LIBF

Part of Walbrook Institute London

Updated September 2022

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure for Financial Education Qualifications

LIBF defines extenuating circumstances as circumstances, normally exceptional and outside the control of the student, which happen unexpectedly on or before an assessment and have prevented the student from performing in an assessment at the level expected or required of them. This document details the policy and procedure for all financial education qualifications.

Special consideration is the term used when LIBF considers cases of extenuating circumstances.

Summary of policy

We're committed to the fair treatment of all our students during the assessment process. The Special Considerations Policy has been designed to ensure that we

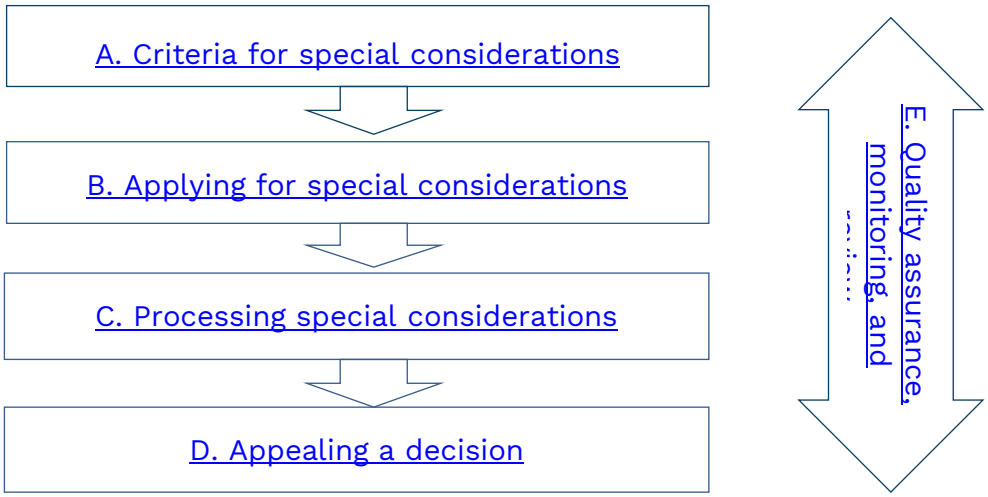
- provide an assessment and awarding system that supports equality and fairness to our students, and
- maintain the integrity and security of the assessment process.

The Special Considerations Policy applies to students who believe they've been disadvantaged during, or before, an assessment because of an injury, illness or other unforeseen temporary circumstances beyond their control that may have adversely affected their performance in one or more assessments. We recognise that, as a result of such circumstances, some students may not be able to demonstrate their true level of ability during an assessment.

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1.0 Section A - criteria for special considerations

1.1 Claims relating to examinations must be submitted within five working days of the assessment.

1.2 If a centre is aware of an extenuating circumstance which affects a student's ability to study prior to the timeframes stated under paragraph 1.1, they must inform us immediately.

1.3 If a centre doesn't present the student's claim within the timeframes set out in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2, the centre will be considered as declaring the student 'fit to sit' the assessment concerned.

1.4 Where there are reasonable grounds we may, exceptionally, consider accepting late submission of special consideration claims.

1.5 We won't consider requests for special consideration if the issues / circumstances concerned have previously been addressed through the implementation of special arrangements under our Reasonable Adjustments policy.

1.6 Likely acceptable extenuating circumstances.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of what we accept as a special consideration

i. bereavement- death of close relative / significant other (of a nature which would've led to an absence from the centre)

ii. serious short term illness or accident (of a nature which would've led to absence) that couldn't have been addressed in advance through a reasonable adjustment request

iii. evidence of a long-term health condition, including mental health deteriorating

iv. evidence of a long-term health condition, including mental health, which has reoccurred.

v. significant adverse personal / family circumstances

vi. significant disruption at the assessment venue during or immediately before the assessment was due to take place that is beyond the control of the centre

vii. incorrect information provided to the centre

viii. scripts that haven't been presented for marking, unless this was the responsibility of the student

ix. other significant exceptional factors outside the control of the student, for which there's evidence of something that caused a student not to perform to their best ability

x. disruption to teaching / learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.7 Unlikely acceptable extenuating circumstances

The following is a non-exhaustive list of circumstances unlikely to be regarded as falling within the relevant definition

i. alleged statement of a medical condition without reasonable evidence (medical or otherwise) to support it

ii. alleged medical circumstances for which appropriate adjustments for extenuating circumstances have already been made

iii. retrospective evidence - evidence that wasn't in existence at the same time as the extenuating circumstance, e.g., a doctor's note which states that the student was seen (after the illness occurred) and declared they'd been ill previously

iv. a circumstance that was foreseeable or preventable

v. long-term health condition for which the student is receiving reasonable or appropriate adjustments

vi. holidays, regardless of the date of booking, including school trips

vii. financial issues

viii. personal computer / printer problems

ix. poor practice e.g., no back-up of electronic documents.

x. claims that students were unaware of the dates or times of submission or examination

xi. late submission of Special Consideration application, or missing published deadlines

xii. poor time management

xiii. transport issues, unless satisfactory evidence can be provided

xiv. poor staff resourcing

xv. minor disruption during an examination, such as a mobile phone ringing.

1.8 If the student's examination or assessment performance has been affected due to the student breaking the law or consuming alcohol or any other non-prescribed drugs, we'll reserve the right not to consider their application for special consideration.

1.9 We won't make a special consideration that affects the integrity of the qualification or disadvantages other students.

2.0 Section B - applying for special considerations

2.1 Applications for special consideration will be reviewed for all available assessment attempts. However, applications for special consideration for first assessment attempts are most likely to be resolved by recommending that the student sits the planned resit attempt, or through a possible offer of a further resit attempt where one is available.

2.2 Applications for special consideration are made by a centre[1] on behalf of a student or group of students they've registered with us. Centre applications must be submitted by an authorised centre representative, usually either the named examinations officer or the Head of Centre.

2.3 Any information supplied by a centre on behalf of their student(s), in respect of an application for special consideration, will be treated as confidential and only be used on a 'need-to-know' basis.

2.4 Centres should be aware that failure to comply with our guidance regarding special considerations has the potential to constitute maladministration, and could lead to us withholding student result(s). Failure to comply is defined as any or all of the following

i. exceeding the allowances agreed with us

ii. agreeing adjustments that aren't supported by appropriate and verifiable evidence or

iii. failing to maintain records of special considerations for audit.

[1] Centres are organisations who are involved with any part of the delivery of qualifications on behalf of LIBF. Centres may be schools, colleges or any other venue where the delivery of learning, including teaching and / or assessments, leading to a LIBF qualification is conducted.

2.5 Applications should be submitted to our Financial Education Services team using the Financial Education Special Considerations Application Form. Confirmation must be made that relevant supporting evidence is available at the request of the Assessment Operations team. For example

- death certificate
- medical / health certificate (with relevant date to the assessment)
- letter of explanation from the centre.

2.6 Applications for special consideration must be fully supported by independent evidence. It's the responsibility of the centre, not us, to include (with the application) details of any report that they've made, any record made by the invigilator at the time of the assessment / examination, and / or independent evidence from a medical practitioner or specialist in support of the application. The supporting evidence must be retained by the centre. We reserve the right to request to review the evidence at any time and not to consider an application for which no or insufficient supporting evidence is provided.

2.7 All supporting documentation must be in English, legible, dated, include the student's full name, and be on headed paper as appropriate.

2.8 All evidence must be valid and include specific dates for the period stated within the student's application, and support the circumstances detailed within the claim form.

2.9 The centre retains all the necessary supporting evidence for the special consideration claim for a minimum of three years**.** We reserve the right to request sight of this documentation at any time within this three year period.

3.0 Section C - processing special considerations

3.1 We will acknowledge, via an automated response, that the application for special consideration has been received.

3.2 Applications for special consideration are reviewed by the Financial Education Services team in terms of the student's individual and specific circumstances, with reference to the supporting evidence / documentation provided.

3.3 If necessary, the Financial Education Services team may refer cases to the Chief Examiner for a decision.

3.4 When deciding upon the outcome of an application for special consideration, we will, in addition to making a judgement upon the individual merits of the case under review, take into account the outcome of previous claims of a similar nature. This action maintains the consistency and fairness of our assessment procedures.

3.5 We'll contact the centre within ten working days of receipt of the application with one of the following outcomes

i. confirmation that the special consideration request has been approved, and / or

ii. details of the measures to be taken as a result or

iii. reason(s) for the application being declined

iv. advise that the special consideration request has been referred to the Chief Examiner for a decision. Where this occurs, the centre will be advised of the time frame for a decision.

3.6 If we approve the special consideration request, one of the following outcomes will be actioned to ensure the student is not disadvantaged. Please note this list isn't exhaustive and applications are considered on a case by case basis

- sit / submit assessment at next available opportunity
- amend registration

- extend academic year
- calculation of the result based upon other completed assessments
- mark adjustment.

3.7 The outcomes listed under paragraph 3.6 are usually free of charge to the centre, though we reserve the right to apply a charge where appropriate.

3.8 If, at any time, we find that an application for special consideration was fraudulent, we'll consider this to be malpractice and will investigate according to the Student Malpractice Policy.

3.9 We reserve the right to withdraw any certification made as a result of the special consideration applied in such circumstances, subject to the outcome of a malpractice investigation. The outcome of the investigations undertaken by us may be shared with any key stakeholders.

4.0 Section D – appealing a decision

4.1 The centre has a right to appeal against a special consideration decision made by us if they believe that the process hasn't been followed properly. For more detail, see the Appeals Policy.

5.0 Section E – quality assurance, monitoring, and review

5.1 The policy and procedures are subject to regular review and formally approved by the Regulatory Compliance Committee.

5.2 All records of special consideration applications, and their outcomes, are maintained by us for the duration of the period of study.

5.3 The policy and procedures have been developed to comply with all relevant legislation.

5.4 We're subject to regulation by the qualifications regulatory authorities, Ofqual, Qualifications Wales, and CCEA.