

Special Consideration Policy

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Section 1 - Grounds for special consideration and application process

1.1 Definition

Special consideration is an adjustment, given to a candidate who has experienced a temporary illness, injury or some other circumstance beyond their control, which has had, or is likely to have had a material effect on their performance in an examination or assessment.

Special consideration can only go some way to assist a candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may impact performance in examinations. It cannot remove the difficulty that the candidate faced. There will be situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination. Only minor adjustments will be made to the mark awarded, in order to maintain the standard of the examination.

Special considerations granted by the Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment (CISI) aim to treat candidates fairly, while ensuring that:

- the assessment requirements set out in the specification for the relevant qualification remain valid, and
- candidates who are given special consideration do not have an unfair advantage compared to candidates for whom special consideration is not granted.

1.2 Acceptable grounds for special consideration

Candidates may be eligible for special consideration if any of the following applies at the time of their examination or assessment:

- 1.2.1 temporary illness or injury that **could not** have been addressed in advance through a reasonable adjustment request;
- 1.2.2 severe accident (of a nature which would have led to an absence from employment);
- 1.2.3 recent bereavement, or serious illness of an immediate relative, significant other or close friend (of a nature which would have led to an absence from employment);
- 1.2.4 witnessing or being a victim of a severe crime such as physical assault;
- 1.2.5 serious domestic crisis on or near the examination day such as a house fire or flood;
- 1.2.6 accidental events at the time of the examination such as failure of the technical equipment provided at an exam venue, being given the wrong examination paper, or being given a defective examination paper;
- 1.2.7 serious disturbance during an examination at a test centre such as evacuation of the premises, or noisy/ disruptive building work;
- 1.2.8 failure by the centre to implement previously approved access arrangements for that specific examination.

1.3 Unacceptable grounds for special consideration

Candidates will not normally be eligible for special consideration if preparation for or performance in the examination or assessment is affected by:

- 1.3.1 a long-term medical condition or learning difficulty for which the candidate may receive reasonable adjustments;
- 1.3.2 bereavement occurring more than four months before the examination, unless there are significant on-going implications such as an inquest or court case;
- 1.3.3 domestic inconvenience on or near the examination day such as moving to a new house, lack of facilities, taking holiday;
- 1.3.4 the consequences of committing a crime where formally charged or found guilty;
- 1.3.5 the consequences of consuming alcohol or any recreational drugs;
- 1.3.6 travel/transport problems on the examination day;
- 1.3.7 minor disturbance during the examination such as another candidate's bad behavior or a mobile phone ringing;
- 1.3.8 the failure of technical equipment provided by the candidate during an exam conducted via remote invigilation;
- 1.3.9 the consequences of disobeying the awarding organisation's internal regulations;
- 1.3.10 misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time or location;
- 1.3.11 misreading the instructions on the question paper and answering the wrong questions;
- 1.3.12 making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the examination or assessment schedule.
- 1.3.13 evacuation of the premises during an examination taken by remote invigilation
- 1.3.14 disturbance during an examination taken by remote invigilation such as excessive noise within the premises.

1.4 Rescheduling in advance

Where possible, the CISI recommends that candidates who have experienced circumstances such as those outlined in Section 1.2, on or near the examination day reschedule their exam to a more convenient date and time.

Candidates wishing to reschedule an arranged exam appointment should submit a special consideration application and supporting evidence (see Section 1.6) immediately. In such circumstances, candidates may be eligible to have their examination transferred or rescheduled free of charge.

1.5 Difficulties at the time of the examination

If a candidate experiences an issue during the examination, which they feel has had a clear and substantial impact on their exam performance, they must inform an invigilator and ask them to record it. If the candidate wants the CISI to consider their circumstances they must also submit an application for special consideration (see Section 1.6), even if the invigilator says they will report the issue to the CISI.

1.6 How to apply for Special Consideration

Examination candidates seeking special consideration must submit the following documents to specialconsideration@cisi.org as soon as possible, and **no later than 10 working days after the examination**:

- a completed Special Consideration Application
- relevant supporting evidence (e.g. medical evidence, police incident report).

Candidates seeking special consideration in relation to a financial plan or extended project submission must apply to the CISI for this on or before their submission deadline. If no information is provided by the submission date, a late or future submission may not be permitted. Candidates should apply for special consideration as soon as they are aware that they could require it.

Special consideration applications that are made more than 10 working days after the examination, or the submission date for case study assessments and extended projects, will not normally be considered.

Special consideration applications relating to narrative examinations that are made after results are issued will not normally be considered.

Applications made without supporting evidence will not normally be considered.

Requests for special consideration are considered on their own merits and may be granted at the discretion of the CISI. The decision made is based on the supporting evidence provided and:

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

Section 2 – Review process and special consideration available

2.1 Computer-based, multiple-choice question (MCQ) examinations

2.1.1 Review process

Applications for special consideration will be reviewed within 10 working days. The candidate will be informed of the outcome of the decision by email.

2.1.2 Special consideration available

Due to the daily availability of MCQ examinations, special consideration is restricted to supporting affected candidates to resit the examination. Where a substantiated request for

special consideration based on the circumstances outlined in Section 1.2 has been submitted correctly (see Section 1.6) candidates may be offered one complimentary exam sitting for the appropriate unit.

2.1.3 Candidates unable to take the examination

The CISI does not make awards to any candidate who is unable, through temporary illness, injury or indisposition, to complete their MCQ examination. In these circumstances, candidates must rebook their examination. Subject to the provision of the appropriate application and supporting evidence, a complimentary sitting of the exam may be offered to the candidate at the time of rebooking.

2.1.4 No grade adjustments

Scores and grades for MCQ examinations delivered by computer-based testing are processed automatically, and results are based on a rigorous quality assured process. In the case of requests for special consideration, it is not the policy of the CISI to adjust grades after the examination.

2.2 Narrative (written) examinations

2.2.1 Review process

The CISI will acknowledge applications for special consideration by email within 10 working days and will indicate the period within which the application will be considered. The candidate will be informed of the outcome of the review by email.

2.2.2 Special consideration available

Where a substantiated request for special consideration based on the circumstances outlined in Section 1.2 has been submitted correctly (see Section 1.6) the application will be considered by the CISI during the results determination process.

Special consideration may be given by applying an allowance of marks (up to 5% of the total marks available) to the candidate's raw examination score. The allowance of marks given is at the discretion of the CISI and dependent on the timing, nature and extent of the issue encountered. The CISI refers to Chapter 3 of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publication *A guide to the special consideration process* as a guideline.

It is not the policy of the CISI to adjust grades after the moderation process is complete and candidates have received formal notification of their results. For this reason, it is important to ensure that any special consideration request is submitted within 10 working days of the examination.

2.2.3 Candidates unable to sit the examination

The CISI does not make awards to a candidate who is unable, through temporary illness, injury or indisposition, to complete all of the usual assessment requirements. In these circumstances, candidates are advised to reschedule the date and time of their examination.

2.3 Financial plan case study submissions and extended projects for schools

2.3.1 Review process

The CISI will acknowledge applications for special consideration by email within 10 working days and will indicate the period within which the application will be considered. The candidate will be informed of the outcome of the review by email.

2.3.2 Special consideration available

Where a substantiated request for special consideration based on the circumstances outlined in Section 1.2 has been submitted correctly (see Section 1.6) the application will be considered by the CISI during the results determination process.

Special consideration may be given by applying an allowance of marks (up to 5% of the total marks available) to the candidate's raw assessment score. The allowance of marks given is at the discretion of the CISI and dependent on the timing, nature and extent of the issue encountered. The CISI refers to Chapter 3 of the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publication '*A guide to the special consideration process*' as a guideline.

It is not the policy of the CISI to adjust grades after candidates have received formal notification of their results. For this reason, it is important to ensure that any special consideration request is submitted within 10 working days of the assessment submission date.

2.3.3 Candidates unable to submit the assessment

The CISI does not make awards to a candidate who is unable, through temporary illness, injury or indisposition, to complete all of the usual assessment requirements.

Candidates working on a financial plan case study, who are unable to submit their financial plan by the published deadline and can provide appropriate supporting evidence for special consideration, will be given a new submission deadline for their financial plan. In this instance, candidates should be aware that the marking of the case study may be delayed, and that their results may be released at a subsequent results publication date.

Candidates who are working on the extended project for schools, who are unable to submit their project on the usual date and can provide appropriate supporting evidence for special consideration, will be given the opportunity to submit their project in the autumn/winter resubmission window.

Section 3 – Appealing a special consideration decision

3.1 Querying a special consideration decision

Should a candidate be dissatisfied with the CISI's decision to decline a special consideration application they can raise a special consideration query in line with the CISI's Appeals Policy.

To raise a query the candidate should write to specialconsideration@cisi.org requesting that the special consideration decision application be reviewed by the CISI Assistant Director Qualifications.

The Assistant Director Qualifications may either uphold the original decision or change it and this will normally be communicated to the candidate by email within 10 working days of the query being received. If it is not possible to reply to a special consideration decision within 10 working days, the candidate will be advised of the delay.

3.2 Appealing against a special consideration decision

If a candidate has exhausted the query process and remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they may formally appeal the special consideration decision, in line with the [CISI's Appeals Policy](#).