

# Special Considerations in GCE and GCSE exams

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The following has been taken directly from the Joint Council for Qualifications literature which regulates how examinations are to be conducted nationally.

Special consideration is a **post examination adjustment** to the marks or grades of a candidate who is eligible for consideration. Special consideration can only seek to go some way to assist the candidate affected by a potentially wide range of difficulties, emotional or physical, which may influence performance in examinations. Special consideration cannot remove the difficulty faced by the candidate; there will be situations where candidates should not be entered for an examination because they are not in a fit state to cope with the assessment. Only minor adjustments can be made to the mark awarded because to do more than this would jeopardise the standard of the examination.

**The following circumstances must apply at the time of the assessment and be supported by appropriate and up to date evidence. Awarding bodies will not enter into discussion with candidates or their parents as to how much special consideration should be applied. The examples listed below are provided for illustrative purposes only.**

**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/guardian/carer;
- very recent death of a member of the immediate family;
- very serious and disruptive domestic crises leading to acute anxiety about the family.

**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;
- severe injury arising from a car accident;
- very recent death of member of extended family;
- severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examinations;
- serious domestic crisis at time of examinations.

**3% A more common category, many more cases will fall into this group, including:**

- **recent** traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative;
- **recent** illness of a more serious nature;
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack;
- **recently** broken limbs;
- organ disease;
- physical assault trauma before an examination;
- recent domestic crisis;
- witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination.

**2% The most common category of allowance - the majority of cases might fall within this category:**

- illness at the time of the assessment;

- broken limb on the mend;
- recent viral illness;
- concussion;
- effects of pregnancy (**not pregnancy per se**);
- hay fever on the day of an examination;
- extreme distress on day of examination;
- allowance on last paper taken in a day when a candidate has exceeded 5 hours 30 minutes at Level 1 or Level 2 (GCSE) or 6 hours at Level 3 (GCE).

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

- noise during examination which is more than momentary;
- illness of another candidate in the examination room;
- stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed;
- minor ailments;
- headache;
- minor upset arising from administration problems, such as wrong time allocated.

**0% Consideration was given but the addition of marks was considered inappropriate.**  
(Where the request fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected.)