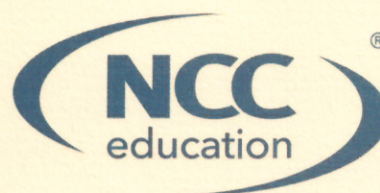




**SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN
UNIVERSITY**



**Awarding
Great British
Qualifications**

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS POLICY



1. Introduction

For the purposes of this Policy, **Special Considerations** means measures or arrangements made to accommodate a candidate who is affected by illness, injury, disability, or other circumstances that may have an adverse impact on their ability to undertake or complete an assessment.

Special Considerations are generally categorized into two areas:

1. **Pre-assessment Special Considerations;** and
2. **Post-assessment Special Considerations.**

1.1 Pre-assessment of Special Considerations

Pre-assessment Special Considerations are adjustments authorized **before an examination or assessment** to enable a candidate to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and attainment without being placed at an unfair disadvantage because of a disability or other established need.

Such arrangements may include, for example, the provision of an appropriately modified assessment paper for a candidate with visual impairment where the candidate's need has been identified and appropriately evidenced in advance.

Pre-assessment Special Considerations are also referred to as **Reasonable Adjustments**.

1.2 Post-assessment Special Considerations

Post-assessment Special Considerations may be granted where a candidate's performance in, or ability to complete, an examination or assessment has been adversely affected by a temporary illness, injury, indisposition, or other unforeseen circumstances occurring at or immediately before the assessment.

The purpose of post-assessment of Special Consideration is to ensure that appropriate recognition is given to the adverse circumstances experienced by the candidate, where such circumstances are considered relevant and sufficiently evidenced.

Post-assessment Special Considerations are also referred to as **Extenuating Circumstances**.

Where a candidate is unable, due to exceptional circumstances, to undertake or complete an assessment to a satisfactory standard, an appropriate outcome may be to permit the candidate to undertake the assessment on a subsequent occasion as a first attempt, subject to the applicable NCC Education regulations and procedures. Where permitted by the relevant regulations, no restriction shall be imposed on the candidate's maximum attainable result solely because of such an arrangement.

2. Principles

South Mediterranean University has a responsibility to ensure that candidates are provided with a fair and equitable opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and attainment.

Where a candidate has a disability, medical condition, learning difficulty, or other legitimate circumstance that may place them at a substantial disadvantage in an assessment, SMU shall consider appropriate adjustments or Special Considerations, subject to:

- the nature and circumstances of the request;



- appropriate supporting evidence;
- the requirements of the relevant qualification and assessment;
- the integrity, validity, and reliability of the assessment;
- applicable NCC Education regulations and requirements; and
- any other applicable institutional policies and procedures.

Special Considerations shall not compromise the validity, reliability, security, or integrity of an assessment or qualification.

The granting of a Special Consideration shall not be construed as an automatic entitlement to a particular adjustment or outcome. Each application shall be considered on its individual merits and in accordance with the applicable regulatory requirements.

3. Examples of Pre-assessment Special Considerations

The following table provides examples of circumstances that may give rise to a request for a pre-assessment adjustment. The examples are illustrative and **are not exhaustive**.

Special Consideration Category	Examples	Typical Adjustments
Communication and Interaction	Written communication difficulties, autism spectrum conditions, temporary or permanent injury affecting the dominant hand	Additional time, scribe, use of a word processor
Cognition and Learning	Specific learning difficulties, dyspraxia, dyslexia	Additional time, reader, scribe
Sensory and Physical Needs	Visual impairment, color blindness, restricted language or vocabulary	Braille or modified assessment materials, large-print materials, colored paper, additional time
Behavioral, Emotional and Social Needs	Conditions or circumstances affecting concentration, behavior, or emotional regulation	Prompter, supervised rest breaks, alternative assessment venue

The specific adjustment granted shall be determined based on the candidate's individual circumstances, supporting evidence, and the requirements of the assessment.

4. Post-assessment Special Considerations

An application for post-assessment Special Consideration may be made where:

4.1 The candidate's performance has been adversely affected

A candidate's performance in an examination or assessment may have been materially affected by circumstances beyond their reasonable control, including, but not limited to:



- personal trauma or significant emotional distress occurring shortly before or during the assessment, such as bereavement or a serious family emergency;
- a minor injury occurring immediately before or during the assessment, such as a sprained wrist;
- an unexpected technical failure or malfunction of computer equipment where the equipment is required for the assessment;
- significant disruption or disturbance during the assessment, including substantial noise arising from nearby construction or other external activities; or
- any other circumstances considered appropriate by the NCC Education Assessments Board.

4.2 The candidate has been unable to complete the assessment

Post-assessment Special Consideration may also be considered where an assessment has not been completed because of circumstances beyond the candidate's reasonable control, including:

- illness arising during the assessment;
- disruption caused by an external event, such as a fire alarm or power failure; or
- any other exceptional circumstance accepted under the applicable NCC Education regulations.

5. Limitations on Post-assessment Special Considerations

Post-assessment Special Consideration is intended primarily to address unexpected circumstances arising immediately before or during an assessment that materially affect a candidate's performance or ability to complete the assessment.

It is not intended to compensate for circumstances that were known to the candidate sufficiently in advance and for which an appropriate pre-assessment adjustment could reasonably have been requested.

Where a candidate is unwell or otherwise medically unfit to undertake an assessment, the candidate should, where reasonably practicable, notify the University before the assessment and seek an appropriate alternative arrangement.

A candidate should not ordinarily be required to undertake an assessment where their condition is such that participation would place them at a significant disadvantage or otherwise compromise the fairness or integrity of the assessment.

6. Procedure for Requesting Special Considerations

All applications for Special Considerations at **South Mediterranean University** shall be submitted and considered in accordance with the following procedure.

6.1 Initial Notification

Candidates, or their parent or legal guardian where applicable, shall notify the University as soon as reasonably practicable if they believe that Special Consideration may be required.



For pre-assessment adjustments, the candidate should submit the request sufficiently in advance of the scheduled assessment to allow the University to assess and, where appropriate, implement the required arrangements.

Requests shall be submitted using the University's official **Special Considerations Request Form**.

6.2 Supporting Evidence

An application shall, where applicable, be supported by appropriate and verifiable documentary evidence.

Such evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- a medical certificate or medical report;
- a psychologist's or other appropriately qualified professional's report;
- a hospital or clinical record;
- documentary evidence of an unforeseen incident or disruption; or
- any other evidence considered relevant to the circumstances of the application.

The supporting evidence should clearly identify the nature of the circumstances and, where reasonably possible, explain their likely impact on the candidate's ability to undertake or complete the assessment.

SMU reserves the right to request additional evidence where the information provided is insufficient to determine the application.

6.3 Submission of Application

The completed Special Considerations Request Form and all supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Examinations Office by email at exams@smu.edu.ly or delivered in person to the Examinations Office.

For pre-assessment adjustments, applications should normally be submitted **no later than five (5) working days before the scheduled assessment**, unless the circumstances arise after that deadline or the candidate could not reasonably have submitted the request earlier.

For post-assessment Special Consideration, an application should normally be submitted within forty-eight (48) hours of the affected assessment, unless exceptional circumstances prevent the candidate from meeting this deadline.

6.4 Review and Determination

Each application shall be reviewed by the Special Considerations Panel, chaired by the Examinations Officer, in consultation with the Head of Academic Affairs and, where appropriate, other relevant University personnel.

The Panel shall consider:

- the circumstances giving rise to the application;



- the supporting evidence provided;
- the nature and extent of the impact on the candidate;
- the requirements and integrity of the relevant assessment;
- applicable NCC Education regulations and guidance; and
- any other information considered relevant to reaching a fair and properly reasoned determination.

The Panel may approve, modify, or reject an application, or request further information or evidence before reaching a determination.

All decisions shall be recorded appropriately for audit and quality-assurance purposes.

6.5 Notification of Decision

The candidate shall be notified of the outcome in writing, normally within **five (5) working days** of receipt of a complete application and the required supporting evidence.

Where additional information or evidence is required, the decision period may be extended as reasonably necessary.

7. Appeals

A candidate who is dissatisfied with a decision made under this Policy may submit a formal appeal in writing to the **Academic Registrar** within **five (5) working days** of receiving notification of the decision.

The appeal shall clearly state the grounds upon which the decision is being challenged and should include any relevant supporting evidence not previously considered.

The appeal shall be reviewed in accordance with the University's applicable appeals procedures and the relevant NCC Education requirements.

The decision following the appeal shall be communicated to the candidate in writing and shall, subject to any applicable external rights of review, constitute the University's final decision on the matter.

8. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All applications, supporting evidence, decisions, and related correspondence concerning Special Considerations shall be handled confidentially and retained securely in accordance with the University's applicable data protection, confidentiality, and record-retention requirements.

Information shall be disclosed only to individuals who have a legitimate institutional or regulatory need to access such information for the purposes of assessing, administering, monitoring, or auditing the application.

9. Compliance with NCC Education Requirements

All Special Considerations shall be administered in accordance with the applicable **NCC Education regulations, policies, procedures, and assessment requirements**.



Where there is any inconsistency between this Policy and a mandatory NCC Education requirement, the applicable NCC Education requirement shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

10. Further Information

For further information regarding Special Considerations, candidates should consult the applicable **NCC Education Special Considerations Policy and related assessment regulations** or contact the relevant Examinations Office at **South Mediterranean University**.

