



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS POLICY

Document control

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Audience | Internal colleagues, External colleagues, Customers, External Quality Assurance bodies and regulators. |
| Application | This policy applies to all Achieve+Partners personnel and bodies that work with it. |
| Version | 1.0 |
| Published | 1 st January 2020 |
| Document status | Published |
| Responsibility | The Operations Director is responsible for the implementation of the policy and maintenance of all controlled documents. |

Document change record

Changes to specific sections of the document are listed below:

| Page | Section | Change |
|--------------|---------|--------|
| None to date | | |



SECTION 1: POLICY

1.1 Introduction

Achieve+Partners is committed to the fit-for-purpose provision of and valid outcomes for end-point assessment, by ensuring that special considerations are applied fairly where they are justified. This policy is designed for customers (typically training providers or employer providers) acting on behalf of apprentices, that are registered on an apprenticeship standard. It also sets out the means by which Achieve+Partners can process requests for special considerations fairly and apply them effectively to end-point assessment results.

This policy outlines:

- + arrangements for making special considerations in respect of end-point assessments
- + on what grounds apprentices can qualify for and request special considerations
- + guidance regarding the special considerations that Achieve+Partners will permit
- + arrangements for applying special considerations

1.2 Purpose

This policy sets out the conditions and arrangements that a customer, on behalf of an apprentice, needs to follow in order to apply for a special consideration in component(s) of an end-point assessment for an apprenticeship standard. The policy also sets out the steps Achieve+Partners will take to respond to requests for special considerations, within an agreed timescale, within the context of permitted adjustments to marks or grades for independent assessment.

1.3 Scope

This policy is relevant to registered apprentices, employers and training providers that have appointed Achieve+Partners to provide end-point assessment services for an apprenticeship standard(s). Special considerations may be required where apprentices suffer:

- + a temporary illness
- + a temporary injury
- + an event outside of the apprentice's control.



These circumstances must be shown to impact at the time of the assessment. In many circumstances, regarding typical on-demand end-point assessments, it will be more appropriate to offer an apprentice an opportunity to take an assessment at a later date. There will be circumstances where apprentices should not be entered for an assessment.

1.4 Definitions

A special consideration is an adjustment to an apprentice's mark or grade, made after an assessment has taken place. It is applied in circumstances where there has been, or it is reasonably likely that there has been, a substantive or demonstrable effect on the ability of an apprentice to take an assessment or perform at their normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration should not give the learner an unfair advantage, neither should its use cause the user of the certificate to be misled regarding a learner's achievements. The application of special considerations cannot remove the difficulties faced by apprentices.

Overall, only minor adjustments can normally be made to a mark or grade awarded, because doing more than this would compromise assessment standards. The size of the adjustment will depend on the circumstances and reflect the difficulty faced by the apprentice. Special considerations therefore have limitations as to the extent that they can go to help an apprentice disadvantaged by a diverse range of circumstances which have adversely impacted on performance in assessment.

It may not be possible to apply special considerations where end-point assessments require:

- + Demonstration of practical competence
- + Grading criteria to be fully met.

1.5 Arrangements

The decision to award a special consideration in end-point assessment will be based on a variety of factors, which will vary from one apprentice to another, and from one assessment component to another. The factors will take into account the severity of circumstances, the type of assessment and its timing.

Special considerations must be requested for individual apprentices and made on a case-by-case basis. Achieve+Partners require additional evidence in support of any request made on the application form.



This evidence will vary depending on the circumstances, but for example may include a statement from an employer or apprentice, and any medical practitioner's evidence where this applies. Failure to produce the appropriate evidence will lead to a request being rejected.

During the processing of a request Achieve+Partners may liaise with the applicant making the request on behalf of the apprentice. A special consideration request will not be considered once an apprentice's result in end-point assessment has been formally declared and certification claimed.

There may be subject or occupationally specific issues relating to end-point assessment where training providers and employers may need to seek advice from Achieve+Partners. Customers using end-point assessment services have a responsibility to ensure that they are conversant with this policy, and if they require more information, they must contact Achieve+Partners.

Should customers wish to appeal against a decision to decline requests for special considerations then they should refer to the Achieve+Partners Appeals Policy.

1.5.2 Requesting a special consideration

Apprentices should follow Achieve+Partners procedure when making a request:

1. Customer and apprentice to declare and collate evidence about the nature of the circumstances
2. Complete the application form. The application form is available on the Achieve+Partners website (www.achievepartners.co.uk) or directly from Achieve+Partners see annex 1
3. The form must be completed in full, signed and with any additional evidence as required, see annex 2 for further guidance.

All applications should be marked for the attention of the Quality Director and sent to Achieve+Partners at:

By post

Quality Director

Achieve+Partners

50 Holdings Road

Sheffield

S2 2RE

By email

info@achievepartners.co.uk



Timelines

Requests for special considerations must be submitted immediately after the completion or non-completion of a planned end-point assessment. Achieve+Partners will acknowledge receipt of a request, including when to expect a response. Every effort will be made to respond to requests quickly and efficiently in accordance with the timelines listed below. However, these may be subject to change where the request may be complex. When this occurs Achieve+Partners will advise of the reason(s) why and the new timescale.

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Acknowledgment: | Within 3 working days after receipt of the request |
| Written outcome: | Within 10 working days from the date of the acknowledgement |

Outcome and action

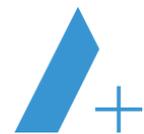
Occupational Awards will review the circumstances and evidence surrounding each request for a special consideration to ensure that the decision made recognises the disadvantage to the apprentice but, does not unduly advantage the apprentice over others in end-point assessment.

An apprentice who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for special consideration if:

- + performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the apprentice e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment
- + alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate
- + part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the apprentice
- + there is enough difference between the part of the assessment to which special consideration is applied and other parts of the end-point assessment that have been achieved to infer that the apprentice could have performed more successfully in the assessment.

An apprentice will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- + no evidence is supplied by the centre that the apprentice has been affected at the time of the assessment by a specific condition
- + any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including holidays or unauthorised absence
- + preparation for an assessment component is affected by difficulties during the programme of learning, e.g. disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages of staff, or industrial disputes.



SECTION 2: PROCEDURE

This section of the policy sets out the procedural steps for special considerations.

| Ref | Step | Owner | CCP |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----|
| 1 | Applicant identifies need for a special consideration in discussions with the apprentice and their employer | Applicant | |
| 2 | Applicant identifies the special consideration appropriate for the apprentice in accordance with the arrangements in this policy | Applicant | X |
| 3 | Applicant completes the special consideration request form providing any supporting evidence as required. | Applicant | |
| 4 | Achieve+Partners acknowledges receipt of special consideration request form within 3 working days of receipt. | Operations Director | |
| 5 | Operations Director reviews the special consideration request form and supporting evidence to ensure that all necessary information has been provided. | Operations Director | |
| 6 | Operations Director contacts the individual submitting the special consideration to request further information if required. | Operations Director | |
| 7 | Quality Director review the special consideration request and supporting evidence in line with the arrangements in this policy. This may involve further contact with the applicant submitting the request. | Quality Director | X |
| 8 | Quality Director will send Achieve+Partners response within 10 working days of the acknowledgement of receipt to the individual, this may involve a phone call to run through the detail of arrangements granted. The response will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + no consideration granted + consideration granted in line with request + different consideration granted in line with the policy. | Quality Director | X |
| 9 | Agreed arrangements or amendments will be discussed with the Operations Director | Quality Director | |



| | | |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 10 | The Operations Director will notify the independent assessor and make all necessary arrangements with the employer, provider and apprentice as required | Quality Director |
| 11 | Special consideration applied in line with agreed arrangements set out by Achieve+Partners | Independent Assessor X |



SECTION 2: REQUEST FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please complete this form and return to info@achievetpartners.co.uk

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Name of individual making request | |
| Name of apprentice | |
| Title and level of standard | |
| Assessment date if known | |
| Reason for application | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Special considerations requested in line with policy | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Please list the evidence being presented to support application. Applications that do not have the relevant documentary evidence cannot be considered | |
| | |
| | |
| | |



| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| If the apprentice has previously been granted special considerations, please provide details | Year |
| | Subject |
| | Awarding Organisation |
| Have you applied reasonable adjustments during their apprenticeship programme? If so, please provide details | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| <p>Declaration</p> <p>The declaration must be signed by the individual making the request and must have the permission of the apprentice to make the request on their behalf.</p> | |
| Signature | |
| Date of application | |

For completion by Achieve+Partners ONLY

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Outcome | Special consideration denied | |
| | Special consideration approved in line with request | |
| | Special consideration approved in line with this policy | |
| Reasons for denial of consideration | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Arrangements agreed for the apprentice | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Quality Director signature | | |
| Date of approval | | |



SECTION 3: GUIDANCE FOR THE APPROVAL OF SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Eligibility and criteria for special considerations

1. Apprentices are eligible for special consideration if they have been fully and professionally prepared for end-point assessment and have attended the whole apprenticeship programme of learning but, performance in the end-point assessment, or in the production of project or presentation material for assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control. These include specifically at time of assessment:
 - + failure to implement previously approved access arrangements and apply reasonable adjustments for an end-point assessment component
 - + serious disturbance during assessment, for example where recorded material is used
 - + arising domestic crisis
 - + temporary illness or accident/injury
 - + bereavement (normally only those most closely involved will be eligible, where whole groups of apprentices are affected)
 - + accidental events in assessment for example:
 - receiving a wrong/defective test paper, CD or online test
 - breakdown of practical equipment/machinery
 - failure of materials to arrive or perform to expectations
 - + international level participation in sporting events, training camps or other events at the time of the assessment.
-



Eligibility and criteria for special considerations

2. For apprentices who are present for an assessment but disadvantaged, special consideration will be considered by applying an adjustment of marks to each component affected within an end-point assessment. The size of the adjustment depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or circumstances. The maximum adjustment given will be 5% of the total marks available in the component concerned.

Achieve+Partners will base a decision on a variety of factors, these may include:

- + the severity of the circumstances
- + the date of the assessment in relation to the circumstances
- + the method of assessment, for example knowledge tests, workplace performance, presentations/interviews.

Special consideration cannot be applied cumulatively. For example, due to a domestic crisis arising at the time assessment and the apprentice suffering from an illness.

Apprentices, their employers or parents/ guardians should, in the first instance, discuss the application of special consideration and where appropriate take advice from a training provider.

A special consideration cannot be applied where none of the components in an end-point assessment have been completed.



Eligibility and criteria for special considerations

3. Achieve+Partners' criteria for special considerations

Circumstances that must apply at time of assessment

- + 1% adjustment for minor issues for example:
 - Hay fever during an assessment
 - Disruption/noise in a knowledge test (more than momentary)
 - Stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed.
 - + 2% adjustment - most cases are in this category of issues:
 - Significant distress at time of assessment (not only test/assessment related)
 - Illness or concussion at time of assessment
 - Fractured limb recovery
 - Additional effects of pregnancy (not pregnancy per se)
 - Significant adverse effects of prolonged assessment in one day (over 6 hours, incl. extra time where approved, but not incl. supervised rest breaks).
 - + 3% adjustment – issues include:
 - Serious illness/disease within 3 months of assessment
 - Flare-up of a severe congenital/medical or psychological condition
 - Fractured limbs recovery
 - Trauma (death of a close friend or distant relative, physical assault) within 3 months of assessment
 - Crisis/incident within 3 months of assessment
 - Witness to a distressing event on day assessment.
 - + 4% adjustment - very serious issues including:
 - Life-threatening illness of apprentice or member of immediate family
 - Severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at time of assessment
 - Major surgery at or near the time of assessment
 - Severe disease
 - Death of member of extended family within 1 month of assessment
 - Serious crisis/incident at time of assessment.
 - + 5% adjustment - maximum permitted for most exceptional issues including:
 - Terminal illness of apprentice or of a parent/guardian
 - Death of member of immediate family within 1 month of assessment
 - very serious and disruptive crisis/incident at or near time of assessment.
-



Eligibility and criteria for special considerations

4. If an apprentice fails to attend an end-point assessment component for acceptable reasons, the apprentice must be re-scheduled for assessment. Unless there are difficulties arising, special consideration will not be awarded, for example repeating group performances.
This principle is also applied where a cohort(s) of apprentices fail to attend assessment due to adverse weather conditions or change of venue.
5. Achieve+Partners must be contacted if an apprentice has been scheduled for end-point assessment and has subsequently died or is terminally ill and unable to complete assessment. A letter of recognition may be provided in respect of assessment components that have been completed. This letter is not a certificate or qualification award and does not in itself have any academic value.
6. Apprentices are not eligible for special consideration if preparation and performance in an assessment is affected by:
 - + Long term illness or other difficulties during learning affecting revision time, unless the circumstances manifest themselves at time of assessment
 - + Bereavement occurring more than four months before the assessment, unless an anniversary occurs at time of assessment or there are current implications e.g. an inquest or court case
 - + Domestic inconvenience, such as moving-house, lack of facilities, taking holidays, exchange visits and field trips at time of assessment
 - + Minor/momentary disturbance in assessment caused by another apprentice, e.g. bad behaviour, phone ringing, building work
 - + Consequences of
 - committing a crime, where charged or found guilty; (however, a retrospective application for special consideration may be considered where the charge is later dropped or apprentice is found not guilty)
 - taking alcohol or recreational drugs
 - disobeying assessment regulations
 - + Failure to:
 - prepare/support apprentices properly for assessment for whatever reason
 - submit portfolio/presentation work
 - cover the learning programme as a consequence of joining the apprenticeship late or part way through
 - + Misreading the:
 - schedule and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place
 - instructions of the assessment and answering the wrong questions



Eligibility and criteria for special considerations

- + Making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the schedule
 - + Disability or learning difficulties (diagnosed or undiagnosed) unless illness affects the apprentice at time of 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.
-