

Covid-19 and summer 2022 exams – summary guidance for students and families

Students and their families should refer to and follow the guidance provided here. Further, more detailed information can be accessed using the JCQ link below or the summary guidance provided.

May and June 2022

All absence from school should continue to be reported in the normal way.

Where a student misses one or more examinations due to COVID-19, the following guidance should be read, understood and complied with.

For specific queries related to exam-related absence, please email 2022exams@coombedean.co.uk. Where required, the self-certification form will be provided by the school to be completed by the parent/guardian/carer who will be required to complete part B.

The self-certification form must only be used in the following circumstances:

- the candidate has missed a terminal examination or a unit which cannot be re-entered;
- the centre has no reason to suspect that this may be a fraudulent claim;
- the candidate has been attending other examinations so far without problems.

The self-certification form is NOT required in the following circumstances:

- the candidate has missed a unit and can re-enter at a later date;
- the candidate was sent home ill by the centre;
- the candidate was seen to be falling ill in the centre the day before their absence;
- the centre knows of long-term medical circumstances which can lead to sudden absence;
- the candidate has a prescription or label from medication showing the date when the medicine was prescribed and the name and address of the candidate.

Where the centre can verify the circumstances, they will be stated when making an on-line special consideration application or on the special consideration form (JCQ/SC – Form 10).

Key documents:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/A-guide-to-the-special-consideration-process-202122-%E2%80%93-General-and-Vocational-qualifications-Updated-8-April-2022.pdf>

https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Form-14_Self-Certification-Form.pdf

The following information has been taken from Appendix 1 Supplementary guidance on the special consideration process for centres in England June 2022 examination series (link to full SC document above).

A range of measures have been put in place this summer to support candidates taking GCE AS, A-level and GCSE examinations. These measures include:

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| • advance information on the focus of examinations for most subjects to help candidates revise; |
| • provision of support materials for some examinations (formulae and equation sheets); |
| • changes to non-examination assessment and fieldwork requirements in some subjects; |
| • optional content in some GCSE specifications; |
| • generous grading in comparison to the June 2019 examination series, providing a safety net for candidates; |

- a minimum of ten days between the first and last examination in each GCE AS, A-level and GCSE specification. This will reduce the chance of a candidate missing all examinations in a subject because of illness.

The JCQ awarding bodies providing other general and vocational qualifications have also put a range of measures in place to support candidates taking examinations and assessments this summer. These measures will have been published by the relevant awarding bodies and information can be found on their websites.

Supplementary guidance for the June 2022 examination series for people with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19, or a positive test result for COVID-19

This supplementary guidance should be read in conjunction with the other sections of the JCQ publication 'A guide to the special consideration process' (link above, summary provided) which sets out the procedures where a candidate has been fully prepared and covered the whole course but performance in the examination, or in the production of coursework or non-examination assessment, is materially affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control.

The two categories of special consideration are:

- a candidate, who on the day of their examination/non-examination assessment, is present for the examination/non-examination assessment but disadvantaged;

or

- a candidate, who on the day of their examination/non-examination assessment, is absent from the examination/non-examination assessment for an acceptable reason.

Additional information

Where a centre suspects the authenticity of the details provided by a candidate within Form 14, they should investigate the matter as suspected candidate malpractice using the standard JCQ policy and procedure. Candidates should be made aware that their results can be withdrawn, or they can be disqualified if they provide false information on eligibility for special consideration.

Key extracts from the UKHSA Guidance as of 1 April 2022

People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). For children and young people 18 and under:

- "Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, **can continue to attend their education setting.**"
- "Children and young people who are **unwell and have a high temperature** should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities **when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.**"
- **"It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional."**
- **"If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can."**
- **"Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal."**
- For further information on high temperature (fever) in children, please see the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fever-in-children/>

As is normal in a standard examination series, candidates are expected to complete examinations to receive a grade. Centre staff should wherever possible encourage candidates to attend for their examinations. There may be exceptional cases though where this will not be possible, e.g. a temporary illness on the day of the examination.

Centres and candidates should adhere to the UKHSA guidance as it applies on the day of the candidate's examination(s). Centres should also consider any differences in the guidance based on the candidate's age (e.g. 18 and under or 19 and over) and ensure they refer to the right guidance.

Special consideration when a candidate is absent for an acceptable reason

Candidates must be reminded that the awarding of a grade through the special consideration process can only be made where they are absent from an examination or non-examination assessment component for an acceptable reason. A candidate who is staying at home and avoiding contact with others, in line with UKHSA guidance, at the time of the examination, is considered to be absent from the examination for an acceptable reason. This includes candidates who are displaying the symptoms described in the UKHSA guidance as advising them to stay at home (e.g. a high temperature for those aged 18 and under) as well as those with a positive COVID-19 test result.

Where a candidate still wishes to attend an examination, despite having symptoms (e.g. a high temperature) or a positive COVID-19 test the centre should encourage the candidate to follow the UKHSA's guidance.

Evidencing candidates' eligibility for special consideration

The JCQ awarding bodies will be adapting **Form 14 -JCQ/ME - Self-certification for candidates who have missed an examination** (linked above) to assist centres in dealing with candidates who are absent from an examination for an acceptable reason in line with the UKHSA guidance. Centres will expect parents/carers/guardians and candidates to complete the relevant sections of the form.

Centres can verify the candidate's circumstances, where provided in Form 14, to process an application for special consideration using the category 'absent candidate'. There is no requirement for a candidate to complete a COVID-19 test to provide evidence of their absence from an examination.

Minimum requirements for a candidate to receive a grade through the special consideration process

Section 4.3. page 8 of the JCQ guidance (linked above) outlines the minimum requirements for an adjustment to be made to the grade where a candidate is absent for an acceptable reason. However, for the June 2022 examination series, due to the exceptional circumstances, the awarding bodies will award a grade where eligible candidates have completed the assessment(s) for at least one whole component within the specification.

As in all previous standard examination series, a qualification award will not be made where none of the examinations/assessments within a specification have been completed.

Examples of possible scenarios:

Example 1

An A-level candidate who is 18 is unwell and has a high temperature on the day of one of their A-level examinations.

- a) The centre advises the candidate to stay at home and not attend their examinations until he no longer has a high temperature and is well enough to attend his examinations.
- b) The centre asks the candidate to self-certify their illness using Form 14.
- c) The centre submits an online application for special consideration for each of the missed A-level examinations to the relevant awarding bodies using the category 'absent candidate'.
- d) As the candidate's examinations have been spaced by at least 10 days he will be able to receive A-level grades based on the other components completed.

Example 2

An A-level candidate who is 19 is displaying symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and has a high temperature or does not feel well enough to attend their examination.

- a) The centre advises the candidate to stay at home and not attend their examinations, until he no longer has a high temperature (if he had one) or no longer feels unwell.
- b) The centre asks the candidate to self-certify their reason for absence using Form 14.
- c) The centre submits an online application for special consideration for each of the missed A-level examinations to the relevant awarding bodies using the category 'absent candidate'.
- d) As the candidate's A-level examinations have been spaced by at least 10 days in every subject, he will be able to receive A-level grades based on the other components completed.

Example 3

A candidate who is 16 has taken a COVID-19 test under the direction of a health professional or has chosen to take a COVID-19 test (against UKHSA guidance recommendations) and has a positive test result.

- a) The centre advises the candidate to stay at home and not attend their examinations for 3 days after the day she took the test.
- b) The centre asks the candidate to self-certify their reason for absence using Form 14.
- c) The centre does not require the candidate to provide proof of a test but could keep a record of the test, such as a photograph, as evidence if it is available.
- d) The centre submits an online application for special consideration for each of the missed GCSE examinations to the relevant awarding bodies using the category 'absent candidate'.
- e) As the candidate's GCSE examinations have been spaced by at least 10 days in every subject, she will be able to receive GCSE grades based on the other components completed.

Example 4

An A-level candidate who is 17 has a positive COVID-19 test result or is unwell and experiencing a high temperature but wishes to attend their examination.

- a) The centre refers the candidate to the UKHSA guidance. In the case of a positive test result, the candidate is advised to stay at home and not attend their A-level examinations for 3 days after the day the test was taken. In the case of symptoms, the candidate is advised to stay at home until she no longer has a high temperature.
- b) The centre reassures the candidate about their eligibility for special consideration. As the candidate's examinations are spaced by at least 10 days in every A-level subject, grades can be awarded on the other completed components.
- c) The centre submits an online application for special consideration for each of the missed A-level examinations to the relevant awarding bodies using the category 'absent candidate'.
- d) If the candidate still requests to attend the examination, the centre should follow the advice in UKHSA's updated health protection in education and childcare settings guidance.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-otherchildcare-facilities>)

SKL – 23/04/22