



Our Customer Service Statement

Gem-A aims to provide a quality service by building strong, mutually supportive relationships with our members, students, suppliers and others with whom we come in contact. We will achieve this by providing direct and easy access to dedicated team of staff who can be reached by direct dial telephone or email.

Gem-A is committed to providing a high quality support service for all our users. This statement will help us monitor our service to you and continually improve that service.

If you wish to comment on this statement or any service offered by Gem-A, please contact us direct on **clientservices@gem-a.com** or by post to **Customer Service Desk**, 27 Greville Street, London EC1N 8TN. Our offices are open 9.30am-5.00pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays, to answer any queries. Outside of these hours an answering service is available where all calls will be picked up the next working day. Phone number: 020 7404 3334, fax: 020 7404 8843.

Our service aims:

Gem-A:

- ensures that the interests of students, members and other clients are our priority;
- offers qualifications with the appropriate national accreditation and international recognition;
- provides prompt, helpful and friendly responses to all enquiries, and endeavours to respond within three working days;
- responds to written correspondence within seven working days wherever possible, excepting requests for examination dates which we will prioritise according to the urgency of the appointment;
- maintains full, easily accessible, current information on fees (available on our website www.gem-a.com), and publishes any changes;
- supports its members, tutors, students and centres through forward-looking syllabuses, publications, events and training;
- provides clear and simple guidance notes to all students;
- has confidential and secure procedures for storing questions, written papers and blank certificates;
- deals with financial transactions within two months wherever possible;

THE GEMMOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

27 Greville Street (Saffron Hill entrance), London EC1N 8TN, UK

Tel: +44 (0)20 7404 3334 Fax: +44 (0)20 7404 8843 Email: information@gem-a.com Web: www.gem-a.com

Registered Charity No. 1109555. A company limited by guarantee and registered in England No. 1945780
Registered office: 3rd Floor, 1-4 Argyll Street, London W1F 7LD



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- makes an initial response to complaints within seven working days;
- investigates any allegations of malpractice thoroughly and rapidly;
- keeps records of candidates' achievements and respond to legitimate requests for these records;
- complies in all areas of the UK Data Protection Act;
- complies with all current relevant statutory legislation;
- continues to ensure that it is committed to providing equality of opportunity and treatment for all, and that it will not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of gender, age, ethnic origin or disability in its dealings with students, tutors, examiners, members or others; and
- provides its students and members with the opportunity to comment on all aspects of our service by contacting us at any time.

Our Equal Opportunity and Fair Assessment policy

Gem-A is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and fair treatment of all its candidates. Gem-A assesses all students in a standardized manner using identical assessment method and content and same administration, together with identical and anonymous scoring and interpretation procedures, regardless of the age, gender and ethnic origin of each individual student. Within its means and in accordance with this assessment system, Gem-A seeks to provide for particular assessment requirements for UK candidates with disabilities or special needs. There are no barriers to entry for disabled people, for women or men, or for different racial groups and the processes are in place to make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners and candidates as appropriate. One exception is partially sighted or blind people would be unable to use the equipment required for full qualification as many of these skills require visual abilities.

All enquiries should be directed to the Gem-A Education Office at 27 Greville Street, London EC1N 8TN, tel: 020-7404 3334 fax: 020-7404 8843, email: education@gem-a.info

1. Policy

Gem-A is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of its business relationships. To this end, Gem-A acknowledges the following basic rights of all those with whom it interacts, its staff, suppliers, students and members:

- to be treated with respect and dignity;
- to be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices;
and
- to receive encouragement to reach their full potential.

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Revised April 2009



Gem-A further acknowledges that these rights carry with them responsibilities; it consequently expects all staff, students and members to recognise these rights and act accordingly.

The underlying principle of Gem-A's Equal Opportunities Policy is to ensure that no group or individual receives more or less favourable treatment.

Gem-A will therefore seek to ensure that all are treated solely on the basis of merit, ability and potential, regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances or other irrelevant distinction.

Through its Equal Opportunities Policy, Gem-A will, as far as possible, seek to:

- identify and eliminate unfair and discriminatory practices wherever they occur in the services and products which it offers;
- remove inappropriate barriers to entry and achievement, thus enabling a wider variety of people to benefit from the opportunities which it offers.

All qualifications, products and services offered by Gem-A, legal or contractual requirements permitting, will be:

- available to all those who are able to achieve the required standard, and free from barriers which restrict access and progression;
- free from overt or covert discriminatory practices, and due regard will be paid to any special learning/assessment needs of individuals;
- free from inappropriate content, language and images;
- free from age or other restrictions; and
- consistent with Gem-A's values.

While, there are no barriers to entry for any group and the processes are in place to make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners and candidates as appropriate there is one exception. This exception is partially sighted or blind people who would be unable to use the equipment required for full qualification as many of these skills require visual abilities.

2. Responsibility

To ensure the effective implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy, Gem-A will allocate the responsibility for the monitoring of the implementation of the Equal Opportunity Policy to the Director of Education.

However, each manager in Gem-A is responsible for the effective implementation of the Equal Opportunities Policy and its associated procedures, and for monitoring equal opportunities in his/her area of responsibility.

Notwithstanding the above responsibilities, each individual staff member is accountable for his/her behaviour and for following the procedures associated with Equal Opportunities.



All Accredited Teaching Centres are required to implement the Equal Opportunities Policy in their local centre and to monitor its implementation.

3. Communication

To support staff in fulfilling their obligations Gem-A will ensure that its Equal Opportunities Policy is known to all employees and is available in the public domain.

Gem-A will expect external bodies/agencies with whom it does business to embody the same Equal Opportunities values in their treatment of Gem-A staff, suppliers, students and members; and will communicate this expectation.

4. Monitoring and Review

Gem-A will regularly monitor and review the application of its Equal Opportunities Policy and the implementation of associated procedures, and from the information gained will analyse potential barriers or areas where positive action may be required.

This statement has been developed to comply with legislation.

Disability Statement

Gem-A recognises its responsibility to offer disabled students, and anyone with a specific learning difficulty or medical condition, access to its qualifications and aims to ensure that no student is subjected to unfair discrimination.

Gem-A endeavors to ensure that no disabled student or member of staff is treated less favourably, or is perceived to be treated as such and in so doing, aims to create a learning environment which:

- enables all students to fully participate in their qualification regardless of disability; and
- offers qualifications that allow for flexibility to ensure that the individual needs of disabled students are met, and that disabled students are able to gain the maximum education advantage.

Defining disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Admissions

Students must ensure that their disability is made known at the time of registration to enable appropriate provisions to be made in learning and assessment. All applications will be considered on an individual basis. Gem-A will ensure that the admissions process is fully accessible to disabled student and specialist support and guidance is available to all enquirers.



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Teaching, learning and assessment

Where possible and reasonable, Gem-A will ensure that all teaching and learning material is delivered in an appropriate format so as to be accessible to disabled students. Where tuition is provided via an external centre, the validation process for acceptance of that centre includes appropriate arrangements for disabled students to ensure they are provided with full access to the facilities available.

Any assessment arrangements will not disadvantage or give unfair advantage to the student but will be adjusted accordingly to meet the needs of a disabled student.

All special arrangements will be made known to the tutor and accredited teaching centre and records will be kept for verification if required.

Gem-A will ensure all staff, including tutors and those involved with examination delivery, are able to deal effectively with the needs of disabled students.

Languages and Translations

All of Gem-A's qualification specifications and assessment materials are available in English. There is no current provision in Welsh or Irish.

Gem-A qualifications will consider any request from centres to provide assessment material for our qualifications in Welsh or Irish, provided that sufficient notice (a minimum of six months) is given. However, provision of such an assessment would be dependant on the availability of appropriately qualified examiners.

Communications with all centres will be in English.

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