**Summer exams, special consideration and Covid arrangements**

This FAQs sheet is to ensure that you understand how the summer exams will work, now that the exams boards have issued their guidelines in relation to Covid and Special Consideration.

**How have exams been organised to ensure that Covid disruption is minimised?**

Exams have been carefully planned so that there is a minimum 10-day gap between different papers of the same exam. This is so that if a student tests positive for Covid, and is unable to sit a paper, they will be out of isolation by the time the next paper comes along.

**So, if I miss an exam paper due to Covid or other illness, I’ll still be able to get my final grade, based on how I perform on the other paper(s) and coursework (if part of the exam)?**

Yes, exactly. This system has been in place for many years and exam boards can calculate full grades as long as you have completed at least 25% of the marks for your exam so you won’t be disadvantaged. This has been especially adjusted this year to make it easier to gain a grade (usually you need to complete at least 50% of the exam)

*You must let college know you are ill and missing an exam(s) due to illness, by calling the college on 0115 851 5000.*

**What if I am so ill, I miss all of my exams for 1 subject?**

Unfortunately, grades can’t be awarded when no papers have been sat and we will not be able to go back to grades achieved in formal assessments earlier in the year for summer 2022 exams. You would have to arrange to re-sit the exams at the next opportunity (autumn term or next summer).

**What happens if I test positive for Covid when I am supposed to have an exam?**

If you have tested positive for Covid, you will not be able to sit papers at the time you are infectious.

**Can I still sit my exam if I have Covid but don’t have symptoms?**

No, unfortunately we don’t have the facilities for this and cannot risk other students being infected as per the national guidance on Covid and exams.

**So, if I do have Covid on the day of an exam paper, or have to miss an exam paper for another reason, what do I do?** You will need to apply for **special consideration.**

**What is special consideration?**

Special consideration is when an exam paper is affected by something that happens **immediately before** or **during** an exam or assessment that has an effect on a student’s ability to take that exam or assessment, or on how they performed. Examples might be the death of a grandparent the day before an exam, testing positive for Covid on the day of an exam, or an epileptic fit during an exam.

**What is the difference between special consideration and access arrangements / Learning Support adjustments (e.g. extra time for dyslexia or rest breaks for health reasons)?**

Access arrangements are dealt with via our Learning support team. Students with access arrangements such as extra time, small room, rest breaks will have already have these in place. You have received numerous emails and reminders from tutors to apply for this. The deadline for applying for these has now passed. All who have applied have had to undergo a rigorous evidence-gathering process.

**If my appeal for special consideration is agreed, how will my new grade be calculated?**

**a. If I miss the whole exam paper**

If you miss a whole paper or module, the final grade awarded will be based completely on the exam papers and any coursework that you did complete. The exam board would calculate this based on their knowledge of performance across the whole exam.

**b. If my performance is affected during the exam**

If your performance in a paper was affected, o*nly minor adjustments can be made* to the mark awarded. The minimum adjustment is to add 1% to the final mark and the maximum adjustment would be to add 5% to the final mark.

Past examples we have seen are as follows

* 1% for stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed
* 5% for terminal illness diagnosis of the candidate

Exam boards consider that larger adjustments would jeopardise the standard of the examination.

**I was badly affected by Covid / other long-term health issue over the last 2 years. Can I apply for special consideration?**

No, special consideration cannot be claimed for missed education due to Covid, long-term health issues or missed education.

**How does this affect vocational qualifications?**

An awarding body’s decision to award special consideration in vocational qualifications will be based on various factors, which may vary from student to student and from one assessment to another. To apply for special consideration for vocational courses (BTEC etc) email specialconsideration@bilborough.ac.uk

**When is the deadline for applying for special consideration?**

Our internal deadline is Tuesday 28th June (4 days after the last day of exams)

**How do I apply for special consideration?**

If college agrees to support your application you can apply for special consideration using the FORM link available from specialconsideration@bilborough.ac.uk

**I’m really worried that the disruption over the pandemic will still have a negative impact on my grade**

While we cannot promise you will get the grades that you are hoping for, we are expecting students to come away with good grades this summer. There have been a range of other changes that have been made this year which should help you maximise your chances of getting the grade you deserve. These include;

* Generous grading in comparison to the June 2019 examination series (the last year of real exams). A higher proportion of top grades and passes will be awarded nationally than in 2019.
* Advance information on the focus of examinations for most subjects (e.g. reduction in content for some subjects)
* Provision of support materials (formulae and equation sheets) and changes to coursework requirements in some subjects

As a college we have also supported you as much as possible during the challenging exam period with a range of activities

* A series of mocks in the hall in January to get used to the exam-hall experience
* Catch-up fund sessions for small groups
* College study spaces open from 7.30am to 6pm for those students who find it easier to study in the building than at home.
* Easter revision sessions in some subjects
* A supervised study space in B3.7 opened up for first time
* 1:1 counselling and wellbeing sessions, support via personal tutors and support from our subject specialist teachers.

Please do speak to your tutor if you need any further support for your exams. If you have any further questions, please ask.

Best wishes for your exams this summer.

Dave