

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.

Applying for special consideration for qualifications

3. Centres are responsible for contacting FDQ, in the event of learners needing special consideration. Centres should make the request for special consideration; uspecifying the reason for the request; the type of special arrangements required and retaining any medical and other evidence to support the request. Centres should follow the guidance in this section when making any requests.
4. 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.

5. 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.
6. 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 using the appropriate method detailing and attaching the following
 - i. The specific assessment to which the application applies, including the date, unit name and qualification title
 - ii. The learner'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.
7. FDQ will process applications for special consideration as follows:
 - a) All special consideration applications received are referred initially to the Quality and Operations Director. On receipt, an acknowledgement will be sent to the centre contact within 5 working days
 - b) The Quality and Operations Director will review the application and supporting evidence, and if further information is required, the centre will be contacted in writing by FDQ within 14 working days

- c) The Quality and Operations Director will produce a report attaching all supporting evidence regarding the special consideration application for consideration
8. Centres or will be informed of the outcome of their request in writing within 14 working days of the special consideration review taking place and before results are issued. It should be noted that a successful application for special consideration may not change the learner's result.

Appeals against special consideration decisions for qualifications

9. 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.
10. 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

11. Requests should be made at the Gateway stage wherever possible, if the circumstances are known at that time. The apprentice's employer should make a request to FDQ using the application form available on the FDQ website and, when completed, the form should be emailed to fdq@fdq.org.uk. The employer should specify the reason for the request and retaining any medical and other evidence to support the request.
12. If the circumstances for the special consideration occur when the Independent Examiners (IE) is already present and the assessment site, the EA 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.

13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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.
16. FDQ will process applications for special consideration as follows:

- a) All special consideration applications received are referred initially to the Quality and Operations Director. On receipt, an acknowledgement will be sent to the apprentice's employer
 - b) The Quality and Operations Director will review the application and supporting evidence, and if further information is required, the employer will be contacted in writing by FDQ
 - c) The Quality and Operations Director will produce a report attaching all supporting evidence regarding the special consideration application for consideration.
17. The apprentice's employer 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

18. 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.
19. Centres must record and retain the relevant evidence supporting applications for special consideration, including relevant medical evidence, for monitoring during external quality assurance activity.