

Exercise walk-through

4.2

Build Up Your Supports and Knock Down Your Barriers

GAC Study and Communication Skills

Method — Key knowledge: match help to the task

A **barrier** is something that makes a particular action harder. “I am hopeless” names no action and gives a helper nothing to change. “I cannot access the application form during my study time” identifies a task and condition. Check what is known before deciding why the problem exists.

Support is a resource or action that helps address the barrier. A friendly person is not automatically the right adviser for every question. Match the help to the need, check availability and ask a specific question. Protect private information: share only what the helper needs, and do not ask someone to write a supposedly personal statement for you.

Method — Source A: Chen's application task

Chen has four weeks to complete a fictional course application. It requires a personal statement and a project example. He has a suitable club project, but his first statement gives only broad adjectives. He can study on Monday and Thursday from 18:00 to 19:00. His home connection regularly fails during these hours. He has not checked whether the form can be saved partway through. His bus leaves school at 16:20, so staying late needs an agreed travel arrangement. No such arrangement has yet been made.

Chen says, "I cannot apply because I am bad at writing." He has successfully explained his club role in a short classroom paragraph. He does not yet know which details the new statement needs. A relative offers to send a finished statement for him to copy. Chen has not accepted the offer.

Method — Source B: available support

The school adviser can discuss course questions on Tuesday from 15:30 to 16:00, by appointment. The library has computers and a stable connection from 17:00 on weekdays; availability must be booked. The writing tutor offers a Thursday lunchtime review of a student's own outline, but does not write the statement. A classmate can check whether project dates and Chen's role are clear. The classmate is not authorised to confirm entry requirements. All these arrangements are fictional details for this task, not offers from a real institution.

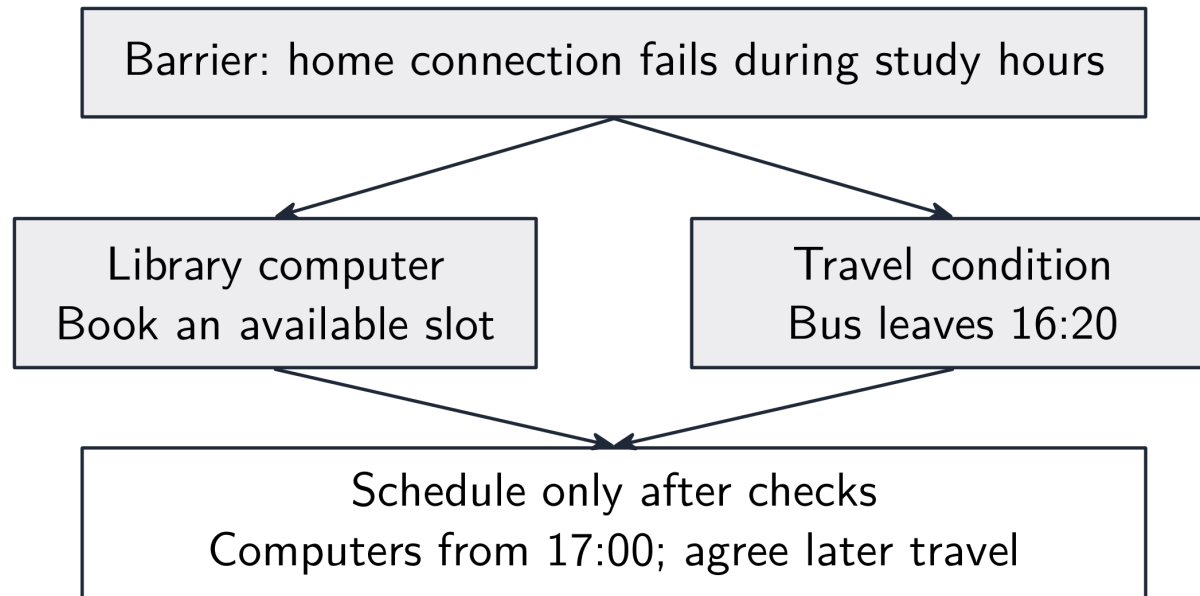
Method — Worked example: one barrier needs a relevant check

Known: the home connection fails during Chen's study hours; library access exists, but a stay after 16:20 has no travel agreement. The problem is access under current conditions, not a proven inability to apply.

A feasible next action is to check whether a computer can be booked from 17:00, whether later travel can be agreed, and whether the form can save progress. The computers become available after Chen's 16:20 bus leaves. "Use the library every evening" ignores this conflict. A plan must include the conditions that make its action possible.

Method — Worked example: one barrier needs a relevant check

Known: the home connection fails during Chen's study hours; library access exists, but a stay after 16:20 has...



Exercises 2.1-2.2

2.1 Identify TWO separate task barriers in Source A without using a permanent label about Chen. [2]

2.2 Match the question about entry requirements and the need to improve an outline to the appropriate people in Source B. Give ONE match for each need. [2]

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Identify TWO separate task barriers in Source A without using a permanent label about Chen. [2]

2.1 Award B1 each for two distinct barriers: unreliable home connection during study hours; not knowing which details the statement needs; an adjective-only first draft; no agreed travel arrangement for a later school stay. Do not award “bad at writing” as a specific task barrier. Treat weak draft and uncertain content as closely related if the answer merely repeats the same point.

2.2 Match the question about entry requirements and the need to improve an outline to the appropriate people in Source B. Give ONE match for each need. [2]

2.2 School adviser for course entry requirements; writing tutor for a review of Chen’s own outline. A classmate checking project dates cannot authorise entry requirements.

Exercises 2.3-2.4

2.3 Explain why using the library after school is a possible support, but not yet a complete plan. Include one benefit and TWO conditions that still require checking. [3]

2.4 Chen proposes copying his relative's finished statement. Explain why this is unsuitable and give TWO acceptable ways the relative could help while the statement remains Chen's own. [3]

Exercises 2.3-2.4

2.3 Explain why using the library after school is a possible support, but not yet a complete plan. Include one benefit and TWO conditions that still require checking. [3]

2.3 Stable connection/computer access is a relevant benefit. Check that a computer is available and booked, and that later travel is agreed because computer access starts after the bus leaves. Accept checking whether progress can be saved as an alternative condition, with a clear link to limited access time.

2.4 Chen proposes copying his relative's finished statement. Explain why this is unsuitable and give TWO acceptable ways the relative could help while the statement remains Chen's own. [3]

2.4 Copying another person's completed statement would present that person's writing as Chen's own. The relative may ask Chen for a concrete example to replace an adjective and comment on whether his own draft is clear. Accept checking spelling, discussing his recorded project role or reminding him of a deadline; do not accept writing new personal evidence or supplying false experiences.

Exercise 3.1

3.1 Produce a three-step help plan for the first week. For EACH step, name a specific action and explain how its timing or responsibility addresses a recorded barrier. Do not assume an appointment, computer or travel arrangement is already approved. [6]

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3.1 Three feasible steps, 2 marks each: specific action, relevant responsibility/timing/condition. For example: request Tuesday's 15:30 adviser slot to clarify statement and course requirements, noting that it ends before the 16:20 bus; draft an outline from the club project during Monday's study hour and request the tutor's Thursday lunchtime review; ask the library about a computer booking from 17:00 and check form-saving, arranging later travel before confirming the booking. Accept another workable order. Do not award a plan that depends on unapproved late travel as if it were already available.

Exercise 3.2

3.2 Write a 100–130 word message to the adviser requesting an appointment. State the application task and one existing strength, distinguish the access and writing barriers, ask a question within the adviser's role and propose a realistic next action. Keep responsibility for the statement with Chen. [8]

Exercise 3.2

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3.2 Local analytic rubric, $8 \times B1$: appointment request within Tuesday’s slot; statement/project task; an evidence-based existing strength; specific access barrier; specific writing-content barrier; question appropriate to adviser; feasible next action with any required permission left open; clear, polite 100–130 word message retaining authorship. Example: “Dear Adviser, Could I book a short appointment on Tuesday between 15:30 and 16:00 about my course application? I have four weeks to prepare a personal statement and a project example. I have explained my club role successfully in a classroom paragraph, but my first statement uses general adjectives and I am unsure which details are relevant. My home connection also fails during my study hours, so access is a separate problem. Could you clarify the course requirements and the evidence expected in the statement? I plan to draft my own outline and ask the writing tutor to review it. I will check a computer booking from 17:00 and arrange later travel before staying. Kind regards, Chen.”