# Maintaining Confidentiality of Assessment Materials Policy & Procedure

## Document Specification:

| **Purpose:** | To set out the policy and procedure to be followed by the staff, management, directors, contractors and other third parties engaged by Gatehouse Awards to ensure that, wherever possible, confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained, and, where a breach has happened, what steps will be taken to manage it effectively. |
| **Accountability:** | Gatehouse Awards Governing Body |
| **Responsibility:** | Quality Assurance Manager |
| **Version:** | 1.0 |
| **Effective from:** | 1st April 2017 |
| **Indicative Review date:** | April 2019 |
| **Links to Ofqual GCR** | G4 |
| **Other relevant documents:** | Maladministration and Malpractice Policy and Procedure Qualification Specifications |
1. **Introduction**

Where confidentiality in the contents of the assessment materials, or information about the assessment is required, Gatehouse Awards is required to ensure that a qualification which it makes available, or proposes to make available, reflects an accurate measure of attainment, and in order to ensure that it must take all reasonable steps to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. In particular, the confidentiality must be maintained where Gatehouse Awards provides training or training materials in relation to such qualification. This policy also sets out what steps will be taken where any breach of such confidentiality occurs, or is alleged to have occurred.

2. **Authority & Responsibility**

This policy applies to all members of staff, including contracted staff, who are involved in the development of assessment materials, and who have access to such materials as part of their role, as well as centre staff involved in the delivery of examinations where confidential assessment materials are used.

The responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy on a day to day basis lies with the Quality Assurance Manager.

3. **Definitions**

**Confidential Information** – confidential information about an assessment is information which, if disclosed, could compromise the ability of the assessment to provide an accurate measure of Learner’s attainment.

4. **Determining if Information about Assessment is Confidential**

Gatehouse Awards will decide whether information is confidential at the qualification development stage. The following factors will be given consideration:

a) The knowledge, skills or understanding being assessed and the method of assessment

b) Whether advanced knowledge of the information or assessment materials could provide an unfair advantage to the Learner who has this information over a Learner who does not

c) Whether knowledge of the information could enable a Teacher or Learner to anticipate the requirements of an assessment, to the extent that they would not need to fully complete the course of study

Gatehouse Awards will assess the above factors in relation to the particular type of assessment, and decide the extent to which the information is confidential for each assessment to allow for accurate measure of a Learner’s attainment.
5. Ensuring Confidentiality of the Assessments and Relevant Information

In order to reduce the risk of disclosure of confidential information, Gatehouse Awards will:

a) Clearly mark assessment materials which have been determined to be confidential

b) Restrict access to confidential material to people who need it

c) Put in place appropriate contractual obligations with employees, contractors and third parties, to protect the confidentiality of the information for the time the information remains confidential. These will require individuals who have had access to confidential information to:

- maintain confidentiality both during and after their term of employment or engagement
- understand what may constitute a conflict of interest and declare any such interests
- notify Gatehouse Awards promptly where they are, or have been, involved in the preparation of any resources that relate to a qualification for which they hold confidential information

d) Offer training for people with access to confidential assessment material on how to maintain confidentiality.

e) Monitor the content of the training events to assure itself that confidential information about assessments is not shared.

f) Assess any instances where staff who have access to confidential information regarding assessment might be involved in training events for Teachers

6. Dealing with Suspected Breaches of Confidential Information about Assessment

All allegations of breaches of confidentiality will be investigated, and as part of the investigation Gatehouse Awards will:

a) make a record of the allegation of the breach

b) fully document the investigation process

c) identify and manage the likely impact of the breach, for example by replacing the assessment materials where a breach of confidentiality could impact on the validity of the assessment

d) take action against those who have breached the confidentiality

e) take any necessary steps to prevent reoccurrence

Depending on the nature of the breach, the GA Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure, and / or GA Disciplinary Policy and Procedure will be followed.