



# gretb

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

## ***GRETB FET Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy***

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## 1. Introduction

The Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB) Further Education and Training (FET) Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy (hereafter referred to as the 'policy') outlines the quality assurance standards required within GRETB to ensure high quality teaching, learning and assessment, to optimise the educational experiences of our diverse learner population. This policy outlines the responsibilities of practitioners and learners in terms of teaching, learning and assessment in GRETB. This policy is aligned with GRETB's core values: Accountability, Innovation, Collaboration, Inclusivity, and Leadership. Additionally, the policy is aligned with GRETB's strategic objectives (GRETB Strategy Statement, 2022):

1. To value, develop, and support our learners and staff.
2. To provide high quality, responsive, and inclusive education, and training programmes
3. To lead in organisation development and corporate governance
4. To raise the profile of GRETB and enhance our provision, in partnership with key stakeholders.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that teaching, learning, and assessment is quality assured and as such is planned, delivered, and evaluated ensuring continuous improvement. This is done through setting out expectations for practitioners and learners and ensuring that teaching, learning, and assessment meets the needs of all learners and awarding bodies (where applicable). This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- GRETB Quality Assurance (QA) Policies (available at <https://gretb.sharepoint.com/sites/QA>)

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Learners enrolled on and attending FET programmes within GRETB.
- Practitioners within GRETB FET

The scope includes the planning for, along with the delivery and evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment, ensuring quality assured practices across GRETB FET for all learners and practitioners. It also sets out roles and responsibilities of both practitioners and learners.

The SOLAS Craft Apprenticeship teaching, learning and assessment rules underpin the apprenticeship assessments, re-checks, reviews, re-sits, referrals, repeats and appeals for all craft apprenticeship assessments leading to the request of an award from recognised bodies whose awards are within or aligned with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). This will ensure compliance with the requirements of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 and the Education & Training Act 2012. Responsibility for maintaining Craft Apprenticeship assessment rules remain with SOLAS. To view the SOLAS Craft Apprenticeship Assessment Rules policy please contact [apprenticeship@gretb.ie](mailto:apprenticeship@gretb.ie). Post 2016 Apprenticeships must adhere to the National Quality Assurance Procedures as outlined in the ETBI (Education and Training Boards Ireland) QAP (Quality Assurance Procedures) Handbook and all relevant GRETB QA procedures.

## 4. Acronyms

<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>ETBI</b>	Education and Training Boards Ireland
<b>FESS</b>	Further Education Support Service
<b>GRETB</b>	Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>LENS</b>	Learning Educational Needs Summary
<b>NFQ</b>	National Framework of Qualifications

<b>PD</b>	Professional Development
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>QAP</b>	Quality Assurance Procedures
<b>QQI</b>	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
<b>RPL</b>	Recognition of Prior Learning
<b>SOLAS</b>	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
<b>TEL</b>	Technology Enhanced Learning
<b>UDL</b>	Universal Design for Learning

## 5. Definitions

<b>Assessment (Formative)</b>	Formative assessment is a ‘process’ rather than an event, a strategy that is built into teaching. Effective formative assessment in the classroom will encourage learners to engage in the assessment of their own learning. In terms of assessment, practitioners will be aware and assess the learners’ understanding of course material as they are learning.
<b>Assessment (Summative)</b>	Summative assessment occurs to assess knowledge, skills, and competencies to meet awarding body standards. Specific assessment policies are available at GRETB Connect. Summative assessment is also a tool used by practitioners and learners to support teaching and learning.  Summative Assessment is the process by which learner achievement is judged in line with the national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award as outlined in the Award Specification.
<b>Blended</b>	Blended learning is where learners’ complete coursework by participating in both in-class and carefully designed asynchronous online components.
<b>Feedback</b>	Feedback in terms of this policy refers to feedback to learners in relation to their progress. Feedback is a two-way process between the practitioner and learner to - identify what still needs to be learned for a learner, if required. It is an also opportunity for the learner to respond to the comments of feedback and the practitioner to establish where a learner is at in their learning.
<b>Hybrid</b>	Hybrid learning is when a practitioner teaches both in-person (in a centre classroom) and remote learners together synchronously (face to face and online), in real time.
<b>In person</b>	In person learning is where all delivery hours occur synchronously, face to face in a GRETB centre location.
<b>Learner</b>	Includes all FET learners: - Part-time/full-time learners - In person/online/blended/hybrid - Accredited learners (Levels 1 – 6) - Non-accredited learners
<b>Learning</b>	Learning in the context of this policy is the outcome of teaching, for both learners and practitioners. Learning occurs when there is a change in knowledge, attitude or behaviour and learners see concepts, ideas, and/or the world around them differently. Learning methods include, but are not limited to: teaching, peer and self-directed learning, assessment of/for learning, etc.

<b>Learning Environment</b>	The Learning Environment (online/in person) refers to the location, space and facilities required to deliver specific programmes and the ongoing evaluation and enhancement to same.
<b>Methodologies</b>	Methodologies refers to any teaching and learning methodologies used in classes examples include, but are not limited to: practical, theory, skills demonstration, project work, group work, research, formative/summative assessment, flipped classroom, self-directed learning, etc.
<b>Online</b>	Online learning is where learners complete a course by visiting the institutional Learning Management System (e.g., Moodle). Learning materials are presented fully digitised in various formats to be accessed flexibly by learners.
<b>Practitioner</b>	Includes: -FET Practitioners/FET Educators (Adult Educator, Teacher, Instructor, Tutors, Resource Persons, Contractors, etc. (this list is not exhaustive)) -Other practitioners who may be indirectly linked to Teaching and Learning (Senior Management Team, QA Team, etc. (this list is not exhaustive))
<b>Resources</b>	Resources refers to any materials/artefacts/etc., sourced or generated by the practitioner, for the purpose of teaching and learning. Practitioners will have access to essential and up-to-date resources required to delivery specific programmes, including Technology Enhanced Learning tools and resources.
<b>Synchronous &amp; Asynchronous Learning</b>	<b>Synchronous Learning:</b> A type of learning that takes place in real-time, with all participants present and engaged at the same time. This can include in person learning, live online classes, webinars, and virtual meetings.  <b>Asynchronous Learning:</b> A type of learning where participants work through predefined activities/tasks at their own pace in a flexible manner. Asynchronous learning activities are designed as part of an overall course/module flow and are completed to specific deadlines. It is up to the learner to schedule activity completion up to the specified deadline.
<b>UDL</b>	UDL is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL aims to improve the educational experience of all students by introducing more flexible methods of teaching, assessment, and service provision to cater for the diversity of learners in our classrooms (AHEAD <i>Universal Design for Learning</i> , AHEAD. Available at: <a href="https://www.ahead.ie/udl">https://www.ahead.ie/udl</a> ).

## 6. Policy Statement

GRETB is committed “to lead(ing) in the provision of high quality, innovative, inclusive, and responsive education, and training programmes for the people in Galway and Roscommon” as envisaged in the GRETB Strategy Statement (GRETB, 2022, p.5). This policy statement includes the following:

- Professionalism
- Planning, preparation and delivery
- Assessment and feedback
- Review and evaluation

### 6.1 Professionalism

The role of the practitioner is to educate through respect, care, integrity, and trust. It is expected that practitioners:

- Demonstrate professional values and relationships through professional conduct.
- Ensure professional practice through collegiality, collaboration, and professional learning and development.

- Adhere to GRETB Policies on [staff portal](#)

## **6.2 Planning, Preparation and Delivery**

Planning, preparation, and delivery should guarantee a constructive alignment between teaching, learning and assessment to ensure quality standards are achieved and maintained through the following:

### **6.2.1 Learning Environment**

It is the responsibility of GRETB, to provide:

- A safe learning environment in line with [GRETB Health and Safety Policy](#)
- An inclusive learning environment through equality and active inclusion and ensuring buildings are accessible to all based on resources.
- A learning environment with essential and up-to-date resources required to deliver specific programmes.
- A learning environment conducive to learning, through induction, group contracts, setting expectations, challenging tasks which are appropriate to the relevant learning outcomes, timekeeping, etc.
- Access to services for learners (Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), Guidance, Supports, etc.)
- Clear communication to learners and opportunities to discuss any issues with relevant staff members.
- Feedback to learners (verbal/written).

It is the responsibility of the learner:

- To ensure that their own health and safety and that of others adhere to Centre policies and procedures.
- That their conduct adheres to centre/college policies so that teaching and learning can take place effectively.

### **6.2.2 Resources**

GRETB must provide access to essential resources to enable effective teaching and learning to take place and achieve learning outcomes. These resources include (but are not limited to):

- Classrooms capable of taking the number of students required, well-ventilated/heated and have suitable furniture to allow teaching and learning as well as having access for those with disabilities. Classrooms are outfitted with IT (information technology) equipment, whiteboards etc as required.
- Supply of teaching and learning materials to support the curriculum/syllabus/programme.
- Availability of specialised equipment for individual courses and training programmes provided.
- IT assistance and backup including GRETB Microsoft account; Learning management system (e.g., Moodle) if required.

### **6.2.3 Methodologies**

Teaching and learning methodologies refer to a set of practices and principles used by a practitioner to help learners achieve learning outcomes. They promote instructional strategies and classroom techniques that improve learner performance and learning. Direct instruction, flipped classroom, project-based learning, cooperative learning, problem solving, and graphic organisers are examples of some of the types of teaching and learning methodologies. Practitioners should identify which teaching method will properly support a learning outcome. Practitioners should consider the allowed time, learners' needs, educational background, and experience. Additionally, consideration must be given to any online/hybrid delivery methodologies including synchronous and asynchronous delivery.

It is important to make assessment for learning/formative assessment, an essential component of teaching and learning methodologies. Through assessment, practitioners can determine if a specific series of activities has achieved the desired learning outcome. Therefore, efforts should be made to integrate assessment for learning seamlessly into the teaching and learning process.

FET resources are available at:

- [GRETB Connect – QA](#)
- [Further Education Support Service \(FESS\)](#)

This list is not exhaustive.

#### **6.2.4 Learner supports**

GRETB are committed to the provision of inclusive learning practices which supports and acknowledges the diversity of the learner population. GRETB’s goal is to ensure that, as far as is reasonably possible, all learners are provided with the supports required to allow them to fully participate and benefit from the educational opportunities available while participating in a FET course offered by GRETB. The types of supports put in place by GRETB FET for learners include the following non-exhaustive list of strategies:

- Learning supports or reasonable examination accommodations due to a diagnosed disability, an on-going physical or mental health condition, or a learning difficulty.
- Access to laptops or assistive technology to assist participation through course.
- Supports are provided for reading, writing, maths, study skills, computer skills or in improving English language skills.
- Access career or educational advice and information.
- Access to the learner counselling service.

A learner requiring supports can register with the Learner Support Service who will then direct the learner to the appropriate department. For individual learning supports an assessment of need will be conducted in partnership with the learner and a Learning Educational Needs Summary (*LENS*).

#### **6.2.5 Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)**

GRETB promotes the use of technology in the classroom for innovative and enhanced teaching, learning and assessment experiences. Practitioners are committed to the use of TEL as a teaching and learning tool and are committed to leveraging technology to enhance the learning experience of learners. GRETB policy on TEL is guided by the following principles:

- **Accessibility:** committed to providing equal access to TEL opportunities for all learners, regardless of their background or ability.
- **Innovation:** continue to explore and adopt innovative technologies that have the potential to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of teaching and learning.
- **Quality:** provide TEL initiatives that are of the highest quality and are aligned to both academic standards and learning outcomes.
- **Professional Development:** provide ongoing access to professional development opportunities for practitioners to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices.
- **Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:** regularly evaluate the effectiveness of TEL initiatives towards improved learner outcomes.
- **Data Privacy and Security:** recognize the importance of protecting the privacy and security of data in line with [GRETB General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\) Policy](#)

#### **6.2.6 Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

GRETB promotes the use of UDL within FET and is guided by the following principles:

- **Flexibility:** multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement to allow for flexibility in how students learn and demonstrate their understanding.
- **Accessibility:** learning materials and activities are accessible to learners, including those with disabilities or other learning challenges.
- **Equality:** strive to eliminate barriers to learning and provide equitable opportunities for learners to succeed.
- **Collaboration:** with learners, and stakeholders to ensure that their voices are heard, and needs are met.



- **Professional development:** provide access to ongoing professional development and support to practitioners to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to implement UDL effectively.
- **Evaluation and improvement:** continuously evaluate and improve UDL practices to ensure that they are effective in meeting the needs of all stakeholders.

### **6.3 Assessment and Feedback**

Assessment in terms of this policy should be a teaching practice to assist learners to move to the next step in their learning through formative and summative assessment methods.

Quality assured assessment ensures that, in criterion referenced assessment, 'learners are assessed, and the assessment judgement is made based on whether the learner has reached the required national standards of knowledge, skill and competence for the award' (QQI, 2013, p.5). Central to quality assured assessment is the assumption that learners are assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the award standard. Quality assured assessment is underpinned by the principles of assessment.

#### **Principles of assessment:**

- **Fair:** Fairness in assessment upholds the validity and reliability principles and gives each learner an equal chance to succeed.
- **Consistent:** Consistency in approach to assessment across programmes and modules.
- **Valid:** Assessment measures what it is required to measure, therefore ensuring the standard is achieved.
- **Reliable:** Accuracy and consistency with which an assessment measures the skill or attainment it is designed to measure. Assessment reliability ensures that outcomes are consistent under similar circumstances. When an assessment is based on legitimate assessment methods, it is reliable.
- **Transparent:** Assessment policy and procedures provide clarity to all relevant stakeholders.
- **Equitable:** Ensure that tasks and procedures do not disadvantage any group or individual while, as far as possible, not compromising award standards.

GRETB's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent manner in line with the standard for each award. GRETB assessment policies are available at [GRETB Connect QA](#).

Effective feedback should be:

- planned into teaching and learning methodologies.
- integrated into the programme timeframe allowed for subject delivery.
- constructive in nature, as such, feedback should not only state what is wrong but must also provide a strategy as to what has to be carried out next in order to achieve learning outcomes.

### **6.4 Review and Evaluation**

In terms of this policy, review and evaluation will take place on an ongoing basis and at the end of the programme. This is achieved through a variety of methods including a focus on student learning and reflective practice. Practitioners are expected to carry out regular and timely teaching and learning evaluations and reviews with learners to inform changes going forward. Review and evaluation should include, but is not limited to: planning, preparation, delivery, assessment, and feedback. Review and evaluation will take place both formally and informally.

Practitioners are expected to engage in reflection and self-evaluation to inform future practice.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

<b>CE/FET Director and FET Quality Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and management of planning, co-ordination, quality, development, and improvement of all aspects of GRETB's further education and training provision.</li> <li>• Provision of qualified practitioners.</li> <li>• Provision of adequate resources (learning environment, equipment, etc) for quality assured teaching, learning and assessment.</li> <li>• Opportunities for professional development.</li> <li>• Protection, maintenance, and development of the standards of education and training programmes and related activities.</li> </ul>
<b>QA Department</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversight of Teaching, Learning and Assessment policy for the maintenance of Quality and Assurance processes.</li> </ul>
<b>Centre Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication of expectations to learners.</li> <li>• Management, coordination, and support of practitioners to deliver a quality assured service within GRETB policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Provision of learning environment which is safe and fit for purpose (to include IT, access to specialised equipment depending on vocational/educational area etc.)</li> <li>• Provision of reasonable accommodation for learners.</li> <li>• Support of learners and aim to enhance the teaching and learning experience for all learners to reach their full potential.</li> <li>• Evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>Practitioners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication of expectations to learners.</li> <li>• Respect for learning environment, learners, GRETB staff and visitors/contractors.</li> <li>• Ensuring that delivery is planned (resources, methodologies, etc.) and delivered to cater for individual learning needs through differentiated learning.</li> <li>• Provision of fair and challenging programmes tasks.</li> <li>• Provision of clear, constructive, and timely feedback.</li> <li>• Consideration learner workload.</li> <li>• Encouragement of learner participation.</li> <li>• Identification and participation in professional development.</li> <li>• Collaboration with colleagues within Centre and GRETB.</li> <li>• Evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>Learners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for learning environment, other learners, GRETB staff and visitors/contractors.</li> <li>• Commit sufficient time to programme.</li> <li>• Attend the programme.</li> <li>• Participation in programme and check communication frequently.</li> <li>• Complete and submit work by stated deadlines.</li> <li>• Adhere to the policies and procedure of the Centre.</li> <li>• Provide feedback on teaching, learning and assessment.</li> </ul>

## 8. Policy Review

This policy statement will be reviewed two years following the publication of this policy, or earlier if necessary.

## 9. **Bibliography**

Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD) (2024) *Creating inclusive environments in education and employment for people with disabilities*. Available at: <https://www.ahead.ie/udl>.

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