

## Qualification Specification

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### Features of the Gatehouse Awards (GA) ESOL International (Classic) Qualifications

- **External assessment:** all examinations are conducted by Interlocutor-Invigilator trained in their role, then externally assessed and moderated by Gatehouse Awards' experienced and supportive examiners and moderators.
- **Full guidance provided:** guidance is given to teachers and Candidates in the form of unit standards, unit amplification, mark schemes and clear Key Language items mapped to each skill at each level.
- **Flexible examination dates:** examinations can be conducted at times that are suitable to Centres and Candidates – there are no 'assessment windows'.
- **Flexible examination structure:** take any combination of units and receive unit certificate or focus on skills areas one at a time. Re-sit examinations for only the skill not yet achieved.
- **Examinations are available in paper based and online formats.**

### About the Gatehouse Awards ESOL International (Classic) Qualifications

ESOL International Qualifications are designed for Candidates who are not native speakers of English and who wish to achieve a high quality, internationally recognised qualification in English that is available and recognised worldwide and at the highest level (RQF Level 3 / CEFR C2). They are suitable for Candidates who are preparing for entry to higher education or professional employment in the UK or elsewhere. ESOL International qualifications are designed to reference the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR). The levels in the CEFR have been mapped to the levels in the Regulated Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland (see *Pathways to Proficiency – the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in English Language DFES / QCA, 2003*).

This specification covers all levels (CEFR A1 to C2 / Entry Level 1 to Level 3) of the suite of Gatehouse Awards ESOL International (Classic) qualifications. The qualifications include all four skills – Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing at each level. The qualifications are designed to reference the descriptors of language proficiency in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The levels in the CEFR have been mapped to the levels in the RQF for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

These qualifications are available within the United Kingdom and overseas and are only offered in English.

The qualifications are regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual) in England and are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). All versions of the qualifications are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications which is operated by Ofqual and can be accessed here: <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Qualification>.

The information contained within this and other official documents must be made available by Centres to all members of staff involved with the administration, conduct and delivery of Gatehouse Awards ESOL International (Classic) qualifications. In addition, essential policies, procedures and forms can be found on the Gatehouse Awards Italy website: [www.gatehouse.it](http://www.gatehouse.it).

### Qualification Aims and Objectives

The aim of these qualifications is to demonstrate a Candidate's ability to communicate using the English language across CEFR levels A1 (Entry Level 1) to C2 (Level 3).

The qualifications assess the Candidate's competency in all four skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing at each level.

All four skills are assessed separately, via externally set examination papers.

The overall objective is to provide a Candidate with a qualification that they can use to prepare for higher education or employment where the ability to speak, write and understand verbal and written English is required.

The qualification has been designed to reflect the four domains as specified by CEFR: the public domain, the personal domain, the educational domain and the occupational domain.

- The public domain refers to everything connected with ordinary social interaction for instance; business and administrative bodies; public services; cultural and leisure activities of a public nature; relations with the media etc.
- The personal domain comprises family relations and individual social practices.
- The occupational domain embraces everything concerned with a person's activities and relations in the exercise of his or her occupation.
- The educational domain is concerned with the learning/training context (generally of an institutional nature) where the aim is to acquire specific knowledge or skills.

(CEFR available: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf))

## **Intended Audience and Entry Requirements**

Gatehouse Awards ESOL International (Classic) qualifications test the speaking, listening, reading and writing skills of Candidates whose first language is not English and who:

- attend an English language course either in the UK or overseas; or
- are learning English as part of their school or college curriculum; or
- need English for their everyday or working life; or
- require an externally recognised certification of their level of proficiency in English; or
- are attending courses over a period of time and require a series of graded examinations which provide steps towards proficiency; or
- attend short courses in English, for example at summer schools.

The GA ESOL International (Classic) qualifications are designed to complement general English language courses.

These qualifications are appropriate for anyone aged 14 or above.

There are no prior learning requirements for these qualifications. However, Centres are expected to ensure that the qualification they offer to their Candidates is appropriate to their age, ability and needs. For example, Centres should not offer a Candidate a qualification that is the same level as a similar English language qualification they have already attained.

Additionally, Candidates who wish to access the online version of the assessment should ensure that they have the relevant general IT skills.

### **Qualification Availability**

The GA ESOL International (Classic) qualifications are offered in the UK and internationally by Approved GA Centres and/or Representatives holding approval from Gatehouse Awards.

If your organisation is not currently a recognised GA Centre, or you do not have approval to offer ESOL International qualifications, please contact us at [info@gatehouse.it](mailto:info@gatehouse.it).

## Qualification Titles, Qualification Numbers and Important Dates

Qualification Title	CEFR Level	Qualification Number	Operational Start Date	Operational Review Date
GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (Classic A1)	A1	600/5182/6	01.12.2014	31.01.2021
GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (Classic A2)	A2	600/7651/3	01.12.2014	31.01.2021
GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (Classic B1)	B1	600/7040/7	01.12.2014	31.01.2021
GA Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Classic B2)	B2	600/7163/1	01.04.2015	31.01.2021
GA Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (Classic C1)	C1	600/7162/X	01.05.2015	31.01.2021
GA Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (Classic C2)	C2	600/7840/6	01.07.2015	31.01.2021

## Qualification Structure

All GA ESOL International (Classic) qualifications are unitised to allow Candidates to re-take examinations for the individual elements of the qualification.

The ESOL International (Classic) four-unit qualifications each have four mandatory units: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. Candidates are assessed on their ability to use all the skills.

In order to achieve the GA ESOL International (Classic) qualification at the level entered for, Candidates must achieve **all** the mandatory units.

## Equivalent Levels: RQF and CEFR

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) Level	Equivalent RQF Level
A1	Entry Level 1
A2	Entry Level 2
B1	Entry Level 3
B2	Level 1
C1	Level 2
C2	Level 3

## Overview of the Descriptors of Competence at each Level

(Adapted from the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*).

<p><b>A1</b></p> <p>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</p>
<p><b>A2</b></p> <p>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</p>
<p><b>B1</b></p> <p>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes &amp; ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</p>
<p><b>B2</b></p> <p>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p>
<p><b>C1</b></p> <p>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</p>
<p><b>C2</b></p> <p>Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.</p>

## Guided Learning Hours, Total Qualification Times and Unit Reference Numbers

GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1) (Classic A1)				
Skill	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference	
Speaking	36	150	Entry Level 1	A/503/4540
Listening	24		Entry Level 1	L/503/8737
Reading	24		Entry Level 1	F/503/4541
Writing	36		Entry Level 1	J/503/4542
<b>Total:</b>	120			

GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2) (Classic A2)				
Skill	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference	
Speaking	36	150	Entry Level 2	Y/503/8739
Listening	24		Entry Level 2	R/503/8730
Reading	24		Entry Level 2	L/503/8740
Writing	36		Entry Level 2	R/503/8741
<b>Total:</b>	120			

GA Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3) (Classic B1)				
Skill	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference	
Speaking	54	240	Entry Level 3	H/503/8744
Listening	36		Entry Level 3	D/503/8743
Reading	36		Entry Level 3	K/503/8745
Writing	54		Entry Level 3	M/503/8746
<b>Total:</b>	180			

GA Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Classic B2)				
Skill	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference	
Speaking	54	240	Level 1	A/503/8748
Listening	36		Level 1	T/503/8747
Reading	36		Level 1	F/503/8749
Writing	54		Level 1	T/503/8750
<b>Total:</b>	180			



GA Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International (Classic C1)				
Skill	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference	
Speaking	72	360	Level 2	F/503/8752
Listening	48		Level 2	A/503/8751
Reading	48		Level 2	J/503/8753
Writing	72		Level 2	L/503/8754
<b>Total:</b>	240			

GA Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International (Classic C2)				
Skill	GLH	TQT	Unit Reference	
Speaking	72	360	Level 3	Y/503/8756
Listening	48		Level 3	R/503/8755
Reading	48		Level 3	D/503/8757
Writing	72		Level 3	H/503/8758
<b>Total:</b>	240			

### Model of Assessment

The GA ESOL International (Classic) qualifications are externally assessed via examination papers determined, issued and externally assessed and moderated by GA.

All examinations are conducted under controlled examination conditions.

In Italy, the examinations are conducted at Approved Centres by the Centre’s staff. Listening, Reading and Writing examinations are invigilated examinations.

Speaking examinations are audio and video recorded. Where Candidates are under the age of 18, video recording may not be possible, in which case the audio recording alone is required. Centres must return the audio recordings with the examination materials. GA may request video recordings of Speaking examinations from time to time. Centres will be notified in advance where this is the case.

Online examinations which are invigilated remotely are always audio and video recorded, unless the Candidate(s) is/are under-age, in which case only audio recordings are used.

All assessment decisions will be made by GA examiners.

### Prepared & Unprepared Tasks

The GA ESOL International (Classic) examinations consist of a number of unprepared tasks in Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing examinations, and one prepared task in the Speaking examination.

Twice per year, GA publishes up to 6 presentation topics per level for Candidates to choose from. Candidates may choose any one of the topics. The task requires Candidates to prepare a presentation about a topic, which they are expected to answer questions about in the examination.

The purpose of the prepared topic task is for Candidates to have the opportunity to demonstrate their English language skills by choosing a topic they are interested in and can feel confident talking about at some length.

Teachers and Candidates are encouraged to incorporate the chosen task topic into teaching and learning, exploring vocabulary, themes and relevant language items in preparing for the examination.

Although the presentation task is prepared, it is **not** acceptable for Candidates to bring any written prompt cards or notes into the examination room. Candidates may bring in props, i.e. pictures or objects, if they wish.

### **Language of Assessment**

These qualifications are available in the English language only.

GA is committed to using English which is plain, clear free from bias, and appropriate to Candidates who are not native English users.

### **Use of Dictionaries**

No dictionaries are permitted in any of the examination components.

### **Rules of Combination**

In order to achieve the GA Certificate in ESOL International (Classic) qualification, Candidates must achieve **all** the mandatory units at the level entered for.

No further rules of combination will apply.

### **Relationship to Other Qualifications & Progression Opportunities**

The qualifications are designed so that Candidates can progress from one level to the next as their skills improve.

Progression from Entry Level 1 (A1) achievement may include further English language courses to higher Entry Levels or Levels 1 – 3, or onto a range of vocational qualifications at Entry Level, Levels 1, 2 and above. Progression from Levels 2 and 3 (C1 and C2) achievement may include further English language courses in specialist English or onto a range of vocational qualifications at Levels 2, 3 and above, including Higher Education programmes of learning.