

Special Consideration Policy



BHS Qualifications (BHSQ) is committed to making sure all its activities are conducted safely, fairly, transparently and objectively. BHSQ manages special consideration 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. Special considerations are where a learner needs an adjustment to assessment as a result of a temporary situation.

BHSQ will assist approved centres to ensure fairness to learners and the accuracy of certification.

This document will:

- Define special consideration.
- Detail BHSQ's approach for the application of special consideration.
- Managing special consideration.
- Detail how to apply for special consideration.
- Outline centre responsibilities and requirements.

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Definition

The regulators in England, Wales and Northern Ireland define special consideration as:

“**Special consideration** is consideration to be given to a Learner who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of his or her control, which has, or is reasonably likely to have, materially affected the Learner’s ability to –

- (a) take an assessment, or
- (b) demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.”

The regulator in Scotland 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.

Special consideration must not give the learner an unfair advantage.

To do this, BHSQ will:

- Ensure the workforce understand special considerations and their application.
- Maintain, review, and analyse a register to ensure that the application of special consideration granted to centres is consistent and appropriate.

For BHSQ qualifications, there is unlikely to be a need for approved centres to apply for special consideration as learners are generally studying on a flexible qualification, where there are multiple opportunities for assessment. For example, a learner who has a temporary illness can delay their assessment until they have recovered.

Each request for special consideration will be unique to that learner or assessment. BHSQ’s decision to award special consideration will be made on an individual basis, based on evidence provided by the approved centre. BHSQ will provide the approved centre with support and advice if needed.

Managing special consideration

Learners are only eligible for special consideration if their temporary illness, temporary injury or any other indisposition at the time of assessment places them at a disadvantage, in comparison to others. Likewise any special consideration must not give the learners receiving the special consideration any advantage over others. To emphasise, it is essential that any learner receiving special consideration addresses the requirements of the specification. Careful management of the arrangements for special consideration is critical.

Approved centres must keep a record of special consideration. This will be reviewed by BHSQ during centre monitoring.

Examples of when a learner **may be** eligible to apply for special consideration if:

- The learner's performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond their control, for example but not limited to recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, or serious disturbance during the assessment.
- Previously agreed reasonable adjustments proved inappropriate or inadequate.
- Failure by the approved centre to implement previously agreed reasonable adjustments, has put the learner at a disadvantage during the assessment.
- Lost or damaged portfolio work that has been previously assessed.
- Physical injury sustained during a scheduled assessment where alternative evidence is available to demonstrate competence.

To reiterate, each application for special consideration will be reviewed individually. BHSQ will make decisions based on objective evidence.

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

- The assessment criteria have not been fully met.
- An assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence and they are not able to.
- An assessment has been missed and the learner has the opportunity to take it at a later date.
- On demand assessments are available and 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 circumstance.
- Preparation for assessments is affected by difficulties, for example, 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 no later than 15 working days after the assessment.

Approved centres must submit sufficient valid evidence to support the application. This may include, but is not limited to, medical evidence, statements from persons present during the assessment, and/or any other appropriate information. BHSQ will only liaise with the approved centre making the application on behalf of a learner.

The application should be signed and dated by the centre; the signatory must declare that the information given is accurate. BHSQ will confirm receipt of the application within 3 working days. Records will be retained by BHSQ.

BHSQ will inform the approved centre of the decision within 10 working days of receipt of the application.

If successful, the learner's result may be adjusted. However, this is not automatic.

Centre responsibilities and requirements

The approved centre must identify any special consideration fairly and promptly.

If an approved centre fails to comply with BHSQ's policy, this will constitute malpractice/maladministration. This may lead BHSQ to withhold results.

Examples of this may include:

- 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 have been submitted to BHSQ.
- Failing to maintain records.

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.

Date for review: August 2024

Document history

Version	Revision date	Reason
3	05/08/2021	To revise and replace previously produced document

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