



nebosh

Special Considerations Policy

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1. NEBOSH policy

NEBOSH will give special consideration to assessment results based on a number of factors outlined in this document. This policy and procedure takes into consideration relevant legislation and regulatory principles of our regulator, SQA Accreditation. This applies to all qualifications.

For definitions of terms used in this document please see the *Glossary of NEBOSH Terms* document available from the [policies and procedures section](#) of the NEBOSH website.

2. Regulatory authorities' criteria

NEBOSH is an awarding body recognised by both the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Accreditation, and the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

In addition to statutory duties, this policy is intended to meet the following relevant regulatory requirements:

SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principle 14 :

“The awarding body and its providers must ensure that its qualifications and their delivery and assessment are fair, inclusive and accessible to learners.”

SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2021)

Ofqual Condition G7 – Arrangements for Special Consideration:

G7.1 An awarding organisation must have in place clear arrangements for Special Consideration to be given to Learners in relation to qualifications which it makes available.

G7.2 An awarding organisation must publish details of its arrangements for giving Special Consideration, which must include details as to –

(a) how a Learner qualifies for Special Consideration, and

(b) what Special Consideration will be given.”

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (2022)

3. Definitions

3.1. *Special consideration*

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to a learner's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, injury or some other event outside of their control **at the time of the assessment**. For practical assessments there is no adjustment to the mark or grade, however, an extension to the practical deadline will be considered.

Special consideration can go some way to assist a learner 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 learner. This means that there will be some situations where learners should not be entered for an assessment. This is because only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded. To make larger adjustments would jeopardise the standard of the assessment.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage; neither should its use cause any person to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The learner's results must reflect their actual achievement in assessment, not potential ability.

The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances during the assessment and will reflect the difficulty faced by the learner. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total percentage marks available. Special consideration cannot remove the difficulty faced by the learner and only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardise the integrity of the assessment.

3.2. Aegrotat

An aegrotat is an award made to a learner who is unable, through illness, injury or indisposition, to complete all the usual assessment requirements.

NEBOSH policy is not to issue aegrotats.

3.3. Individual special consideration

Special consideration applied for by a Learning Partner on behalf of a single learner due to their unique circumstances.

3.4. Whole cohort special consideration

Special consideration applied for by a Learning Partner on behalf of a group of learners undertaking the same assessment – for example, for a disturbance or late start to an assessment.

4. Eligibility criteria

Learners will be eligible for special consideration if they have been fully prepared and have covered the whole course, but performance in the assessment is affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.

In some circumstances, such as a recent bereavement or temporary incapacity, we advise learners to discuss with their Learning Partner their options of cancelling their assessment and requesting a refund, with a view to taking the assessment at a later date.

It is important to note that a special consideration cannot be applied under the following circumstances:

- where an assessment requires the demonstration of practical competence; or
- if the learner has received a refer result.

[Appendix 1](#) lists examples of situations where special considerations may be granted by NEBOSH, and the allowance that may be given.

A learner is only eligible for one [individual special consideration](#) request per assessment.

Should an individual be granted an *individual special consideration* and a [whole cohort special consideration](#), these will be applied separately.

4.1. When will learners not be eligible for special consideration?

A learner **will not** be eligible for special consideration where:

- evidence is not supplied by the Learning Partner that the learner has been affected at the time of the assessment by a particular condition;
- any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence. Learners should be re-entered for any missed units at the next assessment opportunity. This principle also applies where entire cohorts miss

assessments (for example, due to adverse weather conditions, pandemic, civil unrest or for any other reason);

- learners have misread the instructions of an assessment and answered the wrong questions;
- learners have misread the timetable for an assessment and/or failed to attend at the right time and in the right place;
- a learner has a permanent disability or learning difficulty (diagnosed or undiagnosed) unless the illness affects the learner at the time of the assessment. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments should be assessed during the course and discussed between the learner and the Learning Partner and requested under the [NEBOSH Access Arrangement and Reasonable Adjustment procedure \(Q027\)](#). If access arrangements/reasonable adjustment had been granted by NEBOSH, but were not provided on the day of the assessment, then NEBOSH will consider a special consideration request.

Additionally, learners **will not** be eligible for special consideration if **preparation** for the assessment is affected by:

- long-term illness or other difficulties during the course affecting preparation for assessment or revision time, unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of the assessment;
- bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment, or there are ongoing implications, such as an inquest or court case;
- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays (including school/exchange visits and field trips) at the time of the assessment;
- the consequences of committing a crime, or being charged with an offence; (However, a retrospective application for special consideration may be considered where the charge is later dropped, or the learner is found not guilty.)
- the consequences of taking alcohol, or any other non-prescribed drugs;
- the consequences of disobeying the Learning Partner's internal regulations;
- preparation for an assessment is affected by difficulties during the course, such as disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, quality of teaching, changes in or shortages of staff or industrial disputes;
- making personal arrangements, such as wedding or holiday arrangements that conflict with an assessment;
- failure to cover the course as a consequence of joining the class part way through;
- failure, without good excuse, to request access arrangements/reasonable adjustment on time.

5. Extensions for practical submissions

Additional marks cannot be applied to practical assessments. This includes:

- Unit NDEM2: Environmental regulation
- Unit IDEM2: Environmental regulation
- Unit DNI: Application of health and safety management in the workplace
- Unit FSC2: Fire risk assessment

- Unit FC2: Fire safety practical application
- Unit EMC2: Assessing environmental aspects and associated impacts
- Unit EC2: Environmental practical application
- Unit NCC2: Construction health and safety practical application
- Unit ICC2: Construction health and safety practical application
- Unit NG2: Risk assessment
- Unit IG2: Risk assessment
- Unit GC3: Health and safety practical application

Where a learner meets the criteria for special consideration it may be possible to allow a short extension to the deadline for submission of assignments and practical applications. This will usually be no more than 10-working days to enable the learner to complete their work. The Learning Partner must contact NEBOSH to request this arrangement.

Where a Learning Partner has been affected by circumstances beyond its control it may, in exceptional cases, be possible to grant a short extension of 10-working days for a whole cohort of learners. This is at the discretion of NEBOSH. The Learning Partner must contact NEBOSH as soon as possible to request such an arrangement.

6. Lost or damaged work

6.1. Assessments submitted to the Learning Partner (for paper-based and practical assessments)

If a learner's work has been lost or damaged due to events outside of the learner's control (eg lost by the Learning Partner) and despite every effort it cannot be found, or it has been accidentally destroyed, the circumstances should be reported immediately to NEBOSH for further guidance. This may occur in the following circumstances:

- **if only part of the work is lost and part of the work is available;**
- **if the work was marked before it was lost or damaged**, marks should be submitted in the usual way. **No marks will be accepted after the issue of results.**

The Learning Partner must be able to verify that the work was done. If none of the above criteria can be met, the learner must re-sit the unit.

6.2. Assessments submitted to NEBOSH through the assessment platform

If a learner's work has been lost before uploading/submitted to the NEBOSH assessment platform, the learner should make their Learning Partner aware and seek IT assistance to attempt to recover the assessment.

It is recommended that this is reported to NEBOSH for further guidance. This may occur in the following circumstances:

- **if only part of the work is recovered or available;**
- **if the full submission is recovered and available after the submission deadline.**

If none of the above criteria can be met the learner must re-sit the unit.

7. Other circumstances where special consideration may be granted

There are circumstances that arise by accident and where specialist input may be required. Such circumstances may include when an incorrect assessment paper has been issued to the learner, or an assessment is defective in some way.

They will be referred to the NEBOSH Head (Operations and Delivery) for a specific decision as to how the special consideration should be awarded.

7.1. Digital assessments

There may be occasions where technical issues arise with issuing a digital assessment, causing a delay to the scheduled start of an assessment, or a delay for learners in uploading their completed submission. In these cases NEBOSH will be in contact with those affected and, depending on the level of disruption, may consider applying a special consideration.

7.2. Invigilated examinations

Learning Partners may not realise that the learner has been given the incorrect paper. NEBOSH will notify Learning Partners of any discrepancies. If the Learning Partner is aware of the error at the time of the examination the learner should, where possible, be given the correct paper, as long as they are still under supervised conditions and able to continue with the examination. The Learning Partner must inform NEBOSH when an incorrect paper has been replaced by a correct paper.

8. Honorary certificates

Where a learner who has been entered for a qualification has died before completing the minimum amount of assessment required, or has been entered and is terminally ill and unable to complete the minimum amount of assessment, the Learning Partner may request an honorary certificate/posthumous award from NEBOSH. Where the minimum requirement has been met, an award will be issued.

An official request should be sent to NEBOSH from the Head of Learning Partner or Communications Co-ordinator either via email or letterheaded paper.

9. Applying for special consideration

[Individual special consideration](#) applications must be made to NEBOSH on a case-by-case basis. Separate applications must be made for each learner. The only exception to this is where [a cohort special consideration](#) is being made. A list of learners affected must always be attached to the whole cohort special consideration application.

An application for special consideration must be made by the Learning Partner on behalf of the learner. Requests directly from learners will not be accepted. The Learning Partner must be satisfied that learner's performance has been affected.

Learning Partners must complete the *Application for Special Consideration – Form SC1* which is available in the secure Learning Partner area of the [NEBOSH website](#). The information requested on the form must be provided in all cases.

Learning Partners must submit evidence in support of special consideration, where appropriate. This may include medical evidence, a statement from the Invigilator, or any other appropriate information that shows the extent to which a learner's performance has been affected.

All parts of the application form must be completed by a member of the Learning Partner staff who has formally been given authority for this by the Head of Learning Partner. The signatory must declare that the information given is, to the best of their knowledge, accurate.

An *Application for Special Consideration* form should be submitted as soon as possible and **no later than 10-working days** after the assessment. Requests made after this time, but before the results have been declared, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests for special consideration will not be accepted after the results of the assessment have been declared, except in one of the following circumstances:

- the application has been overlooked by the Learning Partner;
- medical evidence comes to light about a learner’s condition demonstrating that the learner must have been affected by the condition at the time of the assessment, even though the problem revealed itself only after the assessment.

The decision made by NEBOSH will be based on various factors, which may vary from learner to learner and from one assessment to another. These may include:

- the severity of the circumstances;
- the date of the assessment in relation to the circumstances; and
- the type of assessment.

Please note: a successful application of special consideration will not necessarily change a learner’s result. An acknowledgement will be sent to confirm the receipt of the request. Confirmation of any additional marks applied will be included in the final mark.

10. Appeals

Please refer to our [Appeals Policy](#) (Q020)

11. Data Protection

Please refer to our [Data Protection statement](#) and [Privacy notice](#).

12. Related document

[Application form for special consideration SC1 \(Q026a\)](#) (available in the Learning Partner secure area of the website, please note, you need to be logged in to access this document).

13. Document Control

Reference number	Q026
Business Unit	Deliver and Improve
Area	Operations
Version	3
Effective from	April 2023
Contact	Head (Operations and Delivery); Head (Regulatory Compliance)
Owner	Chief Operating Officer

Appendix 1: Examples of special consideration

Please note that the % shown in this table are the maximum allowed for each issue – depending on the evidence provided, it could be less than this.

0%	The application was requested but the addition of marks was deemed inappropriate. Where the request fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected.
1%	<p>Reserved for more minor problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noise during the assessment which is more than momentary; • illness of another learner which leads to disruption during the assessment; • stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed; • minor ailments including headaches; • minor upset arising from administration problems, such as wrong time allocated.
2%	<p>The most common category of allowance. The majority of cases will fall within this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • temporary illness or accident/injury at the time of the assessment (including back pain); • broken limb on the mend; • recent viral illness; • concussion; • effects of pregnancy (not pregnancy per se); • extreme distress on the day of the assessment (not simply exam-related); • serious hay fever on the day of an assessment (medicine prescribed).
3%	<p>A more common category (many more cases will fall into this category), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an event that triggers or increases anxiety/depression/stress; • recent traumatic experience; • recent illness of a more serious nature; • flare-up of severe congenital/medical condition (such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack), or a psychological condition; • recently broken limbs; • physical assault trauma before an assessment; • recent crisis/incident; • witnessing a distressing event on the day of the assessment. <p>NB 'Recent' is defined as up to four months prior to the assessment taking place. The Learning Partner must be satisfied that there has been a material detrimental effect on learner assessment performance.</p>
4%	<p>Very serious problems, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life-threatening illness of learner or member of immediate family; • major surgery at or near the time of the assessment; • severe disease; • very recent death of member of extended family or close friend; • severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the assessment; • serious crisis/incident at time of assessment. <p>NB 'Very recent' is defined as within one month of the assessment taking place. The Learning Partner must be satisfied that there has been a material detrimental effect on learner assessment performance.</p>

5%	<p>This is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• terminal illness of the learner;• terminal illness of a parent/carer;• death of a member of the <i>immediate</i> family within three months of the assessment;• severe and disruptive domestic crises leading to acute anxiety about the family
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