Special Consideration Policy

Approved……

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Key Staff involved in Special Consideration procedures

Head of Centre – Mr S Gilbert-Barnham
Exams Officer – Mrs L Abbotts-Freeman
Vice Principal - Mr D Richards
SENCO – Mrs P Richards

What defines special consideration?

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, injury or other adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment.

Special consideration can only be awarded where a candidate:

- has been fully prepared for the assessment(s);
- has covered the entire course; and
- is unable to demonstrate their normal level of attainment due to circumstances beyond their control at the time of the assessment.

Special consideration cannot be applied where a candidate's difficulties arise from:

- absence during the course;
- joining a course late;
- teaching and learning being disrupted for any reason; or
- factors that have not had a material effect on the assessment.

The academy will only submit applications where there is sufficient evidence and where the candidate meets the criteria published by JCQ.

Special consideration cannot be applied for where a candidate has been unable to demonstrate attainment due to absence during the course, joining the course late, or disruption to teaching and learning
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.

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.

Ormiston Venture Academy will only submit applications where there is sufficient evidence to support the application and where the candidate meets the published JCQ criteria.

Centre Responsibility

Ormiston Venture Academy is responsible for determining whether a candidate meets the published criteria for special consideration.

Awarding organisations do not decide whether a candidate is eligible; they consider applications submitted by the centre based on the evidence provided.

The academy will not submit speculative applications and will not submit applications where published criteria have not been met.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to identify roles and responsibilities in the special consideration process and confirms that Ormiston Venture Academy will submit any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria. (JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres, section 5.9)

Eligibility for special Consideration

Circumstances which may warrant special consideration include:

- temporary illness at the time of the assessment;
- injury immediately before or during the assessment;
- bereavement of a close family member;
- domestic crisis occurring at the time of the assessment;
- serious disturbance during an examination;
- incorrect examination papers or defective materials;
- failure of equipment during an assessment.

Each case will be considered individually and supported by appropriate evidence.

Roles and responsibilities

Head of centre

- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to the annually updated JCQ document. A guide to the special consideration process SC
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies by the exams officer

Exams officer

- Understands the criteria as detailed in a guide to the special consideration process SC to determine where candidates will/will not be eligible for special consideration
- Ensures that, where relevant and in eligible situations, applications for special consideration will be submitted to awarding bodies

Teaching staff and/or SENCo

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

Candidates (or parents/carers)

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

Applying for Special Consideration

Where eligible, special consideration will be applied for at the time of the assessment where candidates… 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, section 2)

For candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged, Ormiston Venture Academy must be satisfied that there has been a material detrimental effect on candidate's examination performance or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment. (SC, section 3)

1. Where a candidate may arrive for an exam 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 will be kept comfortable and under centre supervision from the required time while appropriate arrangements are put in place for the candidate to take the exam in the best possible conditions
    - a judgement will be made on how the candidate's situation or disposition affected performance in the exam
    - where appropriate and where eligible, special consideration will be applied for

2. Where candidates may be affected by a major disturbance in the exam room (emergency evacuation etc.), an online application for special consideration will be submitted to the relevant awarding body where candidates have been disadvantaged.
3. Special consideration will be applied for an allowance on the last paper taken in a day when a candidate has been entered for three or more exams timetabled for the same day and the total duration of those papers is more than 5 hours 30 minutes (GCSE, Level 1 and Level 2 examinations) or more than 6 hours (GCE and Level 3 examinations). (Where extra time has been used following formal approval, this will be included in the calculation. Supervised rest breaks will not be included in the total duration of the papers when applying for special consideration.)
4. Where a candidate may be affected by a minor disturbance in the exam room caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour, a mobile phone ringing, or a momentary fire alarm, the candidate would not be eligible for special consideration.

The 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 (SC 1)

If a candidate is absent from a timetabled component/unit for acceptable reasons, and the centre is prepared to support an application for special consideration, special consideration will be applied for if the exam missed is in the terminal series and the minimum requirements for enhanced grading in cases of acceptable absence can be met. 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, section 4)

Where other issues or problems affect a candidate or a group of candidates, special consideration will be explored in SC 5 and applied for where eligible. This might include, for example:

- other certification
- shortfall in work (coursework/non-examination assessment)
- lost or damaged work (non-examination assessment components)
- candidates taking an incorrect or defective question paper
- candidates issued with an incorrect or incomplete question paper, set the wrong coursework or non-examination assessment task or taught the wrong set text

Where a candidate may be eligible for special consideration (a post assessment adjustment) in other vocational qualification, the centre will follow SC 7 and awarding body guidance to determine if, when and how an adjustment can be applied for.

Processing applications for special consideration

Roles and responsibilites

Head of centre

- Ensures, 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*
- Ensures that any applications for special consideration where candidates meet the published criteria and are sufficiently evidenced will be submitted to the relevant awarding body

Senior leadership team

- Authorises appropriate evidence to support all eligible applications
- Ensures that if the centre does not support an application for special consideration, it will not be submitted to the relevant awarding body

Exams officer

- Understands that special consideration must be applied for at the time of the assessment
- Understands that special consideration cannot be applied cumulatively. Where a candidate is affected by different indispositions, special consideration will normally only be applied for the most serious indisposition
- Ensures applications will be processed as required by the awarding bodies
- Keeps evidence to support all applications on file until after the publication of results and provides the appropriate evidence authorised by a member of the senior leadership team to support an application where this may be requested by an awarding body
- Meets the required deadline(s) for submitting applications

Record Keeping

The Exams Officer Will;

- maintain a record of all applications for special consideration;
- retain supporting evidence until after the completion of results services;
- make records available for inspection if requested by an awarding organisation.
- Records will be stored securely and treated as confidential.

Teaching staff and SENCo

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

Candidates (or parents/carers)

- Will be asked to provide any medical or other evidence that may be required to support an application for special consideration
- Will be informed that all cases must be dealt with by the centre

Submitting applications for special consideration

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 SC.

In Cases of online applications for special consideration, the candidate and/or parent/carer may 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 exams

- Applications for individual candidates will be submitted online (where the awarding body's secure system accepts these) by logging into the relevant awarding body secure extranet site and following the links to special consideration
- The processes for submitting a single application to cover all exams affected where a candidate is present but disadvantaged and a separate application for each day on which exams are missed where a candidate is absent from an examination for an acceptable reason detailed in SC 6 will be followed
- 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 exam 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 member of the senior leadership team 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.