

Candidate Access Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

Gatehouse Awards (GA) is dedicated to offering access to all learners (candidates) wishing to take a GA regulated or non-regulated qualification, free from discrimination of any kind, as detailed in the Diversity and Equality Policy and in line with the Equality Act 2010.¹ In some circumstances centres may need to request Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations to be made for learners with particular requirements or in light of unforeseen circumstances, respectively.

Both GA 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. GA will also consider the need to maintain competence standards as well as comply with health and safety requirements. GA may also consider local equalities laws and regulations which apply in countries outside the UK, where the learner is an international learner.

All personal data gathered on learners in respect of any Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations requested and/or granted will be held in the strictest confidence and only be used for the purposes of ensuring all assessments are carried out in a fair and consistent manner and that all results issued are valid and reliable. All data will be held in accordance with the current data protection legislation including, but not limited to, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations.

This policy should be read and understood by GA staff and centre staff (including staff at satellite centres and examination venues) who are involved in the design, development, delivery, assessment, quality assurance and management of GA qualifications. Learners should also be provided with information about learner access arrangements. This includes learners who are undertaking online or distance learning programmes.

The Head of Centre is ultimately accountable for compliance and for allocating resources to support access arrangements.

2. Definitions

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

- By making Reasonable Adjustments
- By making Special Considerations
- By permitting an Exemption

Reasonable Adjustment – A reasonable adjustment is an arrangement made prior to assessment which helps to reduce or remove the effect of a disability, learning difficulty or other need that may place the learner at a substantial disadvantage during the assessment process. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, must not change the mark scheme or assessment criteria, and must not lower the competence standard being assessed. They may involve changing usual assessment arrangements, adapting assessment materials, providing assistance during

¹ Further information on the Equality Act 2010 can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

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* assessment, when unforeseen circumstances may prevent the learner from attending or completing their assessment, such as temporary illness or injury, bereavement, or disruption to the assessment.

Exemption – This is an arrangement made prior to assessment which can be described as a form of a reasonable adjustment as a last resort, since no other access arrangement is available. This exempts the learner from taking a part of the assessment. An exemption may be applied due to a learner having a disability which makes it impossible for them to demonstrate the required skills. An exemption may not be applied if it would affect the integrity of the assessment or provide the exempted learner with an unfair advantage over other learners taking the same qualification.

Controlled Examination – This refers to examinations which are set externally and must be delivered in line with the conditions specified in the published document *GA Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations*.

3. General Guidance for Centres

GA recommends that centres have suitable facilities to allow access for learners with physical disabilities, including wheelchair access and disabled toilet facilities. Centres must not discriminate against any learner 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.

It is important to note that a reasonable adjustment, special consideration or exemption must not be used to give a learner an unfair advantage over others or as a concession to make an assessment easier. These arrangements are used only where a learner would otherwise face a disadvantage in accessing fair assessment, and they must not reduce the standard of performance required for the qualification.

All reasonable adjustments must normally reflect the learner's established and consistent way of working in their usual learning environment. Centres must be able to show that the arrangement is not being introduced solely for the assessment itself but is part of the learner's regular support strategy, ensuring that arrangements are appropriate, effective, and valid.

Centres must ensure that learners have the correct information and advice on the requirements and demands of their selected qualification, and assure itself that the qualification will meet the learner's needs and the learner has the potential to successfully complete their qualification.

4. Opportunities for Learners to Declare Individual Assessment Requirements

Centres must ensure that learners have the opportunity to declare any individual assessment requirements.

The centre's enrolment or learner registration form should provide the initial opportunity for learners to inform centre staff of any long-term learning difficulties, disabilities, health conditions, or anything that may impact on the delivery and assessment of their chosen qualification. This identification of learners' individual assessment requirements is in order to reduce the risk that an individual may experience a disadvantage during the assessment process.

The centre's processes and documentation relating to Learner Access arrangements are subject to GA's external quality assurance checks.

5. Failure to Adhere to this Policy

Failure to comply with the *GA Learner Access Policy* has the potential to constitute malpractice and lead to the application of sanctions, affecting a centre's risk rating and approved centre status.

Examples of failure to comply include:

- putting in place access arrangements that are not permitted.
- failing to consider putting learner access arrangements in place.
- permitting access arrangements within the centre which are not supported by appropriate evidence.
- charging a fee for providing access arrangements.

6. Reasonable Adjustments

Where Reasonable Adjustments are made, these must:

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

Where a reasonable adjustment is approved, the mark scheme, assessment criteria and competence standards remain unchanged. The adjustment is intended to remove, reduce or prevent disadvantage in accessing the assessment; it does not provide compensation in marking, alter grade boundaries, or reduce the level of knowledge, skills or understanding the learner must demonstrate.

6.1. Examples and Eligibility Guidance

The following section provides information on scenarios in which a reasonable adjustment can be made and an overview of the eligibility criteria for the reasonable adjustment. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and learners may need a wide range of access arrangements. Centres should refer to GA directly for advice on any other reasonable adjustments which are significantly different to the examples provided.

This section is in two parts:

- **Part A: Reasonable Adjustments Granted by Centres; and**
- **Part B: Reasonable Adjustments Requiring Prior Authorisation from GA.**

These examples apply to both assessments which are practical in nature (sometimes referred to as competency-based assessments, for example in vocational qualifications) and controlled examinations (examinations completed under controlled examination conditions).

Part A: Reasonable Adjustments Granted by Centres

The following are examples of reasonable adjustments which do NOT require the centre to seek prior authorisation from GA to put the adjustment in place. The Notes column provides additional information for specific types of assessment.

Centres should keep a record of reasonable adjustments they have granted and refused and make this information, and copies of the evidence where applicable, available to the GA EQA at visits, or upon request.

GA provides centres with a spreadsheet template to record requests and the subsequent decisions.

Reasonable Adjustment	Eligibility / Evidence	Notes
1. Adjustments to premises or seating arrangements, (e.g. <i>moving furniture to provide wider access for a wheelchair user, or seating a visually impaired learner near a window for the best possible lighting</i>).	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	N/A
2. Allowing a learner to rearrange planned assessment dates and times around their needs (e.g. <i>in order to attend medical appointments or disability support, or to fit in with the availability of a driver or support worker</i>).	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	N/A
3. Allowing additional rest breaks in between separate assessments to address fatigue.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	Not permitted to have rest breaks within a single assessment session without authorisation (see <i>Part B: example 13 below</i>). Not permitted without authorisation where the integrity of assessment may be undermined by the learner accessing additional materials or discussing assessment tasks with others – this requires supervision (see <i>Part B: example 13 below</i>).

		There should be no more than 10 minutes additional rest time in any one hour of examination.
4. Additional training to the learner to prepare for assessment where they might use a particular piece of equipment unique to them or which needs altering because of the learner's unique needs.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	N/A
5. Permitting the use of hearing aids/hearing induction loops or use of low vision aids / magnifiers.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	N/A
6. Permitting the use of coloured overlays, coloured paper, low vision aids and tinted spectacles.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	N/A
7. Colour naming for learners who are colour blind, or	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	Only permitted where the assessment does not require the identification of colours.
8. Use of a bilingual translation dictionary.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	Only where the learner's first language is not English and they are NOT being assessed in ESOL, English language or Literacy.
9. Use of extra time in non-controlled assessments.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	Extra time of 10% or 25% may be required, e.g. where the learner is using a bilingual dictionary. Extra time in controlled examinations must be authorised by GA in advance – <i>refer to Part B: Example 12 below.</i>
10. Separate invigilation in a controlled examination.	No evidence is required for audit purposes.	This may be an option where the learner has a medical reason, a learning

		difficulty or to reflect the way they normally work in the classroom, for example is they prefer to read aloud to themselves, which would otherwise affect other learners in the assessment room.
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Part B: Reasonable Adjustments Requiring Prior Authorisation from GA.

The following are examples of reasonable adjustments which require the centre to seek prior authorisation from GA to put the adjustment in place.

The [Possible Evidence of Eligibility](#) column provides a guide to the types of evidence which might be available to support the claim

A learner who has been granted additional time as a reasonable adjustment, including for a learning difficulty such as dyslexia, will have their work marked against the same mark scheme and assessment criteria as all other learners. GA will not apply any additional allowance of marks, modified marking, or other post-assessment compensation solely because additional time or another reasonable adjustment was granted.

It is important to note that GA recognises that not all learners, particularly adult learners, will have formal medical documentation or diagnosis of their needs. The evidence requirements outlined should not create unnecessary barriers to accessing reasonable adjustments. While formal documentation is preferred where available, GA accepts that alternative evidence such as detailed statements from teachers about observed needs, historical adjustments made in the educational setting or previous educational settings, or documented observations of learning needs may be sufficient in many cases. The key consideration is establishing the learner's need for the adjustment, rather than requiring specific types of formal documentation. Further guidance and advice on evidence should be sought directly from GA.

The [Notes](#) column provides additional information for specific types of assessment.

Please refer to Section 6.2. Applying for Prior Authorisation from GA below for instructions on how to apply and submit the required evidence.

Reasonable Adjustment	Possible Evidence of Eligibility	Notes
11. Taking the assessment at an alternative venue (controlled examinations only)	Medical statement or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming the condition; plus centre staff confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	For controlled examinations, the venue details MUST be supplied along with the reasonable adjustments request form.
12. Extra time in a controlled examination.	Medical statement/report or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming the	Extra time may also be granted alongside another reasonable adjustment

	condition OR statement of special educational needs OR a psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist OR a specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	where GA is satisfied that the approved adjustment would not be sufficiently effective within the standard time available. Extra time must be justified by the learner's need and the requirements of the assessment, and it does not change how the learner's responses are marked. Extra time should not be requested simply to provide rest breaks – see <i>Example 13 below</i>.
13. Supervised rest breaks	Medical statement/report or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming the condition OR statement of special educational needs OR a psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist OR a specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	Authorisation must always be requested when considering providing rest breaks within a single assessment session, or rest breaks between separate assessment sessions where the learner may be able to access additional materials or discuss assessment tasks with others. Supervision must prevent the learner from accessing materials or other learners. The timing of the assessment should be paused and re-started when the learner is ready to continue and this must be recorded on the Exam Report Form or assessment record. Rest breaks are not included in any extra time allowance.
14. Provision of external assessment materials in enlarged format.	Medical statement or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming visual impairment; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	N/A
15. Provision of external assessment materials in Braille.	Medical statement or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming visual impairment;	N/A

	plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	
16. Use of BSL (British Sign Language).	Medical statement or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming hearing impairment; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	The use of BSL cannot be authorised where speaking and/or listening skills are the subject of assessment.
17. Provision of external assessment materials in audio format.	Medical statement or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming hearing impairment; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	The use of audio recorded materials cannot be authorised where reading and/or responding to text is the subject of assessment.
18. Permitting the learner to provide responses using Braille.	Medical statement/report or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming visual impairment; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	N/A
19. Use of a Reader.	Medical statement/report or letter from GP/medical practitioner confirming the condition OR statement of special educational needs OR a psychological assessment carried out by a qualified psychologist OR a specialist assessment carried out by a specialist teacher; plus GA confirmation that the adjustment reflects the needs of the individual.	The use of a Reader cannot be authorised where reading skills are the subject of assessment.
20. Use of a Scribe.	As above	The use of a Scribe cannot be authorised where writing skills are the subject of assessment, with some exceptions in specific circumstances only* <i>Note that a Scribe Cover Sheet must be completed.</i>
21. Use of a Prompter.	As above	N/A

22. Other reasonable adjustment	As stipulated by GA.	N/A
23. EXEMPTIONS	<i>As stipulated by GA.</i>	<i>All exemptions are subject to prior authorisation from GA.</i>

**The use of a Scribe for a writing test is only allowable in specific cases, such as where a learner can only write in Braille, but it would be unreasonable to expect a centre to have a Braille writer available, or in specific circumstances where the learner has an injury to their writing hand etc. Specific safeguards are in place for the use of a Scribe. See section 6.6 below.*

6.2. Applying for Prior Authorisation from GA

In all cases of reasonable adjustments requiring prior approval from GA, centres must complete the form *Request for a Reasonable Adjustment or Exemption* (Appendix A) and forward it to GA together with the relevant evidence as soon as possible, but **no later than 10 working days** (except for requests for Braille – see **Note**, below) prior to the scheduled assessment date.

The learning outcomes of some GA qualifications may require learners to demonstrate competence. This may limit access for some learners, for instance a learner 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.

ALL requests for *Exemptions* must be submitted in advance to GA.

***NOTE:** Requests for Braille versions of examination papers must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the examination. GA does not hold stocks of Braille assessment materials due to the fact that we change our assessment materials on a regular basis and Braille is requested very infrequently. GA therefore only obtains a Braille version of an assessment paper at the time of receipt of a request. This is regardless of which qualification is being taken.

GA will provide a decision **within 5 working days** of the receipt of the request.

In the rare circumstances where GA will not be able to provide a decision or facilitate the necessary reasonable adjustment within the timescale provided, the centre will be notified of the new timescale as soon as possible.

The outcome of a reasonable adjustment or special consideration request could be:

- approval of the requested adjustment
- rejection of the requested adjustment due to insufficient evidence provided
- rejection of the requested adjustment due to the reasonableness of the request (e.g. such as a request which involves unreasonable costs or unreasonable timescales)
- a suggested alternative adjustment

Where an adjustment can be made, GA recommends that the centre provides the learner with appropriate opportunities to practise using the specific access arrangements before their 'live' assessment takes place.

Where a centre or individual learner disagrees with the decision, an appeal may be made. Appeals must be made following the procedure outlined in the *GA Appeals Policy*.

6.3. Decision-Making for Reasonable Adjustments

When considering a learner's specific circumstances and which adjustments might be appropriate, the nature and extent of the support given as part of normal teaching practice must be considered. The aim of any proposed adjustment should provide the learner with access to assessment in a way which would reflect their normal way of working.

Other factors to be considered include:

- how effective the adjustment is in preventing the disadvantage within the context of the particular assessment
- how practical the reasonable adjustment is to implement
- the potential disruption the adjustment may cause to the learner and to other learners
- the time, effort and resources involved
- the availability of financial or other help

The majority of adjustments are relatively inexpensive, if not free. However, in some cases, GA recognises that the cost of making the adjustment may also become a factor.

Decisions should only be taken after careful consideration of the assessment needs of the individual learner, the assessment requirements of the specific qualification, and the type of support given as part of normal teaching and learning activities. When determining the need for reasonable adjustments, the centre must ensure that they have the capacity to provide the relevant adjustment. The learner should be involved in the discussions throughout the consideration and decision-making process.

GA's Assessment Manager is responsible for processing applications for Reasonable Adjustments; in her absence, the authority for decision-making is delegated to the Lead EQA or the Director.

Centres may wish to refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance for further information, available on the JCQ website: www.jcq.org.uk.

6.4. Evidence Requirements and Alternatives to Medical Evidence

Many reasonable adjustments reflect a learner's long-term learning difficulty, disability or health problem. Sufficient evidence typically takes the form of a document, statement or letter from a medical practitioner or external special educational needs assessor.

Learners requesting a reasonable adjustment or an exemption must provide evidence of their disability, medical condition or learning needs, and a copy of this must be provided to GA with the request form, where these forms of evidence are available.

Where it is not possible for the learner to provide evidence from a medical practitioner and/or does not have a statement relating to their learning difficulty, and the potential reasonable adjustment consists of providing extra time for an assessment, permitting additional rest breaks, or the use of a Reader, Scribe or Prompter, GA permits the centre to supply alternative evidence. This may be particularly relevant where an adult learner does not have formal medical documentation or diagnosis of their needs.

While formal documentation is preferred where available, GA accepts that alternative evidence such as detailed statements from teachers about observed needs, historical adjustments made in the educational setting or previous educational settings, or documented observations of learning needs may be sufficient in many cases. The key consideration is establishing the learner's need for the adjustment, rather than requiring specific types of formal documentation. Further guidance and advice on evidence should be sought directly from GA.

The key consideration is establishing the learner's need for the adjustment, rather than requiring specific types of formal documentation. Further guidance and advice on evidence should be sought directly from GA.

6.5. Controlled Conditions for Use of a Reader

There are some instances where the use of a specially trained Reader is necessary. This may be because of visual impairment or, in some cases, severe dyslexia, etc. However, a Reader should not normally be used as part of a language assessment that is assessing the learner's ability to read text, as then the outcome would not be the learner's own work.

It is imperative that Readers adhere to some specific requirements to ensure that the use of the Reader does not disadvantage or advantage the learner using their services, including:

- The Reader **must** have undergone training in how to be a Reader, including how to deliver an assessment as a Reader.
- The Reader **must not** have any personal or business connection with the learner.
- Readers **must not** provide additional information to learners other than what is written on the assessment papers.
- Readers **must not** paraphrase or explain the meaning of words or phrases contained in the assessment papers.
- Readers **must not** assist the learner in any way whilst they are answering the questions contained in the assessment materials or indicate that they think the learner has made a mistake in any of their responses.
- All learners who are assigned a reader **must** be assessed in a separate room from any other learners taking the assessment to ensure the Reader does not disturb other learners.
- Learners requiring a Reader **must** be assessed on a 1:1 basis in order to prevent the need for learners having to wait for access to the Reader and the Reader disturbing other learners when attending to the needs of other learners.
- Readers **should** not write anything down for a learner unless it has been agreed that they will also act as a Scribe and have received permission from GA to do so.
- Where a Reader is also acting as the Invigilator, they **must** ensure that the invigilation is carried out compliantly and in accordance with the guidance provided by GA. This includes, but is not limited to, things such as:
 - removal of mobile phones prior to the assessment starting
 - removal of dictionaries unless specifically allowed in the assessment instructions
 - ensuring that no learners have access to the internet, e.g., via wi-fi enabled watches, tablets, PCs or any other device that can connect to the internet.

6.6. Controlled Conditions for Use of a Scribe

A 'Scribe' is someone who writes down a learner's answers during an examination because the learner is unable to. This is usually because the learner has an injury or is disabled in a way that would severely affect their ability to write their answers, for instance, severe visual impairment, or the learner has had an accident that has disabled their writing hand and they are unable to write.

The use of a Scribe can be a very high-risk reasonable adjustment to make. There are sometimes alternatives available, such as voice activated software that will produce a text version of what the learner has said. However, this would still need to be invigilated and for the text to be printed off immediately following the end of the examination to ensure that the learner, or someone on their behalf, cannot alter the content before submission.

Where a scribe is used, the following procedures and safety guards should be observed:

- The *Scribe Cover Sheet* **must** be completed (*Appendix C*) and submitted with the assessment materials.
- The Scribe **must** have undergone training in how to be a Scribe.
- The Scribe **must not** have any personal or business connection with the learner.
- A learner who is to make use of a Scribe **must** be in a separate room from any other learners taking the assessment to ensure that they do not disturb other learners.
- A Scribe **must** only scribe for one learner at a time. They cannot be a Scribe to multiple learners taking the same assessment at the same time.
- A Scribe **must not** read any portion of the assessment papers to the learner unless they have also been given permission by GA to act as a Reader as well as a Scribe.
- A Scribe **must not** assist the learner in any way during the assessment (over and above making a written record of what the learner instructs them to write) including answering any questions from the learner about the meaning of a word or phrase, etc or by indicating that they think the learner has made a mistake in any of their responses.
- A Scribe **must** take down exactly what the learner says as their answer; they **must not** amend any words, phrases or answers given, summarize the response or paraphrase or embellish the response in any way.
- A Scribe is allowed to repeat back to the learner what they have taken down and make amendments requested by the learner. Where they are asked to make an amendment, they must score through the original word or phrase and insert the amended word or phrase.
- A Scribe will usually also act as the invigilator to the learner they are scribing for. As such they **must** ensure that the invigilation is carried out compliantly and in accordance with the guidance provided by GA. This includes, but is not limited to, things such as:
 - Removal of mobile phones prior to the assessment starting
 - Removal of dictionaries unless specifically allowed in the assessment instructions
 - Ensuring that no learners have access to the internet, e.g., via wi-fi enabled watches, tablets, PCs or any other device that can connect to the internet

6.7. Controlled Conditions for Use of a Prompter

A prompter is not a Reader or a Scribe; rather, a Prompter can assist the learner in focussing on the assessment.

Where a Prompter is used, the following procedures and safety guards should be observed:

- The Prompter **must** have undergone training in how to be a Prompter.
- The Prompter **must not** have any personal or business connection with the learner.
- A learner who is to make use of a Prompter **must** be in a separate room from any other learners taking the assessment to ensure that they do not disturb other learners.
- A Prompter **must** only act as a Prompt for one learner at a time. They cannot be a Prompter to multiple learners taking the same assessment at the same time.
- A Prompter **must not** read any portion of the assessment papers to the learner or write the learner's responses down for them, unless they have also been given permission by GA to act as a Reader and/or Scribe.
- A Prompter **must not** assist the learner in any way during the assessment (over and above prompting the learner to focus on completing the assessment) including answering any questions from the learner about the meaning of a word or phrase, etc or by indicating that they think the learner has made a mistake in any of their responses.
- A Prompter may tap on the desk or use the learner's name aloud to remind the learner to focus. Alternatively, written prompts such as flashcards may be used.
- A Prompter will usually also act as the invigilator to the learner they are scribing for. As such they **must** ensure that the invigilation is carried out compliantly and in accordance with the guidance provided by GA. This includes, but is not limited to, things such as:
 - Removal of mobile phones prior to the assessment starting
 - Removal of dictionaries unless specifically allowed in the assessment instructions
 - Ensuring that no learners have access to the internet, e.g., via wi-fi enabled watches, tablets, PCs or any other device that can connect to the internet

7. Special Considerations

Special consideration is given to unforeseen events or circumstances beyond the learner's control, which lead to a learner being unable to complete or attend their assessment or examination.

The following are examples of events that individuals might wish to claim as a special consideration, whether that event could qualify and what evidence would be required to support any such claim:

Event Claimed for Special Consideration	Is this even likely to qualify for Special Considerations?	What evidence would be required?
Learner's temporary illness evident at the time of assessment	Possibly – dependent upon evidence supplied and seriousness of illness	Letter from GP, Consultant, Hospital Appointment (clearly showing the medical department)

Learner having caring responsibilities (not originally present at the time of enrolment)	Yes – dependent upon evidence and relationship with individual requiring care. Note that this does not include parental responsibilities unless the child has a recognised medical condition.	Letter from GP or hospital confirming the family member's condition (where appropriate), confirmation from a social worker or other care support worker (e.g. MacMillan Nurse).*
Bereavement of close family member	Yes, if immediate family.	Death Certificate (if available), funeral notice/obituary, plus signed statement from the learner, countersigned by the Centre confirming relationship with the deceased.
Mental health	Yes	Letter from GP, counsellor, psychologist or other healthcare professional. Please note that this may be an ongoing mental health issue that was not expected to cause issues at the time of enrolment. Evidence will be required to show the issues have flared up around time of assessment if not asked for Reasonable Adjustments
Maternity/paternity	Yes – provided unknown at the time of enrolment	MATB1, Birth Certificate or other medical documentation
Military Deployment	Yes	Employer or Ministry of Defence Confirmation
Injury	Yes – if injury prevents completion of assessment	Letter from GP, hospital, consultant or other medical professional (e.g. physiotherapist) clearly indicating how the issue prevents completion of assessment*
Exceptional personal circumstances	Possibly – dependent on severity and context of circumstances.	Independent correspondence from an official third party, such as police, medical professional, fire officer, solicitor, etc.*

Loss of technological equipment	No	If a laptop, PC, tablet or other technology is lost, stolen or broken, the learner will be expected to arrange an alternative.
Domestic inconvenience – e.g. taking a holiday, moving house, having renovation works carried out, etc.	No	These are matters which the learner
Mistakes/misconduct by the Learner during the assessment	No	This would include things such as: • Misreading assessment instructions / questions • Not adhering to timetable • Disobeying instructions from invigilator / Centre • Disrupting the assessment process (e.g. talking, asking questions of neighbours, etc.)
Failure of IT equipment during an online / proctored assessment	Possibly – dependent if the equipment failure was due to outside disruption, etc.	Rarely allowed. Would require evidence to prove issue outside the control of the learner (e.g. correspondence from power company of a power outage, signed statement by the learner, countersigned by centre only if centre was present to observe the failure in real time)
Learner being under the influence of alcohol / drugs	No.	If a learner attends an assessment whilst intoxicated, they will be disqualified.

* In some circumstances, a statement by the learner, agreed and countersigned by the Centre, may be accepted. A rationale as to why other evidence is not available should be provided as part of the submission.

7.1. Special Consideration Provisions

Type	Details
Allowance of marks	Maximum allowance of 5% of total raw marks available for each component, including controlled assessment/coursework/non-examination assessment. Dependent on severity of issue.

Additional Time	Additional time added to overall assessment time equivalent to time lost due disruption during assessment (e.g. loud noises, behaviour of other learners, unscheduled fire alarm, etc.).
Rescheduled Assessment	If disruption severe, new assessment date/time to be arranged with new assessment paper.
Extension of Registration Period	If an event leading to a special consideration being allowed means that a learner is unable to complete their qualification within the normal Registration Validity Period, additional time will be allowed equivalent to the time documented and evidenced that such an event has delayed the completion of the qualification, up to a total maximum of 40% of the normal Registration Validity Period for the qualification.

Special consideration will not be awarded for the same disadvantage that has already been addressed through an approved reasonable adjustment. For example, where additional time has been approved for a learner with dyslexia or another learning difficulty, GA will not also apply an allowance of marks or modified marking because of that same learning difficulty. A separate special consideration may only be considered where a distinct unforeseen event occurs at or near the time of assessment and is supported by appropriate evidence.

7.2. Lost or damaged work

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

GA 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 learner.
- If only part of the work is lost and part of the work is available, further guidance must be sought from the awarding organisation.

7.3. Errors by the Centre

Where an event has been caused by the actions, or inaction, of the Centre, it is up to the Centre to put things right and ensure that the learner is not disadvantaged. This may include rescheduling the assessment at the expense of the Centre. Where the issue is that the Centre has failed to inform GA of the need for a reasonable adjustment, arrange for a practical reasonable adjustment to be put in place, or provided the learner with the wrong assessment paper, etc. GA will work with the Centre to resolve the issue in a way that protects the learner insofar as possible.

7.4. Malpractice and / or Maladministration

Where malpractice or maladministration has occurred during an assessment, all efforts will be made to ensure that any learners not party to the misconduct are protected. This will always be managed in line with the GA Malpractice & Maladministration Policy. Any learners found to be complicit in any wrongdoing will be sanctioned in line with the GA Sanctions Policy.

8. Exemptions

An Exemption may only be granted as a very last resort, where any other reasonable adjustment cannot be granted for a learner with a disability.

The exemption must be agreed by GA before the assessment and permits a disabled learner to miss a component or components.

The grounds for granting an exemption are:

- the exemption must not undermine the integrity of the qualification.
- it must only apply to a whole component where the learner cannot demonstrate any of the required skills within that component due to their disability.
- it must make up no more than 40% of the overall qualification.

When an exemption is granted, an indication will be placed on the learner's qualification certificate to show that not all of the assessment objectives were accessible.

A certificate indication is a small '+' next to the component. This '+' is explained on the back of the certificate. The explanation simply states that the learner was exempt from part of the assessment. It does not make reference to any of the particulars of the exemption.

9. Recording Reasonable Adjustments, Exemptions & Special Considerations

Where an adjustment is approved or refused, the centre must record the decision, the evidence considered, and any conditions attached to the adjustment. The record should make clear that the learner's work will be marked in the usual way unless GA has separately approved a special consideration that applies to the circumstances of the assessment.

Centres must complete the *Record of Reasonable Adjustments / Special Considerations Form* (Appendix B) in order to record the decisions made by its staff.

A copy of the form should be provided to GA with the assessment materials for all externally assessed qualifications. The centre should retain copies for audit purposes for all other qualifications. The record of reasonable adjustments for learners undertaking internally assessed qualifications must be provided to the GA EQA at the next visit, or made available to GA upon request.

10. Monitoring the Candidate Access Policy and Procedure

GA will ensure that:

- reports are made to the Governing Body and Quality Panel as appropriate, as part of our monitoring and reviewing arrangements.
- guidance from the Regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with best practice, as required.
- information from monitoring activities is made available to the Regulator(s) as part of the Awarding Organisation's self-evaluation procedure and on request.
- this policy is reviewed as required.

Document Specification:	
Accountability:	Gatehouse Awards Governance Committee
Responsibility:	Assessment Manager
Version:	12.1
Effective from:	August 2026
Indicative review date	August 2028
Links to Ofqual GCR	D2, C2, G6 and G7
Other relevant documents:	GA Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) & Moderation Policy Record of Reasonable Adjustment/Special Consideration Form Request for Reasonable Adjustment and Exemption Form Qualification Specifications GA Centre Handbook GA Appeals Policy and Procedures GA Malpractice & Maladministration Policy GA Sanctions Policy

Request for a Reasonable Adjustment, Special Consideration or Exemption

This form is to be used to make request for a Reasonable Adjustment, Special Consideration or Exemption for a learner in order to provide them with access to assessment as detailed in the GA *Candidate Access Policy*.

Please keep a copy for your records which must be made available for auditing purposes.

Please submit this form to GA **at least 10 days before the assessment or examination** (or, where the request is for external assessment materials in Braille, a timescale of 60 days is required).

The head of centre must support an application for it to be accepted.

Centre Details

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

Details of Learner & Qualification

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

Definitions:

Reasonable Adjustment – An adjustment made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a disabled Learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.

Special Consideration - Consideration to be given to a Learner who has temporarily experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of their control, which has, or is reasonably likely to have, materially affected the Learner's ability to –

- (a) take an assessment, or
- (b) demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment

Exemption - concessions allowing a disabled learner to complete a qualification without taking certain assessments. This is used only as a last resort when no other adjustments can remove the substantial disadvantage a learner faces. Exemptions must not undermine the integrity of the

Signed:	
Dated:	DD / MM / YYYY
Learner/Parent/Carer Name	
Signed:	
Dated:	DD / MM / YYYY

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 *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 Learner (s) & Qualification

Qualification Title		Learner(s) ULN (if applicable)	
Total Number of Learners		Was whole cohort affected?	Yes ☐ No ☐ (If Yes, attach learner register)

What Action Was/Is Needed?

Reasonable Adjustment Made? (Complete statement below)	Yes ☐ No ☐	Special Consideration? (Complete statement below)	Yes ☐ No ☐
Examination to be re-sat? (in full or in part)?	Yes ☐ No ☐	If Yes, date of re-sit	
Other (please give details)			

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

Learner Name		Learner Number	
Details of Qualification where Scribe was used (title, unit / component)			

For the examiner to apply the correct mark allocation it is essential that the following information is provided. Please indicate in the appropriate box which accurately reflects how the approved application for a scribe was used. If this information is not provided we cannot guarantee that the script will be marked.

1. The learner used a scribe/speech recognition technology but did not dictate spellings (letter by letter) and punctuation.	☐
2. The learner used a scribe/speech recognition technology and dictated punctuation.	☐
3. The learner used a scribe/speech recognition technology and dictated spellings letter by letter	☐
4. The learner used a scribe/speech recognition technology and dictated punctuation and spellings letter by letter.	☐
5. The learner used a word processor with the spell check switched on.	☐
6. The learner used a word processor with the spell check and grammar check switched off.	☐
Any other comments (<i>if applicable</i>)	
Were diagrams/graphs completed by the learner or the scribe?	

The attached script/work of the above-named learner was produced by a scribe during the examination/assessment period in accordance with GA's regulations.

Scribe Print Name	
Signed:	
Dated:	DD / MM / YYYY

Head of Centre or Exams Officer Name	
Signed:	
Dated:	DD / MM / YYYY

To be completed by the examiner or moderator

Name and confirmation	I _____ can confirm I have read the scribe cover sheet and I have marked the script/moderated the learners work in accordance with the instructions given by GA.
Signed:	
Dated:	DD / MM / YYYY