



ACL Trial Guidance Early Allocation of October Half Term Ad-hocs (W/25)

6th May 2025
Version 1

Guidance for Airlines at Airports included in the ACL trial: “Early allocation of October Half-Term Ad-hocs (W25/W26)”

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Scope of Guidance

Scheduling Season:

- **Winter 2025/26 (W25)**

Airports and period of the Season included in the trial:

- **Birmingham (BHX)** between **Sun 26OCT- Sun 02NOV 2025**
- **London Gatwick (LGW)** between **Sun 26OCT- Mon 03NOV 2025**
- **London Stansted (STN)** between **Sun 26OCT- Sun 02NOV 2025**
- **Manchester (MAN)** between **Sun 26OCT- Sun 02NOV 2025**

Introduction

This document is intended to provide additional guidance to airlines about how to manage their initial submissions and the subsequent management of their ad-hoc waitlists in support of ACL’s trial “Early allocation of October Half-Term Ad-hocs (W25/W26)”. Appendix 1 at the end of this document outlines the key dates of the trial.

This document relates specifically to the W25 phase of the trial and updated guidance will be issued ahead of the second phase of the trial for the W26 season following a review of these guidelines.

Initial Submissions

The Winter 2025/26 Initial Submissions Deadline is **Thursday 15th May 2025**. ACL intend to follow standard WASG procedures and will not allocate any ad-hoc slots for the W25 season during the Initial Coordination period.

ACL will consider allocating ad-hoc dates that are recognisable extensions to existing historic series as normal. To support the trial, airlines should consider if requesting these ad-hoc extensions are necessary or whether they would be returned to the slot pool at a later date.

Airlines are free to submit for ad-hoc slot requests above their historic series slot requests for the W25 season as part of their Initial Submission. This provides early visibility of schedule demand. ACL encourage airlines to only submit for ad-hoc slots that they are planning to operate and to avoid speculative submissions.

ACL will not penalise airlines that submit for their W25 ad-hoc requests after the Initial Submissions Deadline. Within the scope of this trial, all ad-hoc requests received up to and including Friday 1st August 2025 will be treated with equal priority regardless of when they were submitted so airlines should not feel pressured to incorporate ad-hoc requests into their initial submissions if they do not wish to do so.

Post-SAL Pre-Trial Activity

The Winter 2025/26 SAL Deadline is **Thursday 5th June 2025**. ACL will issue the SALs for the W25 season with any ad-hoc requests returned as “U” unable at this point. Airlines are free to manage their ad-hoc waitlists using standard WCR messages from this point.

To assist with the trial, airlines are requested to separate ad-hoc requests for the applicable trial period (26OCT-02NOV) as separate records to those for any ad-hoc periods that may extend after 02NOV (or 03NOV for LGW).

Example:

An airline plans to operate the same ad-hoc (<5 consecutive weeks) slot for the first three Tuesdays of the W25 season. They should submit two lines:

NXX9999 28OCT28OCT 0200000 200321 ZZFO900 C *(to be coordinated early as part of trial)*

NXX9999 04NOV11NOV 0200000 200321 ZZFO900 C *(to be coordinated after 31AUG HBD)*

ACL do not intend to create an “early” historic baseline as part of this trial, so airlines are encouraged to consider the following:

Ad-hoc slots which are to be created via ad-hoc changes to historic series should be held in the Live schedule unchanged until after the W25 Baseline and Results Tables have been created shortly after the **31st August 2025 Historic Baseline Date (HBD)** – refer to the timeline outlined in Appendix 1. Making these changes pre-HBD will affect the historic determination of series when the Baseline is created.

Ad-hoc slot requests submitted by airlines and held on ACL’s waitlist should not duplicate any planned ad-hoc changes to be made after the HBD. This is to ensure that the correct volume of pure ad-hoc slots above the historic series slot volumes are held on the waitlist.

Example:

An airline plans to operate the following schedule on the first day of the season:

- **16x** slots planned as unchanged from historic series held as of HBD;
- **2x** slots planned as ad-hoc changes to historic series held as of HBD (to be made after Baseline/Results Table created);
- **4x** slots planned as additional ad-hocs not linked to any historic series held as of HBD.
- **Total: 22x Slots**

The airline’s ad-hoc waitlist for this day should only reflect a net increase of 4x ad-hoc slots above their historic series (unchanged and changed) holdings as of HBD (18x slots).

Ad-hoc slots for the period of the season outside of the scope of this trial can be submitted at any time and managed in the normal way but will not be coordinated by ACL until shortly after the HBD – refer to the timeline outlined in Appendix 1.

Enquiries

Enquiries about the “Early allocation of October Half-Term ad-hocs (W25/W26)” trial or this guidance should be directed to the relevant Coordination Leads for the above airports using the contacts provided on the ACL website airport page.

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Appendix 1: The Trial – key dates

ACL intend to run the trial as follows:

Tuesday 15th July 2025 is the WASG Series Return Deadline (SRD) for airlines to return any series slots to the slot pool. ACL will reallocate series handbacks immediately from this date and allow the series waitlist a short period to react to SRD waitlist improvements before commencing the ad-hoc trial.

By **Friday 1st August 2025**, airlines should ensure that their ad-hoc waitlists for the October Half-Term period (26OCT-02NOV) are fully up to date. This will be the effective “October Half-Term Ad-hoc Submissions Deadline” within the scope of this trial. All ad-hoc submissions received by this date will receive equal priority on the waitlist.

Between **Monday 4th to Friday 8th August 2025**, ACL will perform the initial allocation of the W25 October Half-Term ad-hoc waitlists at BHX, LGW, MAN and STN airports with results sent to carriers via SCR message during this period.

From **Monday 11th August 2025**, Airlines will be able to continue requesting schedule adjustments to ad-hoc slots within the October Half-Term period which ACL will coordinate subject to availability. All other ad-hoc requests for the W25 season between 03NOV-28MAR will be managed after the 31st August HBD in the normal manner.

By **Sunday 31st August 2025**, Airlines will make their final pre-HBD handbacks.

On **Monday 1st September 2025**, ACL will create the W25 Historic Baseline schedules.

On **Tuesday 2nd September 2025**, ACL will create the W25 Results Tables.

From **Wednesday 3rd September 2025**, normal process resumes. ACL will manage all remaining ad-hoc waitlists for the W25 season and airlines will be free to make any planned ad-hoc changes to their historic series within the normal flexibility parameters provided by ACL (“within 60mins” or <=59mins).

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