

Delivery Requirements & Quality Assurance Arrangements

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Centre Approval Process

In order to offer the GA ESOL International (Classic) qualifications, Centres must hold Approved Centre status and approval for each individual qualification.

Centres that do not hold Approved Centre status and approval need to contact info@gatehouse.it for more information on the procedure to follow.

Teaching and Learning Requirements

GA does not prescribe the use of a set course book, workbook or recorded materials for the ESOL International (Classic) qualifications but expects that Centres providing English language courses should use relevant and up-to-date, high quality teaching materials which allow Candidates to apply their learning to real events and activities in everyday life, based upon their own experience.

Where Centres do offer English language courses leading to the qualifications, these can be full-time, part-time, evenings only or by distance/online learning as deemed appropriate in order to meet their learners' needs. There should be an emphasis upon providing learning activities which involve practical participation in language skills. Centres should develop an approach to teaching and learning that supports the practical nature of the GA ESOL International (Classic) qualifications.

Centres must ensure that Candidates have suitable access to the Centre, relevant Centre staff and any other resources including ESOL subject specialist staff and learning materials.

Centres should ensure that Candidates are entered for the level appropriate to their ability. GA recommends that Centres have a short pre-assessment with potential Candidates before determining whether or not it is appropriate to register them for a particular level examination.

Centres are provided with sample examination papers which may be used to assist in preparing Candidates for examinations. These are publicly available on the GA website and so, even where a Centre chooses not to offer any preparatory courses, it is recommended that they point these out to their Candidates so that they might undertake some self-preparation prior to the examination.

Learning programmes and teaching approaches should take into account some or all of the following:

- learners' short term goals and the contexts in which they need to use English
- learners' educational and employment aspirations
- learners' wider need for skills such as IT, study skills, job-search or specific subject skills
- the local community context
- techniques for teaching mixed-level groups and groups of learners with mixed educational backgrounds
- techniques for teaching learners whose listening and speaking skills are higher or lower than their reading/writing skills ('spiky profiles')
- communicative language teaching, including ways of working with learners who do not share a language with the teacher

- cross-cultural approaches which draw on learners' knowledge of other languages and/or cultures
- strategies for tackling learning difficulties such as dyslexia
- the need to move forward towards independence
- the effects of any personal circumstances on Candidate's level of motivation and style of learning.

Staff Resources: Teaching Staff

Whilst GA does not require all Centres to also run English language teaching courses or employ dedicated English language teachers, where Centres do so, GA recommends that staff employed as teachers are able to demonstrate the following competencies:

- must have reached near-native competence or be a native English speaker
- must have recent experience of teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL)
- must hold a recognised teaching qualification or, for new tutors, be working towards a relevant teaching qualification.

Staff Resources: Interlocutors and Invigilation Staff

In order to conduct the GA ESOL International (Classic) examinations, Centres must nominate an Interlocutor, who also acts as invigilator and who should not be the Candidate's teacher, relative, or anyone else from the Centre who is known personally to the Candidate other than via the Centre's professional operations (please refer to the *GA Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure* for more information). **The regularity of the exam session is the responsibility of the Interlocutor.**

The Interlocutor-invigilator is the member of staff who will conduct the Speaking examination and will oversee the Listening, Reading and Writing examinations.

It is important to note that GA ESOL International (Classic) examinations are marked by GA appointed and trained examiners. Centre staff should therefore **NOT** refer to themselves as examiners, markers or assessors of these qualifications.

Centres must ensure that any all personnel employed in the roles of Interlocutor meet the GA guidelines (see below) and that their details are provided to GA upon request.

GA recognises that a high level English teaching qualification does not automatically qualify someone to be a good Interlocutor and as there are no specific qualifications available for Interlocutors, GA does not stipulate minimum qualification levels for such staff. Gatehouse Awards have, however, adopted the following guidelines:

The Interlocutor:

- must have reached near-native competence or be a native English speaker

- must be able to use English to the level that allows the Candidate to fulfil all the tasks in the examination
- must have a degree in English (either in languages or an internationally recognised TEFL/TESOL diploma)
- must have a minimum of 3 years of recent and relevant teacher experience
- should NOT be the Candidate's own English language teacher.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that all Interlocutors and Invigilators maintain the standards required by GA. Failure to do so may affect Centre or Qualification Approval status.

Staff Resources: General

Centres must ensure that they hold up-to-date and detailed information about the staff involved with the delivery, and must make records available to GA upon request. The information GA expects Centres to hold for each member of staff includes:

- a current up to date CV
- copies of relevant qualification certificates
- a relevant and up to date CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Record
- a completed Conflict of Interest declaration (where applicable)

Centres must also ensure that they have the management and administrative arrangements in place which are suitable to support the registration, qualification delivery and assessment of Candidates.

Venue Requirements

Centres must ensure that a suitable examination room is provided which is appropriate and does not disadvantage or advantage Candidates in any way. A quiet room, which is adequately heated, with desks, chairs and the required equipment, must be available in order to conduct the GA ESOL International (Classic) examinations. The examination room must be large enough to seat the number of Candidates attending the examination session, whilst maintaining a minimum distance of 1.25 metres between each Candidate.

For the Speaking examination, Centres may use a smaller examination room as only two Candidates take the examination at any one time. Although GA recommends desks and chairs, it is acceptable to use chairs with flip-over trays or clipboards for Candidates.

Centres must also ensure that a suitable waiting area is provided for Candidates to be seated prior to their examinations. This waiting area should be supervised at all times and Candidates should not re-enter this waiting area after their examinations. This stipulation is in order to minimise the potential for Candidate collusion, cheating or other forms of malpractice.

Centres who wish to offer online examinations must ensure that they are able to meet the technology requirements (see the *Technology Requirements for Gatehouse Awards Online Examinations* document for further details).

Centres must also ensure that the premises have suitable access, in line with Disability Discrimination and Diversity & Equality law and regulations and any other local laws and regulations which apply.

Equipment Requirements

Centres must ensure that the following resources are available:

- IT facilities to enable access to the GA website
- Access to email
- Scanner and printer / photocopier
- Facilities to play digital audio recordings
- Digital audio recorder and video recorder
- Sufficient IT resources to enable back up of all audio recording of the Speaking examinations for a minimum period of 2 years after the examination date.
- Secure storage facilities for the storage of examination materials prior to and immediately after an examination session
- Facilities to securely destroy unused examination papers and to destroy completed Candidate scripts at the appropriate time, e.g. a shredder machine.

Additionally, Centres who offer online exams must ensure that the following resources are available:

Hardware:

- PC, laptop, Mac or Macbook with fast processor
- Monitor
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Headset
- Webcam (for remotely invigilated examinations)

Software:

- Windows 8.1 or above
- macOS 10.14 Mojave or above

Registering Candidates and Booking Examination Sessions

To register Candidates and book examination sessions, Centres must use the documents available on the Centre Support page of the GA Italy website (www.gatehouse.it).

In Italy, examination sessions must be booked a minimum of 10 working days prior to the proposed examination date. All examinations must be conducted at the venue indicated at the time of booking.

ID Requirements

It is the responsibility of each GA Approved Centre to have systems in place to ensure that the person taking any GA ESOL International (Classic) qualification is indeed the person they are purporting to be. All Centres are therefore required to ensure that each Candidate's original formal identification documents are checked and recorded prior to registration and copies remain in the Centre's files. Centres are required to keep copies of the photographic ID in their records for a minimum of 2 years.

Candidates must bring their identification documents on the day of the examination and the Centre must check each Candidate's ID to confirm their identity. Candidates attending without sufficient proof of their identity must not be permitted to take the examination.

At the end of the examination session, a Centre staff member must ensure that a copy of the identification document is included in the submission package which is returned to Gatehouse Awards Italy containing all examination materials.

Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations

All GA ESOL International (Classic) examinations must be delivered under controlled examination conditions. Centres must ensure that all staff have access to and are familiar with the ***GA Regulations for Conducting Controlled Examinations*** document, which can be found on the GA Italy website.

Paper Based Examination Materials

Paper based examination materials will be made available to the Centre by secure online access a short time before the scheduled examination session start time. Materials accessed online must be printed by the Centre, stored securely in order to ensure the security of the materials and only handed to Candidates immediately prior to the commencement of the examination.

Examination materials will be clearly marked to enable Centres to confirm that the version of assessment materials is correct for the particular Candidate / cohort of Candidates, as appropriate. Specific versions of examination materials for use will be issued for each scheduled session.

Examination Materials for these qualifications consist of:

- Interlocutor Booklet
- Candidate Materials for Speaking (two versions – Candidate A and Candidate B)
- Candidate Booklet – Listening

- Candidate Booklet – Reading
- Candidate Booklet - Writing
- Audio recordings for the Listening examination
- Candidate Instructions and Declaration
- Examination Report Form

For the Speaking examination an audio recording is made. The audio recordings need to be submitted to oclassicrecordings@gatehouse.it.

The Reading, Writing and Listening examinations are assessed via separate paper-based examinations. All paper-based examination materials, must be despatched to Naisa – Gatehouse Awards Italy within a maximum of 24 hours of the examination using a secure courier system. The examination materials return address is:

Naisa
Galileo Galilei 10
05100 Terni

Examination papers are NOT assessed by Centre staff or by the GA Examination Observers (where present).

All records of Candidate’s papers, recordings, and copies of their identification documents will be kept securely by GA for a minimum period of 5 years.

Online Examination Materials

All the materials for the Listening, Reading and Writing components are accessed only by Candidates via the GA assessment portal at the time of the examination session.

The Centre will receive the following materials prior to the examination session:

- Interlocutor Booklet
- Visual Prompts for Speaking Task 3
- Examination Report Form

Please note, for online examinations, the *Candidate Instructions and Declaration Form* must be made available to the candidates, and signed and returned to the Centre **before** the examination session.

Candidate to Interlocutor-Invigilator Ratios

Speaking examinations at all levels are conducted with two Candidates and the Interlocutor present.

It is possible for trainee Interlocutors and/or the Centre's internal quality assurance managers to be present in the room; however, GA strongly recommends that the number of people present in the examination room is kept to a minimum. Any additional personnel must be declared on the Examination Report Form, and they must state their name at the appropriate point in the script.

The Reading, Writing and Listening examinations must be invigilated by a Centre-appointed Interlocutor-Invigilator. The minimum ratio of Interlocutor-Invigilators per Candidates is 1:12. This means that one interlocutor-invigilator can supervise no more than 12 Candidates.

The Reading, Writing and Listening online centre-based examinations must be invigilated by a Centre-appointed Invigilator. The minimum ratio of Invigilators per Candidates is 1:8. This means that one Invigilator can supervise no more than 8 Candidates.

The Reading, Writing and Listening online remotely invigilated examinations must be invigilated by a Centre-appointed Invigilator. The minimum ratio of Invigilators per Candidates is 1:4. This means that one Invigilator can supervise no more than 4 Candidates.

The Interlocutor-Invigilator must have a means of communicating with another member of staff also trained in the invigilation procedure and present on the premises, should their assistance be required in an emergency situation. The Interlocutor-Invigilator should be able to summon their assistance without leaving the examination room.

Record Keeping

All materials, including the audio and video recordings, must be kept securely within the Centre. Once Centres have completed examinations and sent them back to Naisa – Gatehouse Awards Italy for marking, records must be kept in a physical secure storage areas such as a locked filing cabinet. Electronic recordings such as audio should be stored securely on a local machine, server (where access is granted to authorised personnel only) or removable device (stored in a secure location).

All records must be kept for a minimum period of two years, be easily retrievable, and made accessible to GA or the Regulators upon request.

Results and Certification

Once Centres have submitted the examination materials, all examination papers and recordings are marked by the GA ESOL International (Classic) Examiners. The results will be sent to the centre as soon as they are released.

In Italy, standard examination results are issued within 20 working days, while fast track examination results are issued within 10 working days, of the receipt of a full and correct submission of the examination materials.

Centres are responsible for informing Candidates of the certification timescales. Candidates should refer directly to the Centre.

For results enquiries, Centres are asked to contact results@gatehouse.it. Such enquiries should only be submitted in instances where the timescales for issuing results and certificates as outlined above have been exceeded.

Certificates will automatically be issued to Candidates who have met the requirements for the full qualification they are registered for. If a Candidate has failed one or more units, a Notification of Results will be issued informing the Candidate of which units they have achieved / not achieved.

Enquiries and Appeals

GA operates an Appeals Policy and Procedure in accordance with the arrangements for regulated qualifications.

Candidates wishing to appeal should use the Centre's internal Appeals Policy and Procedure prior to appealing directly to GA.

Centres wishing to appeal against any decision or action which arises from external assessment and/or moderation activity should do so in line with the content of the ***GA Appeals Policy and Procedure***, available on the GA Italy website.

Examination Re-sits

A Candidate who is assessed as not having achieved the qualification or unit should be advised to wait until they have progressed to a sufficient degree before they re-sit the examination(s).

Candidates who re-sit the examinations will need to do so as part of an examination session and will be provided with different examination materials to those used previously.

Quality Assurance Requirements

GA is committed to providing a high level of quality assurance for the ESOL International (Classic) qualifications, including a thorough Centre and qualification approval process, external assessment and moderation and visits to Centres to conduct quality assurance monitoring and conduct observations of examination sessions.

Examination Observations & Visits to Centres

External Quality Assurance activities will involve observations of examination sessions, discussions with Centre staff and, where appropriate, with Candidates. These activities will focus on ensuring that the Centre continues to meet the Centre approval criteria and that:

- the management arrangements at the Centre are sufficient
- staff and physical resources are in place and sufficient
- the Centre has appropriate policies and procedures in place
- suitable arrangements are implemented to ensure the security of assessment materials
- the assessment and internal quality assurance arrangements are sufficient
- record keeping and administrative arrangements meet requirements
- any actions have been carried out by the Centre

Through the above activities, GA will provide Centres with support, advice and guidance relating to the delivery, assessment and quality assurance of these qualifications.

Additional support visits can be requested, for which there may be an additional charge.

Ongoing Support

There are a number of documents on the GA website that Centres and Candidates may find useful: www.gatehouse.it.

The website is updated regularly with news, information about all GA qualifications, sample examination materials, updates on regulations and other important notices for Centres and Candidates.

Within the Centre, a named Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that all information and documents provided to Centre staff and Candidates are correct and up to date.

GA must be kept up to date with contact details so Centres can be provided with the best level of support and guidance. Contact details for GA are:

Naisa – Gatehouse Italy
Address: Via Galileo Galilei 10, 05100 Terni
Tel: +39 06 62279059
Email: info@gatehouse.it
Web: www.gatehouse.it

Candidates should always speak to a member of staff at the Centre for information relating to GA and the ESOL International (Classic) qualifications prior to approaching GA directly.