



Candidate Access Policy & Procedure

Document Specification:	
Purpose:	To ensure that all Approved Centres of Gatehouse Awards are aware of what a Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration is and how they should be handled. Ensuring a consistent process across all Centres in order to allow reason access to assessment for all Candidates, whilst maintaining the integrity and security of the qualification.
Accountability:	Gatehouse Awards Governing Body
Responsibility:	Quality Assurance Manager
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Links to Ofqual GCR	A2.3(e)
Other relevant documents:	Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations Record of Reasonable Adjustment/Special Consideration Form Request for Reasonable Adjustment Form Qualification Specification Centre Handbook

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1. Introduction

Gatehouse Awards is dedicated to offering access to all Candidates wishing to take a qualification, free from discrimination of any kind, as detailed in the *Diversity and Equality Policy* and in line with the Equality Act 2010. In some circumstances Centres may need to request Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations to be made for Candidates with particular requirements or in light of unforeseen circumstances, respectively.

Both Gatehouse Awards and its Approved Centres are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications, and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Gatehouse Awards will also consider the need to maintain competence standards as well as comply with health and safety requirements.

2. Definitions

There are two ways in which access to fair assessment can be maintained:

- By making Reasonable Adjustments
- By making Special Considerations

Reasonable Adjustments – These are arrangements made prior to assessment which help to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that may place the Candidate at a significant disadvantage during the assessment process. Reasonable Adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, but may involve: changing usual assessment arrangements, adapting assessment materials, providing assistance during assessment, re-organising the physical environment of the assessment or adapting the assessment method using assistive technology.

Special Consideration – These can be applied during or after an examination when unforeseen circumstances may prevent the Candidate from attending or completing their examination, such as temporary illness, bereavement or disruption to examination.

Controlled Examination – This refers to examinations which are set externally and must be delivered in line with the conditions specified by Gatehouse Awards in Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations.

3. General Guidance for Centres

Gatehouse Awards recommends that Centres have suitable facilities to allow access for Candidates with physical disabilities, including wheelchair access and disabled toilet facilities.

Centres must not discriminate against any Candidate on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender-reassignment, pregnancy and maternity and religion or belief and must at all times adhere to the Equalities Act 2010. All Centres must have a suitable Equality Policy which details the way in which they adhere to this legislation.

Centres must also ensure that all relevant staff are aware of how a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration should be processed in line with this policy.

4. Reasonable Adjustments

Where Reasonable Adjustments are made, these must:

- not affect the integrity of the award
- reflect the current needs of the individual Candidate
- not give the Candidate an unfair advantage over other Candidates
- ensure that assessment continues to be valid, reliable and comparable against stated criteria.

4.1 Examples and Eligibility

The following section provides information on when Reasonable Adjustments can be made, an overview of what eligibility criteria will be applied, and whether the Centre may apply the Reasonable Adjustment without seeking prior approval from Gatehouse Awards (C) or whether it must make a formal request (AO) before doing so.

The Centre must ensure that they have the capacity to provide the relevant adjustment.

Reasonable Adjustment	Eligibility /Evidence	Controlled Examinations	Other Assessments
Extra time	Statement of special educational needs OR Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist OR Specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher OR Medical report	AO	AO
Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids and tinted spectacles	Visual impairment / Medical Report	C	C
Use of hearing aids/hearing induction loops	Hearing impairment / Medical Report	C	C
Colour naming by the Invigilator for Candidates who are colour blind	A statement from a GP or optometrist	AO	C
Bilingual translation dictionary	First language is not English and the Learner is not assessed in ESOL, English language or Literacy	C	C
Low vision aid / magnifier	Visual impairment	C	C
Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanner	Visual impairment	AO	C

Supervised rest breaks	Medical / psychological / physical disability	AO	C
Separate invigilation	Use of OCR scanner / Medical report	AO	C
Taking the assessment at an alternative venue	Medical Report / Other	AO	C
Assessment material in enlarged format	Visual impairment – medical evidence	AO	C
Assessment material in Braille	Visual impairment – medical evidence	AO	AO
Assessment material in BSL	Hearing impairment / muteness – medical evidence	AO	AO
Assessment material in audio format	Visual impairment	AO	AO
Responses in BSL	Hearing impairment / muteness – medical evidence	AO	AO
Responses in Braille	Visual impairment – medical evidence	AO	AO
Reader except for any reading test	Statement of special educational needs OR Psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist OR Specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher OR Medical report	AO	C
Scribe except for any writing test	As above	AO	C
Prompter	As above	AO	C
Other	As stipulated	AO	AO

Candidates requesting Reasonable Adjustments must provide their Centre with evidence of their medical condition or learning needs and a copy of this must be provided to Gatehouse Awards with the request.

4.2 Reasonable Adjustments requiring prior approval from Gatehouse Awards

In all cases of Reasonable Adjustment requiring prior approval, Centre must complete the form *Request for a Reasonable Adjustment* (Appendix 1.) and forward it to Gatehouse Awards together with relevant evidence as soon as possible, but no later than 10 working days prior to

the scheduled assessment date. Gatehouse Awards will provide a decision within 5 working days of the receipt of the request.

In the rare circumstances where Gatehouse Awards will not be able to provide a decision or facilitate the necessary Reasonable Adjustment within the timescales below, the Centre will be notified of the new timescale as soon as possible.

The learning outcomes of some Gatehouse Awards qualifications may require Candidates to demonstrate competence. This may limit access for some Candidates, for instance a Candidate who has a severe hearing impairment would not be allowed to use a British Sign Language interpreter or signer during an assessment of their English speaking or listening abilities and therefore would not be able to gain the full qualification.

5. Special Considerations

Special Consideration is given to events or circumstances beyond the Candidate's control, which lead to a Candidate being unable to complete or attend their assessment or, if applicable, examination. Examples of events that may attract Special Consideration would be:

- Temporary illness manifesting itself at the time of the assessment;
- Injury manifesting itself at the time of the assessment;
- Recent bereavement of a close family member;
- Fire or similar emergency during the examination;
- Building work/loud noise at the examination Centre;
- Failure of equipment during the examination;
- Failure of the Centre to implement a requested Reasonable Adjustments, or the Reasonable Adjustments put in place are impractical or incorrect;
- Other accidental events at the time of the assessment such as being given the wrong examination paper, being given a defective examination paper or CD, failure of practical equipment, failure of materials to arrive on time;
- Maladministration and / or malpractice.

Examples of events that **will not** attract Special Consideration:

- domestic inconvenience, such as moving house, lack of facilities, taking holidays ;
- minor disturbance in the examination room caused by another candidate;
- the consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations;
- the consequences of taking alcohol or recreational drugs;
- misreading the instructions of the question paper and answering the wrong questions;
- misreading the timetable and/or failing to attend at the right time and in the right place;

In most circumstances relating to noise disturbance or evacuation of a building during a controlled examination, alternative rooms or premises may be sourced and the examination can continue with extra time allowed for the disruption. If it is not possible for Candidate(s) to attend or complete their examination, new dates will be agreed. The Special Consideration arrangements should allow the Candidate(s) to demonstrate the achievement they are capable of for the unit(s) in question.

In the event of maladministration or malpractice leading to production of unauthentic work, GA may adjust the application of the mark scheme to reflect the fact that a proportion of the work presented is not candidate's own.

Special Consideration will normally be given by applying an allowance of marks to each component affected within a specification. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total raw marks available in the component concerned, including controlled assessment/coursework/non-examination assessment.

The decision made by the awarding body will be based on various factors which may vary from one subject to another. The factors taken into consideration will include:

- the severity of the circumstances;
- the date of the examination in relation to the circumstances;
- the nature of the assessment

Lost or damaged work

If a candidate's work has been lost within the examination centre and despite every effort it cannot be found, or it has been accidentally destroyed, the circumstances should be reported immediately to Gatehouse Awards.

Gatehouse Awards will consider whether it is appropriate to accept a mark for which there is no available evidence of attainment. This may occur in the following circumstances:

- The centre must be able to verify that the work was done and that it was monitored whilst it was in progress;
- The loss is not the consequence of negligence on the part of the candidate;
- If only part of the work is lost and part of the work is available, further guidance must be sought from the awarding organisation.

6. Recording Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations

Centres must complete the *Record of Reasonable Adjustments / Special Considerations Form* (Appendix 2) in order to record the decisions made by its staff, a copy of the form should be provided to Gatehouse Awards with the assessment materials. The Centre should retain copies for audit purposes.

7. Video Recording – Arrangements for Cultural/Religious Objections

Gatehouse Awards is aware that some Candidates may have cultural or religious reasons for not wanting to show their face on camera, particularly if the video may be seen by a person of another gender.

Gatehouse Awards is keen to ensure that no Candidate is disadvantaged due to their cultural or religious beliefs; however, where applicable, it is also necessary to ensure that all Candidates are subject to the same level of scrutiny in respect of confirming their identification. For this reason, Gatehouse Awards have put the following arrangements in place with respect to examinations for qualifications which may require Centres to make video recordings:

- **ALL** Candidates must show their full face to the video camera at least once during the examination, preferably at the start of the examination.
- Once their face has been shown, the Candidate can resume the video wearing any form of face covering they feel comfortable in or is required by their religious or cultural beliefs.
- The video must **NOT** be stopped during any part of the examination after it has begun so that it can be confirmed that the person who showed their face to the camera is the person who sat the examination.
- The Candidate must still take the examination in such a position where their hands can be seen in front of them and their head and upper body is in the frame – recordings of the back of the Candidate are not acceptable.
- The Interlocutor / Invigilator should then ensure that it is noted on the *Examination Report Form* that a Candidate does not wish for their face to be shown to a member of another gender.
- Gatehouse Awards can guarantee that the video is not viewed by any person of another gender for marking, moderation or investigative purposes within Gatehouse Awards.
- All Candidates must be aware that any video recording may be shared with the Regulator and/or other Government-appointed agencies, should it be requested. Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that the Candidate's requirements are adhered to, Gatehouse Awards cannot be held responsible for other agencies' policies or procedures in such matters.
- If a Candidate is not prepared to have their examination recorded in this way, it can be arranged for a member of Gatehouse Awards staff of an appropriate gender to be physically present at the examination sessions. The Candidate will be required to show their face to this member of staff in order to verify their identity. The rest of the examination will be recorded as normal. In order to facilitate this Readjustment, additional fees would be applicable of up to £150 per day plus travel expenses.
- If a Candidate refuses all of the above, they will **NOT** be allowed to sit the Gatehouse Awards examination.

A statement to be provided to Candidates has been included at the back of this Policy for Centres to use in the event that a Candidate objects to video recording on the grounds that it is contrary to their religious or cultural beliefs.

8. Monitoring the Candidate Access Policy and Procedure

Gatehouse Awards will ensure that:

- Reports are made to the Governing Body and Quality Committee as part of the Self-Evaluation procedure
- Guidance from the regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with best practice
- Information from monitoring activities is made available to Ofqual as part of the Awarding Organisation's self-evaluation procedure and on request
- This policy is reviewed at least annually or earlier as required

**Appendix 1:
Request for a Reasonable Adjustment**



This form is to be used to make request for a Reasonable Adjustment for a Candidate in order to provide them with access to assessment as detailed in the Gatehouse Awards *Candidate Access Policy*. Please keep a copy for your records which must be made available for auditing purposes.

Centre Details

Centre Name		Centre Number	
Contact Name		Position	
Centre Address			
Telephone No		Email	

Details of Candidate & Qualification

Qualification Title		Proposed Date of Assessment	DD / MM / YYYY
Candidate Name			

Details of Reasonable Adjustment required and any supporting documentation

Please detail the Reasonable Adjustment required and why it is necessary; attaching any supporting documentation (please continue on a separate sheet if required).

Supporting documentation attached? Yes No

I confirm that I have verified the need for this request and that the supporting documentation is authentic.

Name & Position:	
Signed:	
Dated:	DD / MM / YYYY

**Appendix 2:
Record of a Reasonable Adjustment / Special Consideration**



This form is to be used to record any decisions made by a Centre with regard to Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration in line with the Gatehouse Awards Ltd (GA) *Candidate Access Policy*. Please forward a copy of this form to GA, retaining a copy with your records for auditing purposes.

Centre Details

Centre Name		Centre Number	
Contact Name		Position	
Centre Address			
Telephone No		Email	

Details of Candidate (s) & Qualification

Qualification Title		Candidate (s)' ULN (if applicable)	
Total Number of Candidates		Was whole cohort affected?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (If Yes, attach candidate register)

What Action Was/Is Needed?

Reasonable Adjustment Made? (complete statement below)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Consideration? (complete statement below)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Examination to be re-sat? (in full or in part)?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	If Yes, date of re-sit	
Other (please give details)			

