria for special consideration?

JCQ (who oversee all the qualifications we offer at school) have set out clear guidelines as to what circumstances would qualify for special consideration. The full example list is attached to the Appendix 1 in this letter. However, the most commonly cited criteria are temporary illness or injury at the time of the examination, bereavement close to the time of the assessments, or other domestic crisis.



If your child has a long-term condition or illness which affects their performance over the entire course, then this would normally be dealt with via access arrangements.



Success for All through Attainment, Resilience and Autonomy

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How does it affect exams?

The maximum additional allowance for Special Consideration is 5%, however this would only be applied in extreme situations. Most applications are allocated 1-3 %. Whilst this sounds very low, our experience is that even at these low levels it can make a positive difference, as the difference between grade boundaries can be very small, at around 7% on average.

The process for determining the level of special consideration is outlined in Appendix 2.

How to notify us if you think this applies in your child's case?

If, having read Appendix 1, you feel that your child is eligible for special consideration, please complete the form attached to this mailing and return it as soon as possible, and by 23rd June at the latest, to exams@pcs.hants.sch.uk

You will need to supply evidence to support your application, a short note from a medical practitioner for illness/injury, or an email from you detailing the specifics of bereavements or domestic emergencies.

We appreciate that circumstances might change between now and the time that your child sits their exams. This may well mean that you would apply for special consideration at a later date, up to the final day of the exam series. If this is the case, the earlier you can communicate with us the better.

If you have any questions or queries about this process, please do not hesitate to contact me at a.rose@pcs.hants.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "ARR".

Mr A Rose
Assistant Headteacher (Exams)



Appendix 1

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. These include:

- temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment;
- bereavement at the time of the assessment (where whole groups are affected, normally only those most closely involved will be eligible);
- domestic crisis arising at the time of the assessment;
- serious disturbance during an examination, particularly where recorded material is being used;
- accidental events at the time of the assessment such as being given the wrong examination paper, being given a defective examination paper or CD, failure of practical equipment, failure of materials to arrive on time;
- participation in sporting events, training camps or other events at an international level at the time of the assessment, e.g., representing their country at an international level in chess or football;
- failure by the centre to implement previously approved access arrangements for that specific examination series.

Additionally, JCQ detail a range of criteria for which special consideration would not be applied. For instance,

- long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of the assessment;
- bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are on-going implications such as an inquest or court case;
- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (including school/exchange visits and field trips) at the time of the assessment;
- minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour or a mobile phone ringing;
- the consequences of committing a crime, where formally charged or found guilty; (However, a retrospective application for special consideration may be considered where the charge is later dropped or the candidate is found not guilty.)
- the consequences of 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 for whatever reason;
- quality of teaching, staff shortages, building work or lack of facilities;
- misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- misreading the instructions of the question paper and answering the wrong questions;
- making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the examination timetable;
- submitting no coursework or non-examination assessment at all, unless coursework or non examination assessment is scheduled for a restricted period of time, rather than during the course;
- missing all examinations and internally assessed components/units;
- failure to cover the course because of joining the class part way through;
- a disability or learning difficulties (diagnosed or undiagnosed) unless illness affects the candidate at the time of the assessment or where the disability exacerbates what would otherwise be a minor issue – (difficulties over and above those that previously approved access arrangements would have alleviated).



Appendix 2

Special consideration will normally be given by applying an allowance of additional marks to each component affected within a specification. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total raw marks available in the component concerned, including coursework/non-examination assessment.

The decision made by the awarding body will be based on various factors which may vary from one subject to another. These may include:

- the severity of the circumstances;
- the date of the examination in relation to the circumstances; and
- the nature of the assessment, e.g., whether written papers are affected as opposed to coursework/non-examination assessment, or whether a Practical Test or Speaking Test is involved.

Special consideration cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion.

Examples for each of the bands are set out below.

5% This is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as: • terminal illness of the candidate; • terminal illness of a parent/carer; • death of a member of the immediate family within two months of the examination; • very serious and disruptive crisis/incident at or near the time of the examination.

4% Very serious problems such as: • life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family; • major surgery at or near the time of the examination; • severe disease; • very recent death of member of extended family; • severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examination; • serious crisis/incident at the time of the examination.

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

3% A more common category (more cases will fall into this category), including: • recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative; • recent illness of a more serious nature; • flare-up of a severe congenital/medical condition or a psychological condition; • broken limbs; • organ disease; • physical assault trauma before an examination; • recent crisis/incident; • witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination involved.

NB 'Recent' is defined as up to four months prior to the examination(s) taking place.

2% The most common category of allowance – most cases will fall within this category: • illness at the time of the examination; • broken limb on the mend; • concussion; • effects of pregnancy (not pregnancy per se); • extreme distress on the day of an examination (not simply exam related stress);

1% Reserved for more minor problems: • stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed; • hay fever on the day of an examination.



Application for Review of Special Consideration for Exams Summer 2024

All applications will be treated in strict confidence.

This form will be used to determine whether or not an application to the examination boards is appropriate.

The form must be completed in full with supporting evidence attached.

Candidate Name	
Candidate Number	
Date of Birth	
Applicant name and relationship to student	
Medical or other evidence	<i>Must be attached</i>

Date the problem began:

Is the problem continuing? Yes/No (delete as applicable)

Please provide a **brief** summary in the box below of any adverse circumstances affecting the candidate's examinations. You may continue on a separate sheet if required.

Illness/Injury – give details of the illness/injury

Bereavement – give details of the date of the bereavement and the relationship of the student to this person

Disruption/Crisis – give details of the disruption/crisis

Other – give details of this disadvantageous event or situation



Does this application apply to all May/June examinations? Yes/No
(delete as applicable)

If no, please list the examinations for which an application is requested and indicate whether the candidate was absent or present but disadvantaged.

Subject	Date of Exam	Absent	Present but disadvantaged

Please confirm the following statements

- I have included medical evidence where appropriate
- I understand that applying for special consideration does not automatically mean it will be awarded

Signed by Parent/Carer: Date:

Please return to Mrs Helen Patis h.patis@pcs.hants.sch.uk, Examinations Manager by the deadline of Friday 21 June 2024.