



## How to request Special Consideration for February 2022 Mock Exams

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### Important Notice about the scope of Special Consideration:

- These FAQ concern the A level, AS level and GCSE mock exams taking place between Monday January 31<sup>st</sup> and Friday February 11<sup>th</sup>.
- The primary purpose of these mock exams is to help prepare you for your exams in the Summer. However, if exams are cancelled by the government due to COVID and BHASVIC is required to generate a Teacher Assessed Grade [TAG], your performance in the mocks will contribute towards your TAG. This is why we are running these mocks as if they were “real” exams and, as part of that process, we must collect evidence relating to special consideration.
- The process explained here applies **ONLY** to the February mock exams and will be live **ONLY** between 31 January and 25 February. If exams happen as normal in the Summer and you believe you are entitled to special consideration at that time, you must apply via a separate process.
- BHASVIC is required to follow government guidance as handed down via relevant agencies such as the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications). We are not able to vary or challenge these instructions.
- It is vital that if you are disclosing potentially serious information [e.g. about illness, safeguarding etc.] as part of the special consideration process for February mocks, you must also inform your Tutor or Guidance Manager. This is **NOT** a routine disclosure process and if we are not called upon to produce TAGs we will not be accessing this information.

### What is special consideration?

Special consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a student’s mark or grade. This is to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or some other event outside of the student’s control at the time of the assessment. It is applied when the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a student’s ability to take an assessment or demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment. Special consideration can go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in their examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty faced by the student. Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. To make larger adjustments would jeopardize the standard of the examination. The marks/grade(s) awarded must reflect the level of attainment demonstrated in the examination. The marks/grades awarded do not necessarily reflect the candidate’s true level of ability if attainment has been considerably affected over a long period of time. Where long term circumstances have prevented the candidate from reaching the competence standards, it may not be possible to make an adjustment.

### Who will be eligible for special consideration?

Students will be eligible for special consideration if performance in the examination is materially affected by

adverse circumstances beyond their control.

These include:

- temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the examination;
- bereavement or grieving at the time of the examination;
- domestic crisis arising at the time of the examination;
- a long-term medical or psychological condition which manifests itself on the day of the examination;
- serious disturbance during an examination, particularly where recorded material is being used.

Candidates will NOT be eligible for special consideration if preparation for, or performance in the examination is affected by:

- long term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting revision time, unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of the examination;
- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (including school/exchange visits and field trips) at the time of the examination;
- minor disturbance during the examination caused by another student, such as momentarily needing to leave the room
- the consequences of taking alcohol or recreational drugs;
- the consequences of disobeying the college's internal regulations;
- the failure of the college to prepare students properly for the examination for whatever reason;
- quality of teaching, staff shortages, building work or lack of facilities;
- misreading the instructions of the question paper and answering the wrong questions;
- missing examinations
- a disability or learning difficulties (diagnosed or undiagnosed) unless illness affects the student at the time of the assessment or where the disability exacerbates what would otherwise be a minor issue – (difficulties over and above those that previously approved access arrangements would have alleviated).

### **How is special consideration applied and what allowance can be made?**

Special consideration is given by applying an allowance of additional marks to the individual examination/assessment affected. It is NOT applied to the final grade submitted to the exam boards. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune.

The range of allowance given is **1-5%**, in line with JCQ regulations. The maximum allowance that can be given is 5% of the total raw marks available in the assessment concerned. This is reserved for the most exceptional and serious cases, such as terminal illness of the candidate/parent/carer or death of a member of immediate family within two months of the assessment. The most common category of allowance is 2% for illness at the time of the assessment, such as a broken limb, concussion or extreme distress (which was not exam-related).

[See Appendix 1 below for examples of circumstances published by JCQ [Joint Council for Qualifications]

### **How do I apply for special consideration?**

All requests should be made via **Student Advantage**

1. Select "Exams" tab in Student Advantage.

2. Select "February Mocks" tab and you will be taken to an on-line form where you can type in relevant information for one or more of your courses – to whichever examinations you believe special consideration needs to be given.
3. You should then follow the instructions on the page:
  - a) Only enter text here after you have read and fully understood the FAQ webpage "**HOW TO REQUEST SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR THE A2 FEBRUARY MOCK EXAMS**" on the BHASVIC website.
  - b) Only enter text for courses in which you have sat a February mock exam.
  - c) Do not enter text for a mock exam that you have missed.
  - d) Provide brief details of the condition[s] that applied at the time of the mock exam
4. Information must be uploaded between **31 January** and **25 February**.

### **How is the decision about special consideration made?**

A team of college officials will meet later in the year and will apply the range of allowance in line with government regulations [see Appendix 1 below]. Any uplift to a student's mark will then be factored in to their TAG. Information you have uploaded will only be taken into consideration in the event of the government cancelling exams and requiring BHASVIC to submit TAGs. Teachers will **NOT** apply any adjustment to your original mark when feeding back the marks of your mock in later February.

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### **APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLES OF CIRCUMSTANCES AND % ADJUSTMENTS ACCORDING TO JCQ GUIDELINES:**

**5% This is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:**

- terminal illness of the candidate;
- terminal illness of a parent/carer;
- death of a member of the immediate family within two months of the examination;
- very serious and disruptive crisis/incident at or near the time of the examination.

**4% Very serious problems such as:**

- life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family;
- major surgery at or near the time of the examination;
- severe disease;
- very recent death of member of extended family;
- severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examination;
- serious crisis/incident at the time of the examination.

NB 'Very recent' is defined as within one month of the examination(s) taking place.

**3% A more common category (more cases will fall into this category), including:**

- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative;
- recent illness of a more serious nature;
- flare-up of a severe congenital/medical condition or a psychological condition;

- broken limbs;
- organ disease;
- physical assault trauma before an examination;
- recent crisis/incident;
- witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination involved.

NB 'Recent' is defined as up to four months prior to the examination(s) taking place.

**2% The most common category of allowance - most cases will fall within this category:**

- illness at the time of the examination;
- broken limb on the mend;
- concussion;
- effects of pregnancy (not pregnancy per se);
- extreme distress on the day of an examination (not simply exam related stress);
- allowance on last paper taken in a day when a candidate has been entered for three or more examinations timetabled for the same day and the total duration of those papers is more than 5 hours 30 minutes (GCSE examinations) or more than 6 hours (GCE examinations).

(Where extra time has been used following formal approval, this should be included in the calculation.)  
(Supervised rest breaks must not be included in the total duration of the papers when applying for special consideration.)

**1% Reserved for more minor problems:**

- noise during examination which is more than momentary;
- illness of another candidate which leads to disruption in the examination room;
- stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed;
- hay fever on the day of an examination;
- minor upset arising from administrative problems.

**Where the request for special consideration fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected.**