

CIMA's Special Consideration Policy

Please note we have updated our Special Consideration Policy and application form to make it more user friendly and easier to report a problem with your exam. The revised policy is applicable to all CIMA examinations taking place in a Test Centre or Online on or after the **30 July 2020**.

Key changes to note	
Section 4	How to report a technical issue with OnVUE Online Proctored Examinations
Section 5	New online special consideration application form
Section 6	Section D - Technical problem during your online exam
Section 8	All special consideration applications must be submitted by the student (using the online application form) by the deadlines specified in section 8.
Section 11	Which candidates are NOT eligible for special consideration?

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1 What is special consideration?

- 1.1. CIMA has a process in place which allows you to apply for special consideration if you feel that your exam performance was adversely affected by mitigating circumstances **shortly before or on the day of your exam**.
- 1.2. Special consideration is a post-exam adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, injury, recent bereavement of a close family member or other adverse circumstances which may have disadvantaged a student's ability to take an exam or demonstrate their normal level of attainment.
- 1.3. Special consideration can only go some way towards compensating a student who has been disadvantaged due to unavoidable circumstances beyond their control at the time of the exam. It is not always possible to reflect what might have been achieved in more favourable circumstances. Only minor adjustments can be made to the overall mark awarded without undermining the standard of the exam. Similarly, where an exam requires a competence, criterion or standard to be met fully it may not be possible to apply special consideration.
- 1.4. As human marked exams (e.g. Case study exams) are different from computer marked exams (e.g. Objective tests), the process for applying for special considerations varies according to exam type. The information below explains how you may apply for special consideration.

2 Exam type

- 2.1 Human marked exams include:
 - Professional level integrated case study exams
 - Non-English case study exams eg exams set in the Chinese or Russian language.
 - End Point Assessments. Apprentices please refer to the EPA special consideration policy [here](#),
- 2.2 The special consideration application process takes into account the features of human marked exams. Human marked exams take place at set times during the year. Exam entry window typically closes 2 weeks before the exam date and results are released within 6 to 8 weeks.
- 2.3 Computer marked exams include:
 - Certificate in Business Accounting and Professional level Objective Tests
 - Any other auto scored exam product or assessment.
- 2.4 Computer marked exams can be booked or rescheduled (free of charge) up to 48 hours in advance of the exam date. The special consideration application process takes into account the features of computer marked exams.

3 Rules for applying for special consideration (Personal mitigations)

Adverse personal circumstances shortly before or on the day of the exam

Computer marked exams

- 3.1 Students affected by adverse personal circumstances (such as temporary illness, injury, accidents or a recent bereavement) more than 48 hours before the scheduled exam are advised to reschedule the exam (normal booking terms and conditions apply).
- 3.2 Due to the flexible on-demand availability of computer marked exams, students affected by adverse personal circumstances on the day of the exam or within 48 hours of the scheduled exam will **NOT** be eligible for special consideration. Students are advised to re-schedule their exam to a more convenient time. In such circumstances, students are advised to contact CIMA immediately as they may be eligible for a re-scheduled exam free of charge.
- 3.3 CIMA cannot give advice as to whether a student is fit to take an exam. By presenting yourself for and taking the exam it will be assumed you are fit enough to take the exam.

Human marked exams

- 3.4 Students presenting themselves for and taking human marked exams are eligible to apply for special consideration due to adverse personal circumstances beyond their control shortly before or on the day of the exam.

4 Rules for applying for special consideration (Technical problems on exam day)

- 4.1 These rules are applicable to
- Online Proctored Examinations – human marked exams and computer marked exams.
 - Test centre examinations – human marked exams and computer marked exams.
- 4.2 Students affected by technical issues at the start of and/or during their exam are eligible to apply for special consideration, if the application is made by the specified deadline.
- 4.3 If you encounter any difficulties during the exam, for example, computer hardware or software issues, noise or other disturbances, **you must notify the invigilator/ proctor/test administrator immediately** and obtain a Pearson VUE incident number before you leave the test centre or on the same day of the online exam.
- 4.4 You can obtain a Pearson VUE incident number from your Test invigilator in a Test centre, by raising an issue with the proctor on an online exam or by contacting the Pearson VUE contact centre. Phone numbers are available [here](#)
- 4.5 If you do not obtain a Pearson VUE incident number, CIMA are unable to verify that such circumstances occurred in considering a request for special consideration at a later date.

5 How do I apply for special consideration?

- 5.1 **All requests for special consideration must be submitted by the student, using the online application form by the deadline specified in section 8.**
- 5.2 If you are applying for special consideration because of a medical condition or mitigating personal circumstance(s) (option A or B), you will need to send your supporting document(s) to exams.consideration@aicpa-cima.com within 7 working days of your exam date for computer marked exams and 14 working days of your exam date for human marked exams. If your documents are sent after this time, your application will not be accepted.
- 5.3 Supporting documents may include official medical documentation or other appropriate evidence, such as a doctor's certificate or death certificate.
- 5.4 CIMA will **only** accept supporting documents sent electronically via email. Requests not supported by documentary evidence (where applicable) cannot be considered.
- 5.5 Telephoned requests cannot be accepted and CIMA cannot discuss the details of your application via telephone. Appeals submitted by employers, family members or tuition providers on behalf of a student will not be accepted.

6 What information do I need to include in my application?

- 6.1 In your online application, you must include the following details:
- Your Name, Name of Exam and Date of exam
 - Test centre name (where applicable)
 - Pearson VUE Appointment ID (available on your exam booking confirmation email).
 - Pearson VUE incident number (where applicable)
 - Describe the specific problem and when it started.
 - Explain how the problem affected your exam performance
 - What advice/action was taken by the Proctor/Invigilator/Test administrator?

6.2 Additional guidance for completing your online application.

A. Your medical condition

- The nature of your condition
- When did it start?
- Details of the medical or specialist advice sought
- Did the condition/ illness exist at the time of the exam under consideration here?
- Is the condition temporary or permanent?
- Please attach any supporting documentation

B. Your mitigating personal circumstance(s)

- The nature of the circumstance
- Time period/Date problem began
- Explain how this has affected your exam performance
- Please attach any supporting documentation

C. Problem at your test centre

- Include your Pearson VUE Incident number
- Detail of the problem, including how it affected your exam performance
- Time period - When did the problem start and how long did it last?
- Was it reported to the Invigilator?
- What advice/action was taken by the Invigilator?

D. Technical problem during your online exam

- Include your Pearson VUE Incident number
- Detail of the problem, including how it affected your exam performance
- Time period - When did the problem start and how long did it last?
- Was it reported to the Proctor/Invigilator?
- What advice/action was taken by the Proctor/Invigilator?

E. Other

- The nature of the circumstance
- Time period/Date problem began
- Explain how this has affected your exam performance

7 What happens after I have submitted my online application?

7.1 Once your online application is successfully submitted, you will receive a thank you acknowledgement onscreen. An automated digital stamp will be recorded for your submission. You will not receive any further correspondence from CIMA.

7.2 The result you receive for your exam will reflect the outcome of the special consideration process. We will not contact you about your special consideration application unless we require further information.

8 Deadlines for submitting a special consideration application

8.1 Please note that applications received after the specified deadline or after results have been published will not be accepted.

Human marked exams

8.2 Students must notify CIMA (via the online application) **within 7 working days** starting from and including the date of the exam.

- 8.3 Supporting documentation (where applicable) must be received **within 14 working days** starting from and including the date of the exam.
- 8.4 Please note, submitting a special consideration application will **not delay** the issue of your results and your scaled score being available on MyCIMA. CIMA cannot adjust grades after the assessment process is complete or results are published.

Computer marked exams

- 8.5 If you encounter difficulties during your exam, for example, computer hardware or software issues, noise or other disturbances, you must notify CIMA (using the online application) **within 24 hours** of taking the exam.
- 8.6 Supporting documentation (where applicable) must be received **within 7 working days** starting from and including from the date of the exam.
- 8.7 Objective test results/grades are processed automatically, and provisional results delivered instantly based on a rigorous quality assured process.
- 8.8 Please note, submitting a special consideration application **may delay the issue of your results** and your scaled score being available on MyCIMA. CIMA cannot adjust grades after the assessment process is complete or results are published.

9 How will CIMA consider my application?

- 9.1 Decisions are based on the evidence provided by the student. Adjustments to marks are applied using a tariff (guidelines) approved by the Appeals Panel¹. The Appeals Panel oversees the implementation of the tariff to ensure the process is applied consistently and objectively. Strict policy guidelines are in place to ensure students that encounter similar circumstances are treated fairly.
- 9.2 It is your responsibility to provide all the information required to support your special consideration application. Failure to provide sufficient details or supporting evidence may affect the outcome of your application.
- 9.3 You should be aware that a successful application for special consideration can only result in a small adjustment to your overall mark. It is unlikely to change the pass/fail decision if your exam performance is significantly below the passing standard or if several questions or whole sections of the exam are missed out. Appeals challenging academic judgement or application of the pre-approved tariff will not be accepted.
- 9.4 The result you receive will reflect the outcome of the special consideration process. The decision is final and CIMA reserve the right not to enter into any further correspondence regarding your result or exam performance.

10 Frequently asked questions

- 10.1 **What happens if I miss the deadline to submit my application?** CIMA will NOT consider applications received after the specified deadline or after results are published.
- 10.2 **How do I obtain a Pearson VUE incident number?** You can obtain a Pearson VUE incident number from your Test invigilator in a Test centre, by raising an issue with the proctor on an online exam or by contacting the Pearson VUE contact centre. Phone numbers available [here](#)
- 10.3 **Is there a charge for the special consideration process?** The special consideration process is free of charge.
- 10.4 **When will I receive my exam results?**
Human marked exams There is no delay to exam results for considering special consideration applications. Your result will be available on the results date published on MyCIMA.
Computer marked exams (objective tests) If you have applied for special consideration your results may be delayed by up to 14 working days after receipt of your application/supporting documentation.

10.5 I have more questions about MyCIMA exams?

Please contact our CIMA Customer Contact support team cima.contact@aicpa-cima.com.

For further support on any matters relating to special consideration requests, please contact our CIMA Operations Team exams.consideration@aicpa-cima.com

10.6 See Appendix A on the next page

11 Which candidates are NOT eligible for special consideration?

¹The Appeals Panel is governed by CIMA's CGMA Examination Board. The Examination Board approve CIMA's exam terms and conditions and oversee the implementation of the special consideration policy and tariff, ensuring due process is adhered to.

The Examination Board consists of members from the Lifelong Learning Committee, CIMA council and independent members. CIMA's charter, byelaws and regulations regulate the conduct of CIMA's governance/ policy committees, its members and student.

Appendix A - Applicable to all CIMA examinations

12 Which candidates are NOT eligible for special consideration?

Candidates will generally **NOT** be eligible for special consideration if preparation for or performance in the exam is affected by²:

- failure to report the incident to the test centre on the day of the exam or failure to report the issue to the Proctor for an online exam; failure to provide an incident number and notify CIMA within the specified deadline if difficulties are encountered during the exam; failure to attend a scheduled exam at the right time and in the right location; not attending the exam (i.e. a 'no show'); or where the candidate is present for the exam but no attempt is made to take the exam (i.e. a blank script);
- misreading the exam instructions and answering the wrong task; missing out sections/whole tasks, failure to provide responses in the specified answer screens i.e. drafting responses in the scratch pad; prematurely ending the exam (intentionally or accidentally); refusing to sign CIMA's non-disclosure agreement with reference to exam rules (terms and conditions);
- minor disturbance during the exam caused by another candidate, such as momentary bad behaviour, candidates moving in and out of the test centre, or a mobile phone ringing;
- the consequences of disobeying the test centre's internal regulations; the consequences of failing to comply with CIMA's exam terms and conditions which may result in the Proctor terminating your online exam early.
- the failure of tuition providers to prepare candidates appropriately for an exam for any reason including;
 - staff shortages, building work or lack of facilities; failure by a tuition provider to cover the whole syllabus;
 - failure by the candidate to cover the whole syllabus eg as a result of joining a course part way through;
 - failure by the candidate to prepare adequately for the exam or to use the correct pre-seen material;
 - errors in the Kaplan Official Study Text, including sample (practice) questions or any other Kaplan content;
 - errors in any other study materials (from any other tuition provider or publisher);
- failure by the candidate to process special accommodation arrangements on time and provide appropriate supporting documentation;
- long term illness, unless diagnosis is within six weeks prior to the exam or the illness manifests at the time of the exam;
- bereavement occurring more than six weeks prior to the exam, or there are on-going implications such as an inquest or court case;
- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays at the time of the exam; making personal arrangements such as a wedding or holiday arrangements which conflict with the scheduled exam;
- the consequences of committing a crime or being charged with an offence; consuming alcohol or taking any drugs except those prescribed by your doctor;
- participation in sporting events or other competitions, including at an international level at the time of exam, e.g. representing their country at an international level in football or hockey.
- permanent disability or learning difficulties (diagnosed or undiagnosed); unless illness affects the candidate at the time of the exam or where the disability exacerbates what would otherwise be a minor issue - (difficulties over and above those that previously approved special accommodation arrangements³ would have alleviated;)

² This list sets out CIMA's general approach, but each application for special consideration will be considered at CIMA's discretion on its merit. As a result, CIMA may depart from the general approach in the interests of fairness in a particular case. CIMA reserves the right to review and revise the list from time to time.

³ CIMA welcomes entries from students with disabilities or special educational requirements and is able to provide additional help or concessions, such as extra exam time, as appropriate to individual needs. For further information about CIMA's special accommodation policy please visit <https://www.cimaglobal.com/Studying/Exams/Exam-policies/>