LIBF
Part of Walbrook Institute London

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Special Consideration Policy for Professional 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 professional qualifications programmes.

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 Consideration 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 Consideration Policy applies to students who believe they've been disadvantaged during, or before, an assessment because of an injury, illness or other unforeseen temporary circumstance beyond their control that may have adversely affected their performance in one or more assessments.

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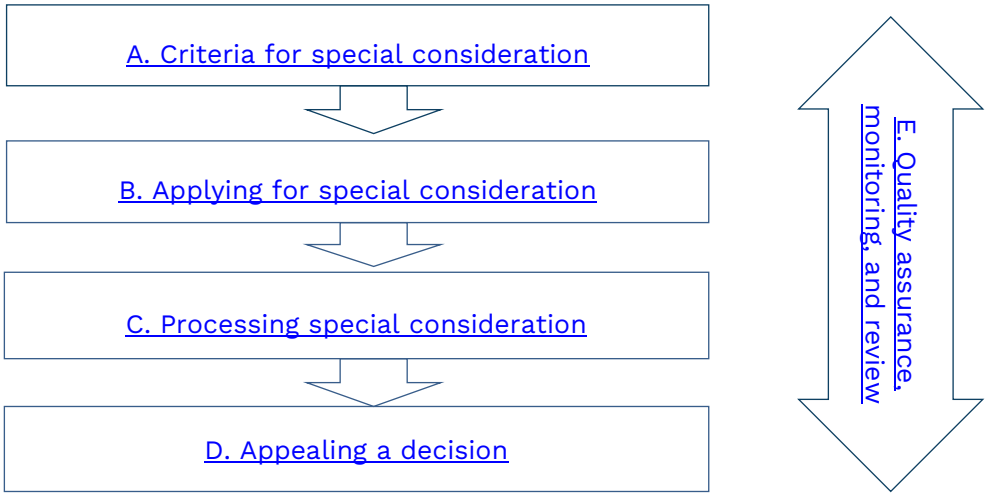
Updates:	Removal of references to assessment venues (1.1 & 1.7vi). Links checked. Reference to evidence required for applications added in the summary. 3.1 removed and subsequent points renumbered. A third point added to 3.4 (now 3.2 in currently policy) regarding additional information. Section E- RCC updated to PERCC. Point 1.7 viii rewritten for readability purposes.

All claims for special consideration must be accompanied by independent supporting evidence. The types of evidence that may be accepted are set out in this policy.

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.



1.0 Section A - criteria for special consideration

1.1 Claims relating to a session-based exam, must be submitted within 48 hours of the assessment. Claims relating to an on-demand exam must be submitted within five working days of the assessment. We'll consider accepting claims after this date if there are exceptional reasons for the delay. Claims relating to other forms of assignments must be submitted on or before the date of submission.

1.2 Claims relating to a request for extension must be submitted prior to the registration expiry date. We may consider applications received outside this timescale in cases where exceptional mitigating circumstances have prevented the student from applying sooner.

1.3 If a student is aware of an extenuating circumstance which affects their studies prior to the timeframes stated under paragraph 1.1, they must inform us immediately.

1.4 If students don't present their claim within the timeframes set out in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2, or proceed with sitting an assessment while aware of

an extenuating circumstance affecting studies, they'll be considered as declaring themselves 'fit to sit / fit to submit' the assessment concerned.

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

1.6 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.

1.7 Likely acceptable extenuating circumstances

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of circumstances that we would normally accept as an extenuating circumstance:

i. bereavement - death of close relative / significant other (of a nature which, in an employment context, would've led to an absence in accordance with compassionate leave)

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

iii. a long-term health condition deteriorating

iv. a long-term health condition which has reoccurred

v. significant adverse personal / family circumstances

vi. significant disruption during remote invigilation

vii. incorrect information provided to the student

viii. the student's completed assessment cannot be marked due to an administrative or technical error that is not the student's responsibility

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.

1.8 Where an incident occurs that's due to a fault on our behalf that we're already aware of, we may proactively contact students to advise them of solutions being implemented rather than waiting for students to contact us individually to request special consideration, particularly where it's affected numerous students. In these situations, we'll keep all affected students informed of the resolutions being provided (see section 3.7).

1.9 Unlikely acceptable extenuating circumstances

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

i. statement of an extenuating circumstance without evidence (medical or otherwise) to support it

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

iii. retrospective evidence - evidence that isn'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. a circumstance which, in a work situation, would be unlikely to lead to absence from work

vi. holidays, regardless of the date of booking

vii. financial issues

viii. issues with personal / workplace electronic devices affecting assessment and studies

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

x. late disclosure of circumstances

xi. poor time management, including increased workload

xii. jury service

xiii. transport issues, unless satisfactory evidence can be provided

xiv. pregnancy, unless there are associated medical problems.

1.9 If an examination or assessment performance (including assessed coursework) 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 an application for special consideration.

1.10 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 consideration

2.1 Students should contact our Student and Customer Services team (by telephone on +44(0)1227 818609 or email customerservices@libf.ac.uk), before submitting an application for special consideration in writing. This allows us to fully understand the circumstances of the request, agree if special consideration is the appropriate action, and advise on the type of supporting evidence required. An initial discussion regarding possible solutions may also be possible.

2.2 Submit applications to our Student and Customer Services team using the Special Consideration form and supported by independent evidence. For example

- death certificate
- medical / health certificate (with relevant date to the assessment)
- letter of support / explanation from a line manager / HR at place of employment.

2.3 Completed claim forms and supporting evidence must be returned within five working days of our confirmation email. If this isn't possible, contact the Student and Customer Services team (by telephone on +44(0)1227 818609 or email customerservices@libf.ac.uk), to agree a time limit.

2.4 We're not responsible for obtaining evidence to support a claim but will provide advice on its requirements. Please contact the Student and Customer Services team on +44 (0)1227 818609.

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

2.6 When providing copies of evidence to support a claim, the document must be certified and include contact details of the certifier.

2.7 All evidence must be valid and include specific dates for the period stated within the application and support the circumstances detailed within the claim form.

2.8 Any information supplied in respect of an application for special consideration will, as far as possible, be treated as confidential.

3.0 Section C - processing special considerations

3.1 Applications for special consideration are reviewed by Student Support Services in terms of individual and specific circumstances, with reference to the supporting evidence / documentation provided.

3.2 When deciding upon the outcome of an application for extenuating circumstances, we'll consider the outcome of previous claims of a similar nature, in addition to making a judgement upon the individual merits of the case under review. This action maintains the consistency and fairness of our assessment procedures.

3.4 We'll contact the student within five working days of the application with one of the following outcomes

i. confirmation that the special consideration request has been approved and / or details of the measures to be taken as a result or

ii. reason(s) for the application being declined

iii. Request additional information in support of the claim

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

- sit / submit assessment at the next available opportunity
- extension to registration
- deferral to next session.

3.6 The outcomes listed under paragraph 3.5 are usually free of charge, though we reserve the right to apply a charge where appropriate.

3.7 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.

3.8 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.

4.0 Section D – appealing a decision

4.1 Students have 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 formally approved by the Professional Education Regulatory Compliance Committee.

5.2 The policy and procedures are subject to regular review and approval.

5.3 All records of special consideration applications and their outcomes are maintained by us for at least five years.

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

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