

Arrangements for special considerations

Purpose:	To ensure FDQ complies with Regulators criteria and adopts robust procedures for dealing with special considerations. The products include regulated qualifications, end point assessments or other FDQ product, developed in FDQ's role as a regulated Awarding Organisation (AO) and End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO).
Accountability:	FDQ Committees and sub-committees; personnel involved in the design, development and award of FDQ products: senior officers within FDQ, centres, learners, apprentices, examiners, moderators, EQACs
Responsibility:	FDQ CE/RO
Effective from:	01/09/2018
Review date:	01/09/2019
Links to GCR:	G7
Related documents:	FDQ documented procedures for managing special considerations; guidance to centres; arrangements for the invigilation of examinations

Introduction

1. Special consideration is given to learners 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 ability to take an assessment or demonstrate their level of attainment in an assessment.
2. This ensures that learners 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.
3. 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 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.
 4. 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.

Applying for special consideration

5. If a learner completing independent assessment suffers any of the above listed points 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 independent 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 evidence, if applicable.
6. FDQ will process applications for special consideration as follows:
 - a) all special consideration applications received are referred initially to the Quality Director. On receipt, an acknowledgement will be sent to the centre contact within 5 working days
 - b) the Quality Manager 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 Manager will produce a report attaching all supporting evidence regarding the special consideration application for consideration
- 7. Centres 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.
- 8. 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.
- 9. 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 special considerations

- 10. FDQ will ensure that:
 - a) appropriate records are maintained of the numbers and types of requests for special consideration received
 - b) operation of the arrangements is reported to the S&QG as part of its remit for monitoring assessment practice.
 - c) reports are made to the FDQ Governance Committee as part of the self-evaluation procedure
 - d) guidance from the regulators is reviewed and the policy updated to comply with best practice
 - e) information from monitoring activities is made available to Regulators as part of the awarding organisation's self-evaluation procedure and on request.