

Special Considerations Policy

Introduction

1. Special consideration is given to learners/apprentices who temporarily experience an illness or injury, or another event outside of their control which has, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on that learner's/apprentice's ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment.
2. FDQ's special consideration arrangements ensure that learners/apprentices who undergo assessment in these circumstances are treated fairly. FDQ will consider requests for special consideration in cases such as:
 - a) Sudden, temporary, illness
 - b) Accident or injury
 - c) Bereavement of a close family member
 - d) Evacuation of the assessment venue in response to an emergency
 - e) Disturbances during the assessment
 - f) Failure of any equipment provided
 - g) Failure or unsuitability of any materials provided for the assessment.
3. If learners/apprentices have permanent or long-term disabilities, medical conditions or illness or learning difficulties (such as sight impairment, hearing impairment, dyslexia, diabetes), mental health conditions, a request for access arrangements should be made using FDQ's Reasonable Adjustment Policy.

Requests for special consideration for qualifications

4. Learners must be registered for the qualification before any special consideration requests are made.
5. Centres are responsible for contacting FDQ, in the event of learners needing special consideration. Centres should make the request for special consideration; specifying the reason for the request; the type of special arrangements required and submitting any

medical and other evidence to support the request. Centres should follow the guidance in this section when making any requests.

6. The Request for Special Consideration application form should be emailed to quality@fdq.org.uk
7. Forms and evidence sent to FDQ must be password protected. The password should be sent to FDQ in a separate email for security of data.
8. Centres are permitted to allow extra time to all learners, for example due to a disturbance during the examination or assessment, but must advise FDQ in writing, confirming the adjustments made and learners/apprentices affected. Where an examination room has been evacuated due to an emergency, the centre contact must make a judgement on whether or not the security of the examination has been breached and consequently whether or not to allow the examination to continue. Full details must be recorded in the invigilators report and FDQ must be informed.
9. It should be noted that special consideration will normally apply to assessments taken under examination conditions (including assessment for Functional Skills), and where the opportunity to re-take the assessment may not occur for several months. Where an assessment requires the learner to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or where another assessment opportunity can be made available quickly, it is usually more appropriate to offer the learner an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date.
10. If a learner completing an assessment experiences any of the circumstances listed at the time of assessment, the centre must:
 - a) Follow its internal procedures to notify the person responsible for making contact with FDQ. This centre contact must then contact FDQ to notify of an impending application for special consideration
 - b) Apply to FDQ by completing the FDQ Request for Reasonable Adjustment/Special Consideration application form and attaching all supporting evidence.
11. FDQ will review the application and supporting evidence, and if further information is required, the training provider will be contacted.

12. Centres will be informed of the outcome of their request in writing and before results are issued. It should be noted that a successful application for special consideration may not change the outcome of a learner's result.

Appeals against special consideration decisions for qualifications

13. In the event that centres are dissatisfied with a decision concerning special consideration, they should refer to FDQ's enquiry procedure in the first instance. If, having exhausted these procedures the centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome it has recourse to FDQ's appeals procedure.
14. Centres must record and retain the relevant evidence supporting applications for special consideration, including relevant medical evidence, for monitoring during external quality assurance activity.

Applying for special consideration for apprenticeship End-point Assessments

15. Requests should be made at the gateway stage wherever possible, if the circumstances are known at that time. The apprentice's training provider should make a request to FDQ using the application form available on the FDQ website and, when completed, the form should be emailed to quality@fdq.org.uk. The training provider should specify the reason for the request and submitting any medical and other evidence to support the request.
16. If the circumstances for the special consideration occur when the Independent Examiner (IE) is already present at the assessment site, the IE is responsible for contacting FDQ, in the event of apprentices needing special consideration. The IE must consult with the apprentice's employer / training provider present at the End-point Assessment site when deciding whether to make a request for special consideration.

The IE, in conjunction with the employer / training provider, should make the request for special consideration; specifying the reason for the request; the type of special arrangements required and retaining any medical and other evidence to support the request.

17. IEs are permitted to allow extra time to apprentices, for example due to a disturbance during the End-point Assessment, but must advise FDQ in writing, confirming the adjustments made and apprentice(s) affected. Where an assessment room has been evacuated due to an emergency, the IE must make a judgement on whether or not the security of the End-point Assessment has been breached and consequently whether or not to allow the assessment to continue. Full details must be recorded in the IE report and FDQ must be informed.
18. Where an assessment requires the apprentice to demonstrate practical competence or where criteria have to be met fully, or where another End-point Assessment opportunity can be made available quickly, it is usually more appropriate to offer the apprentice an opportunity to take the assessment at a later date. In such cases, whenever possible, FDQ will ensure another opportunity for assessment is made within the specified End-point Assessment period.
19. If an apprentice completing an End-point Assessment experiences any of the circumstances listed at the time of assessment, the IE must
 - a) Contact FDQ to notify them of an impending application for special consideration
 - b) Agree the circumstances for the application with the apprentice's employer / training provider present at the End-point assessment site
 - c) Apply to FDQ using the appropriate method detailing and attaching the following
 - i. The specific assessment component/s to which the application applies, including the date and apprenticeship standard title
 - ii. The apprentice's full name and registration number
 - iii. Full details of the reason(s) for requesting special consideration, including any medical and other evidence, if applicable.
20. If the special consideration request form is completed fully and all evidence is included with the submission, FDQ will provide a decision within 10 working days of the request. FDQ will review the application and supporting evidence, and if further information is required, the training provider will be contacted.

21. The apprentice's training provider will be informed of the outcome of their request in writing within the End-point Assessment period, after the special consideration review takes place and before the results are issued. It should be noted that a successful application for special consideration may not change the apprentice's result.

Appeals against special consideration decisions for end-point assessments

1. If the special consideration request form is completed fully and all evidence is included with the submission, FDQ will provide a decision within 10 working days of the request.

FDQ will review the application and supporting evidence, and if further information is required, the training provider will be contacted.
22. In the event that centres are dissatisfied with a decision concerning special consideration, they should refer to FDQ's enquiry procedure in the first instance. If, having exhausted these procedures the centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome it has recourse to FDQ's appeals procedure.
23. Centres must record and retain the relevant evidence supporting applications for special consideration, including relevant medical evidence, for monitoring during external quality assurance activity.

Monitoring requests for special considerations

24. FDQ will ensure that:
 - a) Records of requests for special considerations, along with details of any actions taken, are maintained, and reviewed on a regular basis by the relevant Standards & Quality Group/s at FDQ
 - b) Records are used to identify broader issues or themes that may emerge over time and to recommend appropriate corrective actions that might need to be taken
 - c) Reports are made to the FDQ Governance Committee on a regular basis and as part of the self-evaluation procedure
 - d) Guidance from the Regulators is reviewed, and the policy is updated to comply with best practice



- e) Information from monitoring activities will be made available to the Regulators on request.