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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin
Galway and Roscommon
Education and Training Board

Policy on Assessments in Early Learning and Care Programmes

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) policy with respect to assessments undertaken by learners engaged in the Level 5 Certificate in Early Learning and Care, and the Advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care (Level 6).

2. Scope

This policy applies in the context of the delivery of the Level 5 Certificate in Early Learning and Care, and the Advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care (Level 6) Programmes in GRETB.

3. Definitions

Assessment deadlines: Assessment deadlines are dates that are planned in advance of assessment and adhere to the assessment plan for the programme or module. Learners must be made aware of assessment deadlines including submission dates for assessment evidence and dates of practical assessments.

Centre-based assessment: The following assessment techniques lead to centre-based assessment: continuous assessment, examination, project, skills demonstration.

Draft: An early version of assessment work that may be shown to assessor as part of formative assessment.

Feedback: Feedback is information provided to learners for formative and summative assessment purposes.

Formative assessment: Formative assessment provides feedback on a learner's work and informs a learner how to improve their learning and is generally carried out prior to formal submission of assessment work. The emphasis in formative assessment is on encouraging more understanding by learners of their respective strengths, weaknesses and gaps in knowledge.

Repeat assessment: Refers to the opportunity to carry out an equivalent examination or skills demonstration after a previous unsuccessful (summative) assessment result.

Submission: Any work submitted by the learner on or before a set assessment deadline for the purpose of summative assessment.

Summative assessment: The assessment of work that is formally submitted and assessed for achievement of specified learning outcomes.

Work-based assessment: Learners are assessed on professional competencies demonstrated while on professional practice placement.

3.1 Acronyms Utilised in this Policy

EA: External Authentication

ELC: Early Learning and Care

GRETB: Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board

IV: Internal Verification

NFQ: National Framework of Qualifications

PATD: Professional Award Type Descriptors

QQI: Quality and Qualifications Ireland

RAP: Results Approval Panel

4. Policy Statement

The Level 5 Certificate in Early Learning and Care, and the Advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care programmes have identified Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) for the whole programme which are consistent with the standards in the Professional Award Type Descriptors at NFQ Levels 5 -8: Annotated for QQI Early Learning and Care (ELC) Awards (PATD for ELC) published by QQI in 2019. The MIPLOs have been mapped multiple times across the various assessment tasks of the programme. Learners who successfully achieve all MIPLOs associated with each stage, will thus have achieved standards consistent with those standards in the corresponding stage in the PATD for ELC, as is required by QQI's *Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training*. They will thus have successfully completed the programme and may request certification.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Each Further Education and Training (FET) Centre/Programme manager ensures that all potential and enrolled learners are informed about assessments.

5.1 Implementation Mechanisms

Any changes in legislative requirements or changes in course content or the development of new courses or changes to existing course design will be reflected on GRETB's website and literature. The language used, and methods used in communicating information, will be in keeping with stakeholder requirements.

6. Assessments in Early Learning and Care

- All learners are expected to achieve all Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) in order to successfully complete the Certificate in Early Learning and Care (Level 5), and the Advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care (Level 6) programmes (known henceforth as ELC programmes).
- To ensure that all MIPLOs have been successfully achieved in the ELC programmes, learners must complete each assessment task that they undertake as part of their studies.
- Learners must achieve a cumulative minimum score of 50% in a given programme module in order to be deemed successful for the whole module.
- All unsuccessful learners must be given an opportunity to repeat the assessments tasks in which they were unsuccessful, based on the criteria listed below.
- All assessments will be authenticated in line with the ETB's Internal Verification (IV) policies and procedures, External Authentication (EA) policies and procedures, and approved by the relevant Results Approval Panel (RAP).
- A provider must be satisfied that a learner has met all of the MIPLOs before requesting certification for them. This should be confirmed at the Results Approval Panel meeting.

7. Assessment and Professional Practice Placement

- All learners will be expected to undertake a number of work-based assessments, assessing their demonstration of professional competencies while on their professional practice placements. These are outlined in the relevant programme module descriptors and the Professional Practice Placement Handbook.

- The work-based assessment will be assessed by the professional practice placement supervisor and monitor as 'Competent' or 'Not yet competent'. Where the learner is deemed 'Competent', they receive the full allocated marks (40%). Where the learner is deemed 'Not yet competent', they receive no marks (0%). For full details on work-based assessments, and the procedures for marking those assessments, please see the Professional Practice Placement Handbook.
- **Note:** Learners who have **not** completed the required 150 hours' professional practice placement per stage will not have fulfilled the special validation conditions of the PATD and thus cannot be submitted for certification. In this case, the assessor must complete the Amended Grade Form in order to bring the cumulative mark for the module to 49%.

8. Criteria for repeating assessments in the ELC programmes

In order to be successful in a module:

- The cumulative total mark achieved from **all** assessment tasks per module must be a minimum of 50% for learners to be successful in the module.
- Where a learner has achieved a minimum of 50% in a module but has not achieved 50% (pass mark) in any individual assessment task, they must demonstrate achievement of the MIPLOs principally associated with this module.
- The assessor will confirm the achievement of the MIPLOs principally associated with the assessment tasks of the module. See the confirmation form at the back of the module descriptors.
- In the case where learners have not passed a module as above, learners must be given the opportunity to repeat or resubmit any centre-based assessment task in which they were unsuccessful, in any of the programme modules in which they have engaged. See appendix 1 for a guideline to repeat/resubmission scenarios.
- Learners will be given the opportunity to repeat an assessment task twice (i.e., three assessment opportunities in total)
- Where possible, the repeat assessment opportunity should be made available as soon as possible to the learner.
- Where the learner has been unsuccessful in an assessment task towards the end of the course, and there is not time for a repeat assessment task to be undertaken, then the learner must be given the opportunity to repeat the task at the next reasonable assessment opportunity as per individual centre/college policy.
- Where a learner has been unsuccessful in an assessment task or tasks at stage 1/level 5 of the programme and is hoping to progress into stage 2/level 6 of the programme, then they must be given the opportunity to repeat that/those tasks before the start of stage 2.

NOTE: A learner cannot successfully complete stage 2/level 6 of the programme until they have successfully achieved all MIPLOs associated with stage 1/level 5. That means in effect, that they must have achieved at least a cumulative grade of at least 50% for each module and thus passed all programme modules at stage 1/level 5 in order to engage with, and successfully complete stage 2/level 6 of the ELC programme. A provider must be satisfied that a learner has met all of the MIPLOs either before requesting certification for them at level 5 or allowing them to progress to stage 2 of the programme. A table is included at the end of each module to allow easy identification of the MIPLOs which have been met in the module, to facilitate a provider assuring themselves that the MIPLOs have been met.

- Where the learner has repeated an assessment, their marks will not be capped.
- Learners who do not avail of an opportunity to repeat or resubmit an assessment afforded to them within the specified timeframe, will forego the assessment opportunity and the original grade awarded will stand and be entered as unsuccessful 'U' or 'R' on the QQI certification system.
- Learners are NOT permitted to resit an assessment task or module when they have already passed, in order to improve their grade.
- The **work-based assessment** (40%) is carried out while the learner is on professional practice placement. The learner must be deemed 'competent' in all of the competencies at least once across the two settings to pass the assessment. In this sense, the learner has two assessment opportunities. There are no additional repeat opportunities for the work-based assessment.

9. Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the FET Support and Development Unit in conjunction with FET Centre/Programme Managers.

10. Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1 Repeat Assessment Scenarios Early Learning and Care

The following scenarios are a guide to the grounds for repeat assessment at module level:

Scenario	Repeat/No Repeat
Learner <u>passes</u> all assessments in a module, and therefore demonstrates achievement of all MIPLOs principally associated with that module.	No repeat necessary
Learner achieves a cumulative 50% in a module but is unsuccessful in one or more assessments. However, taking into account all of the assessments submitted for that module, the learner demonstrates achievement of the MIPLOs principally associated with that module.	No repeat necessary
Learner achieves a cumulative 50% in a module but is unsuccessful in one or more assessments. However, taking into account all of the assessments submitted for that module, the learner has not demonstrated achievement of all of the MIPLO(s) principally associated with that module.	Repeat or resubmission to be offered of the relevant assessment/s up to 2 times in order for the learner to demonstrate achievement of the MIPLO(s) principally associated with that module.
Learner achieves less than 50% cumulatively in a module.	Repeat or resubmission to be offered of the relevant assessment/s up to 2 times in order for the learner to demonstrate achievement of the MIPLO(s) principally associated with that module.
The learner does not submit one or more assessments.	No option to repeat. Non-submission is subject to the ETB's policies on compassionate consideration and extended deadline/extenuating circumstances.

10.2 Appendix 2 Sample repeat assessment timeframes for Early Learning and Care

Level 5 Certificate in Early Learning and Care

Advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care

Repeats and resubmissions should be facilitated as soon as is feasible in order not to impede progression to employment, or to stage 2 of the Advanced Certificate or elsewhere in further or higher education.

A resubmission and repeat assessment schedule should consider that many assessments are linked with the professional practice placement. It should also take account of full-time or part-time provision. The following are examples.

Assignment, Portfolio, Project, Reflective Journal, Skills Demo assessments:

- 2 repeat assessments are completed during the course, for example during the academic year, where possible.
- A minimum of 1 repeat (first repeat attempt) should be offered before the end of May within the current academic year.
- If a second repeat (final repeat attempt) is required and this cannot be accommodated within the current academic year, it should be scheduled within the first two weeks of the following September.

Exam assessments:

Repeats of the examination (of which there is only one, in Level 5 Certificate programme, or stage 1 of the Advanced Certificate), could be scheduled as follows for example:

- (a) The first repeat exam and second repeat exam are both scheduled to take place before the end of May within the current academic year.
- (b) The second repeat exam could be scheduled to take place within the first two weeks of the following September.
- (c) The first repeat exam is scheduled for the end of the following August. The second repeat exam is scheduled before the end of the second week of September.

Repeat assessment windows could be considered as follows:

- Learners who were unsuccessful in an assessment task could be given a window of a set number of days, **for example, seven days**, from notification of the unsuccessful grade to resubmit their assessment task in the first instance.
- Learners who are unsuccessful in the repeat assessment task could be given, **for example, three days**, from receiving notification of the unsuccessful grade to resubmit their assessment task for the second time.