

Complaints and appeals procedure (exams) (2025-2026)

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Committee Responsible	Full Governors' Body
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Introduction

Special consideration is given to a candidate who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or some other event outside of their 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. (SC 1)

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 jeopardise the standard of the qualification. (SC 1)

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.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities within the special consideration process and confirms Grey Court School will submit an application for special consideration where a candidate 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 2.1)

- 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 publication A guide to the special consideration process (SC 2.3)

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/officer

The role of the exams office/officer

- Refer to the criteria detailed in the JCQ publication 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

The role of the senior leader

- Sign appropriate evidence to support all eligible applications (SC 6)

The role of other staff

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

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

Applying for special consideration

At Grey Court School, 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 publication **A guide to the special consideration process.**

For candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged, Grey Court School 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 7.4)
- 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 timetable 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 3.3)
- Serious disturbance during the examination (SC 2.1)
- 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 or a mobile phone ringing (SC 2.3)

Additional examples:

Candidates who are absent from a timetabled component/unit for acceptable reasons If a candidate is absent for acceptable reasons, and Grey Court School 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)
- Coursework/non-examination assessment extensions (SC 5)
- Shortfall in work (coursework/non-examination assessment) (SC 5)
- Lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components) (SC 5)
- Candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper (SC 5) Candidates undertaking the wrong controlled assessment or non-examination assessment assignment (SC 5)

Additional issues:

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post-assessment adjustment) in a vocational qualification, Grey Court School will follow A guide to special consideration (section 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 all eligible applications are supported by appropriate evidence signed by a member of the senior leadership team (SC 6)

The role of the exams office/officer

- 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

Submitting applications for special consideration

At Grey Court School, 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 kept 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 10 Application for special consideration will only be completed and submitted to the awarding body where the online system does not accept applications for a particular qualification
- For cases involving groups of candidates, applications will be made online where the awarding body's secure system accepts group applications or form 10 will be completed

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 a short extension to a work submission deadline for an individual candidate is being requested, the awarding body will be contacted directly
- Where an application relates to a shortfall in work for an individual candidate, this will be submitted online or by completing form 10, dependent on the awarding body

Post-assessment adjustments - vocational qualifications

- Where the learner's circumstances are eligible, form 10 or form VQ/SC Application for special consideration Vocational qualifications will be completed and submitted to the awarding body
- Late applications 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. 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.

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

Examples:

- 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.

***All assessments measure what a candidate knows and can do. 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).

***Special consideration cannot be applied for if the candidate was not able to develop their subject knowledge and understanding due to absence during the course, joining the course late or teaching and learning being disrupted by staff shortages, planned building work or lack of specialist facilities.

*** The overall grade(s) awarded must reflect the candidate's level of attainment demonstrated in the assessment(s). Qualifications would not accurately reflect candidates' attainment if special consideration was given to reflect lost teaching and learning.