GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

May 2020

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1 GBS's Quality Assurance Context

1.1 Introduction

Galway Business School has committed itself to embracing an inclusive Quality Assurance and Enhancement culture in order to improve and maintain the quality of education offered to learners. This Quality Assurance Handbook demonstrates the commitment and is the definitive information source for Galway Business School's:

- Academic and Quality policies
- Academic and Quality procedures
- Related forms, templates and documentation

The Quality policies, systems and procedures described herein are in place in Galway Business School and underpin all academic and support activities within the school. This Quality Assurance Handbook formalises those procedures and is a definitive reference for all Galway Business School staff. The Handbook also provides information for other stakeholders, both internal and external, including learners and employers and finally it provides evidence that Galway Business School satisfies the national and European standards required of a higher education provider.

1.2 Background

As an independent, third-level educational institution, providing full-time day and part-time evening programmes, Galway Business School aims to deliver its Quality Assurance policies and procedures in compliance with those required by external validating bodies.

Galway Business School was established in 1999 to provide business and related, full and part-time programmes to both local and international markets. Galway Cultural Institute (GCI), our sister school, was founded in 1989 by David Niland and Celestine Rowland. GCI was established to provide English Language training to non-native speakers. While both schools operate from the same premises and share operations, administrative, financial and marketing functions, the academic management is differentiated along clear lines. Each school is staffed by separate academic management and teaching staff.

1.3 Quality Assurance

The necessary QQI publications on Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures and Standards have acted as a framework for the establishment, development, and ongoing enhancement of Galway Business School's Quality Assurance policies and procedures. In particular, the following documentation has been used to guide the process of GBS's quality assurance development:

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (April 2016)
- Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis (April 2016)
- Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (2018)
- Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training (2017)
- QQI Award Standards – Business (July 2014)
- Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training (2015)
- Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners (2015)
- Assessment and Standards, Revised (2013)
- Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and Learning for Consultation (2018)
- Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining (Revised February 2015)
- Re-engagement with QQI Overarching Policy for All Providers (2014)
- Interim Procedures for the protection of Enrolled Learners – Notice for Providers (2013)

The Quality Assurance Handbook and related documents are reviewed regularly by Quality Assurance committee meetings which take place once per semester. Any changes are recorded and updates are circulated to management and faculty.

The Quality Assurance Handbook is reviewed in its entirety once per year. This ensures quality management processes at Galway Business School are up to date and fit for purpose. In addition, it's monitoring and governance is strictly observed to ensure it follows the GSB Strategic Plan (2018-2022) and School policy at all times.

This updated Handbook details systematic quality assurance procedures for a range of data collection and analysis, identifies the appropriate forum for monitoring the data and requires both a

recording of actions to be taken and a review of the effectiveness of these actions. Galway Business School is currently in receipt of accreditation from the following bodies:

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

1.4 Mission

Building on its previous Strategic Plan (2015 – 2020) GBS' strategy has developed and continues to develop in response to the changing needs of society and the economy. This document provides a renewed roadmap for realising this.

- Create a learning organisation that allows learners to succeed both as learners and as citizens
- Provide a range of flexible programmes where learners can study at their own pace and satisfy their career and educational objectives
- Develop a portfolio of programmes to suit the employment and business requirements of local and international enterprise
- Place strong focus on developing learner's holistic skills to meet objectives of the Ireland's National Skills Strategy and community

Galway Business School's Governing Body guides the development and implementation of this vision of excellence in education. The mission of Galway Business School is to pursue this vision whilst inculcating an ethic of courtesy, integrity, perseverance and respect amongst its staff and student body. Its motto is 'Life-Changing Learning'.

Galway Business School offers opportunities to students who are seeking employment-focused qualifications at third-level through offering high quality programmes that are flexible and geared to meet the demands of modern work environments. Students will be exposed to the best in current management thought through the use of innovative and engaging pedagogic approaches designed to secure learning objectives and enhance employment opportunities. Our Unique Selling Points underpin this mission through being inclusive, international, entrepreneurial, engaging, responsive and flexible.

1.5 Brief overview of GBS Structure

Galway Business School governance structure is designed to ensure the protection of the integrity of the academic processes and standards within the college. It achieves this by ensuring that there is a clear separation of the academic decision making and the market led choices of the school, thus underpinning the quality assurance of the academic / programme provision within the school's offering. The system of governance and management provides the scope to achieve the objectives of the Quality Assurance and allows for the enhancement of policies, procedures and guidelines within GBS.

As a small school GBS takes a collegial approach to Quality Assurance and its continual enhancement by including all its staff in the process to ensure that final decisions to quality assurance enhancement are embedded in the daily life of the school. This ensures that the interests of learners are clearly reflected in all policies and procedures and that standards are maintained organisation wide.

Galway Business School operates from an integrated campus with its sister institution, Galway Cultural Institute, a nationally and internationally accredited English language school. Galway Business School and Galway Cultural Institute are two separate legal entities and are separate companies limited by guarantee. Both companies share the same Directors, Mr David Niland and Ms Celestine Rowland. The two schools have separate governance structures and the structures of Galway Business School are detailed in Figure 1.5 below. Galway Cultural Institute has its own academic governance and quality assurance structures detailed in its Documented Curriculum Framework. Both schools are separately staffed and the Registrar is the academic principal (and monitors all academic processes) of Galway Business School. The Director of Studies is the academic principal (and monitors all academic processes) of Galway Cultural Institute.

The Managing Director is charged with the implementation of strategic and organisational goals for Galway Business School. The Managing Director holds overall responsibility for commercial, operational, management and academic support functions for both Galway Business School and Galway Cultural Institute.

The minimum requirements in terms of staff qualifications are different. Galway Business School's academic staffs are required to have a minimum of masters' degree level in order to teach on the degree programme. They must also, where possible, have teaching and industry experience. Galway Cultural Institute's teaching team is required to have a minimum of a level 7 degree plus an ACELS

recognised TEFL qualification or equivalent. They must also, where possible, have EFL teaching experience.

Both schools maintain separate accreditations and memberships of professional organisations. Galway Business School is accredited by QQI. Galway Cultural Institute is recognised by ACELS (a service of Quality and Quaifactions Ireland, for English language teaching) and is accredited by IALC (International Association of Language Centres), EAQUALS (Evaluation & Accreditation of Quality in Language Services) and is a member of Marketing English in Ireland and the Association of Language Travel Organisations (ALTO). Galway Cultural Institute can use the Education in Ireland brand.

Both schools share facilities and key service functions including administration, information technology, facilities management, finance, and marketing, under the direction of the Managing Director All of these functions report to the Managing Director and full details of functional responsibilities are detailed in Section 2 of the QA Handbook. There are no shared intellectual property rights and the legal and academic responsibilities of the parties in relation to those rights are clearly separate.

Figure 1.5: Organisational Chart:

Managing Director — CEO

GCI – Director of Studies — Marketing Director — Office Management — Financial Controller — GBS - Registrar

- GCI – Director of Studies
  - Assistant Director of Studies
    - EFL Teachers
      - GCI Learners
- Marketing Director
  - Sales/Marketing Manger
- Office Management
  - Accommodation Manager
    - Student Services
- Financial Controller
  - Accounts
- GBS - Registrar
  - Head of Teaching & Learning
  - GBS-Academic Coordinator
    - Academic Staff
      - GBS Learners
  - Programme Leaders

1.6 Current Higher Education Programmes

Galway Business School currently provides programmes on Levels 6, 7 and 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), and offers a range of courses in contemporary business subjects reflecting learner demand, academic research and international best practice. Its prospectus has developed over time to reflect the school's commitment to offering leading-edge courses. The programmes offered by Galway Business School are presented in Table 1.6 below.

Table 1.6 Current GBS programmes offering

Programme Title	NFQ Level	ECTS Credits	Awarding Body	First Approval	Mode of Delivery	Final Intake
Bachelor of Business	7	180	QQI	2014	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019
Bachelor of Business with International Business	8	60	QQI	2017	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2021
Higher Certificate in Business Studies	6	120	QQI	2016	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019
Certificate in Business & Entrepreneurship	6	20	QQI	2016	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019
Certificate in Business & Entrepreneurship	6	20	QQI	2016	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019
Certificate in Sales & Marketing	6	30	QQI	2016	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019
Certificate in Marketing Management	6	30	QQI	2016	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019
Certificate in Strategic Management	7	10	QQI	2016	Full-time Part-time	Revalidation 2019

Non Accredited Programme

Certificate in Data Analysis	n/a	Certificate of Attendance	n/a	n/a	Full-time Part-time	n/a
University Foundation Programme	n/a	Certificate of Attendance	n/a	n/a	Full-time	n/a
Pre-Masters Programme	n/a	Certificate of Attendance	n/a	n/a	Full-time	n/a

2 Governance & Management of Quality Policy

2.1 Purpose

This policy refers to the governance and committee structure of Galway Business School. Details are also provided of individual roles and responsibilities and of functional responsibilities.

Document Name: Governance & Management of Quality Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

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Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Amendment to Policy related to Risk Management Committee, its membership and responsibilities	July 2019	September 2019
V3.0	Amendment to Policy, Membership of Governing Body, Academic Council, Programme Board, and Board of Examiners reviewed. Management Committee incorporated including terms of reference, membership etc. Board of Directors role in appointing the Governing Body specified.	March 2020	March 2020
V4.0	Amendment to Figure 2.2 . Academic Council placed on same level as Governing Body	April 2020	April 2020

2.2 Boards and Committees

Galway Business School is supported by a number of Boards and Committees to ensure the academic integrity and independence of processes and to facilitate and augment the optimum student experience through formal engagement with and feedback from the student body, as outlined in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Boards and Committees Structure

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                          Board of Directors


              Governing Body    .    Academic Council


    Management          Risk Management
    Committee            Committee


  Examination    Programme      SSLC          Quality
    Board          Board      Committee      Assurance
                                             Committee
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2.2.1 Board of Directors

Role
The Board of Directors holds ultimate corporate and legal responsibility for the proper functioning of Galway Business School. There is a statutory duty on the Board of Directors (and each Director) of the company to ensure compliance with the Companies Act 2014. The Act also stipulates that there must be a minimum of two Directors of the company and each Director must comply with certain conditions under the Act before appointment.

Terms of Reference
- There is an express statutory duty on the Board of Directors (and on each Director) of the company to ensure that the requirements of the Companies Act 2014 are complied with.   - The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility for the governance of Galway Business School.   - To ensure best practice the Board of Directors has delegated authority to the Governing Body to ensure compliance with best practice in Higher Education.   - To develop and oversee the implementation of the strategic direction of the school.

Fiduciary Responsibilities
The principal fiduciary responsibilities of a director are set out in Part 5 of the Companies Act 2014.

Duties and Responsibilities
- To comply with their fiduciary duties as set out in the Companies Act of 2014   - To ensure that there are vigorous and competent governance structures to ensure academic capacity and financial viability of the College.   - To ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory and ¨best practice¨ in Higher Education.   - To ensure that appropriate measures are in place to be fully compliant with the requirements of legislation and policies in relation to protection of enrolled learners.   - To ensure that financial accounts are prepared and submitted to the Companies Office on an annual basis, and comply with all CRO, revenue and financial regulation.   - Approval of financial budgets.   - To ensure mechanisms are in place with regard to appropriate resourcing, including human resources.

Membership
The two company Directors are Mr. David Niland (CEO) and Ms. Celestine Rowland (Managing Director).

Powers of Decision Making
While the Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for certain function to the Governing

Body and to the Academic Council, the ultimate responsibility for decision making lies with the Board of Directors.

Meeting Frequency
Twice per year December & July (Minimum)

2.2.2 Governing Body

Role
The Governing Body guides the development and implementation of our vision of excellence in education. It is tasked with creating a learning organisation where students can succeed academically and as citizens. It oversees and fosters a culture of independence whereby individual potential is realised and achieved and reflects the diversity and needs of the stakeholders.

Terms of Reference
- To provide academic and corporate guardianship and ensure best practice   - To develop and oversee the implementation of the strategic direction of the school   - To identify current and future trends in the education sector, and highlight current and future developments within industry which may impact on learners   - To highlight potential growth areas and areas of future opportunity for stakeholders   - To protect the efficiency and integrity of the school through ensuring optimal student educational offering   - To monitor action plans and ensure resources are available for delivery of quality programmes to stakeholders

Duties and Responsibilities
- Decide the overall strategic direction of GBS   - The Governing Body is accountable for compliance with all staturory legislation   - It Is responsible for the financial management and budgetry control of the organisation   - Ensure that the organisation has the capabilities and resouces to carry out its functions effectively   - Receives annual reports from the Academic Council and approves recommendations that are in line with current and future strategy   - Approves new programmes and programme changes   - Reviews and approves changes to quality policies and procedures   - Reviews the Risk Register and ensure effective risk prevention   - Approves the appointment of all staff   - It reviews and suggests policy formulation   - Reviews national /international trends in the Higher Education sector and advise the Academic Council and Programme Development Board accordingly   - Monitors ongoing developments in industry, society and employment both locally, nationally and internationally and advises the Directors on emerging trends

Membership
• CEO, Managing Director, One External Industry Advisor (Chair) One External Academic Advisor, Registrar, Public Interest Advisor
Procedure
• The quorum is formed if there is 50% of the membership of the Governing Body present and this quorum must contain either the Managing Director or CEO of GBS and one other external member.
• Additional members may be seconded onto the Governing Body to compliment or add expertise to its function and this will be determined by majority vote.
Meeting Frequency
Twice per year December & July (Minimum)

Figure 2.2.1: GBS Governance Review Cycle

- To the Organisation
- To Stakeholders
- To Regulators and Legislators

- Creating Vision and Values
- Developing Organsational Culture
- Strategic Planing

Accountablity

Governing Change

Governing Management

Strategic Direction

- Overseeing Management Performance
- Reviewing and Assessing Organisational Capability

- Setting Corporate Direction
- Positioning the Organisaiton
- Risk Assessment

2.2.3 Management Committee

Role
The Management Committee supports the Governing Body in the strategic and operational management of the school.

Terms of Reference
- Contribute to strategic planning and development activities.   - Monitor resource allocation and utilisation.   - Support and ensure appropriate resources are available to enable the Academic Council to engage in both programme monitoring and review and programme development.

Duties and Responsibilities
- Provide support for the Governing Body in its development of the multi-annual Strategic Plan and make recommendations to the Governing Body   - Oversee the implementation and review the effectiveness of the approved Strategic Plans and report to the Governing Body on their progress   - Ensure operational management of the school is effective and efficient.   - Ensure that the Academic Council is appropriately supported in its proper functioning.   - Report to Governing Body on the utilisation of resources and make recommendations regarding future resource needed.   - Manage resources including human and financial resources within the school   - Ensure the availability and quality of Physical and other Infrastructure supports necessary for the proper functioning of the school.   - Manage marketing and PR initiatives

Membership
- CEO, Managing Director, Registrar, Financial Manager, HR Manager, Information System Manager, Office Manager, Marketing Manager (Chair).   - Quorum for the meeting requires 50% of its membership in attendance plus one additional member.

Procedure
- The Chair of the Management Committee convenes meetings with adequate notice.   - At the start of the meeting, the chair outlines the procedures of the meeting.   - Minutes of the meeting are available to appropriate internal committee or Governing Body.

Meeting Frequency

The Management Committee meets every two weeks which provide opportunities for operational monitoring and review and enable effective communication within the members of senior management in the school.

2.2.4 Academic Council

Role
The Academic Council is the ultimate authority for academic standards and rigour within the school. It oversees the protection, maintenance and development of the academic standards within the school, working closely with the Governing Body to ensure that the programmes and offerings are in line with the strategic direction of the school.
Terms of Reference
- To protect the academic rigour and standards of the school.   - To make recommendations on the selection, admission and retention of students.   - To investigate and approve new programme proposals.   - To approve any fundamental changes to existing programmes.   - To monitor and review matrices of the deliverables, including awards, results, progress, attrition, recruitment and student body profile, and report to the Governing Body.   - To appoint External Examiners.   - To approve the Broadsheet of Examinations received from the Examination Board/Board of Examiners at its statutory meeting.   - To ensure the congruence of the academic policies with the strategic plan as outlined by the Governing Body.   - To manage its sub-groups, namely the Quality Assurance Committee, the Programme Board, the Examinations Board and the Staff Student Liaison Committee.   - To ensure that programme deliverables are benchmarked against national and international standards and that these are recorded and reported to the Governing Body.
Duties and Responsibilities
- Monitors the performance and reviews and the reports of its constituent committees: the Quality Assurance Committee, the Programme Board, the Examinations Board, and the Staff Student Liaison Committee   - Ensures the systems for delivery and the academic standards are robust   - Confirms that the academic programmes are in keeping with the overall strategic direction of the school as outlined by the Governing Body   - Recommends policies and procedures regarding the selection, admission and retention of students   - Ensures that student and lecturer feedback has been conducted and reviewed at programme level

- Approves the Broadsheet of Examinations as received from the Examinations Board

- Reviews the progress of programmes as outlined by the Programme Board

- Reviews the academic progress at an overall programme level and if necessary at modular level as communicated by the Programme Board

- Decides on recommendations for changes to existing programmes as suggested by the Programme Board

- Reviews, amends and approves all new programmes as suggested by the Programme Development Team

- Ensures that Quality Assurance and Enhancement is a continuous and ongoing process undertaken by all personnel within the school.

- Approves improvements and changes to the quality system as recommended by the Quality Assurance Committee.

- Benchmarks the academic output against national and international standards, results, awards, and attrition and progression rates.

- Ensures that the required resources are in place to protect academic standards and the delivery of programmes.

- Reviews the recommendations for the appointment of External Examiners.

Membership
- External Academic Advisor (Chair), Head of Teaching and Learning (Secretary), Registrar, Programme Leaders, Academic Coordinator, one Learner Representative
Procedure
- Agenda items that will be considered will include: Reports from Individual Committees, External Accreditations Reports, Quality Assurance, Staff Training & Development, Approval of Examination Results, Student Progress, Student & Lecturer Feedback, Marketing & Student Recruitment, Implications on the Quality Assurance Procedures in GBS, Risks to be considered for GBS's Risk Register - At the end of the meeting, minutes are circulated to attendees and to the Governing Body members
Meeting Frequency
Twice per year December & July (Minimum)

2.2.5 Quality Assurance Committee

Role
The Quality Assurance Committee (QA) ensures that an ethos of excellence permeates all academic and academic support functions. This committee evaluates reviews and revises Quality Assurance procedures within Galway Business School. It has specific responsibilities for maintaining academic and cohesive administrative standards. Ultimately, the QA Committee has two main functions; oversight of the institutional philosophy of quality delivery, and systematic implementation of quality assurance procedures. The QA Committee reports to the Academic Council who in turn report to Governing Body.

Terms of Reference
- To ensure Galway Business School's programmes are delivered in accordance with robust Quality Assurance procedures   - To provide that systems are in place to facilitate a comprehensive, rewarding and engaging education for learners   - To ensure all departments engage in on-going self-evaluation, and comply with external validation processes   - To monitor and review all processes designed to improve academic standards   - To engage all personnel, particularly academic staff, in the delivery of the agreed quality standards   - To ensure that QA standards reflect best practice in relation to other national and international institutions

Duties and Responsibilities
- Develop and review the Quality Assurance Handbook   - Communicate roles and responsibilities of all staff concerning the implementation of quality processes   - Engineer a system of open communication in all academic and academic support services   - Ensure ongoing quality processes are incorporated into the academic programmes   - Ensure that standards are reviewed and benchmarked against national and international education providers   - Monitor academic staff training and development   - Ensure that all committees are aware of the Quality Assurance standards and adhere to Quality Assurance procedures in the design and delivery of academic assessment

• Establish feedback systems for all stakeholders concerning Quality Assurance implementation
• Notify management of non-compliance with Quality Assurance policies to initiate corrective and preventative actions

Membership
• Registrar, Managing Director, Head of Teaching and Learning, Academic Coordinator, Programme Leader

Procedure
• The level of student services is reviewed through examination of feedback in the Annual Module reports. Attention is paid to any suggestions or complaints from students that have been documented through formal or informal meetings through Lecturers, the Registrar, Academic Coordinator or the Managing Director
• The Quality Assurance Committee will review the quality of the training and professional development activities undertaken in the previous year and suggest areas for improvement. It will also assure that quality systems that are in place and monitor access to training. This is done through committee meetings and Registrar and the Academic Coordinator who report on training and professional development activities.
• The committee reviews suitable improvements to processes and documents and proposes these to the Academic Council. Changes that are approved at Academic Council level form part of the report sent to the Governing Body
• The Quality Assurance Committee reviews the quality management systems and the Quality Assurance Handbook annually to ensure that policies and procedures are adequate and fit for purpose particularly with regard to on-going activities and new developments within Galway Business School
• The chair of the Quality Assurance committee is the Registrar. This position maintains meeting minutes and presents the Quality Assurance committee reports including recommendations for improvements to the Academic Council
• Recommendations for quality improvement or change in quality assurance policies or processes then form part of the QA Committee Reports.

Meeting Frequency
Twice per year November & June (Minimum)

2.2.6 Risk Management Committee

Role
The overall responsibility for identification and mitigation of risks within the school lies with the Risk Management Committee.
Terms of Reference
- To ensure Galway Business School recognises the potential risks that could endanger its operations or create opportunities for the schools' further development   - To review the Risk Register and decide on any necessary actions needed to mitigate potential risks   - To ensure all departments engage in on-going self-evaluation, and the document recognised risks in the Risk Register   - To monitor and review all processes designed to improve Risk Management within the school   - To engage all personnel, including academic staff, in effective communication of identified potential risks
Duties and Responsibilities
- Implementing GBS's Risk Management Policy   - Identifying and monitoring risks that could impact on the achievement of GBS's strategic objectives   - Review of the risk register on a bi-annual basis   - Ensuring compliance with relevant QQI policies and Codes of Conducts   - Ensuring the coordination and promotion of risk, including the identification, assessment and management of risks operate efficiently and effectively   - Ensuring that fundamental risks, which threaten the achievement of GBS's objectives, are identified, assessed and included in the school's Risk Register, which will be reviewed regularly   - Ensuring that each member of the committee is responsible for the risk management in their departments and keeping the Risk Management Committee updated   - Ensuring that there is appropriate communication with staff on risk, risk policy and controls   - Ensuring that effective systems are in place to identify new or emerging risks and seek external/ expert advise as necessary   - Ensuring that a risk management culture is encouraged throughout the school and ensuring that risk is embedded as part of the school's decision making and operation   - an, in conjunction with the Financial Controller, that risk is considered as part of the annual

planning and budgetary process

- Ensuring that reports are received on GBS insurance

- Ensuring that adequate training is in place to support staff in fulfilling the requirements of the GBS Risk Management Policy

- Ensuring that risk registers are received from each member of the Risk Management Committee and referring any risk that may require escalation to the Governing body for consideration

Membership
CEO (Chair), Financial Controller, Sales & Marketing Director, Registrar, Academic Coordinator, IT Security Provider, Head of Teaching & Learning

Procedure
- Agenda items that will be considered will include: Reports from individual heads of departments and Risk Register review
- At the end of the meeting, minutes are circulated to attendees and to the Governing Body

Meeting Frequency
Twice per year November and June

2.2.7 Programme Board

Role
The Academic Council appoints a Programme Board for each programme. The Programme Board is responsible for the on-going management and operational delivery of programmes within the school. The Programme Board ensures that programmes run successfully within the parameters set for each programme.

Terms of Reference
- To ensure effective delivery of programmes   - To amend programmes as necessary in response to the strategic direction of the Governing Body and/or Academic Council   - To ensure all programmes are coordinated and in compliance with internally and externally set standards and guidelines as directed by the Quality Assurance Committee and the Academic Council   - To ensure the implementation of QA Committee recommendations   - To ensure the academic delivery and resources are appropriate to the programme being taught   - To submit an annual report to the Academic Council.

Duties and Responsibilities
- Each Programme Board compiles an Annual Programme Monitoring Report   - The Annual Programme Monitoring Report includes an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data provided in Annual Module Reports   - Facilitate feedback across programmes at faculty meetings.   - Ensure the efficient and timely delivery of a coordinated schedule of tutorials, assessments, course work and examinations within each programme   - Track weekly learner attendance records at module and programme level and report any absences to Registrar   - Identify opportunities for programme development through stakeholder engagement reflecting the strategic direction of the Governing Body   - Communicate any potential learner issues to programme management   - Ascertain that continuous learner feedback is monitored, coordinated and communicated by each lecturer   - Communicate any potential operational or other issues to programme management   - Suggest and recommend on-going academic staff development opportunities in accordance with

Quality Assurance Committee guidelines
Membership
Programme Leader (Chair), Registrar, Academic Coordinator, Head of Teaching and Learning, Members of the Academic Team, Learner Representative
Procedure
- The Programme Board is chaired by the Programme Leader (PL). Typically the Programme Board is convened at the start and end of each semester to enable addressing of issues at the outset of programmes and modules and review at the end of the programmes   - The quorum required for the Programme Board is 50% to include the Programme Leader and the Registrar.   - Once the module has been delivered, a Module Report is written by each lecturer for each module delivered on a programme. This contains data on learners attendance, results, feedback and suggestions for a further improvements by the module lecturer   - From the Module Reports, peer reviews, and input at the Programme Board meetings, the Annual Programme Monitoring Report is produced at Programme board level by the Programme Leader   - Decisions are taken on foot of module and programme reports concerning schedule of assessments, tutorials, course work and examinations on the programmes. Actions agreed are assigned to members of the board and minutes recorded   - Any pertinent issues raised in the Annual Programme Monitoring Report are raised at Exam Board Level, Board of Examiners and with the external examining bodies and external examiners as appropriate   - The Programme Board minutes are circulated to members of the academic team and to the Academic Council and Quality Assurance Committee   The Programme Board Agenda includes as standard the following items: - *Assessments including conduct of examinations,* - *Student Progress,* - *Attendance & Classroom Management,* - *Quality Assurance,* - *Review of Module Reports, (learner attendance, results and feedback)* - *Implications on the Quality Assurance Procedures in GBS,* - *AOB*
Meeting Frequency
Three per year February, June & September (Minimum)

2.2.8 Examination Board & Boards of Examiner

Role
The Examinations Board is an internal committee which reports directly to the Academic Council. The Examinations Board is concerned with all aspects of examination and assessment regulation within the school. The Examinations Officer chairs the Examinations Board. The Examinations Officer has overall responsibility for overseeing the internal coordination, registration, compliance, setting and grading of all examinations and assessments within the school. The Board of Examiners is formed from the Examinations Board and External Examiners.

Terms of Reference
• To be responsible for all matters concerning the assessment and awarding of all degrees, certificates and diplomas   • To ensure that systems and mechanisms for the development and implementation of all examinations, assessments and awards within the institution comply with the Quality Assurance Handbook   • To maintain a strict code of fairness and equity in examination and assessment process, with due regard to the school's philosophy of openness and transparency   • To communicate the Broadsheet of Results to the Academic Council for approval   • To communicate awards being attained by learners to the Academic Council   • To ensure the rigour and comprehensiveness of all methods of assessment

Duties and Responsibilities
• Ensure the proper systems of internal and external assessments are being adhered to across the school   • Ensure that Programme Board lecturers are cognisant of the systems for testing learning outcomes   • Promote and develop fair and innovative assessment procedures within the school   • Ensure that all proposed assessment materials are developed in compliance with the guidelines as outlined in the Quality Assurance Handbook   • Remain informed of the appointment of internal and external examiners as directed by the Programme Board and the Academic Council   • Ensure that examinations are conducted in accordance with quality standards as set out in the programme assessment strategy

- Ensure that post-assessment feedback is communicated to learners within an appropriate timeframe

- Oversee grades, awards and other assessment materials have been completed to the standards as outlined in the Quality Assurance Handbook

- Approve recommendations for student referrals, deferrals etc.

- Monitor incidents of mitigating circumstances in tandem with the Registrar and/or Examinations Officer

- Issue results to the Academic Coordinator for dissemination to students and to external awarding bodies

- To ensure an independent and fair system of Examination Recheck, Review and Appeal as outlined in Procedures and Guidelines for the Assessment of Learners

- To appoint any committees necessary for certain academic investigations in compliance with the Procedure for the Assessment of Learners (e.g. Committees of Enquiry/ Disciplinary Committees, Appeals Board, etc.)

Examinations Board Membership

- Examinations Officer (Academic Coordinator) (Chair), Registrar, Programme Leaders, Head of Teaching and Learning, Internal Examiners

Board of Examiners Membership

- Examinations Officer (Academic Coordinator) (Chair), Registrar, Programme Leaders, Internal Examiners, External Examiners

Procedure

- The Examinations Board is chaired by the Examinations Officer

- The quorum required for a meeting is the Examinations Officer, the Registrar, the External Examiners, a Programme Leader and a minimum of two Internal Examiners.

*Agenda items: *Review Exam Board minutes, decision on mitigating circumstances, unfair practise, reports of committees of enquiry, requests for rechecks, reviews or appeals and complaints, assessment and exam results, and forthcoming examinations. Minutes of the Examinations Board are circulated to the Academic Council.*

Meeting Frequency

Three per year February, June & September

2.2.9   Staff-Student Liaison Committee

Role
The Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) acts as a forum for two-way discussion between learners and academics. The Staff Student Liaison Committee is a valuable resource within Galway Business School as it formally connects learners with processes and decisions taken by the school, and provides a unique insight at both a formal and informal level into students' perspectives and ensures their voices are heard.

Terms of Reference
• To act as a mechanism for the on-going communication of issues and feedback between students and the various other committees within the institution • To provide a forum for ideas from the student body that may be reflected on within stakeholder analysis for the strategic direction of the institution at the Governing Body.

Duties and Responsibilities
• Provide an open, two-way flow and exchange of ideas between staff and students • To discuss issues and recommendations designed to promote learner engagement and involvement within the school • Provide ongoing feedback and raise any concerns regarding the operational delivery of programmes • Ensure that all issues and recommendations are addressed to the relevant committee, feeding into the Academic Council • Ensure that the learner representatives are selected by the learners from the student body

Membership
• Programme Leaders (Chair), Registrar, Academic Coordinator, Head of Teaching and Learning & Student Class Representatives

Procedure
• The Programme Leader for each programme arranges for the election of a student representative from each class group (both day and evening). • The quorum required for a meeting is the Programme Leader/ or the Registrar, Academic Coordinator and two student representatives • The Registrar convenes the SSLC and notifies the Programme Leaders and the student representatives according to academic schedule of meetings

* Agenda:
- *Review of last meeting action and minutes,*
- *Each member is invited to present contributions on quality,*
- *Delivery,*
- *Resources,*
- *Assessment,*
- *Levels of service and any other issues of concern.*
Discussion will ensue and summary actions are assigned to the appropriate staff member, committee or department as appropriate, Actions are assigned to members, Minutes of SSLC meetings are circulated to the Academic Council, Implications on the Quality Assurance Procedures in GBS
Meeting Frequency
Twice per year December & July (Minimum)

2.3 Procedures for Academic Governance

Galway Business School is committed to the protection and upholding of rigorous systems of the academic process, governance and standards. Galway Business School has implemented initiatives for the protection of the academic integrity of the school and to ensure the separation of academic and commercial governance within the institution. The governance and committee structure has been designed to underpin academic integrity, independence and processes and to facilitate and augment the optimum student experience through formal engagement with and feedback from the student body.

The academic focus and direction of the school is strictly preserved and guided by and through the Academic Council. The Academic Council has full responsibility for:

- All aspects of the academic development
- Learner assessment and quality assurance within the school.

As a small organisation, there is still clear demarcation between the operations of both academic and commercial activities within the institution. The Chair of the Academic Council is completely independent of all commercial activities and his/her role is to protect the academic integrity and processes within the school. The Academic Council is chaired by a member of the academic staff, normally a Programme Leader.

The Registrar sits on the Academic Council and reports on the performance of the Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures ensuring that the stated academic goals are being delivered. The Academic Council is run independently by the academic staff with input from the Registrar. A student representative sits on the Academic Council. The Managing Director sits on the Academic Council and performs a facilitative and reporting role to ensure that the resources, operational needs and strategic objectives of the school are met and to communicate the recommendations of the Academic Council to the Directors.

Please see the GBS / GCI Group Organisational Chart in Figure 1.5.

2.4   Individual Roles and Responsibilities

2.4.1   Chief Executive Officer

Role
The Chief Executive Officer provides direction and leadership towards the vision, mission, and strategy of Galway Business School. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for setting the strategic goals of Galway Business School and its sister organisation, Galway Cultural Institute.
Duties and Responsibilities
- The Chief Executive Officer, in his capacity as a Director, oversees, with the Managing Director, the compliance with all legal and statutory obligations of corporate governance   - The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring adequate capitalisation and financial security for the business   - The CEO is actively involved in the external engagement of the school and sits on a number of industry, local and national boards in the areas of Business, the Arts and the Educational Sector   - The Chief Executive Officer with the Managing Director develops the Strategic Plan for the school and sits on the Governing Body for the purposes of formulating strategy.   - The CEO is responsible for the Protection for Enrolled Learners (PEL) policies and obligations within the school   - The CEO is ultimately responsible for the Risk Management of the school.   - Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.4.2 Managing Director

Role
The Managing Director with the Chief Executive Officer provides direction and leadership towards the vision, mission, and strategy of Galway Business School. The Managing Director is responsible for setting and the implementation of the strategic goals of Galway Business School and its sister organisation, Galway Cultural Institute, as well as responsibility for the commercial and academic operational activities within Galway Business School and Galway Cultural Institute.
Duties and Responsibilities
- The Managing Director, in her capacity as a Director, oversees, with the Chief Executive Officer, the compliance with all legal and statutory obligations of corporate governance   - The Managing Director drives the culture and ethos of the organisation. She develops the strategic plan for the long term future of the organisation with input from the CEO and the management team   - The Managing Director in conjunction with the CEO is responsible for ensuring that Galway Business School is sufficiently resourced and financially stable while providing a strict structure for corporate governance   - The Managing Director works closely on maximising the efficient operations of the institution in order to ensure its viability and sustainability   - The Managing Director is engaged with the external stakeholders of the institution in the development of both strategic, tactical and operational plans and their implementation. The Managing Director also sits on all the boards   - The Managing Director sets individual departmental goals and objectives to ensure that departmental strategic goals are in line with the strategy of the school   - The development and achievement of agreed growth levels for educational programmes and overall asset usage through dedicated teams   - Overseeing financial planning in conjunction with the CEO, Finance Department and heads of departments   - Overseeing the Sales and Marketing function to ensure that annual marketing and sales plans meet the strategic and budgetary targets   - Overseeing operational management and ensuring sufficient human and physical resources are in place   - With the heads of the various departments, responsible for the final recruitment, selection and

performance of all staff and ensuring that staff is sufficiently trained and the CPD plans are implemented and appropriate

- Overseeing the development and improvement of physical facilities and learner support services
- Responsible for the implementation of corrective and preventative action in conjunction with and as stipulated by the Quality Assurance committee
- Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.4.3 Registrar

Role
The Registrar has principal responsibility for the maintenance and enhancement of academic quality assurance and standards at Galway Business School. He/She has an overarching responsibility for existing quality processes, quality improvement, academic development and liaison with external academic bodies. In relation to quality assurance of QQI programmes the Registrar is responsible for ensuring that the conditions of recognition and validation of GBS programmes required by QQI are fulfilled and meet or exceed the standard.
Duties and Responsibilities
- Overall responsibility for the development, coordination, implementation, supervision and monitoring of the Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures through measurement and review of relevant statistical data, feedback surveys, reports from learners, college staff, external stakeholders and the Quality Assurance Committee which are reflected in the Annual Monitoring Report   - Ensure that GBS's quality policies and procedures comply with all relevant statutory, QQI, GDPR requirements etc.   - Ensure that there is an embedded culture of continuous improvement throughout the organisation   - Ensure that the Quality Assurance procedures are adequate, fit for purpose, approved and up to date, and reflect best practice, as recommended by the Academic Council and by QQI and reporting on their efficacy to the Academic Council and the Managing Director   - The organisation of the Academic Council, ensuring that it has appropriate oversight of the programmes and quality processes in GBS and that it can perform its functions effectively   - In conjunction with programme leaders, ensuring that Programme Boards and Examination Boards operate effectively; that the functions assigned to them are carried out efficiently; and ensuring any modifications required by validation panels, external examiners etc. are implemented and reflected in the programme.   - Review the development of new programmes and updates to modules in line with the strategic plan of GBS   - Maintenance of all records, particularly academic records with the Academic Coordinator   - Overarching responsibility for the quality of the student experience provision particularly in relation to the quality delivery of the teaching and learning in the school

- The appointment of External Examiners

- Liaise with QQI on validation submissions and ensure that the school is up to date on QQI a policy developments as well as monitor developments in higher education in Ireland, and the wider context.

- Conduct training on quality procedures and policies, QQI requirements and processes, assessments and examinations among all staff members and carry out internal quality self-evaluations annually

- Liaise with other private sector colleges to provide delivery, assessment and quality development training to staff. In addition, liaise with other privates and public colleges to provide progression pathways for graduates.

- Liaise with national and international education agencies and review research and new developments in education

2.4.4 Academic Coordinator

Role
The Academic Coordinator is a full-time position within the school. The Coordinator assists in the academic administration and is in daily contact with learners on all programmes providing the first point of contact for queries and enquiries.
Duties and Responsibilities
- Providing academic administrative support to the Registrar and the Managing Director for the smooth running of programmes and responsibility for the quality of the student experience provision   - Answering queries and enquiries from existing and potential students and stakeholders about Galway Business Schools' programmes and processing any enrolments in line with GBS policies. Engage with potential entrants to the school through interviews and open evenings   - Overseeing student admission criteria and Access, Transfer and Progression processes including CAO admissions, international admissions and RPL processes and that they comply with the quality policies of GBS with oversight from the Registrar   - Coordinate the Student Induction programme and the provision of student handbooks with the Registrar   - Maintaining the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) and ensuring that information is uploaded in a timely fashion   - Providing training and induction to the academic and support teams including use of IT and Virtual Learning Environment tools   - Ensuring that students' records are up to date and that all information regarding registrations, visa and attendance requirements comply with the schools' and all statutory policies. Liaising with the Managing Director / Register for any areas of non-compliance   - Acts as examination officer.   - First point of contact for Student Welfare issues   - Responsible for the organisation of graduation ceremonies   - Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.4.5   Programme Leader

Role
Each Programme Leader reports directly to the Registrar and has direct responsibility for the day to day operation of their respective programmes within Galway Business School. Programme Leaders sit on the Programme Board, Examinations Board and on the Academic Council.

Duties and Responsibilities
- Chairing the Programme Board meetings and ensuring it meets its responsibilities   - Updating programme documentation, such as module descriptors, to be lodged with the Registrar and external awarding bodies arising from the Programme Board's annual review process   - Implementing short term changes in response to feedback from stakeholders and making recommendations to the Registrar with regard to medium or longer term changes to the programme as agreed at Programme Board level   - Ensuring adherence to the Programme Documents   - Ensuring the alignment of the modular learning outcomes with the programme learning outcomes and objectives and facilitate progression   - Attending the Academic Council Meetings   - Ensures that the Examinations Board discharges its duties   - Ensuring the alignment of the assessments with the MIPLOs and the MIPLOs   - Crafting the annual Programme Monitoring Report and engaging in the five-year programme review process with the Programme Board   - Implementing recommendations from other boards and bodies   - Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.4.6 Examinations Officer (part of the Academic Coordinator remit)

Role
The Registrar holds overall responsibility for the integrity and security of the Examinations function. The Examinations Officer, a senior member of the team, is responsible for ensuring registering, setting, administering, correcting and double marking of examinations and assessments in line with the Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy. The Examinations Officer operates under QQI Assessments and Standards (2013). The Examinations Officer convenes and chairs the Examinations Board meetings, and attends the Board of Examiners where all assessments, results and awards are discussed.

Duties and Responsibilities
- Overall responsibility for ensuring registration, setting, administering, correcting, double marking and verifying of all examinations and assessments within the school   - Manages the internal verification processes of internally set assessments in line with Quality Assurance Procedures   - Ensures that the Examinations Board discharges its duties   - Ensure the operational management of the examinations process, through room booking, supervision and timetabling, with the Registrar and Managing Director   - Ensure that assessment material is corrected within the agreed timeframes and appropriate feedback is given to students in line with best practice   - Organises double marking of assessment material in line with Quality Assurance procedures   - In cooperation with the Registrar and the Lecturing Team, ensures that representative samples of corrected scripts are externally verified and compiles the list of performance grades, awards, results and grade distribution   - Liaise with students and the Registrar in the case of mitigating circumstances and extension deadlines and keeping the Exam Board informed of all such issues   - Liaise with the Registrar and students in the case of externally set and graded exams   - Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.4.7   Head of Teaching and Learning

Role
Supporting the role of the Registrar, the Head of Teaching and Learning provides leadership on all matters related to learning, teaching and research activity within the school. This involves working collaboratively with faculty and students to promote, support and enhance innovation and best practice in teaching and learning. It includes ascertaining, maintaining, improving and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning within the school. He/She ascertains the quality of teaching and learning within the school through a systematic system of formal and informal feedback from faculty and students.
Duties and Responsibilities
- Ascertaining the quality of the teaching and learning methodologies through regular formal and informal feedback   - Improving the quality of the Teaching and Learning through planned programmes of Induction, CPD, attendance at conferences and Academic Think Tank sessions with the objective of continuous improvement in the overall delivery and the quality of the teaching methodologies in GBS   - Ensuring best use of teaching methods and learner resources, such as the Interactive Display Screens, the Academic Server, the delivery in the classroom, e-activities, use of the VLE and a fully resourced library   - Ensuring that programmes are organised in a manner that exemplifies excellence in Teaching and Learning and reporting feedback to the Registrar, QA Committee and Academic Council on improvements and feedback   - Benchmarking GBS's teaching, learning and assessment strategies to national and international comparators to ensure their relevance and continuous improvement   - Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.4.8 Lecturing Staff

Role
The Lecturing Staff are the primary resource within Galway Business School for the provision of a robust, academically sound, quality educational offering for learners. All lecturers perform the following similar teaching and assessment duties within their respective specialist areas.
Duties and Responsibilities
- Lecture on the respective programme within the weekly schedule and fixed period agreed with the appropriate school personnel / committees   - Prepare Module Packs containing lecture schedule, assessment schedule, assessment criteria and marking scheme, updated reading list etc. in advance of the start of each semester   - Devise and follow programme syllabi in a timely and accurate manner. Prepare lessons efficiently and employ a range of appropriate resources, materials and methodologies   - Upload lecture notes and related materials onto Moodle in advance of each class   - Set and mark all assessments prepared by the students and return within a reasonable time or deadline laid down by School administration. Provide academic guidance to students, in particular, regular and substantial individual feedback   - Be attentive to the exam syllabus and examination procedures for any exam classes taught as outlined in the Teaching Learning and Assessment Strategy   - Report any student academic problems to the Registrar or Academic Coordinator   - Report any student welfare problems to the Academic Coordinator   - Supervise degree Business Research Projects   - Attend Academic Council, Programme Board, Examination Board, Board of Examiners, New Programme Development Board and other meetings (as laid out in the schedule of meetings at the beginning of each semester)   - Liaise with other lecturers teaching on the same programme   - Prepare internal assignments and assessment criteria, marking schemes/model answers for the relevant programmes. Act as Internal Examiner. Double mark assessment materials as allocated   - Provide the Examinations Officer with a spread sheet of continuous assessment and final assessment marks   - Keep accurate records of student attendance   - Advise students on programmes of further study and provide academic references for students when required and liaise with the Registrar regarding same

- Prepare Module Report(s) to contribute to the production of Annual Programme Monitoring reports
- Contribute to the continuous improvement and effectiveness of Galway Business School by actively adopting and practising the School's Quality Assurance system
- Promoting the school at all levels locally, nationally and internationally

2.5 Departmental Responsibilities

2.5.1 Finance Department

- Involvement in all aspects of the company to ensure its continued financial viability, managed growth and profitability
- Preparation of the annual accounts and advise on resource maintenance and investment
- Input into strategic planning and particularly reconciling projects with financial projections of the company
- Drawing up budgets in conjunction with the senior management for various departments in line with the strategic plan
- Costing the courses and products of the company and defining targets in financial terms for the coming year
- Production of and analysis of monthly Management Accounts for review by senior management and benchmarking them in line with similar businesses
- Suggesting cost reductions when required without impacting negatively on operations or the student experience
- Promoting the school at all levels to prospective students, agents etc. and acting as an ambassador for it in a general way

2.5.2 Sales & Marketing Department

- Responsibility for all sales and marketing functions for Galway Business School
- Developing marketing & sales strategies, plans and functions which will be linked to an advertising & PR schedule and implementation of those plans in a timely manner
- Preparing and costing a sales and marketing plan annually with defined targets and a full activity plan to drive sales in line with the strategic plan
- Monthly reporting with statistical comparisons with previous years and projections and benchmarking future plans in line with targets to Management
- Developing, designing and updating marketing information & materials and ensuring their accuracy
- Developing an online presence and social media strategy to drive sales
- Analysing, researching and developing new markets/products and maintaining existing markets
- Preparing & taking part in sales trips and workshops in line with the marketing plan

- Training of other staff members in products & sales
- Promoting the school at all levels to prospective students, agents etc. and acting as an ambassador for it in a general way

2.5.3   Operations & Administration Department

- Ensuring that the school is at all times ready for business and student-focused
- The Front Office has a key role in as the face of the organisation and the first point of contact for students, prospective students and the public
- Implementation of systems & procedures to ensure smooth flow of work through the front office through optimal use of resources and time
- Ensuring that all tasks and service delivery adheres to best practice and are carried out in a timely manner, including queries, bookings, quotations, budgets & services
- Working closely with the management/marketing department to ensure the sale of products in season and to update on the status of enquiries and bookings
- Financial & commercial understanding in order to meet the financial targets of the school with regard to budgets and cash flow
- General administrative duties including answering telephone, filing, tidying, photocopying, postage, stock control & preparing material for student orientation
- Promoting the school at all levels to prospective students, educational agents etc. and acting as an ambassador, by gathering feedback from students and reporting the analysis to the academic team as well as management

2.5.4   Information Technology Function

It is the function of the Managing Director to liaise with the external IT Company for the provision of IT resources with the school and to ensure that:

- The maintenance, upgrade and review of the IT provision (including Interactive Professional Display Units (IDUs) within the school meets the operational requirements in relation to the provision of all hardware and software
- WIFI access, firewall and anti-virus software provision and licensing agreements are up to standard and fit for purpose

- Daily and monthly back-up of all information off-site in a virtual environment including all email and ensuring the school websites are hosted correctly
- Ensure the database Schoolworks is fit for purpose and is upgraded regularly to ensure the school is kept abreast of new developments
- Ensure that WIFI connectivity allows optimum use of the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) and to liaise with the Academic Coordinator and Registrar to achieve the same

3   Procedures and Policies for Evaluating Quality Assurance

3.1   Purpose

The Quality Assurance Handbook establishes a coherent framework for enhancing the quality of education and training provided and demonstrates that standards are safeguarded by a system of transparent evaluations and checks and one that is accountable to the Governing Body and all stakeholders. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and structure on the formulation of quality assurance policies and procedures in GBS.

Document Name: Policy for Evaluating Quality Assurance	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL
Review frequency: Annually	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Policy restructured, policy owner specified, the process for evaluating QA outlined.	July 2019	September 2019
V3.0	Figure 3.3 added illustrating the process of policy development	March 2020	March 2020

3.2 Rationale

GBS recognises the importance of providing clarity and structure to the formation of quality assurance policies and procedures. This policy, therefore, provides a structure and transparency on policy development and implementation within the school. In addition, GBS recognises that the process of the policy formulation should be structured, rigorous, and transparent. All policies will be developed in line with the process outlined in this policy, approved by the Quality Assurance Committee and regularly reviewed and updated to ensure their ongoing relevance. This policy also outlines relevant processes regarding dissemination and communication of all GBS's policies to relevant stakeholders.

The quality assurance system in Galway Business School is based on the principle of continuous improvement and the school strives to make the organisation and the Quality Assurance system more effective. All continuous improvement activities are recorded and tracked by the Quality Assurance Committee with regard to the procedures and processes they affect.

All programmes delivered by Galway Business School, including proposed programmes to be validated by QQI, are underpinned by the eleven areas identified in *the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (QQI, 2016),* namely:

- Governance and Management of Quality
- Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
- Programmes of Education and Training
- Staff Recruitment, Management and Development
- Teaching & Learning
- Assessment of Learners
- Support for Learners
- Information & Data Management
- Public Information & Communication
- Other Parties Involved in education and Training
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

3.3 Procedures for Quality Assurance

The following are procedures relevant to quality assurance in GBS (as illustrated by Fig. 3.3):

- Data collection and monitoring
- Policy Development
- Policy Dissemination & Communication

3.3.1 Data Collection and Monitoring

Galway Business School is committed to self-evaluation and external review. This ensures that the Quality Assurance procedures are subject to the same rigorous monitoring and review process as the programmes delivered. Galway Business School collates all necessary data electronically with regular back-ups The School monitors its Quality Assurance procedures through evaluation of the data from the following critical quality indicators:

- Continuous assessment results
- Examination results
- Class attendance rates
- External examiners' reports
- Committee reports
- Student progression
- Programme results
- Programme attrition
- Graduate destination data

- Annual Self Evaluation Report (SER)
- Annual Programme Monitoring Report
- Module Reports (carried out by individual lecturing staff)
- Stakeholder feedback
- Self-evaluations (carried out by the Quality Assurance Committee)
- Periodic and Institutional Review

The data is analysed and tabulated to highlight trends and locate any areas where corrective and preventive action may be required. The Quality Assurance procedures are judged to be fit for purpose when based on verifiable data, both qualitative and quantitative. For example, learner and staff feedback may provide qualitative feedback suggesting improvements that could be made to programmes, their delivery or to the provision of academic support services. Qualitative feedback is also provided through Extern reports, and where applicable, through Module reports.

Data is managed and used for planned interventions, i.e. corrective or preventative action. It is through the basic process of acting and intervening on results of verifiable data, and evaluating

these interventions that change and ultimately continuous improvement and enhancement can be achieved. All data is protected in accordance with the Data Protection Act, GDPR and with GBS Information & Data Management Policy (Section 9).

3.3.2 Policy Development

The policy owner (Registrar) is responsible for the drafting of newly revised policies in a standardised format. The policies are managed, from their initial development to their ratification, whilst seeking the necessary input from all staff. The final draft of the particular policy is discussed during the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) meeting and when approved by the Committee, it is signed off by the Managing Director. In such instance, the Managing Director will determine the date for which the policy comes into effect and agree on the regularity of its monitoring. Once the policy has been finalised it is brought for final approval to the Governing Body.

The QAC can, however, decide to reject the policy in the case that it lacks alignment to national standards or it is not fit for purpose. In such a case, the QAC recommends specific areas for re-development and issues a time frame for re-development and resubmission.

3.3.3 Policy Dissemination & Communication

There are three main elements to policy dissemination and communication for its effective implementation in the schools' operations:

- Transparency & Accountability
- Communication

3.3.3.1 Transparency & Accountability

All staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with the stated quality procedures. The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for undertaking a review of the quality procedures; ensuring implementation is happening as detailed and that compliance is monitored. Where non-compliance is identified both the Academic Council and management are informed and a meeting takes place to determine the most appropriate course of action. The Quality Assurance Committee monitor that remedial action has been taken and examines preventative measures to ensure its non-recurrence.

Galway Business School's intention is, therefore, to establish and maintain effective communication with all stakeholders, internal and external. The school provides lecturers and

learners with timely, accurate and relevant information relating to all aspects of the programme offerings and the quality assurance procedures and policies. The school will publish objective information relating to student testimonials, programmes, qualifications, and Quality Assurance procedures for the general public on its website once QQI programmes have been approved. For example, all marketing material provides accurate and clear information on all programmes to prospective learners and their educational representatives. Access, transfer and progression information is made clear to prospective learners on registration and application procedures for exemptions are clearly documented.
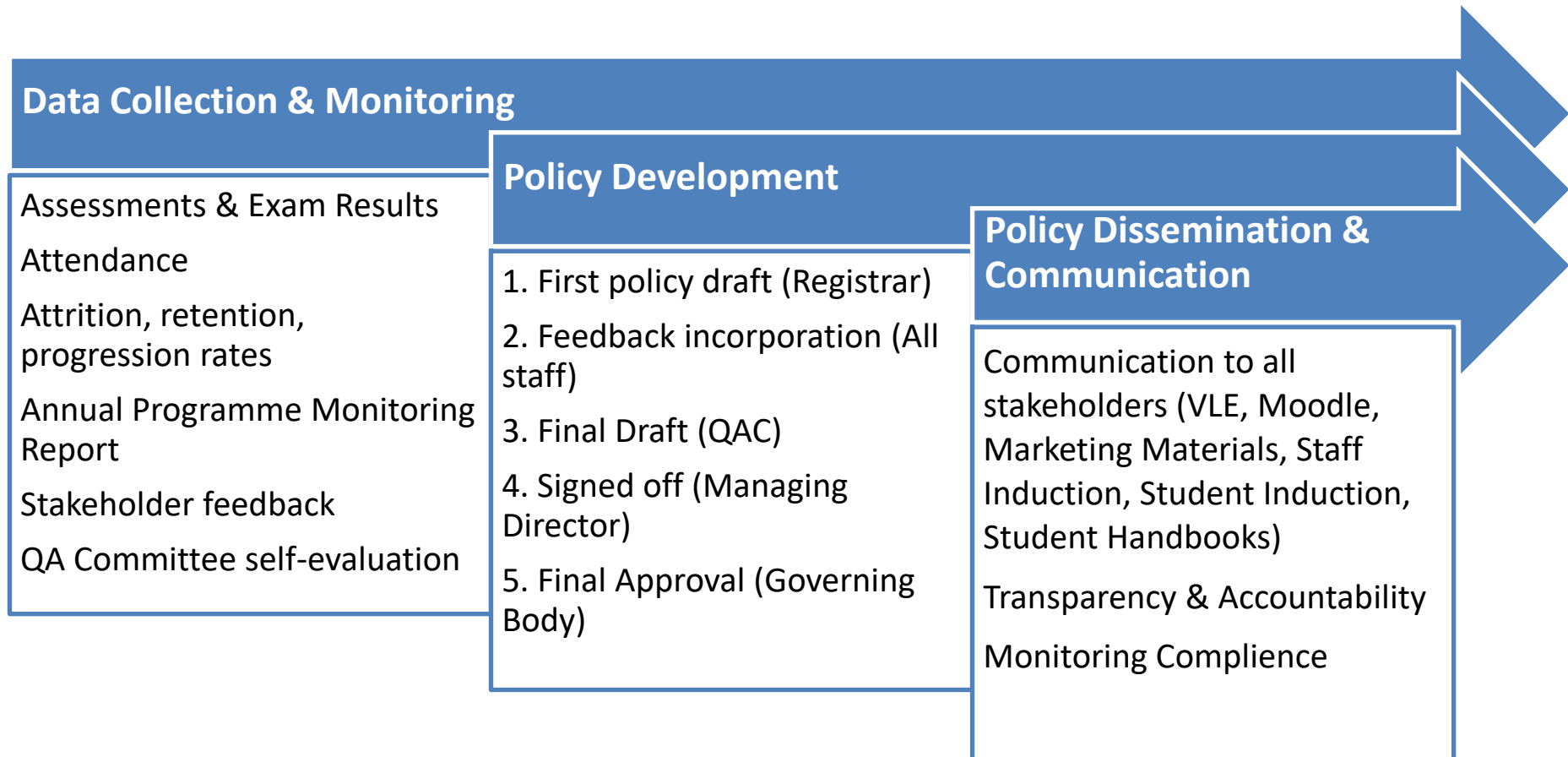
3.3.3.2 *Communication*

There is a culture of open and transparent communication between academic and administrative staff and learners in GBS. All Quality Assurance policies approved and implemented are published on the Galway Business School website and uploaded on the VLE platform, Moodle, where they are easily accessible by all the schools' stakeholders including staff, learners and the wider public.

Formal communication with academic staff takes place through the meeting structure at Faculty, Programme, Examination Board and at Academic Council meetings. At the start of the year, all new policies and the Quality Assurance Manual are reviewed at Staff Induction and at the start of each semester. Communication with administrative staff occurs through the CRM and daily interaction, and staff meetings chaired by the Managing Director. All policies are on Moodleare. All staff have specific Galway Business School email addresses to facilitate communication.

Communication with learners encompasses the initial enquiry and student registration, Student Induction at the commencement of the programme, the provision of Student Handbooks containing details of the programme, assessment schedules and information about relevant policies and their location on the Moodle platform. All forms that could be needed are uploaded onto Moodle. In addition, we have a system of Student Meetings which are daily dedicated times for both modes to receive support and give feedback. We have informal proactive 'pop-in' meetings by the Academic Coordinator and the Registrar into the different classes. There is an 'open-door' policy at all levels and across all committees and departments of the School through the use of meetings, staff and student notices, Moodle, the Student-Staff Liasion Committee and extra-curricular activities where the schools' stakeholders have an opportunity to receive additional information with regards to policy and procedures and how they apply to them.

Fig. 3.3 Policy Development Process

Data Collection & Monitoring

Assessments & Exam Results

Attendance

Attrition, retention, progression rates

Annual Programme Monitoring Report

Stakeholder feedback

QA Committee self-evaluation

Policy Development

1. First policy draft (Registrar)

2. Feedback incorporation (All staff)

3. Final Draft (QAC)

4. Signed off (Managing Director)

5. Final Approval (Governing Body)

Policy Dissemination & Communication

Communication to all stakeholders (VLE, Moodle, Marketing Materials, Staff Induction, Student Induction, Student Handbooks)

Transparency & Accountability

Monitoring Complience

4 Programmes of Education & Training

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide structure and process in the administration and management of the programmes offered at Galway Business School. The policy outlines the process of programme development and effective monitoring to ensure its continued relevance.

Document Name: Programmes of Education & Training Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Policy re-structured and outlined in a greater detail, relevant forms updated.	July 2019	September 2019

4.2 Programme Development

The development of new programmes is conducted systematically. The procedures and guidelines for the design and approval of new programme outlined in this policy ensure that the programme development is rigorous and effective. The process of the new programme development is mapped out in Figure 4.2.1. In addition, the process of programme development is assessed under several criteria:

- Consistency with the school's Strategic Plan and fulfilment of the plan's aims and objectives
- Impact on the existing programmes offered by the school
- Whether it offers a sufficiently differentiated and valuable learning experience to learners
- Compatibility with the school's operational and financial resources
- Viability of proposed programmes in terms of potential learners
- How it takes cognisance of the knowledge, skills and competence framework of National Framework of Qualifications and implements the NQAI in terms of access, transfer and progression
- Compliance with the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training (2017), QQI General Programme Validation Manual (2018), and QQI Award Standards
- How the new programme fits into the school's quality assurance process

Figure 4.2.1: The process of the new programme development

Individual Proposal

Initial Programme Porposal (Registrar) → Initial Programme Proposal Report (Registrar, Marketing Manager, Managing Director) → Does the programme have an academic merit? (Academic Council)

No → Revise and re-submit / Rejected

Yes →

Interim Programme Proposal

Interim Programme Proposal (Academic Council) → QQI Programme Validation Manual (Programme Development Team) → Self-Assessment Programme Report (Programme Development Team) → Does programme meet all QQI criteria for programme validation? (Academic Council)

No → Rejected

Yes →

Revise and re-submit

Final Programme Submission

Programme Validation Manual & Programme Self-Validation Report (Governing Body) → Programme Approved? (Governing Body)

QQI Validation

Yes ← / No →

Revise and re-submit

4.2.1   New Programme Proposals

GBS welcomes initiatives for new programmes from many sources. The most frequent channel for individual proposals and programme development is likely to be by an individual academic staff member at a Faculty Meetings or at a Programme Boards. New proposals may also be introduced directly through the Academic Council.

In addition, the Governing Body and other key stakeholders may wish to propose new programmes. In particular, these may be initiated by a demand for the programme from industry, government agencies or associated professional bodies. Proposals are considered both on their own merit and as part of the framework of the School's Strategic Plan. GBS requires that proposers of the new programme make an initial approach to the Registrar.

If the proposal has some academic merit, the Registrar will contact the:

- **Marketing Manager:** to conduct some preliminary evidence-based market research. This will typically explore inter alia the availability of similar programmes in other institutions; an initial assessment of demand from learners; and some feedback from employers and industry;
- **Managing Director:** to determine preliminary likely resource implications and investigate basic operational feasibility of the new proposed programme offering.

In cooperation with the Registrar, and with the above inputs from the Marketing and Managing Director, the original proposer drafts an initial programme proposal report. This brief (one or two pages) is then submitted for preliminary consideration at the subsequent Academic Council meeting.

This initial proposal report must conform to the requirements of the validating body on the new course evaluation. The preliminary report should address the following issues:

- Academic feasibility and compatibility with current programmes at Galway Business School
- Programme Aims and Outline Programme Learning Outcomes
- Outline Programme Curriculum – module titles, programme length, level of award, resource implications for staffing, accommodation and facilities
- Programme differentiation compared to similar programmes at other institutions
- Evidence of demand from industry for the programme
- Evidence of demand from prospective students

The Academic Council decide on any one of three outcomes in relation to the initial programme proposal:

- **Approved:** the proposal moves on to the Interim stage described below
- **Revise and re-submit:** conditional on modifications or further details to be provided, the proposal may be re-submitted to a later Council meeting
- **Rejected:** the Council decides that the proposal does not meet the criteria to progress any further

4.2.2 Interim Report on New Programmes

Provided the Academic Council has approved the interim programme proposal, the Registrar is delegated the responsibility to appoint a Programme Development Team. The Programme Development Team is then responsible for bringing the new programme idea to the Interim report stage.

The Registrar invites a member of academic staff to chair the Programme Development Team. In consultation with the Registrar, the Chair will put together a representative team of relevant academic staff and, if deemed necessary, external consultants or industry specialists.

The Programme Development Team is responsible for the development of the new programme proposal in accordance with QQI's *'Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training'* (QQI, 2017). Each new interim programme proposal is documented in the most recent version of QQI's *'Programme Validation Manual'* and contains the following information:

- Programme rationale and background, including the results of a benchmarking exercise against similar programmes in other institutions
- Detailed programme learning outcomes and their matching to relevant award standards
- Programme structure, i.e. a list of all modules and relevant ECTS [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System] credits required to achieve the overall programme learning outcomes
- Defined expected learner workload
- The rationale for the programme based on:
  - The feedback from the various stakeholders
  - The research of GBS' comparators

- o The research of the national and international trends in higher education
- o The research of the current labour market, in particular, skills shortages
- Clear explanation of the target learner market to which the new programme will appeal
- Access, transfer and progression criteria
- Overall teaching, learning and assessment strategy
- Programme management arrangements
- A detailed outlined of additional resource requirements
- Module descriptors including learning, teaching and assessment information
- Graduate opportunities

During this process, the Registrar will create a timeline for structured meetings with the Programme Development Team to create the necessary documents to complete the final programme proposal. An additional critical requirement during this Interim process is for the Programme Development Team to provide regular status updates to the relevant Programme and Academic Council meetings, as well as Management. Feedback on the new programme from lecturing staff and management may cause revisions of the programme proposal at this stage.

The Programme Development Team will also prepare a Self-assessment Programme Report. This will provide a critical assessment of the proposal including its strengths, weaknesses and underlying assumptions.

4.2.3   Final Programme Proposal

Based on the feedback received and the findings of the Self-assessment Programme Report, the Programme Development Team submits a final programme proposal document to the Academic Council for formal approval. The final programme proposal is written so as to satisfy all of the relevant validating body's requirements, particularly the provision of a proposed programme schedule, self-assessment report and a detailed new programme validation template.

The Programme Development Team will also prepare a Self-validation Programme Report documented in the most recent version of QQI template. This will provide a critical assessment of the proposal in light of GBS's quality assurance policies and procedures. Also, it ensures that the Programme Development Team meets all QQI criteria during the documentation of the final programme proposal.

The Academic Council has the authority to assess the new programme's academic content and compatibility with the current programmes offered by Galway Business School. If the Academic Council is satisfied on these criteria, the programme proposal is forwarded to an Governing Body for final consideration. The Governing Body's role is to assess the programme within the remit of the School's Strategic Plan and consider the commercial viability of the proposed programme. Any revisions will be communicated back to the Academic Council.

Once any issues have been satisfactorily resolved, the programme proposal is re-submitted to the Governing Body who then has the authority to approve the new programme and sanction the submission of the completed application to QQI for approval. The Academic Council will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that all documents submitted to QQI adhere to the requirements contained in this document.

4.2.4   Programme Submission for External Assessment

Once the programme has been submitted to QQI, an Expert Panel will be constituted by QQI. The Proposed Programme will be assessed and a site visit will take place. Pending a positive decision, the Expert Panel Report will be published on the QQI website www.qqi.ie.

4.3   Learner Admission, Progression and Recognition of Prior Learning

4.3.1   Rationale and Scope

All QQI programmes offered on an academic year basis by Galway Business School are on or are formally aligned to, the National Framework of Qualifications. Students can access Galway Business School programmes both through standard entry channels such as the Central Applications Office - https://www.cao.ie/apply.ie, and as mature students. All Students may also transfer or progress to Galway Business School courses after completing programmes delivered by other providers. Routes are also available for students who wish to transfer or progress from programmes taken in Galway Business School to programmes offered by other providers. The aim of this policy is, therefore, to provide a structure and describe the relevant processes with regards to admission and progression of GBS learners and recognition of their prior learning.

In accordance with QQI's '*Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education & Training'* (QQI, Restated 2015), Galway Business School ensures that the presentation of any particular programme does not lead learners to presume that successful completion of the programme will entitle them to enter a particular profession or progress to another programme unless that is actually the case. Galway Business School also ensures that a programme's use of ECTS (credit) and provisions for recognition of prior learning is consistent with 'QQI's Assessment and Standards 2013' and with relevant national policies.

There are only two academic year programmes that are not validated by QQI – University Foundation and Pre-Masters Programmes.

4.3.2   Access

Galway Business School provides transparent, fair and consistent entry requirements to programmes. Entry requirements for each course are detailed in marketing brochures and on the school website. Each programme document, and related information material, clearly states programmes' MIPLOs, the award the learner will receive and the level of this award. In addition, GBS ensures that the size of class cohorts does not exceed the limits of its physical resources.

All prospective full-time students must apply via the CAO system. For students applying via RPL route, they must submit a completed application form, statement of purpose and any supporting documentation including:

- Leaving Certificate results
- QQI (formerly FETAC) award transcripts
- Transcripts of any other study the prospective learner has completed
- Proof of IELTS score

Non-native speakers of English require a minimum of 6.0 IELTS or equivalent for entry into year one. Students who wish to go directly into year three (or year 4 of the level 8 programme) or into the postgraduate diploma must have a level of 6.5 IELTS or equivalent.

If a prospective learner's access into a programme is rejected, the individual will be afforded a mechanism to appeal this decision as follows:

- Rejected learner will submit written appeal to the Registrar with clearly stated grounds on which the learners is making an appeal.
- The Registrar will review the appeal and discuss the appeal with the admission officer who rejected the application and with the applicant.

At the start of the academic year, the successful applicant receives an induction session and documentation including:

- Academic Calendar, Timetables and contact information for the programme
- Information about GBS's facilities including library and EBSCO and Moodle access
- Information about the structure and curriculum of the programme
- Information about assessments and their requirements and deadlines
- Information about attendance requirements
- Information about learners academic and non-academic support

4.3.2.1 Procedures for admission

Applications are received either online through the CAO process or paper based through appropriate GBS application form. Each application is assessed to determine if it is an application that clearly meets the specified entry requirements, or if it is to be considered an RPL application.

- If the applicant meets all specified entry criteria for access onto the programme, the applicant is notified by email.
- If an application is considered as an RPL or RPEL application, it then follows the appropriate procedures outlined below in Section 4.3.3.

Where a successful applicant accepts a place on the programme, the applicants personal details are recorded on the Schoolworks management database system. The successful applicants are also informed and advised on the payment options available to them. The accrual of fees and potential payment options available to an applicant are dependent on the nature of the application (e.g. international learners with visa requirements are required to pay fee in full before their start of the programme through the esrow account under Transfermate. Each learner will receive a full induction pack prior to the programme commencement.

4.3.3 Transfer and Progression

Galway Business School facilitates transfer and progression both into and onwards from its programmes and commits to ensuring that its learners are fully informed of their transfer and progression options. The details of the transfer and progression criteria are clearly stated in each programme's validation manual. However, these options and criteria are not exhaustive of every possible scenario. Instead, they will give a broad-based transfer and progression options at different NFQ levels. The transfer and progression onwards options that are not within GBS are subject to the admissions policies of other institutions.

The school will assist learners who wish to transfer and progress both inwards and onwards from its programme regardless of the transfer being to another institution or within GBS. This will include the provision of transcript of results and academic references. Progression by graduates of Galway Business School to other providers is based on the entry requirements of the relevant course and an evaluation by that provider of the graduate's transcript.

With regards to internal transfers to other GBS programmes the assistance will consist of providing:

- Aims and objectives, MIPLOs, and Award standards of a target programme
- Availability of exceptions where applicable

4.3.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

4.3.4.1 Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the generic term for learning assessment mechanisms such as Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) or Advanced Academic Standing, which are used within Higher Education to describe the awarding of credit / exemptions to learners on the basis of demonstrated learning that has occurred prior to admission.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an important element of EU policy for widening access to qualifications and supporting lifelong learning. In common with its European partners, the Irish government has made a commitment to support RPL (Education and Training Act 2012). The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012 established the right for a learner to receive recognition of prior learning. The Act reflects a national commitment to widening participation in education and to give equal recognition to all learning. For the purposes of developing a national approach to the recognition of prior learning, prior learning encompasses:

1. Formal learning which takes place through programmes of study or training that are delivered by education or training providers, and which attract awards.

2. Non-formal learning that takes place alongside the mainstream systems of education and training. It may be assessed but does not normally lead to formal certification. Examples of non-formal learning are: learning and training activities undertaken in the workplace, in the voluntary sector, trade union or in community-based learning.

3. Informal learning that takes place through life and work experience (which is sometimes referred to as experiential learning). Often, informal learning is unintentional and the learner may not recognise at the time that it contributed to his or her knowledge, skills and competences. RPL involves awarding the learner recognition in the form of admission to a programme, credits, exemptions or an award for the Prior Learning.

The Prior learning can be certified or experiential (non-certified).

- Prior Certified Learning is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding body such as QQI or other state recognised colleges or institutes. Prior certified learning also can also include qualifications received abroad.

- Prior experiential (uncertified) Learning is learning which has not been previously accredited or recognised and is typically uncertified. This is often described as learning which is non-formal or informal learning. The learning achieved is the focus in prior experiential learning, and not the experience itself. The process of giving formal recognition to this type of learning can be described as the recognition of prior non-formal and informal learning (RNFIL) or the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL).

4.3.4.2   General Principles of RPL

- Prior Learning refers to learning which has occurred before admission to a course or to the relevant stage of a course.
- Prior learning should encompass all forms of learning – formal, informal or non-formal.
- Participation is a voluntary matter for the individual.
- Recognition of prior learning should provide opportunities for access, transfer and progression to education and training and for the achievement of an award.
- The process of recognising prior learning should maintain the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications and its awards.
- The policies, processes and practices for the recognition of prior learning should be clearly stated and documented and are available to all potential applicants.
- Guidance and support should be made available for applicants and all involved in the processes of recognition of prior learning.
- An appropriate appeals mechanism should be in place. Learners seeking exemptions based on RPL should continue to attend class as normal until they receive written confirmation approving their application. This confirmation should come from the Registrar.
- Recognition of Prior Learning will normally be given for complete modules only.
- There should be no limit placed on the maximum credits allowed to be achieved via RPL in the non-award stages of a programme.
- The cost to the applicant for applying for recognition of prior uncertified learning will be determined by the Registrar on an annual basis.

4.3.4.3   Recognition for Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

Prior Certified Learning is where an applicant has already been awarded a qualification for a formal programme taken at an institution or training organisation. This prior learning can be recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications and may entitle the applicant to:

- Gain access onto a programme.

- The award of advanced academic standing (e.g. direct access into year 2, 3 or 4 of a programme).

- The award of exemptions from some parts of a programme.

The applicant is normally expected to submit details of his/her prior certified learning e.g. certificate, programme description, module description, assessment results etc.

4.3.4.4 Assessing Prior Certified Learning

When a learner presents prior certified learning in order to gain an admission, advanced academic standing or exemption(s), the assessor (Registrar or the Academic Coordinator) will base his/her decision to grant this exemption or advanced academic standing on the following:

- Level of Prior Award in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
  o The Prior Certified Learning which the applicant is basing his/her exemption/advanced academic standing on must be at the same level or at a higher level in the framework than the level the learner is seeking the exemption in. For example if a learner is seeing an exemption from a level 6 module, then the learner's prior certified learning must be a level 6 or above. The process of recognising prior learning should maintain the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications and its awards.

- Comparison of learning outcomes
  o The learning outcomes of the prior certified learning must be sufficiently similar in nature to the module(s) the learner is seeking exemption from.

- Currency of Prior Certified Learning
  o The Prior Certified Learning must have been achieved in a comparatively appropriate time frame (in some instances this may be in the last 3 years, 5 years or 10 years – dependent on the learning achieved) i.e. computing learning 10 years ago is of limited benefit today on a current programme– psychology outcomes may be more timeless.

4.3.4.5 Guidelines for Prior Certified Learning

It is the Learner's responsibility to apply for the RPCL. Learners must submit their claim on the relevant form. The form can be obtained from the relevant lecturer. This form must be completed on or before October 1st for semester 1 and on or before February 1st for semester 2. Learners must

also include certificates, results, programme details and where possible learning outcomes of modules completed.

- The Assessor should be a person qualified to deliver the module. The Registrar will appoint a suitably qualified assessor.
- Learners must continue to attend class until a decision has been made (and written confirmation received) on whether to grant the exemption or not. The learner may be expected to attend an interview.
- No grade will be awarded to the learner for the certified learning. The learner receives an exemption.
- The assessor should make a decision regarding the RPL application within 10 working days of application. Assessors have the right to recommend that exemptions be granted with conditions (e.g. certain research is carried out, attendance at certain workshops etc.).
- The Learner has a right to apply for a recheck or review. The appeal for a recheck / review should be made in writing to the Registrar within 5 working days of the initial decision. There will be a cost associated with the appeal. The appeal will be considered by the Registrar along with a qualified assessor not involved in the initial assessment. Their decision is final.

The Documentation submitted by the learner (RPL Application form, photocopies of certificates, learning outcomes, examination result etc.) together with the recommendation of the assessor must be kept for 2 years for quality assurance purposes and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

4.3.4.6   Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

This involves the awarding of credit for learning from experience. In this case, the candidate must demonstrate that the learning experience has occurred by e.g. producing a Portfolio of Evidence to support the claim for access, exemption or credit.   Other assessment tools such as exam, assignment, interview or observation can also be used to assess the prior experiential learning. As a general principle, credit is given for learning, not for experience per se. The portfolio of evidence must be written in such a way that the matching of the knowledge, skills and competencies of the module learning outcomes to the prior learning is clearly demonstrated.

The evidence the learner has to submit will be based on the learning outcomes of the module(s)/ programme he/she seeks credits for. Supporting evidence may include:

- References
- CV (e.g. Europass CV)
- Job Descriptions and experiences
- Details of any training completed
- Certificates for qualifications, training courses etc.
- Sample work (e.g. drawings, minutes from meetings, business plan etc.).
- Evidence from the learner's personal life
- Published work
- Professional licenses/registrations or membership of professional organisations
- Acknowledged accomplishments
- Relevant recreational activities or hobbies

The applicant may be required to provide verification from previous or current employers that the experience stated has been achieved by the learner.

As part of the assessment, the assessor may also interview the applicant.

When assessing portfolios, it is important to consider the currency of the prior learning. It must be achieved within a suitable time frame – for example within the last five years (depending on the nature of the learning achieved).

4.3.4.7   Guidelines for Prior Non Certified/Experiential Learning

It is the Learner's responsibility to apply for RPEL. Applications are made to the relevant lecturer or to the Registrar. Learners must submit their claim on the relevant form (p.71). This form must be submitted on or before October 1st for semester 1 and on or before February 1st for semester 2. Completed RPL assessments must be submitted to the relevant lecturer or Registrar on or before October 21st for semester 1 and on or before February 21st for semester 2.

- The assessor should make a decision regarding the RPL application within 10 working days. Learners are expected to attend class until they receive written verification from the Registrar / Lecturer.
- The portfolio is assessed and graded by an assessor appointed by the Registrar.

Learners should receive a grade for their portfolio of evidence which carries equal weight to modules taken in the conventional method. Assessors must satisfy themselves that the assessment

methods used to determine the standard of the experiential learning gained be equivalent to assessment methods applied to conventional learners.

- Assessors have the right to recommend that credits be granted with conditions e.g. certain research is carried out, attendance at certain workshops etc.
- The Learner has a right to apply for a recheck or review. The appeal for a recheck/review should be made in writing to the Registrar within 5 working days of the initial decision. There will be a cost associated with the appeal. The appeal will be considered by the Registrar along with a qualified assessor not involved in the initial assessment. Their decision is final.
- The documentation submitted by the learner (RPEL Application form, portfolio, CV etc.) together with the completed assessment form must be kept for 2 Years for quality assurance purposes and in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
- Portfolios of evidence should go through the same quality control procedures as exams/assignments submitted by learners completing the programme in a conventional manner.
- Submission of a portfolio does not guarantee that the applicant gains credits. Learners must continue to attend class as normal until they receive written confirmation from the lecturer / Registrar indicating their application has been accepted.

4.3.4.8 The Process for managing RPL

Learners may seek exemptions based on prior certified learning. In week 1 of each semester, learners are made aware of the RPL initiative. The process should be explained and interested applicants provided the relevant application form. Before learners apply for exemptions based on prior certified learning, the relevant lecturer should:

- Provide a description of his/her module in terms of learning outcomes, content and level.
- Explain to the learner that the module(s) the learner previously completed must be at the same level or at a higher than the current module (for example if a learner is seeking an exemption for a level 6 module, then the learner must have successfully completed a level 6 or higher module previously).
- Explain to the learner that the module previously completed must be similar in nature to the current module. If the assessor believes the learning outcomes are sufficiently similar, then an exemption may be awarded. It is at the discretion of the assessor to decide what is sufficiently

similar. If possible the learner should be able to provide a description of the module previously completed (e.g. module description or module learning outcomes)

- Explain to the learner that the Prior Certified Learning must have been achieved in a comparatively appropriate time frame (in some instances this may be in the last 3 years, 5 years or 10 years – dependent on the learning achieved) i.e. computing learning 10 years ago is of limited benefit today on a current programme – psychology outcomes may be more timeless.

- Explain to the learner that if a learner is awarded an exemption for a module, he/she is not awarded a grade but receives an X. The overall average for the year is obtained from the remaining modules completed in a conventional way.

Learners seeking exemptions/credits based on prior experiential learning. In week 1 of the semester, learners are made aware of the RPL initiative. The process should be explained and interested applicants provided the relevant application form. Exemptions based on prior experiential learning are relatively rare. However, if a learner believes he/she has met the relevant learning outcomes through experiential learning, then he/she is permitted to apply for credits by completing an RPL portfolio (or some other assessment e.g. exam, interview or demonstration). The RPL assessment should examine all learning outcomes associated with the module. Applicants must apply on or before October 1st for Semester 1 and on or before February 1st for Semester 2.

Learners seeking advanced entry based on RPL. Applicants seeking advanced entry on a programme based on prior certified learning must submit copies of certificates and exam results. Applicants may also be asked for programme/module descriptors. The assessor must ensure that the prior certified learning is at the correct level on the national framework, the correct number of credits achieved, sufficiently similar in nature and all prerequisite modules are indeed covered.

Occasionally (although very rarely) applicants may seek advanced entry to a programme based on prior experiential learning. In these circumstances, the applicant must provide sufficient evidence that he/she has indeed the required knowledge, skills and competencies associated with the modules from earlier stages of the programme. For example, an applicant may seek entry on to year 2 of a programme based on his/her prior experiential learning. In this instance, the applicant would be expected to complete a portfolio (and possibly alternative assessment techniques such as exams, interview or observation) that clearly meets the learning outcomes of modules in stage 1 of the programme.

Please see below templates for RPCL Application form and RPEL Exemption Application form.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning - Application Form

Please submit the completed form to the relevant lecturer of the module you are seeking the exemption from before October 1st for semester 1 modules and before February 1st for Semester 2 modules.

- Please use a separate application form for each exemption sought.
- The module(s) you previously completed must be similar in nature to the module you seek an exemption in.
- The module you completed previously must be at the same level or higher in the national framework of qualifications than the module you seek the exemption for.
- The Prior certified learning must have been achieved in a comparatively appropriate time frame (in some instances this may be in the last 3 years, 5 years or 10 years – dependent on the learning achieved)
- You must continue to attend the class as normal until you receive written confirmation granting an exemption from the Head of Academic Affairs or from the lecturer.
- The application form must be accompanied by copies of certificates that verify completion of prior modules/programmes of study. Also if possible a module description (e.g. Learning Outcomes) of the module you previously completed should be included so the lecturer can make comparisons.
- Learners that are awarded the exemption based on their prior certified learning will not receive a grade but will be awarded an X (overall average for the year will be based on the other modules the learner completes).

Details of the Complainant

Name:		**Student Number:**	
Telephone number:		**Email Address:**	
Module you seek exemption from			

SECTION A: Details of your prior learning (name of programme and module you previously completed, date of completion etc.)

To be completed by Lecturer (Please Tick)			
Award Exemption		Refuse Exemption	
Reason for decision			
Lecturer Name			
Lecturer Signature			
Date			

To be completed by Head of Academic Affairs (Please Tick)			
Award Exemption		Refuse Exemption	
Signed:	…………………………………	**Date:**	…………………..

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning - Exemption Application Form

Please submit the completed form to the relevant lecturer of the module you are seeking the exemption from before October 1st for semester 1 modules and before February 1st for Semester 2 modules.

- Please use a separate application form for each exemption sought.
- The experiential learning you acquired must match the learning outcomes of the module you seek an exemption in.
- You will be expected to provide evidence of your prior experiential learning via portfolio, exam or an alternative assessment mechanism.
- The Prior experiential learning must have been achieved in a comparatively appropriate time frame (in some instances this may be in the last 3 years, 5 years or 10 years – dependent on the learning achieved)
- You must continue to attend the class as normal until you receive written confirmation granting an exemption from the Head of Academic Affairs or from the lecturer.

Details of the Complainant

Name:		**Student Number:**	
Telephone number:		**Email Address:**	
Module you seek exemption from			

SECTION A: Details of your prior Experiential Learning
Indicate as appropriate

To be completed by Lecturer (Please Tick)			
Award Exemption		Refuse Exemption	
Reason for decision			
Lecturer Name			
Lecturer Signature			
Date			

To be completed by Head of Academic Affairs (Please Tick)			
Award Exemption		Refuse Exemption	
Signed:	…………………………………	**Date:**	…………………………..

4.4 Programme Monitoring & Review

4.4.1 Rationale

GBS has primary responsibility for the quality of the programmes it provides. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programmes ensures that academic quality assurance is undertaken and that continuous improvement and enhancement can be implemented. Corrective and preventative actions are identified to enhance programmes. This ensures that each student receives the best education and the best experience that Galway Business School can offer and that all is in line with the Quality Assurance and overall objectives of the school.

All programmes offered by Galway Business School are monitored on an annual basis. Galway Business School is very aware that effective monitoring will ensure greater consistency across and between programmes in related fields of learning, including but not limited to, teaching and learning methodologies, and assessment.

Galway Business School monitors to:

• Ensure that the stated aims of each programme are met and delivered

• Monitor the learner experience

• Monitor assessments to ensure the stated learning programme outcomes are being achieved

• Receive ongoing programme evaluation from learners and lecturers

• Identify best practice between lecturers and programmes

• Evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum and assessment in relation to outcomes

• Monitor student achievement and progression

• Review entry standards and attrition rates. This is undertaken in the knowledge that high non-completion rates normally indicate a problem with the programme concerned, its access criteria or its attractiveness to learners

• Identify issues for further learning enhancement or corrective action or preventative action

• Benchmark the programme against other similar programmes

4.4.2 Internal Monitoring of Programmes and Quality Assurance

4.4.2.1 Responsibility

The Programme Board is responsible for the annual monitoring of that programme, and for producing an Annual Programme Monitoring Report. The Programme Board comprises the Programme Leader, all academic staff lecturing on the programme, a learner representative, the Registrar and the Manging Director. The Programme Board meets a minimum of three times per year and liaises with other relevant personnel in the school, as appropriate, to complete the relevant sections of the report. Each lecturer produces a Module report which contributes to the Annual Programme Monitoring Report. The report is submitted by the Programme Board to the Academic Council.

Where responsibility for curriculum development and changes to syllabi is external to Galway Business School QQI validated programmes, the Programme Board collates and focuses on information relating to access, attainment, teaching strategies and attrition.

4.4.2.2 Monitoring Practice

Each programme is monitored by an ongoing examination of its delivery and outcomes. Throughout the lifetime of a programme, both learner and lecturer are given opportunities to evaluate the programme through expressing opinions and making suggestions regarding programme and learning experiences. Each programme is also evaluated in terms of its module content, assessments (internal, external), demands on the learner, a lecturer, school and the overall quality and relevance.

The Annual Programme Monitoring Report is produced based on the following information derived from the following sources:

- Previous Annual Programme Monitoring Reports
- External Examiner Reports
- Programme Board minutes
- Module reports
- Student intake, access, transfer and progression data
- Student attainment
- SSLC Committee Reports

- Lecturer Feedback

- Learner Feedback

- Ongoing Student Monitoring Reports

- Interim Feedback Reports

- Muddy Point Reports (End-of-Class Feedback on unclear point)

- End of Module Student Evaluation

- Graduate Survey (undertaken online through for example social media)

- Survey of Employers / Industry Bodies / Wider Community

The Registrar is responsible for ensuring that lecturing staff provide feedback on their modules. The Academic Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that learners complete feedback sheets at the appropriate intervals. All feedback sheets are available on Moodle. The End of Module Learner Evaluation Forms are completed anonymously. Data on access, transfer and progression and on attrition rates is produced by the Academic Coordinator for discussion at the end of year Programme Board meeting. The Registrar administers the Graduate Survey and presents results to the Programme Board.

4.4.2.3 Annual Programme Monitoring Report

The Annual Programme Monitoring Report is presented by the Programme Board to the Academic Council for full consideration and approval. The Report includes an action plan and timeline for the programme(s) under scrutiny which is monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee. The Annual Programme Monitoring Report will form part of the input into the periodic evaluation (5th year) of the programme.

4.4.3   Procedures for Programme Modification

4.4.3.1   QQI Programme Modification Procedures – Major and Minor

Recommendations arising from an Annual Programme Monitoring Report often point to proposed programme modification. This will only apply to internally controlled programmes. (This does not apply to externally validated programmes.) Galway Business School is cognisant of QQI's Core Validation Policy and Criteria which details the requirements for significant major change and minor change.

Table 4.4.3: Requirements for Significant Major and Minor Change

Minor Change	Major change
Occur annually	Incorporated into Periodic review
May be made internally	Require Revalidation
Examples: • Revised Reading lists • Provision of additional learner supports • Assessment strategies (not affecting credit • weightings)	Examples: • Change to the programme title • Module change • Change to programme learning outcomes • Changes to entry requirements

All minor modifications and proposals to any particular programme will be agreed at Academic Council level and the Programme Document will be updated with the agreed minor modifications. Minor modifications do not impact on the overall programme, module learning outcomes, the course schedule and the overall assessment strategy.

The procedure for approving minor changes to QQI validated programmes is as follows:

• the amended Programme Submission document is forwarded to the Academic Council
• once the Academic Council has approved the Programme Document, the Registrar presents the modified document and recommendations to the Awarding Body
• the Registrar corresponds as necessary with the Awarding Body, and the programme document is updated in accordance with feedback from the Awarding Body
• the final approved modified programme document becomes the current programme offering
• any modifications required to the School prospectus are implemented on the next reprint
• the website is updated

4.4.4 Procedures for Periodic Evaluation of Programmes

4.4.4.1 Objectives of Periodic Evaluation of Programmes

The objectives of the procedures set out by Galway Business School are to ensure the regular evaluation of programmes and guaranteeing that programmes are performing in accordance with relevant QQI's policies and procedures defined as:

- To analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of each validated programme, including details of learner numbers, access, progress, retention rates and success rates
- To review the development of the programmes in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy and international developments
- To evaluate the response of Galway Business School to market requirements and educational developments
- To evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback
- To evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programmes
- To evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes
- To evaluate feedback from both programme graduates and their employers
- To review any research activities in the field of learning under review and assess their impact on teaching and learning
- To evaluate projections for the following five years in the programme field of learning under review
- To consider proposals and decisions in relation to updating programmes and modules, discontinuing programmes or parts of programmes, and with proposals to develop new programmes

4.4.4.2 Overview of Periodic Evaluation of Programmes

The periodic programme evaluation can either be conducted on an individual programme or a group of related programmes. There may be a combined periodic programme evaluation for all programmes in the school. A periodic programme(s) evaluation is carried out at least once every five years, or as the approved validating body directs.

General Principles

The periodic programme evaluation is a dual process involving both internal self-evaluation and external expert evaluation following the agreement of terms of reference with the validating body.

- The internal element of a periodic programme evaluation involves Self-Evaluation of the programme, designing a plan for the subsequent five years, and modifying the programme document.
- The external element of a periodic programme evaluation involves a group of external professionals taking into consideration the evidence of the self-evaluation and creating an evaluation of the modified programme document and plan.

When examining a programme the focus is on both the effectiveness of the programme in meeting its stated aims and also the success of the learners in reaching their intended learning outcomes. The self-evaluation will culminate in a Self-Evaluation Report, including an evaluation of the programme's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and any possible actions that may be taken.

To produce the Self Evaluation Report, the Programme Board consults widely with internal and external stakeholders and evidence is compiled from the following sources:

- Annual Programme Monitoring Reports
- Programme Board Meetings
- External Examiner Reports
- Module Reports (including quantitative data on learner attendance and results; and feedback from both lecturers and learners)
- SSLC Committee Reports
- Ongoing Student Monitoring Reports
- School Alumni
- Survey of Employers / Industry Bodies / Wider Community

4.4.5 Periodic Monitoring

Internal Phase of Periodic Monitoring: Procedures for the Development of a Self-Evaluation Report

The self-evaluation process commences at the beginning of year three of the five year cycle. The Programme Board, with the Registrar, agree a schedule of tasks to be completed within a set time frame, and identify the internal and external stakeholders who need to be consulted on the merits and appropriateness of the content and delivery of the programme.

The Registrar presents the schedule for Programmatic Review to the Academic Council for approval. This schedule will summarise the process to be followed in conducting this review and will also specify when specific elements of the work will be completed and by whom they will be undertaken.

The members of the Programme Board will synthesise all relevant information and take a holistic view of each programme to evaluate their pedagogical appropriateness and to ensure that the programme(s) remain relevant to learner needs and academic and labour market needs. Physical facilities and all other resources are also evaluated.

The Programme Board meets regularly during these periods of consultation to monitor progress and process the data generated in order to assess its relevance to the evaluation. The Registrar will present progress reports at each Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Council meeting until the internal self-evaluation is completed.

A draft Self Evaluation Report is prepared in accordance with best international practice and adheres to both the School's standards and the appropriate validating body's standards. The draft Self Evaluation Report is presented by the Programme Board to the Academic Council for review. Once approved by the Academic Council, the Self Evaluation Report is sent to the Governing Body. The Governing Board examines the draft Self Evaluation Report in terms of the School's Strategic Plan.

When all appropriate committees are satisfied with the Self Evaluation Report, the Quality Assurance committee meets to consider the composition of the External Evaluation Review Group and makes recommendations to the Governing Body who are ultimately responsible for inviting panel members to participate.

External Phase of Periodic Monitoring: Peer Review of Programme Evaluation

Following the production of the Self Evaluation Report (SER), the school arranges an external evaluation conducted by a group of experts from outside the School. This Independent Review Panel comprises a suitably qualified chairperson, a secretary, a minimum of two external academic experts in the field of learning, a student representative, and representatives of industry / or the relevant profession. In the composition of the Independent Review Panel, other factors may include; gender balance, international input and academics from outside the jurisdiction.

The peer review process is held in a collaborative environment of cooperation, consultation and advice, facilitated by Galway Business School. The functions of the Independent Review Panel, as outlined in are:

- Study the Self Evaluation Report
- Visit Galway Business School and meet with faculty, learners past and present, (if possible), support staff, management, employers and any other category of internal and external stakeholders
- Clarify and verify details in the Self Evaluation Report and allow for private discussions of the panel and or review of further documentation and evidence not included in the Self Evaluation Report
- The panel will also consider how well the identified aims and objectives of Galway Business School are being met
- The Chair will provide verbal feedback to Galway Business School at the end of the visit, indicating overall conclusions, recommendations for change, and further evaluation and any associated conditions

The Chair of the Peer Review Group will provide a written report combining the evaluation of the Self Evaluation Report and the panel visit. The report should make a recommendation as to the continuing validation of the programme(s), improvements, changes, and the schedule for implementation of same.

4.4.5.1 *Procedures for Implementation of Final Evaluation Report Recommendations*

The Independent Review Report is reviewed by the Academic Council and a formal response to the Report is produced. An implementation plan to effect change amd improvements, which addresses the findings and recommendations of both the Self Evaluation Report and the Independent Review Panel is prepared by the Programme Board and the Quality Assurance Committee. This is sent to the Chair of the Independent Review Panel who then produces an Independent Evaluation Report and sends it to the Registrar. The Academic Council then submits all relevant documentation to QQI with a request for revalidation of the programme.

5 Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

5.1 Purpose

Galway Business School endeavours to provide consistency and transparency in how it recruits manages and develops its staff. The policy is holistic in its scope, covering staffing issues from prior to appointment through to the development of existing staff. The importance of consistency and transparency is to ensure that no individual is discriminated against and that all potential and current staff are fully aware of what the college expects from them in all areas of the policy.

Document Name: Staff Recruitment, Management and DevelopmentPolicy	**GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL**
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Extended by enhanced Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and by enhanced Respect and Dignity Policy	July 2019	September 2019

5.2   Introduction

Galway Business School considers the quality of its people the single most critical factor in achieving success as a teaching and learning organisation and in equipping learners with the necessary academic and life skills to take their place in the workforce and in society. GBS is committed to attracting qualified, committed and competent academic staff with the necessary expertise to meet the demands of the programmes and to support the learner in their chosen programme of study.

The selection, recruitment and retention of competent and effective staff is fundamental to the on-going success of the school. Equally, the management and development of staff is integral to ensure that they are sufficiently qualified, supported and capable of delivering the high level of quality education that GBS strives to provide for its leaners.

The policy applies to all staff who are involved in the management, administration and delivery of GBS programmes and supports staff members' contract(s) of Employment and the GBS Employee Handbook.

5.3   Staff Recruitment

The Recruitment Policy ensures that the school identifies and appoints the ideal candidate with the necessary competence to effectively teach and/or support leaners. Consideration must also be given to whether the position is new or recently vacated, why the position is needed, how it will assist the school in achieving its strategic goals and mission, how it relates to other positions in the school, and what skills and other abilities are necessary to carry out its responsibilities.

The decision to recruit an employee is made in response to an identified need. With regards to academic staff, the need to recruit new members of the lecturing team is identified by the Programme Board and/or by the Registrar. The ongoing employment needs of Galway Business School are reviewed by the Management team on a regular basis.

Once the need has been identified, a person specification and job description are produced. The person specification sets out the requirements of the position in terms of qualifications, personal skills and experience. The job description outlines the goals and objectives of the role including the main duties and the reporting relationships involved in the organisation. It is sufficiently flexible to allow the roles and responsibilities to evolve. The selection and recruitment process is signed off by the Managing Director.

For management and administration staff, the College ordinarily appoints a staff member for full-time or part-time contracts. However, should there be a need, the School may appoint a staff member to a fixed-term contract for a defined purpose such as lecturing or administrative support at particular times of the year e.g. the summer examination period. However, this does not negate the legal employment rights that are afforded to staff on fixed-term contracts, which the school fully abides by.

5.3.1   Staff Recruitment process

The step-by-step process for the recruitment of staff is as follows:

Procedure	Details
Provide rationale for any new positions	• New Academic positions must be approved by the Academic Coordinator or Registrar (whoever the recruited person is to report to) and signed off by the Managing Director • Non-academic positions must be approved by the Department Head / Line Manager and the Managing Director
	⬇
Devise a job description	The job description will include: • Essential skills, qualifications, and the experience necessary • Desired skills, qualifications, and experience necessary • Key roles and responsibilities of the position • A summary of the expected work activities • The duration and terms of employment of the position • Any additional duties (meetings, programme development etc.)
	⬇
Advertise a position (both internally and externally)	• Advertise online, through LinkedIn, the School's website, local and national newspapers, a recruitment website etc.
	⬇

Screen all applicants	• Applicants are screened to see whether they meet the minimum criteria.
Shortlist a minimum of two candidates **Call for interview**	• Any interview panel must contain at least two people, which must include the line manager of the new appointee. • Inform the interviewee that they will be required to do a presentation as part of the interview process • Use a criteria-based rating system to score each interviewee, based on previously agreed criteria (linked to job description)
Collectively choose the most suitable candidate	• The decision should be unanimous. • Where it is not, another round of interviews will be required, where the interview panel will change. • The selection decision after this round of interviews enquires a 2:1 majority in favour of an interviewee.
Check references	• A reference check may be completed by email or phone
Make an offer of employment	• Offer is made verbally, followed by a formal letter • The candidate has 7 days to respond in writing • Upon acceptance, all other interviewees will be notified of the outcome of the interview process. • A formal contract is then issued

5.4   Staff Management Process

GBS views the appropriate management of staff as integral to ensuring that the academic, professional, pedagogical and technical standards of staff are maintained and enhanced. This requires GBS to regularly review the performance of its staff and to support their development within the company. Additionally, every member of staff is provided with a contract of employment and an Employee Handbook on or before the commencement of their employment, so that they are aware of and refer to them at all stages of employment. Lecturers are provided with a Lecturer Handbook as well as the Quality Assurance Handbook location on Moodle.

To ensure that the academic, professional and technical standards of staff are maintained and enhanced, GBS:

- Reviews all job descriptions on an annual basis as part of employee appraisals to ensure their continued relevancy and currency. Such reviews will be particularly cognisant of developments within the area of the job. The reviews are conducted by the Registrar and Academic Coordinator.
- Encourages staff to join professional bodies that are related or relevant to their job. GBS pays any associated membership fee for a professional body, where this is agreed to be of benefit to the school's activities. Staff can recommend or be recommended to join professional bodies by GBS management.
- Encourages staff to attend academic conferences where the topic of the conference is of relevance to their job role. GBS will also pay for any cost of attending the conference and any associated travel expenses. These should be agreed prior to registration for the conference. Staff can recommend or be recommended to attend conferences by GBS management.
- Holds staff training sessions at least twice per year, and more often if necessary, on topics identified as benefiting the school's development. These sessions may be conducted by internal staff members or external personnel. These sessions will be scheduled by GBS management.

5.5   Staff Probationary Period

All new staff hired will serve an initial probationary period of maximum of 11 months. Performance is reviewed after 6 months by their line manager.

Depending on the performance of the individual during this probationary period, the line manager may:

- Allow the probationary period to end and inform the individual of this. The individual will be informed that they have successfully completed their probationary period. In practice, the individual's role will not change.
- Extend the period of probation for a further 5 months
- Terminate the employment of the individual

If the decision is to terminate the employment of the individual due to roles and responsibilities of the job not being met, or terminable offences as outlined in the Code of Conduct policy, due process wil be followed. This would be an untypical outcome and would only occur after repeated notifications to the employee that their performance has not met the expected standard.

5.6   Staff Appraisal and Development System

GBS is committed to supporting its staff to fulfil their job responsibilities to the best of their abilities through its Staff Appraisal and Development System. To complement this system, the College also has its own goals for its staff development initiatives. These are:

- To improve the learner experience
- To support the pedagogical approaches used by its teaching faculty
- To support the use of new technology in its teaching and learning methodology
- To support innovation in teaching methods
- To improve the efficiency of its management and administration functions
- To support research activity that contributes to the teaching and learning activities in the college

Furthermore, where the school has a new member of staff who is newly-qualified or has minimal experience, the school commits to supporting this staff member through the following mechanisms:

- Assigning that staff member with a mentor to assist them
- Reviewing their performance within 1 month of commencement in order to provide feedback to date
- Expediting and prioritising CPD training (and funding if necessary)for such staff members. Such applications will be considered outside the structure outlined in the Appraisal and Staff Development System

5.6.1   Staff Appraisal System

An annual appraisal of all staff is conducted by the Academic Coordinator and Registrar. The key elements of this system are:

- To review the staff member's work performance for the previous year
- To set goals for the following year
- To ensure coherence between staff training and development activities and GBS's strategy
- To ensure that lecturer voice and opinion is considered through out the review process
- To ensure that learner's voice is considered through the review process (through learner feedback)
- To ensure that management voice and opinion is considered through the review process

5.6.2   Staff Development System

The college is commited to the development of its staff and place great importance on the concept of staff development. However, it also acknowledges that the resources it has to commit to staff development are finite. Therefore, the College must review applications for continuous professional development (CPD) and determine which applications merit commitment of resources. The college makes this decision with regard to the following criteria:

- An application for CPD can be made formally as part of the annual appraisal.
- Applications for CPD can also be made informally to the Academic Coordinator
- The college's senior management will assess all CPD applications, and determine the outcomes of all applications, within one month of application.
- All CPD applications will be assessed under the following criteria

- o   Relevancy to the staff member's job role with the company
- o   Relevancy to GBS's strategy
- o   Relevancy to the career progression of the applicant
- o   Cost of the requested CPD activity

5.7   Staff Code of Conduct

The Staff Code of Conduct is intended to support the school's mission to provide high quality education. Furthermore, it facilitates the ethical treatment of staff, a harmonious working environment for staff and a harmonious learning environment for learners.

The central pillars of the Staff Code of Conduct are:

Integrity:

- Staff should act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work. Staff will respect the privacy of colleagues and stakeholders unless there is a legal or ethical imperative necessitating disclosure to a relevant person and/or authority.
- Staff must avoid conflicts of interests that should arise between their role with GBS and their private interests. Where there may be such a conflict it is the staff members responsibility to notify their line manager of this.
- Staff will not accept gifts from external individuals, stakeholders or learners without the consent of their line manager. All gifts received will be accounted for with Management. Cash gifts are not acceptable in any circumstances.

Values and Relationships

- Staff will be fair, reasonable and honest in their interactions with peers, learners, management and stakeholders
- Staff will be committed to quality and inclusion and respect the diversity of learners, management and stakeholders.
- Staff will uphold the reputation of the school and not bring its name into disrepute
- Staff will act in a manner that helps ensure the health and safety of peers, learners, management and stakeholders

- Staff will not intentionally act or behave in a manner that infringes upon legislation or regulations that govern their job role

- Staff will report any incident they witness where the welfare of a peer, learner, management or stakeholder is put at risk

- Staff will not intentionally have in their possession material, in any format, that is inappropriate or offensive to others.

- Staff will be professional, courteous and respectful in all communications with peers, learners, management and stakeholders

- Staff will not present to work in a manner that impedes their ability to perform their roles as expected.

- Staff will respect the confidentially of any information that they may receive during the course of their duties with the school

- Staff are encouraged to be open and transparent in sharing their opinion of the management, operations and governance of the school. Such opinions shall be discussed in a collegial, respectful and professional manner, and can be made by the staff member without fear of reprisal.

Practice

- Staff will fulfil the duties assigned to them to the best of their ability

- Staff will communicate to the relevant person in a timely manner if their availability for a scheduled task/duty/event has changed

- Staff will work in a collaborative and collegial manner, when required, to effectively meet the goals of the school

- Staff will support the school, in as much as is responsible, in improving and enhancing its education provision

- Staff will act in the best interest of the school

Where an aspect(s) of this Code of Conduct is not fulfilled, the staff member may avail of the grievance procedure or be sanctioned under the school's disciplinary process. The school's grievance and disciplinary processes are designed to protect the interests of both the school and its staff, learners and stakeholders.

The grievance and disciplinary process aims to ensure that:

- Staff members are treated fairly and without prejudice

- Staff members have an assumption of innocence until definitively proven otherwise

- Staff members will be given full opportunity to provide their version of events, with any extenuating circumstances taken into account

Where misconduct has been identified in relation to a staff member and is deemed to be major, a staff member will be reprimanded through the disciplinary process outlined below. Ordinarily, staff will progress through the stages of the disciplinary process in order unless there is a justifiable reason to skips a stage(s).

5.8   Respect & Dignity

GBS is a multi-cultural community that values and promotes equality and diversity across its organisation. The school does not tolerate unlawful discriminatory practices. GBS believes that its entire staff, learners, visitors, contractors, sub-contractors and others associated with the school have the right to enjoy their work and or study in an environment free from harassment or bullying.

The policy to promote respect and dignity sets out our commitment to the promotion of a school that recognises and respects individual differences and that rejects harassment or bullying as destructive to the recipient, the harasser or bully, and the school. Every employee and learner of the school should be aware that all forms of harassment or bullying are unacceptable and that everyone has a duty to behave in an acceptable and appropriate manner.

The policy provides a set of guidelines for any member of the school community who experiences incidents of harassment or bullying. The policy provides a number of options to resolve incidents that may arise. The policy requires that colleagues adhere to professional standards of behaviour and to take appropriate action in relation to other employees or learners who exhibit unacceptable behaviour.

An individual who experiences harassment or bullying in the course of his/her work or study will have the support of the school in putting a stop to the behaviour. Complaints will be addressed speedily and will be treated with fairness and sensitivity and in as confidential manner as possible.

5.8.1   Defining harassment, sexual harassment or bullying

5.8.1.1   Harassment

Harassment is any act or conduct (including spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material), if the action or conduct is unwelcome to the recipient and could reasonably be regarded, in relation to the relevant characteristic of the recipient, as offensive humiliating, or intimidating. Harassment is covered in legislation by the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and 2004. The issue of harassment is also dealt with under Equal Status Act, 2000 and 2004. Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. For the purpose of this policy all references to harassment include any activity that can be classified as sexual harassment.

5.8.1.2   Bullying

Bullying is any form of repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work, but, as a once off incident, it is not considered to be bullying.

5.8.2   What constitutes harassment or bullying

There are many examples of harassment or bullying. To constitute harassment under the legislation, the behaviour must be reasonably regarded as offensive, humiliating, or intimidating to the recipient. A single incident of unwanted behaviours of a sexual nature can be viewed as harassment. While some behaviour may be overt such as verbal abuse and the threat of physical violence, it can also be covert including subtle intimidation through inappropriate comments about personal appearance, constant criticisms, isolation and/or exclusion, or unrealistic, embarrassing or degrading demands. The following is a non-exhaustive listing of examples of behaviours which can be viewed as harassment or bullying.

- Abusive, insulting or offensive language by one or more persons to another or others.
- Behaviour or language which frightens, humiliates, belittles or degrades, including criticism that is delivered with a raised voice,
- Inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, lifestyle or their family;
- Teasing or regularly making someone bear the brunt of pranks or practical jokes;
- Interfering with a person's personal effects or work equipment
- Physical assaults or threats
- Behaviour that undermines, treats less favourably, or disempowers others. Examples may include: overloading a person with work, setting timelines that are difficult to achieve or constantly changing deadlines, setting tasks that are beyond a person's skill level, ignoring or isolating a person, deliberately denying access to information, consultation or resources, or unfair treatment in relation to accessing entitlements such as leave or training
- Inappropriate written communication including letters, emails or telephone text messaging

5.8.3 What does not constitute harassment or bullying?

It is important to differentiate between the exercise of a person's legitimate authority, as opposed to harassment or bullying. Line managers and supervisors have the right to manage, direct and govern how work is done, and a responsibility to monitor workflow and to manage performance. The exercise of this right is not harassment or bullying.

Disciplinary action taken against staff or learners does not constitute harassment or bullying where the appropriate processes have been applied and communicated in a professional manner, examples of which follow:

- Constructive feedback and /or advice on performance or professional behaviour are appropriate and reasonable management actions.
- Critical comments indicating performance deficiencies do not constitute harassment or bullying where the comments are objective and communicated professionally.
- Constructive and appropriately delivered feedback which is intended to assist staff to improve their performance or the standard of their behaviour.
- Constructive and appropriately delivered academic feedback to learners. Any such feedback should be in keeping with the school regulations.

5.8.4 Nine grounds of prohibited discrimination - as outlined in the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and 2004

- Gender : A man, a woman or a transsexual person (note: specific protection is provided for pregnant employees or in relation to maternity leave);
- Civil Status: Single, married, civil partnered, separated, divorced or widowed;
- Family Status: A parent of a person under 18 years or the resident primary carer or a parent of a person with a disability;
- Sexual orientation: Gay, lesbian, bisexual or heterosexual
- Religion: Different religious belief, background, outlook or none;
- Age: This applies to all ages above the maximum age at which a person is statutorily obliged to attend school;
- Disability: This is broadly defined including people with physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive or emotional disabilities and a range of medical conditions;
- Race: A particular race, skin colour, nationality or ethnic origin;

- Membership of the Traveller community: People who are commonly called Travellers, who are identified both by Travellers and others as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, identified historically as a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland.

5.8.5 Impact of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying

Harassment or bullying can lead to serious health consequences and individual distress for those, affected, and cause organisational disruption with substantial financial and other consequences for the school. Indicators include disrupted teamwork; poor morale; reduced student and staff loyalty/commitment; impact on recruitment/retention, increased absenteeism, sick leave, staff turnover and poor employer public image.

Harassment or bullying can impact on health as indicated by distress, anxiety, sleep disturbance; sense of isolation; depression; loss of self-esteem/self-confidence; impaired ability to make decisions; physical symptoms of ill health e.g. headaches, nausea; deterioration in family/social relationships and increased risk of injury in the work/study environment.

At an organisational level, harassment or bullying may result in an unsafe work environment, which can lead to prosecution under Section 8.2 b of the Health Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2005/a1005.pdf).

5.8.6 Victimisation

A complainant will not be victimised or subjected to any form of sanction for making a complaint in good faith, nor will any individual be victimised or subjected to sanctions for giving evidence in proceedings or giving notice of their intention to do so. No element of penalty will attach to a complainant whose complaint is found to demonstrate that:

- Harassment or bullying did take place
- Harassment or bullying did not take place
- It was not possible to determine whether harassment or bullying occurred

5.8.7   What is expected of members of the GBS community

5.8.7.1   7.1. GBS Appropriate behaviour guidelines

In accordance with the general guidance and the specific principles set out in this policy, appropriate behaviour for members of the GBS community is one which recognises the right to dignity of all individuals, and imposes a duty of respect on them, whereby members of the GBS community are treated with consideration, courtesy and respect, without harassment, or physical or verbal abuse, or actions that can be interpreted as bullying or demeaning of others.

In view of GBS's stated commitment to equality of treatment for all individuals in the school community, all its members are expected to act with tolerance, sensitivity, respect, and impartiality towards others. This is especially so where there may be a variation in the interpretation of acceptable behaviour resulting from different backgrounds and cultures. It particularly applies also where a power imbalance exists. Power imbalances can exist in many forms including seniority, membership of a group and level of knowledge about systems or processes.

GBS takes all allegations of harassment or bullying very seriously. However, every staff member and learner of the school should be aware that where, following an investigation, it is found that a complaint is malicious, frivolous or vexatious, the complainant may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in serious cases, particularly in cases where the good name and reputation of another member of the school community has been unjustifiably attacked.

5.8.7.2   Responsibilities of all members of the GBS community

All members of the GBS community have a duty to behave and conduct themselves so as to respect the right of others to dignity, courtesy and respect at all times. All members should refrain from engaging in acts of harassment or bullying and work to deliver a positive environment in which to conduct all school activities.

Every member of the GBS community is responsible for safeguarding his/her own safety and welfare, and that of his/her colleagues who may be affected by his/her actions, or omissions, while at work or on school premises. Therefore each person has a duty not to place the safety, health and welfare of colleagues at risk by engaging in harassment or bullying, and where in a position of authority, to take the appropriate steps to stop bullying or harassment if or when it occurs.

Members of the GBS community should also cooperate by providing any relevant information when an allegation of harassment or bullying is being looked into whether at an informal or formal stage. Any person who believes they are being subjected to harassment or bullying is encouraged and, indeed expected to report such incidents and to engage in a co-operative manner with any process undertaken with a view to reaching an effective resolution or having the matter fully investigated.

5.8.7.3 Responsibilities of Managing Director and Registrar/Head of School

GBS requires all staff members with management responsibilities, where practicable, to provide and maintain a working environment in which their staff and learners are not exposed to hazards, of either physical or psychological nature. Managers who fail to act on reported incidents of harassment or bullying may be in breach of the GBS appropriate behaviour guidelines as outlined above in Section 5.9. Managers have a responsibility to manage in such a way as to protect the safety, health and welfare of employees. This means accepting responsibility for preventing bullying at work and endeavouring to resolve alleged cases of bullying at work.

All staff with management responsibility will promote the policy and treat complaints seriously and address them promptly, confidentially and impartially in accordance with the informal complaint resolution procedure. The emphasis is on promoting as early and as informal a resolution as is possible.

When a manager has witnessed or has been advised of inappropriate behaviour, appropriate remedial action should be taken as outlined in this policy. There is a responsibility on the manager to manage and facilitate a resolution wherever possible. Managers will ensure that complainants are not victimised for making a complaint in good faith.

5.8.7.4 Where does the Policy apply

This policy applies to all areas of the GBS's operations and academic courses. Any member of the school community who is found to have harassed or bullied may be subject to the appropriate staff or learner disciplinary action and/or other sanctions up to and including dismissal.

Where the conduct complained of is violent or criminal in nature, the Gardaí will be contacted without undue delay. In addition, in the case of staff, an immediate formal complaint should be made to the Registrar and Managing Director. Learners should make an immediate formal complaint to the Academic Co-ordinator or Registrar.

5.8.8 Contact people

For any member of the GBS community who feels that they have experienced harassment, bullying or discriminatory behaviours there can be a heightened sense of isolation. In order to ensure that staff and students can determine the appropriate way to deal with the issue there are a number of contact people than can be approached to support the individual while they address the issue.

Contact persons for staff include:

- Head of Teaching & Learning
- Registrar/Head of School
- Managing Director
- CEO

Contact person for learners include:

- Academic Co-ordinator
- Registrar/Head of School

5.8.8.1 Policy Advisors

The policy advisors are GBS staff members who are appointed by the Managing Director to help to support staff as part of the informal process under the remit of this policy. This can be done by

- listening to your experiences
- providing support to help resolve the problem
- giving information and support on the processes covered by this policy and also other supports available within the school

5.8.9 Implementation of Policy to Promote Respect and Dignity

The policy will be communicated to all members of the GBS community. The policy will be available on the GBS learning and teaching platform 'Moodle', 'Teacher Handbook, and 'Learner Guide: Learner Code of Conduct and Discipline' and will be communicated to and distributed to new employees in the GBS's induction process and in training courses. It will be communicated to incoming learners during the induction process.

The school places particular responsibility upon Registrar/Heads of School, as well as managers to make every reasonable effort to eliminate harassment or bullying of staff and learners within their

areas. They must ensure that they and those reporting to them are aware that harassment or bullying are regarded as being completely unacceptable forms of behaviour and will not be tolerated in the GBS community. Definitions of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying behaviours are detailed in section 1.2 of this Policy.

The school is committed to monitoring reported incidents of all forms of harassment or bullying in the workplace. This will be carried out through the Registrar. To allow the Registrar to report on an annual anonymised basis, any incident of harassment or bullying should be recorded and returned to the Managing Director.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis for effectiveness in its implementation and operation. This will be done in line with changes in statute law, relevant case law and other developments, and in line with the school's experience.

The Registrar will present an annual report on the operation of the policy to the Managing Director and CEO.

5.8.10 The process for dealing with incidents of harassment or bullying

5.8.10.1 Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout any investigation to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the requirements of a fair investigation. All individuals involved in the informal or formal complaints procedures (especially policy advisors) are expected to maintain the utmost confidentiality on the subject. However, GBS will of course be obliged to disclose the details of any complaint to such persons and to such extent as is necessary to properly and fairly investigate the complaint.

5.8.11 Informal, GBS Resolution Process

5.8.11.1 STEP 1 - Determining whether harassment or bullying has taken place

In order to help staff or learners determine whether they are being harassed or bullied it is recommended that they complete a self-audit check list (p.107). If after having completed the self-audit and sought advice the staff member or learner feel they have a valid complaint, it is recommended that they should proceed to step 2 of the informal resolution process. As part of the informal process it is recommended that any staff member or learner should seek advice and guidance from one of the contact people.

What are the facts?

Harassment or bullying can sometimes be difficult to prove. It is therefore important for a complainant to keep a careful record of:

- when and where incidents occurred
- what was said/done
- how it made them feel
- who was involved
- potential witnesses
- names/details of people who will support their claims

Communication Breakdown:

The issue may result from a communication breakdown, an interpersonal dispute, or a lack of clarity around roles in teams. If this is the situation, by talking to the other party about the difficulties that are being experienced, a resolution may be possible. It is important to stick to facts. In this situation staff or learners should talk about the impact that events have had on them. This can be illustrated by examples. It is important that any meeting should be open and a two-way frank discussion. The meeting should be held in a private space away from the work or study environment.

It is important to remember that a one off incident does not constitute bullying and any bullying behaviour must be of a repeated nature in order to be investigated.

5.8.11.2 STEP 2 - Request that the behaviour stop, Approach the person directly

Unless a staff member or learner feels that they are unable to, or where they feel it may be dangerous, uncomfortable or stressful for them to do so, they should initially discuss the matter with the person/people concerned and request that the unwanted behaviour stop. The complainant should raise the issue as soon as possible after it has happened. Raising the issue with the individual provides them with an opportunity to desist from the complained of behaviour, which they may not even be aware of.

Once the complainant has made the person engaging in the complained of behaviour aware of its effect, it is frequently the case that the latter desists from it and appropriate relations are restored between the parties. However, if the informal process is unsuccessful or deemed inappropriate the complainant may decide to go to step 3 –facilitated resolution or to step 4 – formal resolution process.

5.8.11.3 STEP 3 - Attempt a resolution through Facilitation

Should the direct approach either not have the desired effect or not be possible, the complainant should raise the matter with either their line manager or the line manager of the person engaging in the unwanted behaviour. In the case of learners this should be done with their programme leader or Academic Co-ordinator. In the event that the person who is allegedly harassing or bullying is the line manager or programme chair another person in authority within the GBS should be contacted (i.e. Academic Co-ordinator, Registrar, Academic Administrator)

In situations where a solution has not been reached following the initial process the option of a facilitated meeting should be put forward. Where this involves a staff member, the Registrar may facilitate the meeting. Where the claimant is a learner, the Academic Co-ordinator may facilitate a meeting.

Through facilitation a solution may be found at which point the issue will be deemed to have been resolved. The line manager should monitor the work environment to ensure that the unwanted behaviour has ceased. Where facilitation does not provide a solution the complainant may decide to proceed to step 4, the formal complaint procedure.

5.8.11.4 Step 4 - Formal GBS Resolution Process - Staff

In the event that the informal processes have not proved successful in restoring a working relationship the complainant may wish to lodge a formal complaint.

Formal Resolution procedure for complaints against a member of staff

- Write to the Managing Director with full details of the complaint and copies of all or any relevant notes of the alleged behaviours. Although a complainant may decide to access the formal resolution process at any time where an allegation of harassment or bullying is made, where an Informal Resolution has not been attempted, the Managing Director may decide to explore other options with the complainant prior to proceeding to the investigation stage.
- On receipt of the complaint the Managing Director will provide details of the complaint to the person named by the complainant, who for these purposes will be called the respondent. The respondent should return a written response to the allegations within 5 working days.
- The Managing Director and CEO set up an investigation panel.
- The names of the investigation panel will be provided to both parties. Either party may raise an objection to a member of the panel based on either conflict of interest or potential for lack of impartiality. Any objection will be assessed by the CEO whose decision will be final.
- The Investigation panel meet separately with both parties and provide them with the opportunity to outline the issues as they relate to the behaviours complained of in the complainant's written complaint. The panel will also meet with any witnesses who can provide corroborative evidence. The aim of the investigation panel should be to complete this process within 10 working days.
- Either party may be accompanied during these meetings.
- Once the investigation is underway both parties are expected to make themselves available in order to deal with the issue as expediently as possible. This is in recognition of the fact that a protracted process can cause additional stress and anxiety to both parties.
- If the investigation panel consider that it is necessary to do so it may in exceptional circumstances convene a joint meeting with the complainant and the respondent with a view to assisting in the determination of any facts in issue or dispute between the parties.
- The Investigation panel submit findings to the CEO within 5 working days of completing their investigation.
- Both parties are provided with a written report

- Where any disciplinary or other action needs to be taken as a result of the findings of the investigation they will be processed through the HR policies and procedures.

- The panel should endeavour to complete the investigation within 30 working days; however, this may be reviewed by the panel in light of availability of witnesses or scheduling difficulties. Should the complainant decide to withdraw the complaint it will not be possible to reactivate it or the resolution process for the same issue.

Should the complainant withdraw from the process, the respondent or the investigating committee may request that the investigation continue to provide a finding in relation to the complaint. This is to ensure that any member of the GBS community, accused of behaviour which breaches the terms of the policy to promote respect and dignity, has the opportunity to answer the charge and receive a formal determination from the investigating committee.

Potential Outcomes of a Formal Complaint Process

The investigation panel can only make recommendations with respect to the validity of the claim put forward by the complainant. The panel may find in its view:

- Harassment or bullying did take place

- Harassment or bullying did not take place

- The behaviour of one or other or both parties contributed to the breakdown in working relations

- No harassment or bullying was evident and the claim appears to be malicious or vexatious

In a case where harassment or bullying is found, or the claim is vexatious the existing GBS disciplinary processes will be used to address the issue. Depending on the seriousness of the behaviour the school may decide to use any stage of these disciplinary processes.

5.8.12 Formal GBS Resolution Process - Learner

The process outlined in this document will apply in all cases where learners have a complaint concerning a member of GBS staff. Where issues arise between learners, resolution can be attempted by mediation through the Academic Co-ordinator.

In the event that a member of GBS staff has a complaint concerning a learner, the issue should be raised with the Registrar. This may result in a formal submission to the Learner Disciplinary Committee.

5.8.12.1 Support for Complainants of alleged Harassment or Bullying

The school views violations of this policy on respect and dignity in the workplace very seriously. The policy has been formulated in the spirit of promoting equality and preventing behaviour which is damaging to an individual's well-being and his or her ability to work effectively.

Where a member of the GBS community is found to have been subjected to behaviour which is harassing and/or sexual harassment and/or bullying in nature, counselling support will be made available. Such support will be available to staff through the Managing Director, and to learners through the Student Counselling Service.

5.8.12.2 Advice if you are accused of bullying or harassment

A staff member accused of harassment or bullying may seek support or advice from GBS support areas such as Registrar, Managing Director, Director of Studies (Equality Officer).

Learners may wish to consult the Equality Office. As part of the process of dealing with the accusation, it is recommended that the person accused complete the self-audit checklist for harassment or bullying which assists to reflect on behaviour, define the problem, and determine if the behaviours fall into the category of workplace harassment or bullying.

Where a complaint has reached the formal investigation stage, a person accused of harassment or bullying has the opportunity to respond to any allegation where this is relevant and at the appropriate stage of the procedure. They must be given a clear written account of the allegation so as to be in a position to respond to the allegation and to state their case.

5.8.13 Right to Appeal

In the event that either party can demonstrate that the investigation process was flawed or compromised, then they may appeal and/or request the Managing Director to appoint an external adjudicator. On hearing the appeal, the nominated appeals hearing officer or external adjudicator will report to the Managing Director, who will then decide whether to uphold the appeal.

5.8.14 Remedies available under the Employment Equality Act, 1998 & 2004

Using the Complaints Procedure will not affect the complainant's right to make a complaint under the Employment Equality Acts, 1998 & 2004 or the Equal Status Acts 2000 & 2004.

5.8.15 Disciplinary Action and Penalties

Penalties may be applied in accordance with the disciplinary procedure set out in the GBS 'Learners Code of Discipline' and/or the employee's contract of employment.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

FOUR STEP RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR BREACH OF RESPECT & DIGNITY POLICY

Outline of resolution process

This resolution process focuses on trying to re-establish a good working or study environment for any member of the GBS community following an experience of harassment or bullying. The resolution process comprises of four steps listed below. It is recommended that, where possible, the informal part of the process steps one to three, be used. Note: For cases of bullying between learners all aspects of the informal resolution process should be attempted through the existing student structures provided by the Academic Co-ordinator.

Step One

Assess whether harassment or bullying has happened. Use the self-audit checklist to help with this process. Should you prefer to discuss the options contact a policy advisor or the Academic Co-ordinator for more information.

Step Two:

Approach the individual directly and request them to immediately stop the offending behaviour. If it is not possible to approach the individual and the informal process is being followed bring the matter to the attention of the individuals' line manager and request an informal resolution.

Step Three:

Facilitated or mediated solution attempted. Where possible a locally facilitated solution should be attempted.

Step Four:

In the event that an informal resolution process has failed or a member of the GBS community wishes to proceed to a formal investigation of a complaint, the formal resolution investigation process will be initiated.

While it is not necessary to follow the steps sequentially it is recommended that all steps should be attempted prior to entering a formal process. A complainant's decision, to bypass the informal stages, for whatever reason, should not reflect negatively on his or her complaint in the formal stages.

The guiding principle of the entire process will be one of fairness to each party. When it is necessary to proceed to a formal complaint, it should be made at the earliest possible date in writing to the relevant GBS designated office holder

- Where a member of staff is involved contact the Managing Director
- Where a learner is involved contact the Registrar/Head of School
- Where a visitor to the campus is involved contact the Managing Director

Incidents involving Senior Management

In the event that any member of senior management is the subject of the complaint the GBS Managing Director should be contacted directly. Where the Managing Director is the subject of complaint formal complaints should be made directly to the CEO.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

SELF-AUDIT: CHECKLIST FOR COMPLAINANT

Experiences of harassment or bullying can be difficult to define and evidence may differ between people and work situations, and can arouse a range of emotional responses. It is therefore recommended to complete this checklist which is designed to assist you to reflect upon your situation, define the problem, determine if your experience falls into the category of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying, and identify relevant school policies and courses of action available to you. The checklist is a tool for your personal reflection and is not recorded or reviewed by any other person unless you choose to disclose it. In considering options to resolve your current situation you should consider the following, or discuss these points with an appropriate contact person or manager.

- Does the behaviour I am concerned about meet the definition of harassment/bullying in the GBS policy document?
- What is the impact of the behaviour on me?
- Would a reasonable person consider the behaviour to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening?
- Has the behaviour I am concerned about been repeated?
- Was the behaviour I am concerned about part of the normal disciplinary or performance feedback procedure at work? Was the feedback given in an appropriate and respectful manner?
- Have I read the GBS Policy as a basis for considering my options?
- If I do not believe my experience can be defined as bullying or harassment could the behaviour be seen as workplace conflict and if so, have I explored the options available to me for resolution of these issues?
- Can I resolve the situation or stop the behaviour by talking to the person directly?
- Have I informed the other person that the behaviour is unacceptable in terms of the GBS's policies and procedures and must stop?
- If I am unable to discuss the matter directly with the person, could I discuss the matter with his or her supervisor/manager?
- Were there witnesses to the behaviour?
- Have I kept a diary about the behaviour including times, places, names of witnesses?
- What are the possible consequences, if any, of making a complaint?
- What do I want to achieve from making a complaint?
- How do I cope with the behaviour if I decide not to make a complaint?
- Have I discussed the situation and options with someone I trust?

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

SELF-AUDIT: CHECKLIST FOR A RESPONDENTS (person accused of bullying)

Experiences of harassment or bullying can be difficult to define and evidence, may differ between people and work situations, and can arouse a range of emotional responses. For a person accused of harassment or bullying this can be as stressful as for the complainant. It is therefore recommended to complete this checklist which is designed to assist you to reflect upon your situation, define the problem, and consider whether any of your behaviours might be perceived as bullying or harassment. The checklist is a tool for your personal reflection and is not recorded or reviewed by any other person unless you choose to disclose it. In considering options to resolve your current situation you should consider the following, or discuss these points with an appropriate contact person or manager.

- Have I read the school's policy as a basis for defining harassment, sexual harassment and/or bullying and do I understand the school's policy and procedures?
- Could a reasonable person consider any of my behaviour to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening?
- Is it possible that the tone or volume of my voice or my body language could ever be perceived as offensive humiliating or threatening?
- Could my communication or management style ever be perceived as offensive, humiliating intimidating or threatening by someone else?
- When I feel angry, stressed or anxious, could my feelings be exhibited in a way that others might find offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening?
- Could the way in which I provide feedback on people's work, or monitor their performance, ever be perceived as overly critical or excessive by someone else?
- Have I excluded a particular staff member or learner from essential information or meetings?
- Could targets or deadlines I have set be perceived by others as impossible?
- Having read the policy could my behaviour be perceived as fitting with the definition of bullying or harassment?
- Is it possible that my behaviour towards the complainant has been repeated?
- Do I have any records of previous interactions I have had with the complainant?
- Was the behaviour that has been perceived as harassment or bullying part of the normal disciplinary or performance feedback procedure?
- Have I discussed the situation and options with someone I trust?

5.9   Grievance Procedure

Where an employee believes any part of their Contract of Employment and/or Employee Handbook or the central pillars of The Code of Conduct has been breached in any way they are entitled to avail of the Grievance Procedure. The Grievance Procedure ensures their interests as well as the Colleges interests and those of the other staff, learners and stakeholders.

GBS has both an informal and formal Grievance Procedure to ensure staff can raise a grievance as regards any conduct, decision or action taken by the College or any person associated.

5.9.1   Grievance Procedure (Informal)

The Informal Grievance Procedure is as follows:

- Staff are encouraged to approach their line manager in the first instance to arrange a meeting to discuss and attempt to resolve and issues in a timely manner.
- Should the grievance be with the member of staff's line manager, they are entitled to make an informal complaint to either the Academic Co-ordinator or Registrar in an attempt to resolve any issues in a timely manner.
- Should a member of staff be dissatisfied with the process or outcomes of the informal grievance procedure, they may proceed to the formal grievance procedure.
- Should a member of staff not wish to avail of the informal grievance procedure, they can proceed straight to the formal grievance procedure

5.9.2   Grievance Procedure (Formal)

The formal Grievance Procedure is as follows:

- The staff member will be required to set their formal complaint out in writing to their line manager (or other member of management if the complaint pertains to the employee's line manager)

- The member of staff will be invited to a meeting where the issue will be discussed, and a reasonable timeframe set out for resolution. The staff member is entitled to be accompanied by a colleague at this meeting. The meeting will be minuted.

- An investigation will take place by management. This may entail meeting with other staff, gathering of documentation etc.

- A meeting will be held where the staff member (and an optional accompanying colleague) will be issued with an outcome. The outcome can be appealed to the Managing Director if necessary and if the employee is still dissatisfied, they can then choose to seek recourse through external bodies.

5.10 Disciplinary Process

Ordinarily a staff member will move sequentially through the Disciplinary Process illustrated in figure 5.10. Failure to improve on a previous stage within the period outlined, will result in the next stage of the process. While it is most likely that the stages of the process will happen sequentially, there may be instances that warrant a stage(s) to be skipped. This will typically be in the event of the staff member committing an act that could be defined as gross misconduct, or when there have been additional problems added to the current ones under review. Gross misconduct is anything that:

- Can be described as a serious dereliction of duty
- Causes intentional harm to someone else
- Intentionally brings harm to the college's name and/or reputation
- Causes intentional damage to the College's facilities
- Deliberately misrepresents the reality of the college's operations

Figure 5.10: Disciplinary Process

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┌──────────────┐
│   Verbal     │    •Record of warning kept on file
│   Warning    │            for 12 months
└──────────────┘
       ↓
    ┌──────────────┐
    │ First Written│    •Record of warning kept on file
    │   Warning    │            for 12 months
    └──────────────┘
           ↓
        ┌──────────────┐
        │ Final Written│    •Record of warning kept on file
        │   Warning    │            for 12 months
        └──────────────┘
               ↓
            ┌──────────────┐
            │  Suspension  │
            └──────────────┘
                   ↓
                ┌──────────────┐
                │   Dismissal  │
                └──────────────┘
                       ↓
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │    Appeal    │
                    └──────────────┘
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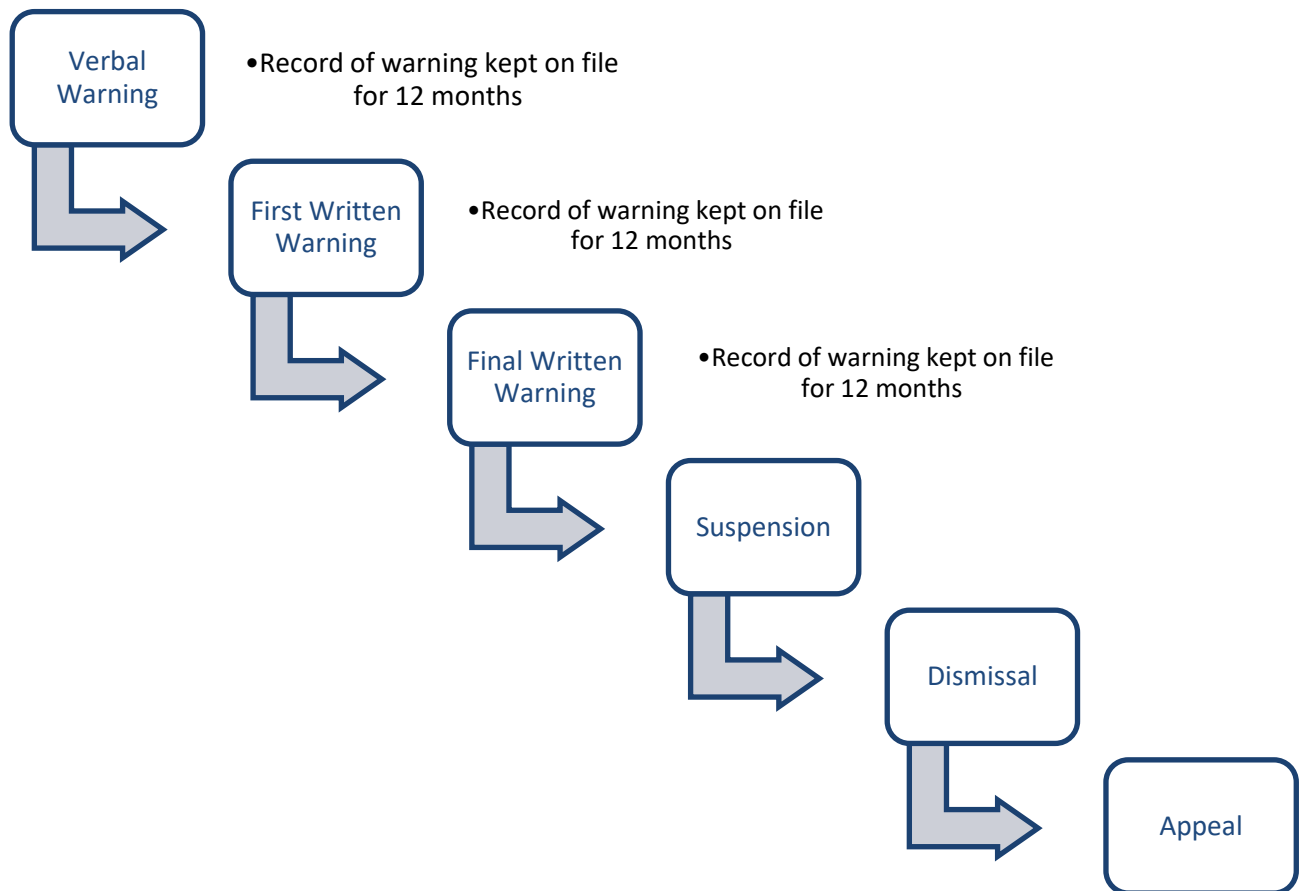
Should a staff member feel that they have been unfairly disciplined, they have the right to appeal the discipline decision. The appeals process is as follows:

- Any appeal should state the grounds on which the appeal is being made and include all previously involved decision makers.

- Should there be grounds for an appeal, GBS will arrange for an appeal hearing to be facilitated. This hearing will be attended by the Managing Director and a senior manager, the appellant and a person invited, at the discretion of the appellant.

- The hearing will note the argument by the appellant and will consider the documented reasons for the disciplinary action.

- The appeal committee will consist of 3 members of GBS senior management. They will determine a decision that must be agreed by at least a 2:1 ratio.

The possible outcomes are:
- To uphold the original disciplinary decision
- To overturn the original disciplinary decision
- To amend the original disciplinary decision

Possible Appeal Decisions		
Uphold	**Overturn**	**Amend**
The appellant will be notified of this in writing and informed of the reasons for upholding the decision.	The appellant will be notified of this and informed as to the reasons for this decision. Any note of the disciplinary action will also be removed from the staff member's file. Should the overturned disciplinary decision have been a dismissal, the staff member will be offered their original job back. Should they decline this, the staff member and the College will agree a compensatory outcome.	The appellant will be notified of this in writing and informed of the reasons for this decision The options for amendment available to the college are: • A different disciplinary action at a higher or lower stage of the disciplinary procedure • An informal rather than formal disciplinary action taken

6 Teaching and Learning Policy

6.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to ensure the quality of the learning experience offered by the school. The learning experience is inclusive of the learning facilitated in the classroom on VLE, how programmes are taught and delivered by the school, as well as the learning environment offered by the school. This policy, therefore, establishes the Teaching and Learning Strategy within Galway Business School and details the services and resources available to students and staff.

Document Name: Teaching & Learning Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing body	
Review frequency: Annually	

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the QQI	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Policy restructured, policy owner specified, the process for evaluating QA outlined	July 2019	September 2019

6.2 Rationale

The Teaching and Learning Strategy at GBS is informed by the QQI Award Standards, European Standards and Guidelines, the National Framework of Qualifications, and the 'National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030' (Hunt Report), along with stakeholder engagement with lecturers, students and employers on both how students learn and what lifelong skills they need to acquire for the world of work. The main purpose of the strategy is:

- Preparation for sustainable employment
- Preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies
- Personal Development
- The development and maintenance, of a broad advanced knowledge base achieved through teaching, learning and research

6.3 Teaching & Learning Strategy

The Teaching and Learning Strategy at Galway Business School takes account of continuing developments in Irish and international development in Higher Education. Our mission is to transform our students for individual excellence and global citizenship. 'Transformation requires curiosity, courage and commitment – qualities that we seek to develop in our students. Armed with these qualities, our students will not only understand the world of business, they will also be capable of making it better'.

Galway Business School recognises that the development of an academic ethos to foster student-centred learning is at the core of its mission. The School's teaching and learning strategy has two primary dimensions, namely (i) students and (ii) lecturers, underpinned by rigorous evaluation and reporting systems.

Galway Business School's Strategic Plan (2015 - 2020) closely mirrors the mission for higher education in Ireland, as documented in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (Hunt Report). Like the Hunt Report, our strategy looks at how we can pursue ambitious yet realistic objectives in terms of three interconnected core strands - teaching and learning, research, and engagement. We consider these strands as underpinning the strategy of Galway Business School.

Figure 2: GBS Strategic Plan

In addition to this, and corroborated by assertions in the Hunt Report, internationalisation is another core theme at GBS. These core themes are supported by a solid quality assurance function, which is fundamental to all GBS' core and supporting functions. Specifically in relation to Teaching & Learning, it explores how GBS ensures that its students can have an excellent teaching and learning experience facilitated by a high-quality learning environment, with state-of-the-art learning resources.

The commitment to flexible learning modes provides the opportunity for wider participation and fairness of access for learners. Galway Business School is well placed to provide this capacity as the private sector can and will adapt more quickly to market demands.

6.3.1 Teaching and Learning Strategy Goals and Objectives

Our Teaching and Learning Strategy is based on a set of key goals with specific objectives for learning, teaching and assessment. These take account of external reference points of knowledge, skills and competencies as stated in QQI Awards Standards. These include but are not limited to:

- Learning as a skill
- Student success and progression

- Competence-based learning

- Flexible approaches to learning

- Internationally relevant inclusive curriculum

- Research informed curriculum

- Assessment to support learning

- Readiness for Employability

- Academic and pastoral learner support

- Staff development in teaching and learning

- Research

Teaching and assessment methods at GBS enable students from a range of backgrounds to discover, exploit and build on their strengths. GBS's teaching approaches are learner centred and reflect different learning styles and different disciplinary areas. These teaching approaches are both inclusive of and complemented by e-learning opportunities (through a list of e-activities), self-directed learning, problem-based learning, and collaborative projects. This facilitates the teachers 'need to stimulate active, not passive, learning and to encourage students to be critical, creative thinkers, with the capacity to go on learning after their college days are over' as recommended by Hunt (p. 54).

The main format of teaching in Galway Business School is classroom based teaching supported by the VLE (Moodle) as outlined in the contact hours on approved programme schedules. The focus of the teaching methods employed support learning and the learner, through helping the learner understand how to use resources. There are dedicated modules around learning skills and these areincluded at every stage and module, thus enabling students to achieve the learning outcomes of their programmes and modules.

6.3.2 Digital Capacity

Given the increasing transformation of 'digital' capacity Galway Business School aims to meet the expectations of digitally empowered students to help them better engage and enhance their learning experience. Educating students on digital capacity highlights:

- Flexibility and Accessibility
- How to keep pace with a global world

- Awareness of their digital footprint

- New ways of working

- How to reach out to other students

Galway Business School enhances the student experience by embedding digital technologies, resources and skills in all elements of their planning techniques, together with using a collaborative approach to student and lecturer learning, as can be seen from Figure 6.3.2 The three attributes of Galway Business School's Digital Capacity Plan: Teaching and Learning Strategy, Graduate Attributes and QA Policies and Procedures are highlighted in Figure 6.3.2 below.

Figure 6.3.2: GBS Digital Capacity Plan

Digital Capacity Plan
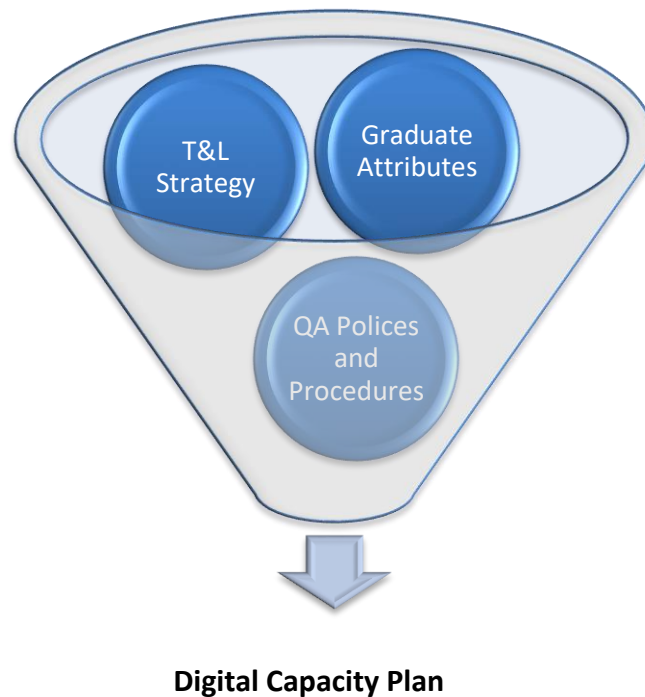
6.3.3   The Core Teaching, Learning and Assessment areas

6.3.3.1   Programme Content

GBS ensures that the content of its programmes is both engaging and challenging and allows for fostering skills for future employability. The MIPLOs of each programme inform MIMLOs of each module both in terms of theoretical information as well as practical application. Each programme's content is therefore designed to:

- Ensure that MIMLOs are benchmarked against those of other leading educational institutions
- Ensure that modules are theoretically informed and practically applied
- Facilitate learner input into the devising of a programmes content

6.3.3.2   Excellence in Teaching and Learning

GBS recognises that its teaching staff should be informed on best and contemporary practice in teaching delivery. The Head of Teaching and Learning therefore, monitors the recent developments in effective teaching strategies and disseminates his / her knowledge among the rest of the academic staff during Academic Think Tank sessions. These sessions also allow for the academic team to share ideas and practices around effective teaching strategies. In addition, GBS has committed to providing financial support for some of its members to attend various conferences. In summary, the teaching and learning excellence is therefore fostered through:

- Ensuring that faculty members are informed of teaching and learning theories, and effective teaching strategies
- Facilitating teaching staff in furthering their knowledge by providing continuous professional development opportunities
- Monitoring the teaching and learning approach on an annual basis

6.3.3.3   Learner Engagement

Learner participation is important for ensuring continuous learning and positive educational experiences for learners. GBS academic staff ensures that the learning environment is interactive

and that learners are engaged in a variety of learning activities/modes as much as possible. The main aims of learner participation are:

- To provide an engaging and challenging programme in terms of content, delivered through the use of engaging teaching and learning strategies
- To explore how technology can be used both inside and outside the classroom to enhance positive learner experience
- To ensure there is an emphasis on transferable skills
- To foster a learner voice and feedback that serves as a basis for further development of various aspects of the programme assessment strategies.

6.3.3.4 Assignments Design

GBS ensures that the assessment strategy is both appropriate at the module level and cohesive at the programme level. In addition, the learner workload has to be manageable and appropriate for allowing the learner an opportunity to achieve high results. The main considerations are given to the following when designing assessments:

- Assessment workload is appropriate, challenging and balanced at each stage of a programme
- There is an appropriate exam/continuous assessment ratio within the overall context of a programme
- A variety of assessments are utilised at each stage of a programme

6.4 Approaches and Methods

The Teaching methods and approaches that GBS employ in partnership with the lecturers help students take ownership of, and responsibility for their own learning. To enhance leraner experience GBS lecturers focus on consistently adopting a learner centred approach both through delivery style and methods utilised. Enhanced by the use of Interactive Display Units lecturers achieve this approach through the variety of ethods including:

- Classroom-based delivery
- Formative assessment

- Problem-solving
- Skills development

- Seminars & Workshops
- Skills Development including personal skills development
- Case Study Analysis
- Research supervision and Projects
- Group work
- Presentation skills
- Simulation games
- E-learning including E-activities
- Company visits
- Guest lecturers

6.4.1   Creating Blended Learning through Technology

E-activities, supported by Moodle, facilitate the following additional teaching methods:

- Forums, Blogs
- Videos
- Podcast
- Discussion Boards
- Wikis
- Online Journals
- Online Tests/ Surveys/ Questionnaires
- Web-based Knowledge Construction in Business
- Virtual Reality Business Games

This student-centred approach is one where lecturers and students are on a learning journey with the lecturer acting as guide and facilitator. As a student progresses through the various stages, the subject matter becomes more challenging. Students move from the acquisition of knowledge to critical analysis and the application of concepts to practical situations.

6.5   Personal and Skills Development for Employability

All documents relating to Higher Education learning outcomes highlight the critical importance onf key transferable skills that all learners need to acquire as part of their undergraduate education. They also point to the fact that 'the simple acquisition of knowledge is not enough to count as education'. These transferable skills include analytic reasoning, critical thinking, work readiness, research, and the practical application of theory. In addition they suggest that all learners need to demonstrate competence in written and oral communication skills, leadership ability, and the ability to work in a team environment.

Galway Business School is committed to enabling learners to develop these key skills that can be transferred to other areas of their lives, of both, their professional and personal. These skills are illustrated in Figure 6.5.

Fig. 6.5: Learner's Skills fostered by GBS' Programmes

These skills are evidenced right throughout all GBS's programmes, both in specific credit modules (Learn to Learn) as well as being integrated and tested throughout other modules. The programme development strategy at GBS also ecompassess these elements throughout both module content and assessment strategies. One such example includes cross modular assessment which interlinks modules learning outcomes & student skill sets.

6.6   Quality Assurance in Teaching and Learning

The Academic Co-ordinator and the Registrar reports to the Quality Assurance Committee to ensure that the views of students, staff and graduates are fully integrated into the review of resources. The Quality Assurance Committee makes recommendations where appropriate to the Academic Council. Particular emphasis is given to any factors that would materially affect programme delivery and any deviations from the school's goals and objectives.

Although the Quality Assurance Committee will typically make recommendations for remedial action and resource improvements, the Academic Council decides whether to make requests for additional, remedial or new resources. If the Academic Council recommends expenditure or commits to any decision with resource implications, an implementation plan is agreed with the Managing Director along with a proposed schedule for completion. The implementation is monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee.

If recommendations are not approved by the Academic Council, the reasons for refusal are outlined to the Quality Assurance Committee. Together with the Managing Director, the Quality Assurance Committee may decide to re-submit the recommendations with additional information to give extra clarity to the proposals. Where disagreements arise among any of the Boards regarding the school's facilities and resources, a specific report is submitted by the Academic Council to the Governing Body summarising recommendations and disagreements to ensure that recommendations on any changes to the school's facilities and resources and/or implementation plans are in line with overall strategic planning, quality control, development and improving institutional quality.

6.6.1   Monitoring the Learning Experience

The maintenance of the quality of the learning experience is central to the ethos of the school. To ensure this, the school recognises the need to continuously monitor and improve the experience that it offers. The following information is used for the monitoring of learning experience:

- Module feedback from learners each semester
- Feedback collected from class representatives during SSLS
- Faculty feedback collected by the Head of Teaching & Learning during Academic Think Tanks
- Feedback from external examiners
- Report on contemporary trends in teaching & learning from the Head of Teaching & Learning

6.7   Learner Complaint Procedure

6.7.1   Purpose

GBS is committed to excellence in teaching and service provision, therefore it aims for the highest standards of quality in all its activities. It takes legitimate learner complaints seriously and aims to resolve them in a clear, fair and timely manner. The guiding principles are:

- To provide learners with a clear framework in which to raise complaints
- To respect all the individuals involved in a complaint
- To support improvements through regular reporting and reviewing of issues raised

For the purpose of this procedure, a complaint is considered to be an expression of significant or sustained dissatisfaction, where a student seeks a specific action to address the issue. The complaints procedure spans many aspects of the student experience: for example, teaching and academic facilities, academic services, student accommodation administered by the school, student support services, administrative services and alleged actions or inaction by a member of GBS staff. The complaint process procedures together with the appeal procedures are illustrated in Figures 6.7 and 6.8.

6.7.2   Informal Complaint Procedures

Learners may initially make an informal complaint. Complaints about the following are deemed as informal and can usually be dealt with at Reception:

- Library opening hours
- Students wishing to borrow books outside of library opening hours
- Printing Card issues
- Photocopier jamming, breaking etc.

6.7.3   Formal Complaint Procedures

The formal Complaints Procedures apply to complaints from any registered learner of the school hpwever anonymous complaints will not be considered. Learners who wish to make a formal complaint must complete the Student Complaints Form (below) and submit it to the Academic Coordinator Reception for the attention of the Registrar. A student may raise a formal complaint relating, but not limited, to the following perceived issues:

- The quality or standard of any service or failure to provide a service by the school or a member of its staff
- The quality of facilities or learning resources
- The failure to follow an appropriate administrative process
- The perceived unfair treatment of a learner or inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards a student, which would not be covered by the Dignity and Respect Policy
- An alleged action or inaction by the school or a member of its staff.

Generally, complaints are resolved more easily and effectively at an early stage and by those who have a direct influence on the situation. In the first instance, learners should seek the advice of Academic Coordinator and use existing informal mechanisms to resolve difficulties – for example, discussing with individual lecturers or support staff, or engaging with student representatives. The formal student complaints procedure is available when informal approaches have not produced a satisfactory resolution within a reasonable timeframe, or when the seriousness of the complaint merits it.

6.7.3.1   The Formal Complaint Process

Learners should understand that when they make a complaint certain procedures will follow and complainants must be clear on the grounds for their complaint. They are required to provide full and accurate information and to cooperate with the investigation, including providing any additional information as requested. A learner making a complaint will not be discriminated against or suffer any recrimination as a result of making a legitimate complaint. Where a complaint is deemed to be malicious or vexatious or where false information is submitted, disciplinary action may be taken against the complainant.

GBS seeks to handle all complaints with discretion. It is important that all parties involved take care to ensure that confidentiality is respected. As far as is practicable, confidentiality will be preserved at all stages in the procedure, in the interests of both the student making the complaint and the individual members of staff involved. Where a complaint involves an individual member of staff that member of staff has a right to respond as part of the investigation. All information received and considered as part of the investigation of a complaint will be retained for record purposes.

6.7.3.2   Stage 1

1. The student complaints form is available from Moodle (p. 127).
2. Formal complaints should normally be made within one month of the last related incident occurring.
3. The complaint will first be assessed by the Academic Coordinator to confirm that local or informal processes have been exhausted before the formal complaint process is initiated.
4. The learner will receive acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint and will be informed of the next steps and, where appropriate, the timescale.
5. If the complaint is to be investigated, Academic Co-ordinator will investigate the complaint or designate an investigator to carry out an investigation into the issues raised. The investigator will normally be an experienced member of staff from the area who is not implicated in any way in the complaint and does not have any close relationship with any of the parties involved. Should the complaint refer to an individual, that person should be informed at this stage of the complaint. The appointed investigator will examine the issues raised in the complaint and will seek to establish:

    •   the nature and circumstances of the complaint

    •   whether the complaint has merit

    •   what actions (if any) are needed to resolve the issue

6. As part of the investigation, the investigator may conduct individual interviews with the complainant, with those against whom the complaint is made and with any relevant third party.
7. On completion of the investigation, the investigator will provide a written report to the parties concerned recommending measures to be taken to resolve the complaint to the parties concerned. Once approved by the Managing Director a copy of the report will be sent to the complainant. This will set out the outcome of the investigation and ask the learner to respond to the outcome of the investigation within 15 working days.

Possible outcomes

•   A mutually acceptable outcome is reached.

•   A mutually acceptable outcome is not reached but the Registrar considers that the complaint has been heard fairly and that the appropriate actions have been taken

•   The learner appeals the outcome

6.7.3.3   Stage 2: Learner Appeals Procedures to an unresolved complaint

A learner may appeal in writing the outcome of Stage 1 of their complaint process if they have reason to believe that

- the written report does not address the substantive areas of the complaint
- there is a procedural irregularity in connection with the conduct of the investigation

The Registrar will chair a small group comprised of individuals with relevant expertise (such as the Senior Lecturer, Managing Director and Equality Officer) to consider the appeal.

The role of the group is to judge whether the school has correctly and properly addressed the substantive areas of the complaint, followed correct procedures and examined all the evidence. The learner will be provided with the report of the group within three weeks of requesting an appeal and will be asked to respond within 15 working days.

Possible outcomes

- The complaint is deemed to have been handled appropriately. No further action is necessary.
- The complaint is referred back to the Academic Coordinator for further action and/or investigation which results in a mutually acceptable outcome and the problem is resolved.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

STUDENT COMPLAINTS FORM

This form is used when a student feels they have grounds for complaint in any areas. Please submit the completed form to Academic Coordinator at Padraig@gci.ie

Full Name	

Address for Correspondence		E-Mail Address:	
		Telephone Number:	

Programme Studied:	

Dates you were enrolled on the programme:	

YOUR COMPLAINT

Please set out the main points of your complaint. Please include:
- Nature of the complaint
- Please describe in detail the nature of the event

[Please continue on a separate sheet(s), if necessary]

Signed:	……………………………………	Date:	…………………………..

Fig. 6.7: Learner Complaints Procedures

Written Complaint	→	Investigation	→	Report	→	Decision
• Academic Coordinator		• Academic Coordinator / Investigator		• Academic Coordinator		• Registrar • Managing Director

Fig. 6.8: Learner Appeals Procedures

Written Appeal

Decision

No further action necessary — Reffered back to Academic Coordinator for a further investigation

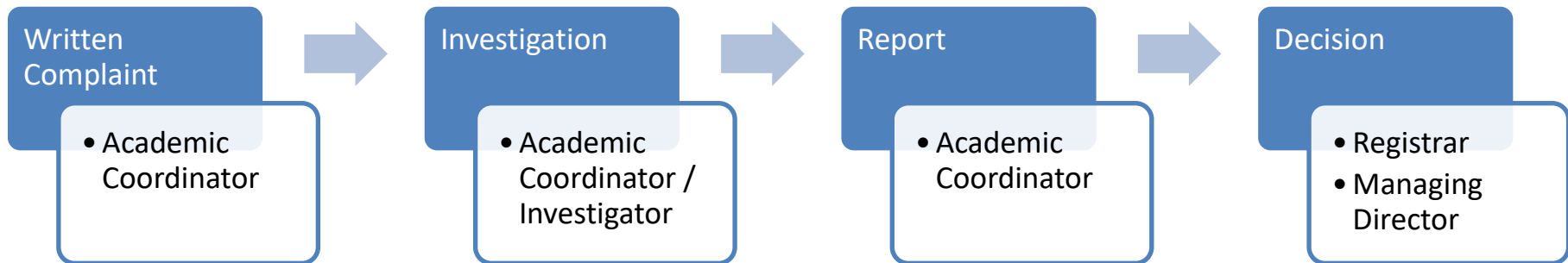Mutually agreed outcome
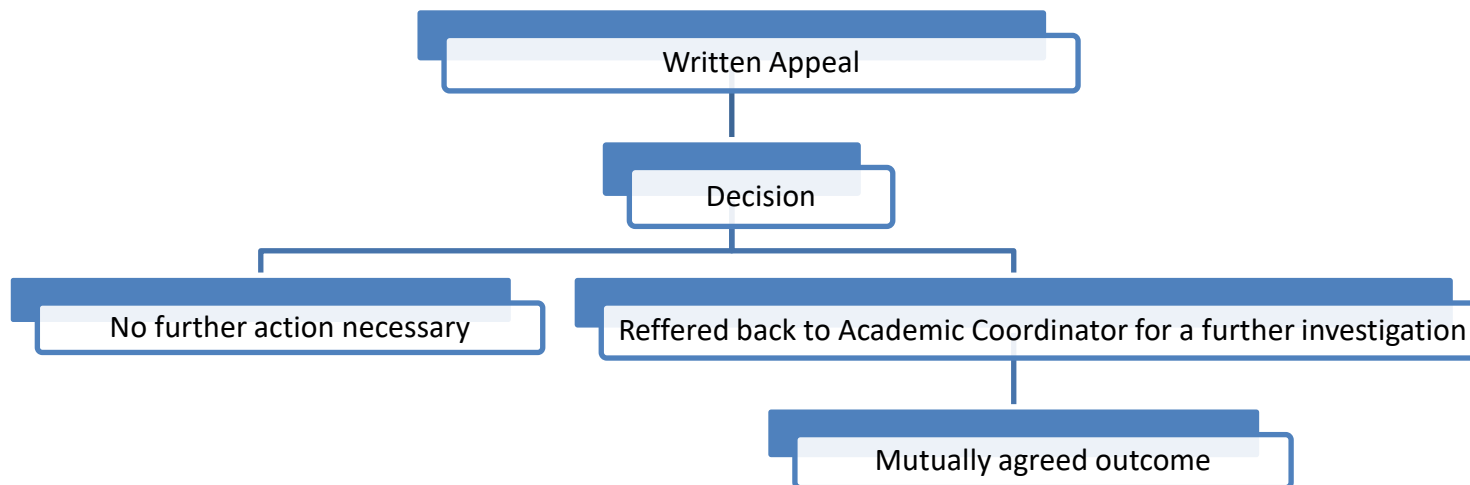
6.8   Learning Environment

Galway Business School acknowledges that physical resources contribute positively to the students' learning, performance and satisfaction. Galway Business School aims to provide and maintain a safe, well-resourced building, available and accessible to all staff and students of the school including:

- attractive clean classroom spaces
- interactive Display Screens which give access to all resources on line
- academic server allowing lecturers to develop resources that can be backed up and shared
- fast WIFI
- well-stocked library
- virtual Learning Environment (Moodle)
- IT supports for students and staff that promote learning including access to laptops, printing and photocopying
- study space for students in the evenings and at weekends

6.8.1   Academic Environment

Academic standards are established by the Academic Council. Annual reports from Programme Boards, as well as regular communication with Programme Leaders, are the principal bases for decisions taken at Academic Council. Secondly, as indicated in Staff Recruitment, Management & Development Policy, there are a number of staff development initiatives undertaken each year.

6.8.2   Physical Infrastructural Resources

The Managing Director and Registrar ensure that all classrooms are of a size capable of taking the number of students required, well ventilated and / or heated and have suitable furniture to allow optimum teaching and learning. Each classroom is equipped with sufficient sockets, IT provision, whiteboards, flip charts, projectors and PCs as required. The room must have access for those with disabilities and must also allow students and teachers to access bathroom and recreational facilities.

There are dedicated student facilities including a student common room and a café and the availability of these facilities additionally serves the function of providing students with an informal, social space to meet.

6.8.3   Library Resources

The provision of library facilities is a fundamental resource for both students and staff and an essential part of the teaching and learning environment. Galway Business School has invested in both a dedicated physical library and a virtual library (EBSCO). Full and Part-time students have ample access to borrowing resources with a renewals and ordering facility. These facilities are seen as being a resource for both Learners and staff and an are essential part of the teaching and learning environment. It is a priority for Galway Business School to increase Learners' familiarity and engagement with the online database.   All Learners receive intensive library induction at the commencement of their course in addition to on-going training sessions at modular level.

The library has an on-going stock replenishment system in place, with emphasis placed on current titles. Lecturers on all modules are encouraged to recommend core text books as well as indicative supplementary reading to Learners.Tthese resources are provided for in the library. Booklists are updated at the start of each academic year. Lecturers are kept abreast of current titles and updated texts through regular engagement with publishers and are involved in editorial reviews of new titles.

Galway Business School library facilities have been and will be expanded commensurate with the ambitions of the School. Our recent upgrade of our EBSCO online library database licence has significantly developed and expanded our online facilities, allowing students to access the industry's most popular business research database, Business Source Premier.

GBS's physical library content will be enlarged proportionate to the learner numbers in the school. Up-stocking the library continues to be done before the start of each academic year, following consultation with both academic staff and publishing companies, and based on experience of what material and what quantity is needed. Galway Business School keeps a modest stock of books and journals in hard copy in the library.

There is regular monitoring of the library facilities and its distinction will lie in its relevance and agility to adapt quickly and in response to demand.

There are copying and printing facilities in the library and dedicated computer desks. There are 48 study spaces/seats and desks in the library. Additional rooms are available for group study and these can be booked through the Academic Coordinator.

6.8.4   Information Technology Resources

Galway Business School has installed the open source Virtual learning Environment (VLE), Moodle, as the platform to support student learning and self-study. All lecturers use Moodle in the delivery of their programmes. Moodle enables interactive learning through access to programme notes, past exam papers, journal articles, videos and other key readings, sample assessments and various online exams and assignments.   Students use Moodle for class preparation and revision. Staff training and student induction sessions regarding optimal use of this resource, including the setting up of interactive forums and Wikis, are scheduled at the start of the academic year.

All learners are enrolled on the Virtual Learning Environment – Moodle. As well as providing information, Moodle also acts as an assessment tool through quizzes, Multiple Choice Questions, Case Study Analyses, Applied Virtual Business Games / Simulations, Discussion Forums, and Quantitative Solutions. Lecture notes and presentations are uploaded weekly by the respective lecturer to enable Learners to have material for class preparation and revision. This resource gives support to the learner off-site and within the school and is particularly important for part-time learners.

The recently upgraded version of Moodle brings a more robust online platform for students with such improvements as new interactive features, and advancements in learning activities and resources for students. The new Moodle provides a clear view of all learning activities and resources for each program, including assessment information. In addition, the new Moodle platform includes subscription tools to receive information about your study, such as RSS feeds of forum discussions, calendar feeds and forum discussions or marked assignments. Our VLE link is http://elearning.galwaybusinessschool.ie/

There have been significant training and Learner induction sessions regarding optimal use of this resource including the setting up of interactive forums. There have been investments in IT hardware and software for Learner use with the increased use of virtual resources during class and as on-going study resource for Learners. Galway Business School has identified a Moodle champion within the

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staff (Academic Coordinator). This person assists both learners and staff in their use of this VLE resource contributing to increased learning.

6.8.5   Facilitating of Work Experience for learners

The school is currently submitting programmes for QQI validation that offer work placement as an optional component. Therefore, going forward there is a need to ensure the appropriateness of the environment where existing learners may gain ECTS credit for learning acquired in the workplace. The following are the main components for facilitating the effective work experience for learners:

- Ensuring that each organisation that is facilitating work experience for GBS learners is fully informed on what is entailed. This is communicated by email to the appropriate person in the organisation with the details of the requirements of the work experience
- Having a designated liaison person internally for the learner to contact with work placement queries.
- Requesting that the work placement provider informs the school and learner of a nominated contact in their organisation for work placement queries.
- The Work Experience Project Handbook will be designed containing relevant information for learners who wish to undertake the work experience as a part of their course.

6.8.6   Evaluating Learning Environment

The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing the effectiveness of all academic and support services related to its programmes of higher education and training. The first priority in providing these services is to focus on the student experience within the school. The main support services are reviewed annually with regard to adequacy, functionality and capacity.

Galway Business School recognises that the continuous management, evaluation and improvement of physical resources and other support services supports the quality of learning and teaching that it espouses.

The Quality Assurance committee and the Managing Director are involved in this process as a key part of their respective roles and responsibilities. In particular, the Managing Director has duties and responsibilities regarding Teaching and Learning resources. These include:

- ensuring that the physical and resource requirements are in line with the strategic plans of the Directors and that all legal and statutory requirements are met
- managing the institutional administrative support for both institutions including allocation of resources, classroom scheduling and maintaining and upgrading of all facilities and resources as necessary
- Gathering feedback from lecturers, students, administration and from the various committees on resources. This information informs the Annual Resources Report which the MD produces for the Quality Assurance Committee based on the previous year's findings.

7   Assessment Policy

7.1   Purpose

The aim of this policy is to inform learners, academic and support staff, and external examiners of their responsibilities associated with assessment including assessment standards, submission of assignments, examinations, marking and moderation, external examiners, examination boards, academic appeals and complaints.

Document Name: Assessment Policy	
Owner: Registrar	**GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL**
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Extended by Section 7.4.	July 2019	September 2019
V3.0	Section 7.10 reviewed and benchmarked to other providers	March 2020	March 2020
V4.0	Section 7.12.7 Penalties for breach of academic integrity has been extended by link to a General Reassessment Policy for more clarity.	07.12.2021 by Academic Council	09.12.2021

7.2 Rationale

The guidelines and procedures in this document refer to the programmes with curricula devised internally by Galway Business School (QQI). The assessment Policy has been designed to meet the regulations of assessment and examination of students on all programmes delivered by Galway Business School.

Assessment can be defined as any process that appraises an individual's knowledge, understanding, abilities or skills. Galway Business School is committed to ensuring that the assessment policy is,

- Unbiased and consistent with the standards formed by QQI and other relevant approved accreditation bodies.
- Compliant with the accreditation body's standards as related to the National Frameworks of Qualifications award type descriptors.
- Demonstrating that appropriate standards are being maintained in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance.
- Generating valuable student learning activity.
- Providing a fair and transparent guideline for students to understand the assessment procedures.
- Contributing to the development of the learner by providing constructive and applicable feedback and adapting to evolving requirements.
- Providing an appropriate balance of formative and summative assessment.

7.3 Assessment Purpose

Galway Business School has implemented various methods to ensure that the learner understands the means by which they will be graded and what constitutes a pass or fail as well as clear criteria for the achievement of each grade. The means of grading are linked to the intended learning outcomes as presented to the learner. Also, that the learner knows the minimum requirements for academic progression and award qualification and is provided with timely, relevant, and appropriate feedback which enables performance improvement. In addition, every learner has the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching methods adopted.

Similarly when creating assessment methods, best practice and developments in assessment are included in topics for staff development ensuring that lecturers:

- Assign appropriate assessment in line with learning outcomes
- Provide criteria for the assessment, including a description of the weighting for the assignment and relevant due dates
- Encourage creativity and innovation in fulfilling the assignment

The language used in any assessment tool should be appropriate for the level and standard of the learners. When developing assessment tools, the following characteristics should be considered:

- Validity
- Reliability
- Transparency

Examiners when assessing the programme learning outcomes, should also focus on the range of assessable qualities developed by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI): Knowledge, Know-How and Skill and Competence.

7.4   Award Classification

GBS has adopted a percentage grading scheme similar to those used by its comparators from the private and public sector (e.g. GMIT, NUIG, Dorset College, etc.). This means that learners receive module results as a percentage, where the maximum mark attainable is 100%. In addition, the programme results are based on a credit-weighted mean value of the results from leaners' award stage modules.

	Classification of Level 8 degree programmes	Classification of Level 6 and Level 7 programmes	Minor Awards with less than 60 ECTS
70% or higher	First-class honours	Distinctions	Pass
60-69%	Second-class honours Grade 1	Merit Grade 1	Pass
50-59%	Second-class honours Grade 2	Merit Grade 2	Pass
40-49%	Pass	Pass	Pass
<40%	Fail	Fail	Fail

7.5   Examination Board and Procedures

7.5.1   Internal Examiners Role

An Internal Examiner is a member of the GBS academic staff responsible for assessing students. The role of the Internal Examiner in consultation with the Examinations Officer is ensuring:

- Assessment instruments and marking criteria are consistent with the approved module descriptor
- Assessment instruments considering transparency, validity, and reliability
- The timing and weighting of assessments is in accordance with the approved programme schedule and the assessment schedule, as stipulated to learners is as per the approved module descriptor
- The implementation of learner feedback on their assessment performance
- Draft examination papers, model answers and a marking scheme are submitted to the Examinations Officer in line with requirements
- The consideration of all suggestions proposed by the external examiner(s)
- The examinations material for both first sitting and repeat papers are be submitted to the Examinations Officer several weeks prior to the first sitting examinations so that the Registrar can forward them to the Extern for approval.
- That assessment materials are submitted to the External Examiner following a standardised format. Each piece of assessment must specify:
  - the title of the programme(s)
  - the title of the subject/module
  - the names of the internal examiner(s)
  - time allowed (for examinations)
  - total number of questions
  - mandatory questions (if any)
  - the number of questions to answer
  - the marks awarded for each question
  - any special conditions
  - additional material that has been appended, or otherwise provided
- All examination papers, soft files, model answers, and marking schemes are password protected and securely retained and stored

- Learners are informed at the beginning of the term of the structure of the assessment. Any changes to that structure should be made known to student at least four weeks prior to the examination
- They are present at the examinations centre for the first 15 minutes of the examination and available throughout the examination
- Organisation of assessment correction
- They maintain a consistent approach when correcting, keeping in line with the model answers and the marking scheme
- Every examination script is marked anonymously
- Marks and written feedback are transferred to the relevant feedback sheet and annotations are made on the examination script
- Total module marks including any continuous assessment and exam results are collated
- The examination scripts, individual feedback sheets and overall Module Results Sheets are returned to the Examinations Officer who will ensure that no errors have occurred from marking assessments and examination scripts. The final mark is recorded on the marks sheet
- The continuous assessment marks of students not present for final examinations must also be recorded on the marks sheet. The marks sheet is the means of recording students' work for future years. A final grade of absent should be recorded for students absent from the final exam
- Organising a time for consultation with students to handle queries. Together with the role of rechecks, reviews and appeals
- Availability to meet extern examiners prior to the Board of Examiners meeting to discuss examination issues
- Attendance at the internal exam board meeting to ensure that the marks on the marks sheets are correctly recorded on the Examination Broadsheet

7.5.2 External Examiners Role, Nomination and Appointment

External examiners act as independent and impartial advisors providing Galway Business School with informed comment on the standards set and student achievement. It is, therefore, an integral and very important part of the School's quality assurance system. The School recognises that the main purposes of external examining are:

- To verify that the minimum learning outcomes, as assigned to a programme / module to which the external examiner has been appointed, have been met by the learners.

- To verify the actual attainment of learners using assessment material provided by the School.

- To ensure that the School's assessment processes are valid, reliable, consistent and fair and are fairly operated and in line with the School regulations.

- To ensure that the School's assessments conform to the assessment policies of QQI and to advise staff on necessary or desirable improvements in assessment processes and strategy.

- To pay particular attention to award stage assessment to ensure that the programme outcomes overall have been met and that the distribution of award grades are appropriate.

- To ensure that the overall programme outcomes are not affected significantly where minor changes have been made to the programme following validation.

- To adjudicate where students request a review of decisions of internal examiners or examination boards where necessary and appropriate.

- To report on these issues to the School and to advise the School on whether:

  o Particular students' performances have been judged properly against the awards standards of the National Framework of Qualifications.

  o The assessment process has measured Learning Outcomes appropriately.

  o The range of assessment and their type are suitable tools for the measurement of the learning outcomes.

  o In the opinion of the examiner the programme outcomes have been achieved by award stage learners.

  o To advise the School on overall design and structure of existing programmes on request.

- To attend the school at the beginning of each academic year. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss with the programme leader and academic team the assessment strategy for the year and where possible to view suggested continuous assessment tasks.

- To attend the School at the time of final determination of results and/or at such other times as may be determined by the School in consultation with the External Examiner for the purpose of assessing the standard of the programme and / or the standard of student performance.

- To ensure that quality is assured, External Examiners shall inspect all draft examination papers and propose modifications and amendments prior to final printing.

- To inspect any or all programme work, project work and assignments which form part of the continuous assessment material for any student and which affects the final module mark.

- Together with the Programme Leader responsible for ensuring that such material is collated in good time.
- Requested to attend a meeting in the School or other location for the purposes of:
    o Induction of new appointees as External Examiners
    o Discussion of issues in relation to External Examiners in the context of Quality Assurance
    o Other general matters relating to examinations including requests for reviews of assessments by learners as they arise
- On termination of their period of appointment the examiner will be required to give a final report detailing their overall impressions of the programmes, any issues they feel are important and discussion on the response of the School to issues raised during the course of their appointment.
- External Examiners are equested to declare any circumstances, which may constitute a conflict of interest with the School or with an Examinee.
- Requested where a conflict of interest is identified, the External Examiner may not be involved in any consideration of that particular Examinee.

It shall be the School's task to respond to any observations made by the External Examiners in an appropriate manner. The school recognises that the External examining process is one part of the overall quality assurance system. It acts in harmony with the internal quality systems and is integrated with them. It ensures that the standards are maintained that the assessment strategy is being implemented. On request it acts as a quality driver, advising the school on developments in the disciplinary field or in assessment. Finally, by the stature of the appointees it enhances the reputation of the school and guarantees the quality of its graduates.

7.5.2.1   Nomination of External Examiners

Galway Business School implements the following process when nominating an external examiner:

1   The Academic Council of Galway Business School approves the terms of office and appointment of persons to act as External Examiners to its programmes.
2   The Academic Council shall request the Registrar to seek nominations for persons to act as External Examiners. The Council may also nominate persons to act as External Examiners.

3	The Registrar shall consult with QQI and programme leaders as to suitable persons for nomination as External Examiners. The nomination of external examiners shall be made before May 1st of the year of appointment.

4	Persons nominated as external examiners shall be acknowledged experts in the community of practice within the programmes broad area of discipline. They shall be qualified and experienced senior practitioners within higher education with knowledge of best practice in assessment processes and the standards of the NFQ. Alternatively, they can be industrial, commercial or management professionals with acknowledged experience within their profession. Ideally the latter would also have some higher education practice experience or an involvement with their professional organizations.

The overarching criterion for nomination of an External Examiner is that they can provide an independent, knowledgeable, informed viewpoint in regard of the ongoing assessment of students on a programme of study.

In order that no perception of impropriety or conflict of interest may arise, the External Examiner must be financially and socially independent of Galway Business School and shall conform to the following conditions:

• External examiners may be drawn from academic life and, where appropriate, from business, industry and professional practice.

• External Examiners should be professionally qualified where this is the normal practice for the industry.

• External examiners drawn from business, industry or professional practice should be in current practice and of senior standing in their fields.

• All External examiners should normally be suitably qualified with a minimum of a Master's degree or an advanced professional qualification. They should have both current and relevant experience in the areas of industry, education or research or profession practice.

• In order to ensure the independence of the role of external examiner, restrictions must be placed on the selection of External Examiners. The following persons will be ineligible for appointment:

  • Persons who are currently employed or contracted or hold office at Galway Business School in any capacity, shall be ineligible for appointment as External Examiner.

  • Persons who might be likely to financially gain as a result of decisions as an External Examiner are ineligible for appointment.

- Members of the Governing Body of the School.

- Spouses, partners and children of persons in these categories are likewise ineligible.

- All such persons shall be ineligible for appointment as External Examiner until a period of five years has elapsed after terminating the formal relationship with the School.

- In the event of a spouse, partner or child accepting employment at or enrolling on relevant programs in the School or its subsidiaries, the External Examiner must resign their position.

7.5.2.2   Appointment of External Examiners

External Examiners for QQI programmes are appointed by GBS under Section 23 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012. It is a role of the Academic Council to appoint external examiners. The Academic Council shall satisfy itself that persons nominated for appointment will normally satisfy the criteria for appointment as detailed in Criteria for Nomination and restriction on eligibility set out below. In exceptional circumstances, where it is proposed to nominate a person who does not satisfy these formal criteria for appointment, this shall be clearly noted on the External Examiner nomination form and reasons given for the nomination.

The Academic Council shall approve the appointment of as many persons as it deems necessary to act as External Examiners for the School for such periods as it decides, in accordance with Section 4 of these procedures. Approval of appointments of External Examiners will normally be completed by the end of May of the year proceeding their term of office.

Following approval of nominations by the Academic Council of the School and the Registrar, the Managing Director shall issue a letter of appointment to the External Examiner, along with a contract to be signed by the External Examiner which shall include, inter alia:

- External Examiners: Duties and responsibilities

- Term of office

- Reporting relationships and requirements, including standard report form and the terminal report

- Fees payable by the School

- Conditions relating to other appointments

- Termination of contract procedures

- Conflict of Interest declaration.

The External Examiner shall be appointed from the date of signing of the Contract by the External Examiner and the Managing Director. The term of office shall normally be for a period of four years but in exceptional circumstances, the appointment may be extended by one further year. The circumstances shall be reported to the Academic Council which shall decide on the extension. The School will ensure that team of external examiners are not appointed for the same period. This will mean that there will be no point, except initially, where a completely new set of examiners will be required.

The Registrar shall maintain a register of External Examiners appointments and periods of tenure. The register shall be available to learners and the names of external examiners together with the internal examiners will be included on all formal final examinations.

Following appointment, the Registrar shall ensure that the External Examiner receives adequate additional documentation to enable him/her to understand the examination systems operated by the School. Such documentation might include:

- Quality assurance policies and procedures of the School
- Relevant documentation relating to the NFQ, Assessment policy of QQI and Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examiners.
- Programme submissions with validation reports, module descriptors and programme schedules.
- Contact details for relevant programme leaders.
- Assessment and examination procedures.
- Examination rules and regulations.

In addition the Programme Leader shall ensure that the External Examiner is provided with adequate documentation to enable her/him to carry out the functions of External Examiner, including:

- Staff lists indicating module / programme allocations
- Draft examination papers and related material
- Previous examination papers as appropriate.
- Previous external examiners reports
- Significant continuous assessment items

On appointment the School will invite the External Examiners to visit the School to become familiar with its operations; to discuss his/her responsibilities as External Examiners and to determine the

requirements of the External Examiner. They will be briefed on the duties of external examiners, on the requirements of the School and QQI and also on the detail of the programmes. Where necessary and feasible they will be supported in acquainting themselves with the outcomes based approach and with the standards of the NFQ. They would also meet with staff on the relevant programmes to discuss assessment strategy for the coming year. This in particular would include briefing on continuous assessment tasks and schedule.

Where an external examiner has ceased to carry out their duties or where they have been carried out in a desultory or inefficient way, or they may be removed by decision of the Academic Council. This may also occur in situations where the External Examiner does not provide adequate and timely report. This decision can only be made following a report from the Registrar to the Council and following adequate notice to the external examiner involved.

7.5.2.3   Number of External Examiners

Galway Business School ensures:

- Sufficient External Examiners are appointed so that it can be satisfied that the standard of its programmes and student performance can be adequately moderated and that the assessment, examination and determination of award processes are being fairly conducted. Consideration is also given to ansure that there is a sufficient range of expertise to cover the academic topics involved.
- External Examiners are appointed to particular programmes, however in some cases they may be appointed to examine particular specialist modules e.g. Finance.
- Where External Examiners are appointed on a programme basis, there shall be at least two External Examiners appointed for each programme. As far as possible these externals with bring a different set of experiences and qualifications to bear on the programmes and complement each other.

Please see below – External Examiners Report Template

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

External Examiner's Report

Date	

Programme Details	Programme Reference[1]	
	Award Title:	
	Area Of Specialisation (ISCED CODE):	
	Main Modes of Delivery Offered:	
	Stage (1,2,3,4,…, or Award Stage):	
	Semester (if applicable indicate whether first or Second):	

Classification Distribution and Trend		Current Year	Previous Year	Previous Year	Previous Year	Previous Year
	% H1/D					
	% H21/M1					
	% H22/M2					
	% P					

Completion Rate Data	Number who started the programme	
	Number who started the stage	
	Number who completed the stage (i.e. attempted final stage examinations)	

External Examiner Details	Name	
	Main Employment	
	Email address	
	Other contact details	

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[1] The provider should complete the factual parts of the cover sheet before forwarding the template to the external examiner.

In presenting opinions under the following headings the external examiner should make national and international comparisons.

The text in blue italics is explanatory material and may be deleted by the external examiner when completing the report.

- **The Evidence Considered**

The purpose of this section is to indicate how well informed the external examiner is about the provider, the programme and its context. Summarise the documentary evidence considered (see HETAC's Effective Practice Guideline for External Examining 2009) and any visits, meetings and interviews with learners and academic staff and others.

- **Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes**

The purpose of this section is to comment on the educational objectives including their explicitness, appropriateness and consistency standards with the relevant awards standards and the National Framework of Qualifications. If there are gaps these should be identified. If the standard is too low this must be stated explicitly so that it can be addressed.

- **Actual Attainment of Learners**

This section should present external examiner's informed perception of the actual attainment of learners (knowledge, skill and competence). This is the most important finding of the external examining process. This should be based on consideration of:

- *The provider's assessment instruments (e.g. assessment strategies, examination papers, marking schemes), procedures and findings*

- *Representative samples of learner responses to assessment tasks (e.g. examination scripts, dissertations, etc.)*

- *Interviews with learners*

- *Benchmarking data prepared by the provider*

- *Any other appropriate evidence*

In presenting those perceptions the external examiner should make national and international comparisons. Opinions (e.g. satisfaction with the actual attainment) should be explained (e.g. by outlining the rationale and criteria).

- **The Programme**

Often external examiners' experience of the programme might lead to suggestions about particular aspects of the programme. This might involve the curriculum or the approach to teaching and learning. This section should identify some notable strengths and areas for improvement. It is not intended that the external examiner would attempt to systematically review the programme.

- **Assessment Procedures**

The external examiner plays a vital role in the ongoing quality assurance and enhancement of assessment. This section should address:

- *The quality of the assessment instruments (programme and module strategies, examination papers, dissertation guidelines, etc.) and scoring rubrics/schemes etc.*
- *The fairness, consistency and fitness for purpose (valid, reliable, authentic, robust) of assessment procedures.*
- *The reliability of the provider's benchmarking of its assessment procedures.*

- **Trends**

Evidence concerning the extent to which teaching, learning and assessment arrangements have changed in response to the feedback provided by previous external examiner reports; and Progress on recommendations in recent external examiner and other relevant reports on the programme.

- **Conclusions and Recommendations**

_____

External examiners' signature, date

7.5.2.4 Reporting Arrangements

- Following the assessment / examination, the External Examiner shall provide a report to the Registrar of the School by 1st October of each year, or at such other times as may be specified by the School. This report will be a on a standard report form provided by the school and will be called the External Examiner's Report.

- The External Examiner may, in addition, submit a special written report to the Registrar on such other matters as (s)he deems appropriate, and may request that such matters be treated on a confidential basis.

- The Registrar shall provide a copy of the pro forma External Examiner's Report to the Managing Director.

- The Registrar will circulate the external examiners report to the programme leaders and the relevant academic staff.

- The Registrar shall provide a copy of the External Examiner's report to the Academic Council.

- The Academic Council shall consider the External Examiners reports at an early stage in the first term and shall ask the Programme Boards to report on any issue raised by the reports.

- Where issues have been raised the Registrar shall report on progress to the external examiners.

7.6   Assessment Strategy

Learners should understand the motivation behind any chosen assessment tool.   Feedback is imperative to the learning process. Assessment tools should be constructed with consideration to learner feedback.   Feedback should be clear: how a grade was obtained ought to be obvious; as should what the learner needs to do in order to improve their performance.   All feedback should be given to students in a timely manner, enabling student improvement to occur within the module.

Assessment for the subject/module should be discussed at the beginning of the term. The policy and procedures for assessment and reassessment must be made explicit and clear to learners. Learners should be made aware of what the assessment and reassessment will be, how it will be marked, when it will be assigned in detail, the due date, and the penalty associated with late submission. Assessment due dates should not overlap any more than necessary, and the design and scheduling of assessment tasks should be coordinated by the Programme Board. Assignments must also be approved at Programme Board level and by the Examinations Board before being given to students. Assignments must be approved by the relevant External Examiner. Students are provided with an Assessment Schedule at the start of term.

7.6.1   Assessment Techniques

Acceptable assessment techniques come in a variety of forms:

- Diagnostic assessment is used to show a learner's preparedness for a module or programme. This identifies - for both learner and lecturer - any strengths or weaknesses relating to knowledge, skills, competences or other issues at the start of the programme. Particular strengths may lead to a formal consideration of accreditation of prior learning.
- Formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help learners learn more effectively by giving them feedback on their performance, and on how it can be improved and/or maintained.
- Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of a learner's success in meeting the assessment criteria used to gauge the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

An assessment process for a particular module can, and often does, involve more than one of these assessment techniques. Within a programme, use of a range of assessment types enables students

to demonstrate their capabilities and achievements in a multifaceted manner with respect to learning outcomes. Diversity of assessment practice is to be expected and welcomed in order to test a wide range of outcomes. Our educational philosophy encourages the use of continuous assessment within a module/subject. Therefore assessments may be consecutively formative and summative.

7.6.2 Continuous Assessment & Criteria

The majority of programmes offered in Galway Business School feature some element of continuous assessment (CA). One or several of the following forms of assessment instruments are used to measure student performance and gain an insight into their knowledge, skills and competences:

- Written Essays
- Examination papers (including open book)
- Research Projects (Primary and Secondary Research)
- Individual and Group Projects
- Case Study Analysis, including Virtual Games
- Direct observation
- Presentations
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Structured practical assessments
- Online exercises, including MCQs, discussion forums, wikis and blogs
- Self-assessment (which may be conducted on-line)
- Thesis/Dissertation Project

Internal examiners are required to ensure that they are fully aware of the weighting attached to the continuous assessment elements in each of the modules or subject delivered. As there are many forms of continuous assessment it is critical that the methods chosen remain consistent with the requirements of the approved module descriptors. Internal Examiners are also required to align to the intended learning outcomes of the assignment to the programme level and stage.

7.6.2.1 Assessment Criteria

Assessment is a compelling force for motivating students' efforts and improving overall programme standards. Conversely, it may lower student effort and standards if executed incorrectly. Therefore assessment criteria should cover the learning outcomes in a way that promotes analysis, synthesis, and evaluation at the appropriate level.

The purpose of assessment criteria is to establish clear and unambiguous standards of achievement, and to provide a method of measuring the outcomes of student learning. By following the guidelines set out in the National Qualifications Framework, Galway Business School aims to:

- Promote transparency in the assessment process.
- Promote consistency and fairness in marking.
- Promote understanding of the way in which the assessment process works between staff and students, and between markers.
- Help promote discussion about standards.
- Help provide feedback to students.
- Demonstrate to the outside world the standards that students have achieved.

7.6.3 Implementation of the Assessment Process

For all internally set assessments a template is provided by the Programme Board to the lecturers to ensure consistency across individual programmes. Each student must be given clear and unambiguous written assessment specifications.

- Every Assignment / Examination should have assessment criteria stating:
    o Module name, code and name of assessor(s).
    o The nature of the coursework in detail.
    o Date of issue and date assessment is due.
    o Exactly what the examiner/ assessor is looking for.
    o Exactly how many marks should be awarded for the appropriate text/section.
    o Weighting of the assessment.
    o Specific deliverable(s) I.E. Word count, date of issue, date of submission should be included.

- Penalties for late submission / non-submission
- The GBS plagiarism policy.
- Reassessment procedures.

- The marking scheme/assessment criteria are lodged with the Examinations Officer at the same time as the assignment / examination paper which are reviewed by the Programme Board.
- For QQI assessment, the assessment material is prepared by the lecturer under direction from the Programme Board. Assessment briefs are internally verified.
- All QQI assessments must be sent to the External Examiner for final approval.

Assessments are given to learners with submission dates and in standardised format. Exams are held in the school and supervised by independent trained invigilators. Exam papers are corrected by the lecturer and internally verified.

7.6.3.1   Submission of Assignments

Learners should be informed of:

- The date of issue of each assessment requirement.
- The date and time by which each assessment should be submitted.
- The mechanism for submission of assessment.

In some instances deadline extensions may be inevitable as assessment can sometimes only be completed after specific material has been covered in class. Some flexibility is required for deadlines and students should not be penalised for any adjustments to the assumed schedule.

Learners submit the form entitled '*Learner Declaration of Academic Integrity*' with their assignment. Learners must submit their assignments in soft copy to assignments@galwaybusinessschool.ie. This applies also to late submissions.

Please see Section 7.12 for Galway Business School Learner Declaration of Academic Integrity Form

7.6.3.2 Student Responsibilities

- Learners must ensure they have paid all examination and programme fees in advance of the examination session. The policy is detailed in the Student Handbook.

- Learners must be familiar with all information relevant to assessments and examinations.

- Learners must be aware of the date, time and location of examinations.

- Learners must be present in an examination hall 15 minutes prior to examination commencement.

- Learners must obey examination and assessment regulations.

- Learners must abide by assessment deadlines.

- Learners must make requests for extensions as soon as they are aware they may need an extension and must submit supporting documentation, i.e. medical certificates, and/or a description of the extenuating circumstances which led to the request for the extension.

7.6.3.3 Late Submission

Assessment will be accepted if it is received after the specified submission date ONLY if there is a valid and approved reason for late submission. Whenever possible, learners should inform the lecturer and/or Registrar before the submission deadline, of a likely late assessment submission and of the reason for late submission by completing and handing in a Mitigating Circumstances & Special Cases Form to the Academic Co-ordinator. Although not exhaustive, valid reasons for late submission are:

- Illness or bereavement.

- Unavailability of key resources required for the completion of the work (this situation should be reported as soon as possible and ideally before submission dates).

- Commitments of students which could not reasonably be predicted.

In the second case above, a serious difficulty may require an extension to the submission deadline applicable to all students. If this is the case, students should be informed of the new deadline in writing as soon as possible. Academic staff may exercise discretion with respect to other extenuating circumstances which may arise. All assessments received within agreed deadlines will be assessed in the normal way.

All information relating to late submission of assessment as detailed above should be placed in the student's file. For example: medical certificates; written statements citing reasons for late submission; new negotiated deadlines, etc.

7.6.3.4   Penalties for Late Submission

Late submission is where an assessment is submitted after the specified due date and a deadline extension form has not been submitted. Assessments received late, after the specified submission deadline, will be deducted by 5% for every week delayed up to six weeks.. After six weeks, the assignment is considered fail and must be repeated and capped at 40%.

Please see below - Galway Business School Mitigating Circumstances & Special Cases Form

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Mitigation Circumstances & Special Cases Request Form

Student Details

Full Name			
Scheme of Study			
Mode of attendance		Type of Degree (e.g. BA, BSc)	
Nature of Request			
Grounds for Request			
Date of Original Deadline		Length of Extension	
View of Institution for the Case presented:			

Supplementary Evidence as defined by Standing Orders (Please Tick)	Copies of Correspondence	Medical Evidence	Statement from Student	Letters from Employers	Death Certificate (for close bereavement)
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Case Presented by:			
Signed:	…………………………………………	Date:	…………………………..

7.6.4 General Reassessment Policy

Students may be reassessed in any module where a fail or compensation pass grade is obtained, by repeating that module. Where a module examination is attempted by a student more than once, the student will be capped at 40% in subsequent attempts. Learners will be informed at the start of the module about the arrangements in relation to repeat continuous assessment elements such as assignments, projects, and practical work. Learners who fail a module will be required to repeat a significant element of the module assessment to achieve a pass. The reassessment will ensure that the module learning outcomes are attained before the learner progresses to the next stage of the programme.

It is School policy that all examinations of an individual module (initial sitting and repeat attempts) are of similar academic standard. Therefore, where practicable, students participating in repeat examinations of a particular modular assessment should do so under the same assessment criteria as for the first attempt. The School will strive to provide learners who fail a module with an opportunity to repeat the continuous assessment, project and/or practical work elements prior to the subsequent Examinations Board. This facility may be provided to learners, when appropriate, without the necessity of a repeat attendance at a module.

In the case of a repeat learner taking a module where all of the marks are for Continuous Assessment then the School may devise, with the agreement of the Extern Examiner(s), alternative assessment arrangements in lieu of the module assessment. Arrangements for such alternative continuous assessment shall be determined by the Programme Board and communicated to students. Such determination will be subject to maintaining academic standards and, in general, ensuring that equivalent module learning outcomes are assessed. Learners who fail a module of this type are required to repeat the equivalent of a significant proportion of the assessment for the module, addressing those elements of the module assessment as deemed appropriate by the School, including the elements where the learner failed to achieve a passing mark.

7.6.4.1 Group Work

The general policy on group work is as follows. In the case of a student who must repeat the group work element of continuous assessment, the School may again devise, with the agreement of the Extern Examiner(s), alternative assessment arrangements that cover equivalent learning outcomes in lieu of the group work assessment. Students will have the opportunity to resubmit this alternative piece of assessment by the end of the subsequent examination series.

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Further opportunities for repeating such elements are dependent on reasonable availability of module or reassessment opportunities. Repeat attendance in a module is where the learner has the opportunity to attend all classes, tutorials, workshops etc. and the mark they achieve at the end of the module is based solely on the repeat attendance. The School will advise learners on the merits or otherwise of a repeat attendance and will retain a record for the Examinations Board of learners undertaking a repeat attendance.

7.6.4.2   Examinations

In the case of a learner repeating an end-of-semester examination, marks awarded on the basis of continuous assessments shall normally be carried forward from the original examination to the repeat examination and shall be aggregated with the marks scored in the latter to determine the total marks to be awarded in respect of the repeat examination. However, in the case of a learner repeating an examination following a repeat attendance, only the marks awarded as a result of the repeat assessment and examination shall be considered. The results for such a learner following the repeat assessment shall be based on the marks awarded for the alternative assessment combined with marks carried forward from any elements of the module assessment that the learner was not requested to repeat.

The reassessment strategy for each module will be worded as follows and will be made explicit in each module descriptor in the programme document.

Opportunities to repeat failed assessments (exams or continuous assessments) are organised in the following way:

a) Repeat examinations are held in February and June of each year, two weeks after the finish date of each semester. Students must present for the next examination period.

b) Repeat continuous assessments will have to be submitted before the end of the next examination period.

c) Any student failing group work will have to submit an alternative equivalent piece of assessment approved by the Programme Board and the External Examiner.

The Programme Board will have ultimate discretion on reassessment approaches in each module.

At the end of the examination session the School will advise learners who have failed to achieve a pass in one or more modules of all outstanding assessment tasks to be completed.

7.7   Examination Standards and Regulations / Moderation

The examination paper is drafted by the Internal Examiner. All draft examination papers must be set according to the GBS standards and must be consistent with previous examination papers in the same subject/ module. Whilst ownership of the paper remains with the Internal Examiner, all papers are reviewed by the designated External Examiner. Once drafted by the Internal Examiner, the exams and marking schemes are then forwarded to the External Examiner for review and approval. The reviews of the External Examiner are seriously considered by both the Internal and External Examiner, and the paper and/or marking scheme is amended if/as necessary by the examiner. The final draft of the paper and marking scheme is stored in the Examination Office.

The security of examination papers and scripts is carefully monitored and secured by the Examinations Officer. Exam Papers are password protected and only the Examinations Officer and the Registrar have access. A secure location is provided to store examination scripts until they are sent to the External Examiners for approval or collected by the Internal Examiners and Examinations Officer.

All internal examinations are written on dedicated examination booklets provided by Galway Business School. The School employs a number of experienced Invigilators for exam supervision to ensure full compliance with the exam procedures.

- Candidates must ensure that they are correctly registered on their programme, aware of the date, time and place of the examination, and aware of the relevant policies. Students are made aware of the registration dates and must ensure they are registered.
- All candidates are required to bring their identification cards to the examination hall and are advised to arrive at the hall at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the examination. Candidates without a valid School ID card will be asked to produce another form of valid photo identification.
- Candidates are not allowed to eat or drink in the exam hall.
- Candidates who arrive late are only allowed to enter within 30 minutes of the start of the exam, at the discretion of the Invigilator. Candidates are not allowed to leave the exam hall within the first 30 minutes of the exam. Once a candidate has handed in their exam booklet and left the hall, they will not be allowed to return. Candidates may not leave the exam hall in the final 30 minutes.
- Candidates are advised both when 30 and 15 minutes remain in the exam.

- Candidates are required to leave all personal effects in a dedicated separate room (i.e. jackets, bags, coats, handbags, mobile phones, all electronic devices etc.). Candidates must not have mobile phones on their person during the exam and must ensure that they are turned off if left in the dedicated room. Candidates are advised not to bring any valuables to the exam hall, if they do, they do so at their own risk.

- Unless stated on the exam paper, calculators and handheld electronic dictionaries are not permitted in the exam hall.

- Dictionaries used during an examination must be paper based and they should only provide translations. They will be checked by an Invigilator.

- A standard set of announcements is read out by the Invigilator prior to the commencement of each exam.

- Candidates must not speak to or communicate with any other candidate. If a candidate has a question, the candidate must raise his/her hand to speak with the Invigilator.

- Candidates must stop writing when the end of the examination is announced.

- Writing after the end of the examination could result in the loss of marks, removal of exam, and/or a disciplinary action.

- Any unruly or disruptive behaviour may result in the candidate being removed from the examination and he/she may not be allowed to complete his/her exam.

- Once a candidate has completed his/her exam, he/she should raise his/her hand and an Invigilator will come to him/her to collect all exam material. If the exam has finished candidates are requested to remain seated until all exam scripts have been collected by an Invigilator.

- Once the examination period is closed all examination documentation is completed by the Invigilator and together with all exam material is stored securely for collection and distribution by the Examinations Officer to the Internal Examiners.

7.7.1   Failure to Attend an Examination

Any candidate who fails to attend for any examination, who arrives late, or who leaves early for any reason other than that they have completed the examination, is required to send a written explanation to the Registrar immediately. A medical certificate must be supplied in addition to the explanation if the absence was due to illness. All students must sit final examinations.

7.7.2   Breaches of Examination Regulations

Any breach of examination regulations of Galway Business School is a serious academic offence and will not be tolerated by the School. All such breaches or attempts to cheat will be brought to the attention of the Examinations Board. Examples of breaches and cheating include but are not limited to the following:

- Using an unauthorised text, set of notes, books, electronic aid, or any other non- approved material during an examination.
- Obtaining a copy of the examination before its authorised release.
- Acquiring help from or providing help to another student where such collaboration is not permitted.
- Hiring or outsourcing someone to complete an assessment.
- Attempting to or actually handing in work completed before the time of the examination.
- Any act of dishonesty in relation to the administering, taking, and/or evaluating of the exam.

7.8 Assessment Correction and Feedback

7.8.1 Marking of Scripts

The lecturer should ensure that assessments are marked and returned to learners as soon as possible, but normally no later than two weeks after the submission date.   Learners must be informed when they can expect return of assessment, and should also be told if there will be any delay in the return of assessment. Where there is a delay, students must be informed of a new return date.

7.8.2 Double Marking Policy

For QQI, assessments are corrected by the module lecturer. Subsequently, double marking is carried out internally, whereby 10% of the overall assessments including any borderline cases are selected for double marking. A sample of double-marked assessments are then sent to the External Examiner for further verification. The sample includes sufficient material to enable the External Examiner to form a judgment as to the appropriateness of the marking at all levels of classifications.

7.8.3 Feedback

The method for returning marked assessments should also be made clear to students. All assessments must be uploaded to Moodle. Lecturers upload feedback on learners' work on Moodle within 3 weeks from the submission. The feedback includes provisional, indicative grades which will be ratified by the Board of Examiners. Learners should also be made aware of any further information or assistance that the lecturer has organised to aid students who may have failed an assessment. Feedback on the final examination is provided only upon learner's request.

7.8.4 Recording of Assessment Marks

GBS ensures that the recording of assessment marks is an efficient and secure process. The number of people who have access to the recording of assessment marks is limited. All records with assessment marks are password protected.

- Lecturers record the assessment marks for their modules through Moodle
- Access to assessment marks is restricted to the module lecturers and appropriate administration and management personnel
- The Examination officer exports the assessment results into an appropriate format that allows for the production of the broadsheet for the consideration of the Board of Examiners
- The exported broadsheet is saved on the school's intranet with access restricted to the administrative and management personnel who have direct involvement with the assessment function

7.9 Progression Eligibility

A learner must demonstrate achievement of all MIMLOs of modules equivalent to 60ECTS credits, including all mandatory modules, to be eligible to progress onto the next stage of a programme. However, there are the following exceptions to this:

• Pass by compensation

• Exemption from part of the programme

• Progress carrying the failed modules to be passed during the subsequent stage (maximum of 10ECTS).

7.9.1 Compensation

Any candidate, who fails, may re-sit final examinations and re-submit coursework. Such a candidate may be awarded a degree based on their overall marks in all subjects including the resit subjects. The only exceptions to this rule occur in the case of candidates who may be compensated.

7.9.1.1 *Compensation and Carrying rules for QQI-approved programmes*

Compensation will only be applied in cases where its application enables the student to pass the module as a whole. Performance at the first attempt in a given semester (of at least 30 credits) may be used to compensate in the same semester, provided no module in the semester has been failed outright (mark less than 35%). The pass standard for a module is 40%. However, a student with marks of less than 40% in one or more modules will be deemed to have passed the semester provided (a) the aggregate mark for all modules of the semester is at least 40%; (b) the mark in every module is 35% or more; (c) the module(s) with marks in the range 35-39% totals 10 ECTS or less per semester and (d) the stage aggregate of credit-weighted excesses of percentage marks over 40 is greater than or equal to the stage aggregate of credit-weighted deficit of marks under 40.

Compensation may be applied only to enable a learner to pass a semester or stage (at the award stage) a learner who passes by compensation remains eligible for honours. Compensation does not change the result of the modules passed. When reporting module passes by compensation, the actual result is returned, the mark for the module will appear on transcripts with a grade of Pass by Compensation. Students who have a compensatable grade on a given module will be allowed to resubmit continuous assessment or resit an examination to improve their result.

7.9.2 Rules for Carrying

A student can carry up to 10 credits from one year to the next (from year 1 to year 2, and from year 2 to year 3). The following criteria must be met and followed for a learner to be eligible to carry a module:

- A prerequisite module cannot be carried
- The maximum missing credits that can be carried is 10 ECTS per 60 ECTS credit stage
- The learner must get an overall pass in each module to be able to carry
- Learners can only carry a module if the aggregate of the other modules reaches a pass grade
- Learners can repeat any failed element of a module once module marks have been adjudicated by a Board of Examiners and are officially released
- The learner can repeat failed exam at the next available opportunity but the overall grade will be capped at 40%

7.9.3 Exemption from part of a programme

Generally, exemptions are allowed at any stage of a programme in line with QQI Assessment and Standards (QQI, 2013). The process of granting exemptions, and the grounds for which exemptions can be granted, are outlined in Section 4.3.4 Recognition of Prior Learning.

7.10 Appeals, Re-checks and Reviews

It is a requirement of Galway Business School that any complaint or dispute arising in relation to any result for the purposes of a QQI award shall be resolved promptly as set out in the procedures set out below.

• Decisions are taken concerning candidates' examination and performance at the following points: allocation of marks, adoption of provisional results, recheck, review, and appeal.

• These checkpoints create a hierarchy of decision-making where the decision taken at any level may be changed at the next level, without referring to the previous level. The decision- making entity at any particular level has full powers in relation to any decision that is brought before it.

• Candidates contemplating a recheck, review or appeal of a piece of assessment are encouraged to discuss the matter with the appropriate lecturer before submitting such requests, to ensure that they fully understand the context of the result achieved.

Galway Business School is committed to ensuring their assessment procedures are accurate and fair. However, we understand that students may sometimes have occasion to query the learner feedback they receive for assessments. All queries, rechecks, reviews, and appeals, (as defined below) will be addressed in a fair, transparent and timely fashion.

7.10.1 Re-checks

This is the administrative operation of checking (again) the recording and combination of component scores for the module and/or stage (QQI Assessment and Standards, 2013). A recheck is carried out to ensure that there have been no arithmetical or administrative errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate and that all the marks to which the student is entitled have been included in the final total. A student wishing to have the marks awarded for any module re-examined should seek a recheck of the relevant module.

The steps to request a re-check are as follows:

• All requests for a re-check must be in writing by email to the Academic Coordinator and accompanied by the appropriate fee (€15.00 per module).

• The fee in the event of a successful recheck will be refunded. The candidate should supply any details that he/she believes will help expedite the recheck.

- A request for a re-check must be made within 5 days of the dissemination of assessment results.
- The school will complete the Re-check process within 5 days of receiving it.
- All recheck requests are coordinated by the Academic Coordinator
- Re-checks are completed by the Examinations Officer for that programme, except in the case of a conflict of module interest where another Examinations Officer within the school will be appointed to carry out the re-check
- The Academic Coordinator will inform the student in writing of the outcome of the re-check within 5 working days of its completion.

7.10.2 Reviews

The review is the reconsideration of the assessment decision, either by the original assessor or by other competent persons or the Board of Examiners. Learners are required to state the grounds for the requested review. The grounds for review will normally be that the learner suspects that the assessment was erroneous in some respect (QQI Assessment and Standards, 2013). A request for a review must state the grounds upon which the review is sought and the candidate must supply evidence in support of his/her request.

Reviews can only be made concerning the assessment process and not marks attained.

The steps for a review are as follows:

- A review can happen even if a re-check of marks has not been requested. A re-check of marks should be also be carried out in such instances.
- All requests for a review must be in writing on the appropriate form and accompanied by the appropriate fee (€50.00 which is refunded in the event of a review being successful).
- A request for a review must state the grounds upon which the review is sought and the candidate must supply evidence in support of his/her request.
- A review must be made within 10 working days of a request has taken place.
- The school will complete the review process within 10 working days of receiving it.
- All review requests are coordinated by the Registrar.
- The review panel is made up of the independent senior academic staff not involved in the assessment, Head of Teaching and Learning and the Registrar.
- The Internal Examiners report to the Examination Board / Board of Examiners.

- The Registrar will inform the learner in writing of the outcome of the review within 5 working days.

7.10.3 Appeals

The appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on learner progression assessment and awards (QAA Code of Practice 2015). A learner can appeal the outcome of the review within 10 working days on the grounds that the review did not properly address his/her case. The following Appeals process marks the internal point of finality for a learner's right to question the school's decision-making process. The introduction of new material that could have been included in the submission of the review will not be valid grounds for an appeal.

An appeal is a reconsideration by the Appeal Board of the outcome of a review. Grounds for an appeal include:

- The examination regulations of the School were not implemented correctly
- The assessment task is not relevant to the intended programme learning outcomes
- Medical or compassionate circumstances exist which may not have been known to or considered by the Board of Examiners. Compassionate circumstances must be notified in writing to the Registrar when they occur.

Excluded grounds for appeal:

- Failure to adhere to the stated appeals procedures
- Disagreement with a decision
- The academic judgement of the Examiner or Board of Examiners
- Any circumstances other than those stated in the submission of the written appeal (not including any new evidence arising after the submission deadline)
- Evidence-based on third party hearsay

Appeals Procedure:

- An appeal can only happen after a review has taken place.
- All requests for an appeal must be in writing through the Registrar's Office and accompanied by the appropriate fee (€50.00 refundable if the appeal is successful).

- Appeals must be made in writing within 10 working days of the notified decision under review having been issued to the learner.

- Late declaration of an appeal will only be considered where evidence is produced that circuimstances or valid reasons prevented the learner from filling the appeal form within the stated timeframe (e.g. medical certification).

- Appeals can only be made in relation to exam process and not marks attained.

- The Academic Council will consider cases brought on the grounds of substantial irregularity in the conduct of examination or assessment.

- The Academic Council may invite non-members of the Board to consult or present information pertaining to the appeal should the need arise.

- Decision making will be based on the majority and will either communicate sufficient or insufficient grounds to uphold the appeal and will be required to agree on remedial action to be taken.

- The quorum Academic Council will convene approximately two weeks following the relevant Board of Examiners meeting and will communicate outcomes of any appeal to the learner by post on the first working day after its meeting.

- Learners are advised as per QQI Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013, QQI does not have a role to play in a learner's appeal of the provider's assessment decisions.

7.11 Work Placement

GBS will facilitate work placement as an optional component on some of its programmes. The work placement will be a 30 ECTS module assessed by learning portfolio (20%) and independent applied research project (80%). The assessment of work placement will, therefore:

- Be graded by appropriate GBS academic staff
- Incorporate an assessment by the workplace provider of the learner's performance. This element of the assessment will require a nominated individual within the workplace to assess the performance of the learner, provide feedback to the learner, and grade the learner.

All learners enrolled in a programme with the work experience component will receive the Work Experience Project Handbook in Stage 1 of their programme. The handbook provides the detail of assessment requirements for the module and relevant timelines. In addition, it outlines the responsibilities of learners, work providers and the module leader with regards to this module.

7.12 Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

The reputation of Galway Business School and of its graduates depends on upholding the highest standards of learning and research. Learners have a right to be assessed on the quality of their own work and have the corresponding duty to present only their own work for assessment. In this context, 'work' means ideas and concepts as well as their specific expression in words, formula, code, designs, images, sounds and other forms. Learners are expected to have read the GBS' statement on academic integrity, plagiarism and referencing techniques for work that is submitted for assessment. In order to avoid any suspicion of plagiarism, a learner should:

- In accordance with the GBS' recommended practice, cite the sources of all quotations, paraphrases, summaries of information, tables, diagrams or other material in which intellectual property rights may reside.
- When paraphrasing the work of others, use their own words and sentence structures
- Provide a complete bibliography of all works and sources used in the preparation of projects, essays or other assignments.
- Ensure the originality, independence and integrity of their individual submission, even if it has emerged from the context of group study.

7.12.1 Academic Integrity

In an academic context, we show respect for the work of others and demonstrate our professionalism by being honest and trustworthy and acting with fairness, respect and responsibility. Practices that undermine or damage academic integrity are unacceptable, and individuals who are found to have engaged in such practices will have appropriate action taken against them.

Practices that breach standards of academic integrity include:

- Submitting other peoples' work as your own, irrespective of whether you commissioned or paid for the work
- Buying or commissioning work via professional agencies
- Submitting the same or similar work for more than one assessment
- Falsifying research results, data, interviews or other research material
- Providing false information to obtain unjustified concessions

7.12.2 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of taking and using another person's work and presenting it as your own without adequate reference. It includes:

- Reproducing the work of another, even with small changes, without appropriate acknowledgement or referencing, whether the work reproduced is from books, journals, articles, TV programmes, the Internet, lecture notes, and so on, without the use of quotation or citing the source.
- Collusion by a group of learners to produce/present an assessment or a substantial part thereof, when the examiner required individual research and outcome.

7.12.3 Dissemination of Policy

Administration staff delivering a Learner Induction session must refer learners to, and explain, the GBS' academic integrity and plagiarism policy. Programme documentation ('Student Handbook' and 'Learner Guide: Academic Skills Development') will recommend an appropriate referencing system required by the discipline.

7.12.4 The process aimed at protecting against plagiarism when submitting assessments

Assessment submitted physically or online, will not be accepted or graded unless accompanied by a completed 'Learner Declaration of Academic Integrity' form [see Form below]. A learner who does not include such a declaration will be required to resubmit according to the School module assessment procedures with a completed 'Learner Declaration of Academic Integrity' form. The work of any learner that does not include such a Declaration will not be marked.

Submitted assessments and projects will be subjected to electronic review by Turnitin and analysed electronically for plagiarised passages etc.

7.12.5 Reporting cases of alleged breaches of academic integrity and/or plagiarism

The following text on the process for dealing with alleged breaches of academic integrity and plagiarism is outlined in the flowchart on page 178.

If the academic staff member to whom the assessment is submitted is satisfied that there is a case to answer, he/she must complete a report in writing [below] to the Registrar.

The report must include:

- The relevant material (essays, code, diagrams, video, audio, web pages, reports, dissertations, learning logs etc.) including a web link for Internet sources.
- Breaches of academic integrity: an explanation as to how the learner's submitted work constitutes a practice that breaches academic integrity and/or plagiarism.
- Plagiarism: a brief textual analysis – for example, identical work, or proportion of work, from different learners; presenting others' work as the learners' own; absent or misleading references. Any alleged breaches of academic integrity or plagiarism offence may be referred directly to the Registrar. In a case, that is considered to be the first offence, an interview may be arranged between the learner and the GBS' representatives (lecturer on the modules, Programme leader and Registrar) to allow the learner concerned to respond to the allegation of a breach, or breaches, of academic integrity and/or plagiarism. Normally this interview will be conducted face to face, but it may, in exceptional circumstances, be conducted electronically.

In the case of a second offence, i.e. where a learner has already been sanctioned at GBS, his/her case will immediately be referred to the GBS Disciplinary Committee. Notification of such action must also be sent to the Registrar for noting at Programme Board meeting. All communication with the learner will be recorded and copies retained by all relevant parties initially. If the allegation of breaches of academic integrity or plagiarism is not upheld by the Disciplinary Committee all official records of the alleged offence must be destroyed/deleted. If the allegation is upheld by the Disciplinary Committee the records will not be destroyed and will be retained.

7.12.6 Learner interview process

Prior to an interview being arranged, the learner's record must be checked at the central level to ensure there is no previous academic integrity or plagiarism offence. Where a learner's record shows no previous breach of academic integrity or plagiarism, and an alleged breach is being dealt with at module level, an interview will be held with that learner so that they may answer the allegation. This interview may be concluded face to face or, in exceptional circumstances, electronically.

The interview panel will involve, at a minimum, the Registrar and another academic member of staff (for example, the staff member who identified the alleged breach).

As part of the interview process, the learner will be asked if they have ever had any allegation of plagiarism or breach of academic integrity upheld before, either in GBS or elsewhere. It will be explained to the learner how they have allegedly breached the academic integrity and plagiarism policy. Learners are then afforded the opportunity to explain how they did not breach the policy or outline any extenuating or mitigating circumstances involved in their case. Records of the interview must be kept; these records may be electronic or paper-based.

The learner is entitled to bring an observer to the face-to-face interview, or involve an observer in the interview process taking place electronically. In the case of a face-to-face interview or a synchronous electronic interview, the interview panel must be notified, at least 48 hours in advance, of such a planned observers attendance, including the name of the observer and their relationship to the learner. In the case of an asynchronous interview being held electronically, the interview panel must be informed that an observer will be involved in the interview process, including the name of the observer and their relationship to the learner. This observer may not be a legal representative (see point below).

The learner can i preffered waive the interview with the panel and have the matter referred to the GBS' Disciplinary Committee. The matter must be referred to the GBS' Disciplinary Committee if the learner retains legal representation, for example, a solicitor.

Records of the interview and all communication with the learner must be retained initially. If the allegation of breach of academic integrity or plagiarism is not upheld, all records of the alleged instance must be destroyed/deleted. If the allegation is upheld, the records will not be destroyed and will be retained.

7.12.7 Penalties

All penalties for breaching academic integrity and/or plagiarism will be greater than the penalty for submitting poor work or none. If the allegation is upheld, local penalties may include:

- A zero mark for an assessment component and a requirement to re-sit the assessment component. Additional work may be imposed.
- A zero mark for the complete assessment and a requirement to re-sit the completed assessment. Additional work may be imposed.
- A zero mark for the module and the requirement to repeat the module in the following academic session. Additional work may be imposed.

The full implication of the penalty must be made clear to the learner, including potential impact for progression and/or award.

A record of sanctions must be kept with Registrar. Notification of the sanction must be noted at the Programme Board meeting. Where the allegation is upheld at the local level, a flag will be added to the centrally-held learner record to ensure that, should the second event of this nature occur, even if in a different module, the first incident would be visible. If, when this flag is being added, it is found that the learner had not declared a previous finding, the matter will immediately be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for consideration of both the plagiarism/breach of academic integrity issue and dishonesty in not declaring the previous offence. If the interviewing panel believes that the range of available local sanctions is not sufficient, the matter will be referred to the GBS Disciplinary Committee and record of action kept with the Registrar. Notification of such action must also be noted at the Programme Board meeting. If the allegation is not upheld at the Disciplinary Committee, all officials' records of the alleged instance must be destroyed/deleted.

Some further guidance on penalties is included below.

The local penalty for breaching the GBS Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the offence. Offences committed in later years of an undergraduate programme will generally be regarded as more serious than similar offences in earlier years. Graduate learners are generally expected to have a much greater understanding of academic integrity and plagiarism and the consequences of breach than undergraduates are. In extreme cases, the GBS Disciplinary Committee may impose higher sanctions, including suspensions from GBS for a year, or permanent exclusion from the school.

Sample Offences	Possible Penalty
The first occasion of unattributed copying by a learner	A zero mark for an assessment component and a requirement to re-sit the assessment components.* Additional work may be imposed.
Minor plagiarism (e.g., on the scale of one or two short unattributed phrases or sentences within a larger body of work) or associated unacceptable practices.	A zero mark for an assessment component and a requirement to re-sit the assessment components.* Additional work may be imposed.
Significant plagiarism (e.g. on the scale of more than two unattributed phrases or sentences) or associated unacceptable practices, especially within an assignment with a significant weighted contribution to the overall module mark	A zero mark for the complete assessment and a requirement to re-sit the complete assessment.* Additional work may be imposed.

*The assessment is considered as failed at first sitting and the re-submission is in line with the General Reassessment Policy in Section 7.6.4.

7.12.8 Outcome and right to appeal

Learners should be informed of the decision promptly in writing and should be informed at this stage that they have the right to appeal the local penalty imposed by the module leader by appealing to the GBS' Disciplinary Committee.

7.12.9 Process in respect of learner BRP

Research misconduct means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other questionable research practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the research community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. Allegations of research misconduct are reported to the Registrar.

A judgement as to whether or not plagiarism has occurred is integral to the examination of research reports submitted for formal assessment. The recommendations of the Registrar reflect the outcome of this evaluation.

7.12.10 Retrospective detection of plagiarism and/or breaches of academic integrity

In cases where a breach of academic integrity and/or plagiarism is alleged subsequent to the awarding of credit, GBS will invoke this policy or the policy Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. In situations where allegations are upheld and the offence is serious, GBS may revoke the credits or award given.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

LEARNER DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Learners may be required to submit work for assessment in a variety of means, for example, physical submission or electronic submission as per the lecturer's instructions. In all cases, learners must make a declaration of academic integrity, either by physically completing such a declaration and submitting it with their assignment or engaging appropriately with the electronic version of the declaration. Assignments submitted such that the form has not included, or the electronic equivalent has been circumvented, will not be accepted.

Declaration

Full Name:		**Learner ID number:**	
Programme Studied:		**Module Code**	
Assignment Title		**Submission Date:**	

I understand that the GBS regards breaches of academic integrity and plagiarism as grave and serious.

I have read and understood the GBS Academic and Plagiarism Policy. I accept the penalties that may be imposed should I engage in practice or practices that breach this policy.

I have identified and included the source of all facts, ideas, opinions and viewpoints of others in the assignment references. Direct quotations, paraphrasing, discussion of ideas from books, journal articles, internet sources, module text, or any other source whatsoever are acknowledged and the sources cited are identified in the assignment references.

I declare that this material, which I now submit for assessment, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledges within the text of my own work.

I have used the GBS referencing guidelines and/or the appropriate referencing system recommended in the assignment guidelines and/or programme documentation.

By signing this form or by submitting material online with this form attached, I confirm that this assignment, or any part of it, has not been previously submitted by me or any other person for assessment on this or any other course of study.

By signing this form or by submitting material online with this form attached, I confirm that I have read and understood the GBS Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Policy.

Signed:	……………………………………	Date:	……………………..

GBS Alleged Breach of Academic Integrity Process

Academic Staff Member

Suspected breach of academic integrity → Preliminary Investigation → Formal plagiarism procedures waranted?

No → End of Process

Programme Board

Report prepared and learner contacted → First offence? → Yes → Learner invited to explain → Invitation accepted? → Yes → Legal Representation requested? → No → Interview held with learner → Allegations upheld? → No → End of Process

Adequate local sanctions available? → Yes → Learner accepts local sanctions? → Yes → Local sanctions applied and recorded → End of Process

Disciplinary Committee

First offence? No →

Invitation accepted? No →

Legal Representation requested? Yes →

Allegations upheld? Yes →

Adequate local sanctions available? No →

Learner accepts local sanctions? No →

→ Disciplinary Process

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

REPORT OF ALLEGED BREACH OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM

Student Name:		**Student Number:**	
Date:		**Programme:**	
Year		**Module:**	
Lecturer			

SECTION A: ALLEGED BREACH OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Indicate as appropriate

Submission of work not the learner's own irrespective of whether the learner paid for or commissioned this work.	
Commissioning or buying of work via professional agencies	
Submission of same/similar work for more than one assessment	
Falsification of research results, data, interview or any other research procedure	
Provision of false information to obtain unjustified concessions	
Other (Provide a description of the breach of academic integrity):	

SECTION B: SUSPECTED PLAGIARISM
Indicate as appropriate

Reproduction of work (even with small changes) of another, sourced from books, journals, articles, multimedia files, lecture notes, the Internet, etc., without appropriate acknowledgement to the author(s) of that work	
Collusion by a group of learners to present an assessment, or a substantial part thereof, when the assessment required individual research and outcomes to be presented.	
Other (Provide a description of other alleged plagiarism activities):	

SECTION C:
Describe the alleged breach or suspected plagiarism involved, providing excerpts or examples as appropriate which demonstrate or represent the same.

SECTION D:
Attach a relevant material (in the appropriate format) relating to the alleged breach of academic integrity or suspected plagiarism.

7.13 Review of Assessment Policy

The Assessment Policy and relevant procedures are reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Council on an annual basis.

8 Support for Learners Policy

8.1 Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide an overview of the learning supports that are made available by GBS and the standards with which the school maintains these. The policy also intends to outline how the learner perspective is incorporated into the school management and operations, as well as covering the responsibilities of learners.

Document Name: Support for Learners Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	**GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL**
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	May 2016	May 2016
V2.0	Code of Conduct and Discipline has been extended	July 2019	September 2019

8.2 Scope

Galway Business School as a small educational institution prides itself on the high level of academic, technological, and developmental support it offers its learners. The School strives to maintain and improve the academic and general support services available to its learners through the provision of workshops in Study Skills, Career Guidance, Referencing & Attribution, and through the school's provision of Pastoral care.

Galway Business School is committed to providing a stimulating learning experience in a supportive environment. It is acknowledged that quality accessible support services combined with evaluation systems and procedures are necessary and inherent to an active quality assurance culture.

The Annual Programme Monitoring Reports are used to identify corrective and preventive action where improvements can be made or where new supports should be targeted.

8.3 Learner Protection

As a private educational profit-making institution, and in accordance with QQI's Core Validation Policy and Criteria 2013, Section 6.1, Galway Business School has specific arrangements in place to provide for and protect learners in the unlikely event that Galway Business School were to cease to provide a particular programme. Galway Business School is a member of HECA which gives it access to bilateral protection for learners to other HECA members offering a similar course. Galway Business School conforms to QQI policy on Protection for Enrolled Learners (PEL) for all QQI programmes.

Galway Business School has (PEL) for our students in the event of Galway Business School being unable to fulfil its commitment to students on QQI-accredited courses. For the Bachelor of Business Level 7 programme, GBS has formal PEL arrangements with Dorset and Griffith College Dublin and for the Bachelor of Business in International Business level 8 programme, GBS has formal PEL arrangements with Dorset College and Griffith College Dublin.

8.4 Refunds and Cancelations

GBS does not usually provide refunds after the imminent commencements of its programmes, however, it acknowledges that learners' circumstances may change dramatically and therefore offers a variety of supports.

- For cancellations, up to 2 weeks before course commencement full fees will be refunded except the non-refundable deposit of €300.
- For cancellations of 14 days or less before the course commencement, the deposit will be retained and the following percentages of the course fees will be refunded.
    - 7-14 days before the start of the course: 50% of course fees will be refunded.
    - Less than 7 days before the start of the course: 30% of course fees will be refunded.
- Once the course commences fees will not be refunded as it is GBS's policy not to refund fees irrespective of the circumstances. This includes late arrival/ early departure or days missed during the course.

8.4.1 VISA & Refunds

GBS can assist learners in their application for a VISA should they require one. Learners must allow a minimum of 8+ weeks to process their VISA application. GBS recommends that long-stay students apply for a D-VISA. All fees must be paid in advance and are refundable (except for the deposit of €300.00) in the case of a visa being refused unless false documentation has been submitted. This includes a minimum of four weeks accommodation and medical insurance. For Visa Requiring Learners:

- Learners must pay throughTransfermate Escrow Account, where their fees will be held on behalf of the learner and GBS pending the VISA Decision. Delays in issuing visas will mean that a course is postponed to the next course starting date and additional charges may apply.
- Fees will not be refunded if a visa is denied due to the submission of false or inaccurate information.
- Visa applications are available from http://www.inis.gov.ie/
- There is a fee of €300 each time a visa is issued or extended by GNIB (Irish Immigration).
- Visa requiring and all non-EEA students must have adequate health insurance to cover their stay in Ireland and this is available for purchase from GBS.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Fee Refund Form

Student Name:		**Student Number:**	
Student Address (Incl. Area Code)		**Programme:**	
Bank			
Bank Address (Incl. Area Code)			
Account No			
Branch Code			
IBAN			
SWIFT Code			
Account Holder			
Account Holders Address			
Signature:	………………………………	**Date:**	……………………………..

GBS does not accept responsibility for wrong information provided in the refund form.

8.5   Learner Induction

During the first days of week one in the first semester, all new learners attend Induction sessions with the Registrar, Head of Teaching and Learning, the Programme Leader and the Academic Coordinator. Lecturing staff on the programme give learners a thorough briefing about the programme, as well as covering key concerns such as time management, study skills, plagiarism, use of the on-line library, referencing and attribution, and critical thinking. In addition, it is school practice for each lecturer to integrate such skills as part of their modules early in the academic year to reinforce learning of these key attributes.

The aim of this session is to welcome new learners to the programme, provide them with essential information and to let them know what to expect over the duration of the programme. During this session, learners will complete a campus tour and note the location of key contact personnel. Learners also get the opportunity to meet their lecturers and student peers by engaging in team-building and ice-breaker exercises. Learners will be provided with the following:

- student handbook
- the academic calendar
- GBS Quality Assurance Handbook

- information technology training
- support services

In the final schedule of induction, learners are provided with training on GBS e-learning platform – Moodle, online library – EBSCO, Referencing styles and techniques and general printing facilities.

Throughout each semester, both academic staff and the Registrar provide dedicated office hours and scheduled appointments to meet Learners on a one-to-one basis.

8.6   Attendance

The importance of regular attendance has a direct impact on student achievement but does not impact on marks awarded. While attendance at class is not obligatory its importance is stressed and monitored. This serves to emphasise the importance of regular class attendance and this is highlighted to students should their attendance fall below par. Attendance is maintained on a daily basis and recorded on Schoolworks (School Database Management System).

Class attendance is discussed at Programme Boards and Faculty Meetings, with all lecturers reporting poor attendance to the Registrar and Programme Leader. If poor attendance is due to a personal problem, the student will meet with the assigned Programme Leader or the Registrar. If necessary, the student will be referred to a Counselling Professional.

If there is no valid reason for poor attendance, the student is informed that his/her attendance record will be made available to the Programme Board. The attendance reports contribute to the Module Reports.

8.7 Counselling Service

Lecturers are encouraged to alert the Programme Leader or the Registrar if they feel a student may require some outside assistance. Students can be referred to a subsidised off-site counselling service provided by a fully accredited and experienced counselling professional. The Programme Leader or Registrar will maintain contact with the student throughout the counselling process. Such contact is recorded and maintained in hard-copy form in the student file.

Confidentiality of the individual student's counselling process will be of the highest priority in these cases, and any personal identifying information related to the counselling process remains undisclosed.

8.8 Careers Support Service

With its history of close integration with industry, Galway Business School is committed to preparing its students with the skills necessary to excel in the workplace or to progress to further education. Within the school, there are a number of careers support mechanisms:

- The school offers a professional Career Guidance professional throughout the year to provide focused skills-based workshops on CV preparation, communications and interpersonal skills, and interview techniques.

- Academic staff with expertise in given industries or in particular academic areas are available to meet students individually to discuss their future plans and to advise them on possible avenues to further education.

The Careers Support Service is monitored through student and graduate feedback. In particular, the Registrar surveys graduates and, where possible, employers of graduates to monitor and review how graduates perceive the school and how employers perceive graduates of the School. Results of these surveys help evaluate this service and form part of the ongoing monitoring process.

8.9   General Student Services

Other student services provided by the school include:

Support for Social and Sports programmes: The School provides information on all types of sporting activities around the city, including information with regard to student discounts. A number of social programmes and events are organised throughout each semester normally involving sporting and cultural events. There are also opportunities for students to volunteer for community and arts projects in the city.

Medical Insurance provision: Galway Business School arranges yearly student medical insurance with an accredited insurance company for a reduced fee. This insurance is particularly targeted towards international students who may not have insurance arrangements in place before programme commencement. This insurance covers GP visits and any hospital visit up to the value of €2,000,000.

Health Service: If the need arises, Galway Business School can refer any of its students to a Medical Clinic in Galway city, with which the school has an agreement in place.

International student registration support: New international non-EU students require help and guidance with regard to opening a bank account, obtaining a PPS number and to ensure that all necessary paperwork and identification is obtained in order to register with the Garda National Immigration Bureau. The Reception will provide students with the necessary information and supporting documentation.

Student safety and security: Galway Business School ensures that its premises and facilities are fully compliant with relevant health and safety legislation. Any other information which increases safety awareness is communicated to all students at induction and as necessary during the academic year.

Accommodation service: The school manages a network of Irish host families and school accommodation and arranges brief stays, particularly for cultural orientation purposes, for the first few weeks after the student arrives. The school also offers advice on finding and sharing independent accommodation in Galway.

Data Administration Services: The "Schoolworks" software program handles all enquiries, bookings for students and their educational agents, invoicing of students for courses and records collection of fees. It also records the allocation of physical and personnel resources on a daily / semester basis. Galway Business School seeks to maintain almost all student and school records on Class. Records that require additional security are recorded elsewhere. These include staff contracts and performance reviews and student examination and assignment results. Access to student examination results is limited to the Registrar and management of Galway Business School.

8.9.1   Administration Services

On an institutional level, a centralised administration function provides support in such areas as accounting, fees administration, marketing and admissions, student services, and academic records administration to the Governing Body, Academic Council and its sub-committees. The institutional administrative support is managed by the Managing Director and is monitored by the Governing Body.

The Admissions Office is responsible for student recruitment, enrolment, interviews, and offers, in accordance with admissions policy as determined by the Academic Council. The Admissions Office liaises with the Marketing Department on marketing and promotion of the school, and on planned recruitment strategies.

A number of staff members provide administrative support for all departments. The Academic Coordinator has specific responsibility for Galway Business School students within the school. This includes acting as a daily liaison with students and academic staff and providing administrative support for the Registrar. It also includes registering students for courses, for examinations and

posting timetables, notices and information on Moodle or/and on notice boards. Part of the role includes the management of the Virtual Learning Environment within the organisation.

8.9.1.1 Feedback

Feedback on Administration services is received from student, lecturers and graduate surveys. Daily feedback in all its forms is recorded and discussed at the relevant committee and faculty meetings. As part of the Annual Resources Report, the Managing Director reports issues relating to all feedback to the Quality Assurance Committee.

8.10 Disability Support

Galway Business School operates a clearly defined supplementary admissions procedure for applicants with disabilities/specific learning difficulties who believe that because of the impact of their disability they will not achieve the required competitive points for the course of their choice. This procedure has developed in recognition of the difficulties experienced by some students with disabilities in reaching their academic potential in second-level education. This also addresses the under-representation of learners with disabilities in higher education in Ireland.

Galway Business School's Policy on Disability aims to deal with learners with a disability who wish to undertake a qualification. The Policy covers varying forms of learners' disability. The building at Galway Business school is wheelchair accessible but not adapted.

The document outlines the support services from admission to graduation that Galway Business School will provide for learners with a disability to complete their academic qualification.

8.10.1 Registering

The Disability Support Service at GBS supports learners at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Learners can register at any stage during their course of study; however, it is recommended that learners register with the service at the beginning of the first year. Registration allows learners to avail of support that is determined by an individual needs assessment. Learners cannot avail of these supports unless they are registered with the service.

Learners are required to follow three steps to register for the Disability Support Service (DSS) with Academic Co-ordinator.

8.10.1.1 Documentation needed for registration:

To register for the DSS with Academic Co-ordinator, a learner must provide verification of her/his disability, which can either be an Evidence of Disability Form or a Medical Report from the appropriate consultant with the same level of detail. Please see table 8.9.1 below for information on the type of report required and the age limit of the report.

Table 8.9.1: Documentation required for registration for DSS.

Disability	Report	Age of report
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	Consultant Psychiatrist OR Psychologist OR Neurologist OR Paediatrician	No age limit
ADD/ADHD	Consultant Psychiatrist OR Psychologist OR Neurologist OR Paediatrician	No age limit
Blind/Vision impaired	Ophthalmologist/Ophthalmic Surgeon OR Letter from NCBI OR attended school for the blind	No age limit
Deaf/Hard of hearing	Audiogram OR attended school for the Deaf	No age limit
Neurological Condition	Neurologist OR relevant Consultant	No age limit
Speech and Language Disabilities	Speech and Language Therapist	No age limit
Physical/Mobility	Orthopaedic Consultant OR relevant Specialist	No age limit
Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD) Dyspraxia/Dysgraphia	Educational Psychologists report AND Occupational Therapist OR Neurologist	No age limit
Mental health condition	Consultant Psychiatrist OR Specialist Registrar	No older than 5 years
Significant Ongoing Illness	Relevant Consultant e.g. Diabetes Type 1: Endocrinologist or Paediatrician	No older than 5 years
Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia or Dyscalculia)	Educational Psychologists report	No older than 5 years

8.10.1.2 DSS Registration

Learners are required to obtain a Registration Form for the DSS from the Academic Co-ordinator and return it filled with the supporting documentation outlined above.

The Registration Form for Disability Support Services is attached below:

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

REGISTRATION FORM FOR DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Welcome to the registration form for learners with disabilities and specific learning difficulties at GBS. This is your first step in the process of registering with the Disability Support Service.

Following the completion of this form and its submission to Academic Coordinator, a member of the academic support team will contact you to arrange a meeting for an individual needs assessment. Learners that have completed this form will be prioritised. The needs assessment meeting is used to determine the best supports to put in place to help you achieve your academic goals.

All information provided will be held securely and confidentially in accordance with the GBS' Data Protection Policy.

Full Name	

Address for Correspondence		E-Mail Address:	
		Telephone Number:	

Programme Studied:	
Year of Course	
Primary Disability	
Secondary Disability	
Other Disability	

In order to facilitate your registration, the Academic Co-ordinator requires evidence of your disability from an acceptable professional source that verifies the nature of your disability or specific learning difficulty.

If you experience any difficulty in completing this form, please contact Padraig@gci.ie or 091 529000.

Signed:	……………………………………	Date:	…………………………..

8.10.2 Needs Assessment

The third step is the meeting of the learner with Academic Co-ordinator who will carry out a full needs assessment.

After completion of Registration Form for DSS, the Academic Co-ordinator will contact the learner to arrange an appointment for a Needs Assessment. Following the Needs Assessment, the Academic Co-ordinator prepares an Individual Learning-Educational Needs Summary (LENS) detailing the Reasonable Accommodations to be implemented. The information outlined in the LENS is communicated to the relevant lecturers on the learners' course.

The Needs Assessment at GBS is conducted based on the three most common areas of disability which are discussed below. The form for the LENS assessment is attached at the end of this section.

8.10.2.1 Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia or Dyscalculia)

Dyslexia presents students with many challenges which are outlined below.

In lectures:

- Listening while taking notes; writing at speed
- Catching and writing new words
- Tracking columns of figures

In seminars/group discussion:

- Sight-reading: being asked to read text aloud without time to prepare
- Pronunciation of polysyllabic words,
- Word retrieval
- Hesitancy

In reading:

- May be slow and inaccurate with difficulty in scanning text to find information,
- For some learners text appears to be moving or falling off the page
- Screen-based information may be subject to flicker and distortion

In writing:

- Difficulties with sequencing or word retrieval may produce a stilted style of writing which may not match the student's oral performance

- Unsophisticated language structures- in order to avoid grammatical errors, many dyslexic students adopt simplified language structures, which do not necessarily denote unsophisticated thinking
- Simplified vocabulary – in order to avoid spelling errors, many dyslexic students adopt a simplified vocabulary when writing
- Repeated information or phrases – which would not be detected by a spellchecker or by a student proofreading their own draft
- Other errors which may not be picked up by spell checkers – including homophone substitutions, phonetic equivalents, incorrect word substitutions, and/or American spelling
- Omitted words or punctuation
- Excessive or misplaced punctuation
- Handwritten work may look messy and/or juvenile

In exams:
- Slow reading & writing speeds

In other situations, outside formal teaching situations:

- Difficulties in filling in forms, reading timetables and notices, following sequence of numbers in the library
- Poor short term memory

8.10.2.2 Hearing Impaired Learners

The majority of learners with hearing loss in third-level education institutions will have mild to moderate hearing loss and use oral /aural (speaking /listening) methods as their main mode of communication.

Hearing-impaired learners may face many challenges which are outlined below.

In Lectures, Seminars / Group Discussions:

- Difficulties pronouncing some words or speech sounds
- The omission of word endings
- Failure to pay attention when spoken to
- Frequent observation of peers for a lead as to what to do

- Giving incorrect answers to simple questions

- A high frequency in asking for repetition of words and sentences

- Intense face and/or lip watching

- Mispronunciation of some words/sounds

- Straining to watch a speaker

- Tiredness, a tendency to speak loudly and to have difficulty monitoring voice level

- Withdrawal from in-class activities

8.10.2.3 Visually Impaired Learners

Learners with visual impairment are described in Department of Education and Skills (DES) circulars as having a visual disability that is so serious as to impair significantly their capacity to see, thus interfering with their capacity to perceive visually presented materials such as pictures, diagrams and the written word. Some will have been diagnosed as suffering from such conditions as albinism, cataracts, congenital blindness, retinitis pigmentosa, etc. Most are described as requiring the use of low-vision aids. The category is not intended to include learners whose visual difficulties are satisfactorily corrected by the wearing of glasses and/or contact lenses. Most learners described as having a visual impairment are, in fact, partially sighted and can function in the school situation with the assistance of low-vision aids.

Learners with visual impairment may display comprehension difficulties such as:

- Having poor organisational skills
- Fail to complete assignments and experience difficulty staying on-task

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

DISABILITY SERVICE LEARNING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS SUMMARY (LENS)

Student Name:	
Student Number:	
Support Document Status:	Approved by Student
Email Contact:	
Course:	
Disability:	
Academic Co-ordinator:	Padraig Hynes
Date of Needs Assessment:	

Disclosure of a disability to the course

This document contains confidential information of a sensitive and personal nature. [Name of the student] has given permission for this information to be shared with all teaching / administrative staff working with her/him e.g. Head of Teaching & Learning, module leaders, and all guest lecturers.

This information must be reissued to relevant staff each semester. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Academic Co-ordinator, Padraig Hynes.

Disability Specific Information:

Disability Service Interventions:

Examination Accommodation:

Adaptation to teaching and Learning Situations:

8.10.3 Reasonable Accommodation

Standard Reasonable Accommodations identified through the Needs Assessment process by the Academic Co-ordinator are accommodations that alleviate a substantial disadvantage for learners with disabilities and/or significant ongoing illnesses. It is expected that the standard Reasonable Accommodations stated in the LENS report will be put in place. In cases where an RA cannot be applied and a specific rationale is provided, the non-standard decision route will apply.

8.10.3.1 Assessment adjustments:

The underlying principle here is that assessment should enable a student to demonstrate that he/she has achieved the required learning outcomes. It is therefore entirely possible that more than one mode of assessment might legitimately test the same learning outcomes. However, as a general rule of thumb, it is likely that what a student uses to minimise disadvantage when studying may also be helpful in assessment (e.g. large print format; speech to text software; screen reading software; taped material; human assistance etc.)

There are two main avenues to explore: firstly, the possibility of adjusting the assessment so that the student is not disadvantaged by reason of their disability; secondly, where the adjustment will not suffice, the possibility of offering an alternative mode of assessment. It is important that any proposed solution should not compromise academic standards, and it might be that in order to maintain standards then no adjustments are possible, reasonable or appropriate.

Examples of reasonable adjustments might include:

- allowing extra time (10 mins per hour)
- using large print format or assistive technology
- allowing breaks: students may need to relieve pain by moving around (e.g. Arthritis); they may need to eat or take medication (e.g. Diabetes), and students with fatigue stemming from their condition or from treatment may need rest breaks
- providing a different venue (where the use of assistive technology or breaks might be disruptive to other candidates)

8.11 Learner Code of Conduct and Discipline

8.11.1 Introduction

The mission of GBS is to transform lives and societies through education, research and innovation. By registering for a programme in GBS, a student undertakes to behave in a manner consistent with the achievement of this mission. This includes accepting the rights and responsibilities of membership of the GBS community. The purpose of this Learner Code of Conduct and Discipline is to facilitate the maintenance of a safe and supportive environment for all members of this community.

All learners are required to observe this Code at all times within GBS, outside it if representing GBS, and on all other occasions when they are identifiable as learners of GBS. Observing this Code entails respecting the rights of others and showing them due courtesy and respect. Learners are also required to observe all other regulations of GBS and to conform to all such regulations.

If this Code is breached, disciplinary procedures are normally invoked. This typically involves the initial notification of the issue to the Academic Co-ordinator, and potentially, the subsequent referral of the issue to the Disciplinary Committee itself. The Academic Co-ordinator will also inform the Registrar where the alleged breach concerns academic matters.

The Disciplinary Committee may not be initially notified in respect of a minor academic matter as the Lecturers and/or Academic Co-ordinator may deal with them. In this instance, the Registrar advises the learner of his or her right to have the matter referred to the Disciplinary Committee (if the learner waives this right, a penalty may be applied and the Academic Co-ordinator advised thereof). It should be noted where minor offences relate to plagiarism the GBS Academic Integrity and Plagiarism policy shall be invoked/or enforced.

Suspected criminal offences will ordinarily be referred to An Garda Síochána and/or the appropriate civil authorities for investigation in the first instance. In certain instances, GBS is obliged by law to report suspected criminal offences to An Garda Síochána. Any such report may be in addition to any investigation carried out by the school under this Code.

8.11.2 Responsibilities of learners

Learners are expected to familiarise themselves with this Code, with all other relevant GBS regulations and with relevant GBS policies. With respect to these, learners should refer to the list of policies provided on the GBS Moodle.

Learners are bound by this Code even if they do not agree with its provisions or even if they fail to make themselves aware of its existence.

Where learners are working off campus in a host organisation, as part of the programme for which they have registered (e.g. on professional experience project) they are expected to familiarise themselves, and comply, with the relevant codes and regulations of those institutions or organisations. Such learners are also required to:

- Conduct themselves in such a way as not to bring themselves or GBS into disrepute.
- Respect the staff, property and activities of the host institution or organisation as they would the staff, property and activities of GBS.

GBS is entitled, but shall not be obliged to, investigate any complaint against a learner while on placement with a host institution or organisation and, if upheld, shall be entitled to impose a sanction under this Code similar to if the complaint was made while the learner was at GBS.

Learners are expected to comply with the law at all times.

Learners are expected:

- to participate in all academic activities associated with the programme for which they have registered
- to fulfil all the examination and assessment requirements associated with the programme for which they have registered
- to deal honestly and with integrity with all other members of the GBS community
- to acknowledge and respect the authority of all the staff of GBS in the performance of their duties and to co-operate with them accordingly .
- to respect the rights and dignity of all the members of GBS community, including fellow students, and of our neighbouring communities, and therefore to refrain from conduct liable to infringe their rights and dignity

- to maintain an awareness of what constitutes appropriate behaviour in GBS, when representing it or when identifiable as a member of it, and to behave accordingly.

8.11.3 Offences

As noted above, suspected criminal offences will ordinarily be referred to the civil authorities in the first instance.

Offences against this Code may broadly be described as:

- behaviour that obstructs GBS staff or learners in the performance of their duties relating to teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures or other activities
- behaviour that obstructs GBS learners in the pursuit of their studies
- behaviour that brings, or has the potential to bring, the GBS into disrepute

Breaches of this Code can arise irrespective of whether the behaviour takes place on or off campus.

Set out below is a non-exhaustive list of offences that may result in the initiation of disciplinary procedures under this Code.

- Plagiarism, or the use of unauthorised material during an examination, or other serious breaches of the Examination Regulations (learners should refer to the GBS Academic Integrity and Plagiarism policy)
- Research misconduct
- Failure to identify oneself on request to a member of staff and/or to produce a student card on request by a member of staff.
- Failure to advise the GBS of relevant addresses (home address and, if appropriate, study address).
- Furnishing false information to GBS with intent to deceive
- Forging, alteration or misuse of GBS documents, records or identity cards.
- Making false claims about academic or professional achievements to GBS or to a third party.
- Misrepresenting oneself as an agent of GBS.
- Unauthorised use of academic materials.
- Posting or distributing inappropriate advertising or other unsolicited materials.

- Failure to abide by such local GBS regulations as may relate to particular areas of the GBS (including, but not confined to, computing facilities, the Libraries, Campus Residences, sporting facilities, restaurants, car-parks and roadways).

- Failure to comply with any reasonable, oral or written, individual or collective instruction given by any staff member or agent of GBS in the performance of his or her duties, including an instruction to leave the campuses, or a specific area within a campus.

- Physical abuse of another person, whether actual or threatened.

- Verbal abuse of another person.

- Abusive electronic communication with others (e.g. by e-mail, text or on social media sites); this includes the making of abusive or false statements about GBS, its learners and/or staff.

- Bullying.

- Harassment including, but not confined to, sexual harassment.

- Stalking, whether carried out in person, by telephone, on-line or by any other means.

- Disorderly conduct, including conduct outside the campuses that would be likely to bring GBS into disrepute.

- Forcible occupation of GBS buildings or grounds.

- Littering.

- Destruction, damage, misuse or use without authorisation of GBS property, including Library materials or of private property on campus.

- Theft of GBS property, including Library materials, or theft of private property on campus.

- Possession of property in the knowledge that it has been stolen or misappropriated by another.

- Fraud, misapplication or gross negligence in relation to GBS funds or property.

- Unwarranted interference with the GBS's safety equipment, firefighting equipment, security systems or alarm systems.

- Refusal to evacuate rooms or buildings on hearing the fire alarm.

- Knowingly making false reports about the existence of fires, bombs or other dangers.

- Setting of fires.

- Possession of firearms, other weapons, any item that might be construed as being a weapon, or explosives, or possession of a dangerous substance.

- Abuse of alcohol or other substances on campus

- Smoking in GBS buildings.

- Dealing in, or using, drugs, alcohol, firearms, other weapons, or explosives, contrary to the law.

- Making false, frivolous, malicious, mischievous or vexatious complaints.

- Intimidation of witnesses involved in a disciplinary hearing.

- Refusal to comply with the disciplinary procedures of the GBS or with penalties imposed after due process.

- Encouraging or inciting others to breach this Code.

- Conduct that interferes, or is likely to interfere with, the administration or the good order of GBS.

- Any activity, whether committed on or off campus, which adversely impacts, or is likely to adversely impact, the reputation of GBS, its learners or members of staff.

8.11.4 Reporting an offence

In most cases complaints should be made under this Code by completing the Learner Complaint Form and submitting it, with supporting evidence as necessary, to Academic Co-ordinator.

8.11.5 Preliminary Hearings

In certain cases, as determined by the Academic Co-ordinator, learners will be invited to attend a preliminary hearing with the Academic Co-ordinator, at which he/she will be invited to address the complaint/allegation against him/her. The purpose of the preliminary hearing is to afford the learner an opportunity to respond to the complaint/allegation and to afford the Academic Co-ordinator an opportunity to form an opinion on the seriousness of the case. The Academic Co-ordinator will outline the complaint/allegation made against the learner and ask them to accept or reject the complaint/allegation. It is also an opportunity for minor complaints under this Code to be addressed without the requirement for a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee. Preliminary hearings will only usually be scheduled where the complaint/allegation made is minor in nature.

In advance of the preliminary hearing, the learner will be provided with details of the complaint/allegation made against them.

At the preliminary hearing, the learner will be invited to respond to the complaint/allegation and to provide any other information they consider relevant.

A learner has the right in the course of, or following, the preliminary hearing to request that the complaint/allegation be referred to a Disciplinary Committee for investigation and determination.

A learner is entitled to be accompanied to a preliminary hearing by a fellow student or a relative.

The options available to the Academic co-ordinator following the preliminary hearing are as follows:

➢ Dismiss the complaint/allegation with no further action.
➢ Conclude the process by agreeing with the learner some form of remedial action will be taken (e.g. issuing a written apology).
➢ Conclude the process following an admission by a learner and issue a formal warning to the learner, which, if deemed appropriate, is then placed on their learner file.
➢ Refer the complaint/allegation to the Disciplinary Committee, without making any findings on the complaint/allegation.

The outcome of the preliminary hearing shall be confirmed in writing to the learner.

A summary of Preliminary Hearing outcomes will be provided by the Academic Co-ordinator in writing to the Disciplinary Committee in advance of every Committee meeting.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

LEARNER COMPLAINT FORM (on the basis of Learner Code of Conduct and Discipline)

Please submit the completed form to Academic Co-ordinator by email to: Padraig@gci.ie as soon as possible after you have observed a possible breach of the Code. If possible, the form should be submitted electronically.

Details of the Complainant

Name:		Student Number:	
Telephone number:		Email Address:	

SECTION A: Broad Indication of Type of Offence Alleged

Indicate as appropriate

Academic offence (breach of examination regulations, plagiarism, other)	
Fraud/misrepresentation	
Anti-social behaviour	
Bullying/associated activities	

Other (specify):

SECTION B: Details of the Alleged Offence

Date on which alleged offence was observed	
Location at which alleged offence was observed	
Name of other witness, if any and if known	
Name(s) of learner(s), if known	
ID number(s) of Learner(s), if known	

SECTION C: Evidence

Do you have material evidence to support your complaint?	Yes		No	

If yes, please provide it. If it is in electronic form, please email it along with this form. If it is not in electronic form, please submit it to Padraig Hynes (Academic co-ordinator) or indicate where it may be accessed.

Evidence may take the form of (tick as appropriate)

Academic transcripts	
Details of programme academic structure	
Documentation detailing prior communication with learner	
Photograph	
CCTV recording	
Other (specify)	

Signed:		Date:	
	…………………………………		………………………..

8.12 Disciplinary Commitee

GBS strives to maintain the highest academic and social standards and expects students and staff to be treated with respect at all times. Learners who are in breach of any of the regulations may be asked to present themselves to the Disciplinary Committee. This Committee will decide on an appropriate course of action after hearing the events as outlined by both the offender and prosecutor. Some examples of a learner breaching the regulations include plagiarism, cheating in exams and disorderly conduct.

8.12.1 The Chair of the Disciplinary Committee

The Chair of the Disciplinary Committee will be an appropriately senior and experienced member of academic staff, nominated by the Registrar and approved by the Managing Director for a period of not less than three and not more than five years. The Chair of the Disciplinary Committee is responsible for:

- receiving a summary of Preliminary Hearing outcomes from the Academic Co-ordinator in advance of every Committee meeting
- receiving all complaints against learners under this Code referred to the Committee by the Academic Co-ordinator
- determining whether or not a complaint received against learners under this Code should be referred to An Garda Síochána, if it has not already been referred
- referring complaints under this Code for investigation and determination by the Disciplinary Committee
- deciding to recommend the suspension of a learner as outlined in section 2.1 below
- ensuring that, where necessary, the Learner Complaint Form and any supporting evidence are made available via the Academic Co-ordinator
- liaising closely with the Academic Co-ordinator to ensure streamlined procedures and streamlined maintenance of records
- ensuring that there is follow-up with relevant members of staff, in respect of penalties imposed, to ascertain that these penalties are actually implemented
- attending meetings of the Disciplinary Committee and working with the Academic Co-ordinator to prepare documentation for this committee

8.12.1.1 Suspension Recommendations

The Chair may recommend to the Registrar the suspension of a student pending the outcome of a disciplinary process. The suspension will be for no longer than is necessary to investigate any allegations against the learner or for no longer than is otherwise reasonable while any disciplinary process concerning the learner is ongoing. The arrangements relating to any suspension shall be confirmed in writing. While suspended, learners must not visit any GBS' premises or contact any member of staff or GBS learner unless authorised to do so by the GBS. Suspension of this kind is not a disciplinary sanction and does not imply that any decision has been made about the allegations made against the learner. Any decision to suspend a learner will be made by theManaging Director.

8.12.2 The Disciplinary Committee: membership and meetings

The membership is as follows:

- The Chair
- One member of academic staff nominated by the Registrar
- Registrar
- CEO

Every effort should be made to ensure gender balance and appropriate diversity in terms of the membership.

The minimum term of office for the Chair and the academic representatives will normally be three years; the maximum will normally be five years. Membership by these individuals will, where possible, be on a staggered basis to ensure continuity of expertise. The quorum for any meeting of the Disciplinary Committee is four members. Substitution of representation on the Disciplinary Committee by members other than the Chair is not permitted. No member of the Disciplinary Committee may be present at a meeting in which he or she is personally involved.

The Academic Co-ordinator is not a member of the Disciplinary Committee and does not have a vote. He or she is responsible for ensuring the arrangements for meetings, notifying all parties concerned of these arrangements, drafting the minutes and other relevant documentation, and presenting

documentation on cases to the Disciplinary Committee in consultation with the Chair where necessary, and notifying all parties concerned of the outcomes of meetings.

The Academic Co-ordinator will ensure that a letter is given in person to the learner charged with an offence under this Code or will send it to his or her home or study address, as appropriate. A copy of the letter will also be e-mailed to the learner at their email address, on the same day that it is posted.The letter will be given or sent to the learner at least five days before the meeting. It will contain the date, time and location of the meeting, the name(s) of the complainant(s) and any witnesses who will attend the hearing. Details of the complaint/allegation made against them and copies of any documents that will be relied upon at the meeting will also be contained in the letter.

A learner is entitled to be accompanied to a Disciplinary Committee meeting by a fellow student or a relative. In certain cases, at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee, a learner may be permitted to bring a legal representative to the meeting, in which case, the Committee may also request the attendance of a legal representative.

If a learner facing a complaint/allegation wishes to adduce extenuating circumstances, or make a counter-accusation, this should normally be done in writing to the Academic Co-ordinator, before the meeting. Furthermore, should the student wish to do so, he/she can make written submissions to the Disciplinary Committee via the Academic Co-ordinator in advance of the meeting.

Meetings will take place as required. Every effort will be made to ensure that meetings take place as soon as reasonably practicable after the learner is notified of the complaint/allegation against them.

8.12.2.1 The Disciplinary Committee: procedures relating to meetings

The meetings of the Disciplinary Committee always take place in private and written minutes of all such meetings shall be recorded. The minutes of the meeting must be approved by the Chair and the other members of the Committee before being signed off by the Chair.

Meetings will be convened by the Chair via the Academic Co-ordinator. All meetings must be notified to all members, electronically, a minimum of five working days in advance, and documentation must be made available to members, electronically, at this point also.

The proceedings are ordinarily conducted through the Chair. Questions may be submitted, through the Chair, by a learner or by a witness. The Chair may put these questions to the party at whom they are directed. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the proceedings are conducted in an appropriate and respectful manner and that no person intervenes in any way that could cause offence to another. The Chair may permit cross-examination of witnesses by a learner or his/her representative where considered appropriate and necessary.

When adjudicating on each case, the Committee will hear from:

- the complainant, or a representative, or a relevant member of staff, as appropriate
- the learner charged with an offence and, where appropriate, his/her representative
- any witnesses called by the learner
- any person the Committee considers might be of assistance in enabling it to come to a decision

The learner may be accompanied to the meeting as outlined previously. The learner's representative shall be given the opportunity to make submissions to the Committee but shall not be permitted to give evidence on the learner's behalf.

If the learner is not available to attend a meeting as scheduled, he or she may request an adjournment; however, the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee will decide whether or not to grant the adjournment.

If the learner does not attend a meeting as originally scheduled or as rescheduled, the proceedings may be conducted in his or her absence.

If a case involves more than one learner, each learner will be called before the Disciplinary Committee individually.

All decisions made by the Disciplinary Committee shall be made by a simple majority. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair (or his/her nominee) shall have a casting vote.

The decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall be communicated in writing and delivered by email or by post to the learner concerned.

The Registrar shall submit an annual report to CEO and Programme Board, outlining the number and type of breaches that occurred, categorising them into types of breach and seriousness of breach indicating the types of penalties imposed per type/breach.

The proceedings and details of learner disciplinary cases are private and confidential and where learner disciplinary data is reported to Programme Board or CEO it is done on an anonymised basis. However, in certain circumstances, GBS may need to communicate decisions made under this Code to staff members where it is deemed necessary or appropriate for the effective administration of the disciplinary process.

8.12.3 Penalties

The types of penalties for offences which can be imposed by the Disciplinary Committee include:

- Caution
- Reprimand
- Fines
- An order for the reparation of any damage or loss caused either to the GBS or any of its members of staff, learners or members of the public
- Suspension from some academic exercises
- Suspension from all academic exercises
- Exclusion from library, computer and/or other GBS facilities for a period of time
- Prohibition from access to the school or parts of the school
- Failure in respect of an element of assessed work
- Reduction in marks for an element of assessed work
- Failure in respect of examination
- Reduction in marks for an examination
- Withholding of an award or of examination results
- Suspension from GBS for a period of time or until such time as any requirements specified by the GBS have been met
- Expulsion from the GBS

All penalties which have implications for the learner's academic record shall be checked with the Registrar, before being communicated to any relevant party, to ensure that the consequences for the academic record will be consistent with the intentions of the Disciplinary Committee.

A learner who has been fined may request, in exceptional circumstances, the substitution of a non-monetary penalty, and such a request will be considered by the Disciplinary Committee.

The penalty imposed will be communicated to the Registrar and the Chair of the relevant Programme Board as a matter of course, within three days of the hearing. In cases in which another member of staff needs to be notified, the penalty will be communicated to him/her also, within the same timeframe. In cases in which another party – such as a complainant who is a member of the local community – needs to be notified, this should be done by the relevant GBS staff.

If a Progression and Awards Board involving the relevant student is held before the outcome of the decision of the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee or of the Disciplinary Committee is known, the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee may instruct the Registrar to withhold the learner's examination results until the outcome is known and, where necessary, to amend the results in the light of the outcome.

8.13 Disciplinary Appeals Committee

Decisions of the Disciplinary Committee may be appealed by a learner to the Disciplinary Appeals Committee.

A learner has the right to appeal a decision of the Disciplinary Committee on the following grounds:

- there is new evidence or evidence which was, for good cause, not presented to the Disciplinary Committee which might reasonably have resulted in a different decision;
- there were procedural irregularities (including administrative errors) such as might give rise to reasonable doubt as to whether the Disciplinary Committee would have reached the same decision had they not occurred;
- the evidence considered by the Disciplinary Committee did not support the findings made by the Disciplinary Committee;
- the penalty imposed by the Disciplinary Committee was unreasonable or disproportionate considering all the circumstances of the case.

It is at the absolute discretion of the Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee to decide that there are reasonable grounds for an appeal to proceed.

A learner who exercises his right of appeal shall be required to submit his grounds of appeal in writing by completing the Disciplinary Appeals Committee form within 7 working days from the date of issue of the Disciplinary Committee's decision. If an extension to this period of time is required, the learner must request this in writing from the Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee, via the Academic Co-ordinator. The decision as to whether or not to allow an extension is taken by the Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee and a request will only be considered if a student's inability to meet the 7 working days deadline is due to circumstances beyond their control and if not granting it would likely result in an injustice to the student concerned. The maximum extension allowed is a further 7 working days period.

The Disciplinary Appeals Committee is comprised of:

- The Chair - External
- One appropriately senior and experienced member of academic staff who has formerly been a member of the Disciplinary Committee
- One other appropriately senior and experienced member of academic staff

- One Learner Representative

No current member of the Disciplinary Committee may be a member of any Disciplinary Appeals Committee. The Chair of the Disciplinary Appeal Committee shall be an External Academic Advisor.

The Secretary to the Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the Registrar. He or she is not a member of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee and does not have a vote. He or she is responsible for making the arrangements for meetings, notifying all parties concerned of these arrangements, drafting the minutes and other relevant documentation, preparing if necessary and presenting documentation on cases to the Committee in consultation with the Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee, and notifying all parties concerned of the outcomes of meetings.

The Secretary to the Appeals Committee will ensure a letter is given in person to the learner who has lodged an appeal under this Code or will send it to his or her home or study address, as appropriate. A copy of the letter will also be e-mailed to the learner, on the same day that it is posted, to their e-mail address. The letter will be given or sent to the learner at least five days before the meeting. It will contain the date, time and location of the appeal meeting.

The meetings of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee will always take place in private. The Disciplinary Appeals Committee may call any witnesses whose evidence appears to the Committee to be necessary to resolve questions raised by the appeal.

A written record of all Disciplinary Appeal meetings shall be made. The minutes of the meeting must be approved by the Chair and the other members of the Committee before being signed by the Chair.

A learner is entitled to be accompanied to a Disciplinary Appeals Committee meeting by an officer of a fellow student or a relative. In certain cases, at the discretion of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee, a learner may be permitted to bring a legal representative to the meeting, in which case, the Committee may also request the attendance of a legal representative.

Decisions of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be taken by a simple majority and in the event of a tie; the Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall have a casting vote. A record of all meetings conducted by the Committee shall be made by the Secretary of the Appeals Committee.

In advance of the Disciplinary Appeal meeting, the Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be provided with the learner's grounds of appeal (including any submissions made by the student in the course of the process before the Disciplinary Committee). They will also receive a copy of the relevant decision of the Disciplinary Committee and a copy of the minutes of the Disciplinary Committee meeting(s) with the learner. The learner shall also be entitled to receive a copy of the minutes of the Disciplinary Committee meeting prior to the appeal meeting.

The learner and his/her representative may make oral or written submissions to the Disciplinary Appeals Committee. The Disciplinary Appeals Committee may, at its discretion, invite the Chair of the Disciplinary Committee to make oral or written submissions to it. Where considered necessary or appropriate, the Disciplinary Appeals Committee may consider evidence not given before the Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Appeals Committee may:

- allow the appeal and overturn the Disciplinary Committee's decision in whole or in part;
- reject the appeal and uphold the Disciplinary Committee's decision in whole or in part;
- decrease, increase or vary the nature of the penalty imposed by the Disciplinary Committee

The decision of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee is final. The decision of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be in writing and delivered by email or post to the student concerned. A copy will also be provided to the Secretary of the Disciplinary Committee.

The Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall report on an annual basis to the Programme Board and in his/her report, shall report on the appeal meetings held during the course of the year and the outcome of those meetings.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

GBS DISCIPLINARY APPEALS COMMITTEE

Please submit the completed form to the Academic Co-ordinator by email to: Padraig@gci.ie within the timeframe specified in the GBS' Disciplinary Committee Policy.	

Details of the Appellant

Name:		Student Number:	
Telephone number:		Email Address:	
Home Address:			
Study Address:			

SECTION A: Details of the Decision being Appealed

Date of the hearing of the Disciplinary Committee	
Reference Number	
Decision of the Disciplinary Committee	

SECTION B: Grounds for Appeal (Disciplinary Committee Policy section 6)
Tick the relevant

That there is new evidence or evidence which was, for good cause, not presented to the Disciplinary Committee which might reasonably have resulted in a different decision	
That there were procedural irregularities (including administrative error) such as might give rise to reasonable doubt as to whether the Disciplinary Committee would have reached the same decision had they not occurred.	
That the findings of the Disciplinary Committee do not warrant the resolution that there was a breach of discipline charged	
That the penalty imposed by the Disciplinary Committee was unreasonable having regard to all the circumstances of the case	

SECTION C: Evidence for submission to the Disciplinary Appeals Committee (i.e. evidence not made available to the Disciplinary Committee)

Is evidence being submitted?		**Yes**		**No**	

If yes, describe the evidence:

If yes, specify why the evidence was not made available to the Disciplinary Committee

If yes, provide the evidence. If it is in electronic form, please e-mail it along with this form. If it is not in electronic form, please submit it to Academic Co-ordinator or indicate where it may be accessed.

SECTION D: Statement to support Appeal (Provide a concise statement to support the appeal)

Signature of appellant:		Date:	
	…………………………………		………………………..

9   Information & Data Management Policy

9.1   Purpose

GBS operates in a complex, data-oriented environment. Data generated and held by the school are key assets that must be managed correctly in order to ensure that the school functions effectively. The aim of this policy is, therefore, to provide a comprehensive information and data management framework that covers data collection, storage, security, maintenance, and dissemination. In addition, the policy ensures that GBS complies with the requirements of the relevant Irish legislation such as GDPR 2018.

Document Name: Information & Data Management Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	July 2018	September 2018
V2.0	Extended by Section 9.7 Records Maintenance and Retention	July 2019	September 2019
V3.0	Policy reviewed to reflect GDPR 2018	March 2020	March 2020

9.2 Scope

The policy covers both personal and sensitive data including but not limited to:

- Learners' data and records

- Staff data

- Financial data

- Commercial data

- Intellectual property

- Academic data

GBS is committed to ensuring that all data is clearly identified and storage of all data is effectively maintained. The data storage includes data held on all IT resources and application types including Schoolworks and Microsoft Excel spreadsheets (and other such end-user applications) stored on the intranet.

9.3 Information Systems

The data availability is crucial for further organisational development and improvements of the operation of GBS. Therefore, GBS ensures the effective collection of information about its operations to help inform its decision-making process. Central to this are the GBS's CRM system Schoolworks and the VLE system Moodle, where all information that GBS collects is initially recorded and stored. In addition, certain information is exported from these into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and other applications and stored on the intranet.

With regards to information systems, GBS will:

- Ensure that both Schoolworks and Moodle are maintained securely, kept up-to-date and remain fit for purpose.

- Ensure that Schoolworks and Moodle generate appropriate statistical data that can be easily accessed and analysed

- Produce annual data-driven reports that will serve as a basis for decision making and improvement of quality assurance policies and procedures. These reports will include data on:
  - Learner satisfaction rates

- Learner attendance/attrition/progression/dropout rates

- Learner completion rates

- Learner graduation/certificate rates

- Grade analysis of learner performance

- Career paths of graduates

- Learner individual traits

9.4 Management Information Systems

The Schoolwork and Moodle systems must be reviewed annually and their usability must be evaluated with regards to statistics generation. These statistics serve as a basis for various data-driven reports on which GBS bases its strategic planning. The Managing Director, Quality Assurance Committee and Risk Management Committee consider the reports listed below when crafting future plans for GBS's operations:

- Annual Monitoring Reports for each programme
- Module Reports for each module
- Overall attendance statistics
- Overall learner results

9.5   Data Classification

The purpose of this policy is to support the classification of data to allow for the protection of GBS's data, or data held by GBS, in terms of confidentiality, integrity, and availability. This policy covers all data captured, processed or stored by GBS. It applies to all members of GBS' community including, academic staff, administration and support staff, learners and other organisations or individuals handling data on behalf of GBS.

9.5.1   Responsibilities

- All information owners are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adopted within their area of responsibility.
- The classification of information will be the responsibility of the head of individual departments.
- Individual staff members are responsible for ensuring that sensitive information they produce is appropriately protected and marked with the appropriate classification.

9.5.2   Policy Requirements for Information Assets

All existing GBS information belongs to one of the classifications below. Unless otherwise classified, the information should be treated as 'GBS Controlled'.

9.5.2.1   Information Classification Guide

The guide provides a framework for classifying and protecting GBS's information resources. It outlines the security objectives in the left column and assesses the potential impact GBS should certain events occur which jeopardise the information and information systems needed by the school to accomplish its mission, protect its assets, fulfil its legal responsibilities, maintain its day-to-day functions, and protect individuals.

The three levels of potential impact on GBS or individuals should there be a breach of security (i.e., a loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability) are as follows:

The potential impact is **LOW** if the loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability could be expected to have a limited adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.

The potential impact is **MODERATE** if the loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability could be expected to have a serious adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.

The potential impact is **HIGH** if: The loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability could be expected to have a severe or catastrophic adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or individuals.

Public Information, i.e. information that can be communicated without restrictions, and is intended for general public use, is not included in the framework below as this data will not cause harm to any individual, group, or to GBS if made public. Examples include Standard guidelines and policies, GBS' Strategy, Contact Details, maps, GBS's Marketing materials, Public Web site and advertisement.

POTENTIAL IMPACT			
Security Objective	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Confidentiality Preserving authorised restrictions on information access and disclosure, including means for protecting personal privacy and proprietary information.	The unauthorised disclosure of information could be expected to have a limited adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.	The unauthorised disclosure of information could be expected to have a serious adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.	The unauthorised disclosure of information could be expected to have a severe or catastrophic adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or individuals.
Integrity Guarding against improper information modification or destruction, and includes ensuring information non-repudiation and authenticity.	The unauthorised modification or destruction of information could be expected to have a limited adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.	The unauthorised modification or destruction of information could be expected to have a serious adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.	The unauthorised modification or destruction of information could be expected to have a severe or catastrophic adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or individuals.
Availability Ensuring timely and reliable access to and use of information.	The disruption of access to or use of information could be expected to have a limited adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.	The disruption of access to or use of information could be expected to have a serious adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.	The disruption of access to or use of information could be expected to have a severe or catastrophic adverse effect on GBS's operations, assets, or on individuals.
Data Classification	**GBS Controlled** With this classification protection of information is at the discretion of the custodian and there is a low risk of embarrassment or reputational harm to GBS.	**GBS Restricted** GBS has legal, regulatory or contractual obligation to protect the information with this classification. Disclosure or loss of availability or integrity could cause harm to the reputation of GBS or may have short term financial impact on the school.	GBS Highly Restricted Protection of information is required by law or regulatory instrument. The information within this classification is subject to strictly limited distribution within and outside of GBS. Disclosure would cause exceptional or long term damage to the reputation of GBS, or risk to those whose information disclosed, or may have serious or long term negative financial impact on the GBS.
Examples	Meeting minutes, school working & draft documents.	Learner or employee records, grades, employee performance reviews, personally identifiable information.	PPS numbers, physical or mental health records relating to individuals, critical research data.

9.6 Data Privacy

This section provides details of the way in which GBS processes personal data in line with its obligations under Data Protection Law. The purpose of this Data Privacy Policy is to explain what Personal Data GBS processes exist and how and why GBS process it. In addition, this section outlines GBS's duties and responsibilities regarding the protection of such Personal Data. The manner in which GBS processes data will evolve over time and the policy will be updated from time to time to reflect changing practices. In addition, in order to meet transparency obligations under Data Protection Law, GBS will communicate this policy section by reference into notices used at various points of data capture when collecting personal data (e.g. application forms, website forms etc.).

9.6.1 GBS as a Data Controller

Data Controllers are defined in the GDPR as persons or organisations that, alone or with others, determine the purpose and means of processing personal data. When GBS determines the purposes and means of the processing of personal data it acts as a Data Controller. In relation to such processing, Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR provides an appropriate legal basis, which permits processing that is necessary for the performance of the task which is in the public interest, where such "public interest" is laid down in EU or Irish law. Section 34(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018 further makes it clear that GBS can rely on this public interest basis as a lawful basis for processing personal data where processing is 'necessary for the performance of a function of a Data Controller conferred by or under an enactment, or the administration by or on behalf of a Data Controller of any non-statutory scheme, programme or funds where the legal basis for such administration is a function of a controller conferred by or under an enactment'.

Where processing activities are not specifically supported by a particular statutory basis, GBS relies on other legal bases under Data Protection Law. These include: Article 6(1)(a) of the GDPR which permits processing where the data subject has given his or her consent; Article 6(1)(b) which permits processing where necessary for the performance of a contract to which the data subject is a party; Article 6(1)(c) which permits processing that is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the Data Controller is subject; and Article 6(1)(d) which permits processing that is necessary in order to protect the vital interests of the data subject or of another person.

In certain instances, GBS will act as a joint controller of personal data whereby GBS together with other entities (e.g. external HRM contractor) determines the means and purposes of the relevant processing. In such circumstances, the essence of the arrangement as between GBS and the other Joint Controllers will be made known to the relevant individuals in a transparent manner. Examples of such scenarios may include where GBS and other institutions engage in collaborative research projects or admission of learners.

9.6.2 GBS as a Data Processor

In some cases, GBS may act as a Data Processor, under the instructions of a Data Controller. Data Processors are persons or organisations that process personal data on behalf of a controller (e.g. payroll contractor). The GDPR defines data processing as any operation(s) performed on personal data, e.g. collecting, storing, distributing or destroying. Many controllers also process personal data and do not require a separate data processor.

When acting as a Data Processor, GBS complies with its relevant obligations under Data Protection Law. These include ensuring that the data that is processed by GBS on behalf of the relevant Data Controllers is subject to appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure a level of security appropriate to the risk and ensuring that the processing is underpinned by a contract which includes the data protection provisions required by Data Protection Law.

9.6.3 Purposes of Data Processing

Much of the data Processing undertaken by GBS is for the purpose(s) of fulfilling GBS's statutory functions, and objects under the QQI Approved Quality Assurance Procedures. The following are illustrative and non-exhaustive examples of the types of public interest Processing undertaken by GBS:

(a) **Examinations and Academic Records:** One of GBS's core functions to provide courses of study and to conduct examinations for the purpose of QQI award degrees and other qualifications. Accordingly, the processing of Personal Data, including but not limited to student numbers, names, exam scripts, exam results, details of qualifications and degrees conferred is necessary in order for

GBS to perform these functions. To ensure the integrity of this system, it is also necessary and proportionate for GBS to maintain records of exam results, degrees conferred and other relevant details. GBS Processes such as Personal Data in accordance with this Privacy Policy and its other policies, regulations and procedures, including the Examination Appeals Procedure.

(b) **Registry:** In administering the GBS in such a manner as to enable GBS to provide courses of study in an efficient manner it is necessary for GBS to Process Personal Data, including the full student record. Academic Coordinator and Registry may also process personal data of a sensitive nature which is provided by the student to GBS, for example, health data to support a deferral of an academic year or postponement of an assessment. This is clearly both necessary and expedient to further the objectives and development of the school per QQI regulations.

(c) **Alumni Affairs:** Among GBS's functions are to collaborate with graduates, convocations of graduates and with associations representing graduates both within and outside the State. This function provides appropriate support for Processing activities undertaken by GBS when liaising with and contacting GBS graduates in relation to their alumni events and initiatives.

(d) **Other Universities/institutions:** In accordance with its objects and functions to promote and facilitate the highest standards in, and quality of teaching, and to collaborate with educational, business and other institutions both within and outside the State, GBS will engage in certain collaboration with such organisations. Such collaborations may involve the sharing of certain personal data as between GBS and its international educational partner institutions and other organisations. Personal Data of students and staff may be disclosed to such other institutions as necessary for the purposes of enrolling the students and marketing, and written agreements will be put in place.

9.6.4 Special Categories of Data

GBS processes Special Categories of Data (SCD) in certain circumstances, typically related to the ordinary course of employee and student administration, the provision of student support and development services and the processing of Garda vetting forms for students and employees, where required by law.

Section 41 of the Data Protection Act 2018 provides a general lawful basis for processing SCD where it is necessary for the purposes of exercising or performing any right or obligation which is conferred or imposed by law on the controller or the data subject in connection with employment or social welfare law. As required by Data Protection Law, GBS applies suitable and specific measures in respect of such Processing of SCD.

GBS Processes Garda vetting forms for students and employees as authorised by the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (the "National Vetting Act") in respect of GBS students and staff that undertake placements or volunteering and studies which involves engagement with children and vulnerable persons. Garda vetting forms may contain Personal Data relating to criminal convictions/offences and because GBS is subject to a legal obligation to process such data, Art, 6(1)(c) of the GDPR provides the lawful basis for such processing.

9.7 Records Maintenance and Retention

As part of our record-keeping obligations under Article 30 of the GDPR, GBS retains a record of the processing activities under its responsibility. This Policy applies to GBS and all staff, employees, officers and contractors engaged by GBS. This section is concerned with the retention and destruction of Personal Data (e.g. documents, records, emails and correspondence, files, audio visual files and recordings and any other forms of information and records regardless of their format together referred to as 'data'). Having regard to the principles contained in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU No. 2016/679) ("GDPR"), it is the duty of GBS to:

- retain personal data in identifiable form only for such period as is necessary in relation to the purpose for which the data are processed
- ensure that personal data retained by GBS is adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purpose for which it is processed
- take all reasonable measures to ensure that personal data retained by GBS are accurate

This policy applies to any type of data created, received, transmitted and retained in the context of GBS's day to day activities and any other data processing undertaken by GBS, regardless of the format. Therefore, any data in paper or electronic form must be retained for the period indicated in Table 9.7 below. Data should not be retained beyond this period unless a valid operational reason (or a litigation hold or other exceptional situation) calls for its continued retention.

9.7.1 Data Ownership

All data, irrespective of format, generated, created, received and/or retained by GBS is the property of the school and subject to its overall control. GBS Personnel leaving GBS are not to remove any data.

9.7.2 Data Storage

GBS's records must be stored in a safe, secure and accessible manner to ensure the security and confidentiality of such data in accordance with GBS's Data Privacy Policy in Section 9.6. Special care

is to be taken to ensure that information of a sensitive nature, in particular, information that constitutes a special category of personal data under the GDPR, is stored in a secure manner which may include, for example, locked filing cabinets and offices for hard copy data and/or the use of password protection and encrypted files for data stored in electronic form. The table below presents the data retention periods implemented by GBS for various types of data:

Table 9.7: GBS's Data Retention Periods

HR Data	
Type of Personal Data	**Retention Period**
Annual Leave and Public Holiday records	6 years
Carer's Leave records	8 years
Parental Leave records and Force Majeure Leave records	8 years (Parental Leave Acts, section 27)
Hours Worked and related information such as annual leave	3 years (The Organisation of Working Time Act, Section 25)
Payslips	3 years (National Minimum Wage Act, Section 22)
Taxation records	6 years (Companies Acts and Taxes Consolidation Act)
Accidents	10 years (The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, Section 60)
Employee contract	3 years from the date of termination of the employment
CV and interview notes of unsuccessful applicants	3 years (National Minimum Wage Act, Section 22)
Signed Documents	6 months
Learner Data	
Type of Personal Data	**Retention Period**
Records relating to summative assessment results	Permanently retained (Assessment and Standards, Section 4.5.2)
Records contributing towards module grade	One year after Graduation
Research Thesis	Permanently retained
Broadsheets	Permanently retained
Records of successful learner applicant	Duration of Studies + 3 years
External Examiners' reports	Permanently retained
Deferral, withdrawal and application for transfer	Duration of Studies + 1 year
Board of Examiners meeting records	Permanently retained
Module Reports	Permanently retained
Quality Assurance Data	
Type of Personal Data	**Retention Period**
Minutes of QA meetings	Permanently retained
Record of amendments to the QA system	Permanently retained

9.7.3 Data Destruction

Once Data have met their required retention period it should then be transferred to the GBS approved archives or deleted or destroyed as follows:

- Hard copy files: to be destroyed by confidential shredding or by using the services of an approved confidential waste disposal firm.
- Electronic files: to be purged or deleted from all relevant systems on which such Data is stored and/or databases.
- Data stored in other media: to be deleted or destroyed in a safe and confidential manner to ensure the content is not disclosed.

It is the responsibility of each GBS department to ensure that personal data is retained by that department in compliance with this policy and to ensure that all GBS Personnel under their responsibility complies with it.

9.8 Data Protection

This document is the GBSs policy in response to the requirements of the Data Protection Acts. GBS is required by law to comply with the following Irish legislation relating to the processing of Personal Data:

- General Data Protection Rregulation (2018)
- The Data Protection Act 1988 (The Principle Act)
- The Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

9.8.1 Scope

In order to sustain competitive advantage, GBS needs to collect and process personal information relating to many categories of people, which include the students and staff of the school. GBS takes the confidentiality of all personal information particularly seriously and consequently takes all reasonable steps to comply with the principles of the Data Protection Acts. The school aims to collect personal information only in order to meet specific legitimate purposes and to retain that information only for as long as those purposes remain valid. Ordinarily, the school will not pass personal information to any third party, except where required by law.

GBS is committed to ensuring that all employees, registered learners, agents, contractors and data processors comply with the Data Protection Acts regarding:

- the processing and confidentiality of any personal data held by the school
- the privacy rights of individuals under the legislation

9.8.2 Data Protection Principles

To comply with the law, information (as defined by the Data Protection Acts) must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully. To do this, the school must comply with the following Data Protection Principles or Obligations:

- The data must be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully
- The data can only be obtained for specified, lawful and clearly stated purposes

- Processing and Disclosure of personal data should not be incompatible with the specified purpose for which it was obtained.

- The data must be kept safe and secure. GBS is responsible for applying adequate security structures to prevent unlawful or inadvertent processing, alteration or loss of the data.

- The data must be kept accurate, complete and where necessary up-to-date.

- The data obtained should be adequate, relevant and not excessive

- The data should not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes for which it was obtained.

- The person to whom the information relates has a Right of Access. GBS must store and maintain the data in such a manner as to be able to respond to a Subject Access Request in a timely manner.

9.8.3   Disclosure of Personal Data

The legislation recognises two categories of Personal Data:

- Ordinary Personal Data such as name, address, mobile phone number, car registration, PPS Number.

- Sensitive Personal Data, which is more deeply personal to an individual, such as their racial or ethnic background, political opinions, religious or similar beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health, sexual life, the (alleged) commission of any offence, subsequent proceedings or sentence.

Sensitive personal data should normally only be processed if the data subjects have given their explicit consent to this processing. The legislation applies equally to automated and manual data, i.e. data held or processed on a computer, or data held in 'hard copy', stored in an indexed or relevant filing system.

The security of personal information in the possession of GBS is of paramount importance. In addition to the principles contained within this policy, staff are also advised to read and adhere to GBS's Data Classification Policy. All staff and students have an individual responsibility to ensure that they adhere to this policy and the Data Protection Acts.

9.8.4 Summary of Responsibilities:

9.8.4.1 School / Department Responsibilities:

- All personal data is processed within the School/Unit complies with the Data Protection Acts and this policy.
- All contractors, agents and other non-permanent school's staff used by the school, are aware of and comply with, the Data Protection Acts and this policy.
- All personal data held within the School/Unit is kept securely and is disposed of in a safe and secure manner when no longer needed.

9.8.4.2 Staff Responsibilities

- Personal data which they provide in connection with their employment is accurate and up-to-date, and that they inform the school of any errors, corrections or changes, for example, change of address, marital status, etc.
- Personal data relating to living individuals which they hold or process is kept securely
- Personal data relating to living individuals is not disclosed either orally or in writing, accidentally or otherwise, to any unauthorised third party.

9.8.4.3 Learner Responsibilities

- Personal data which they provide in connection with their studies is accurate and up-to-date, and that they inform the school of any errors, corrections or changes, for example, change of address, marital status, etc.

9.8.5 Rights under the Acts (1988 & 2003)

The Data Subject is entitled to:

- Access to a copy of any data held by GBS which relates to them including:
    - A copy of their personal data
    - The purpose of processing data
    - The categories of personal data concerned
    - To whom the data has been or will be disclosed
    - Whether the data has been or will be transferred outside of the EU

- - The period for which the data will be stored, or the criteria to be used to determine retention periods
  - The right to make a complaint to the Data Protection Commissioner
- Require that any inaccurate data held by GBS is corrected or erased
- Prevent the processing of the data likely to cause them distress or damage
- Prevent the processing of their personal data for the purposes of Direct Marketing

9.8.6   Procedures to access personal data held by GBS

Formal written application is made to the Registrar via email. The Registrar will respond within 14 days from the date it receives the request with the following information:

- A copy of the personal data requested
- The purpose of processing data
- The categories of personal data
- To whom the data has been or will be disclosed
- Whether the data has been or will be transferred outside of the EU
- The period for which the data will be stored, or the criteria to be used to determine the retention period
- The right to make a complaint to the Data Protection Commissioner
- The right to request rectification or deletion of the data
- Whether the individual has been subject to automated decision making

10 Public Information & Communication Policy

10.1 Purpose

GBS is responsible for the accuracy of the information which it shares in the public domain. Therefore, it has the responsibility to ensure the validity of such information and to ensure transparency with all stakeholders.

Document Name: Public Information and Communication	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

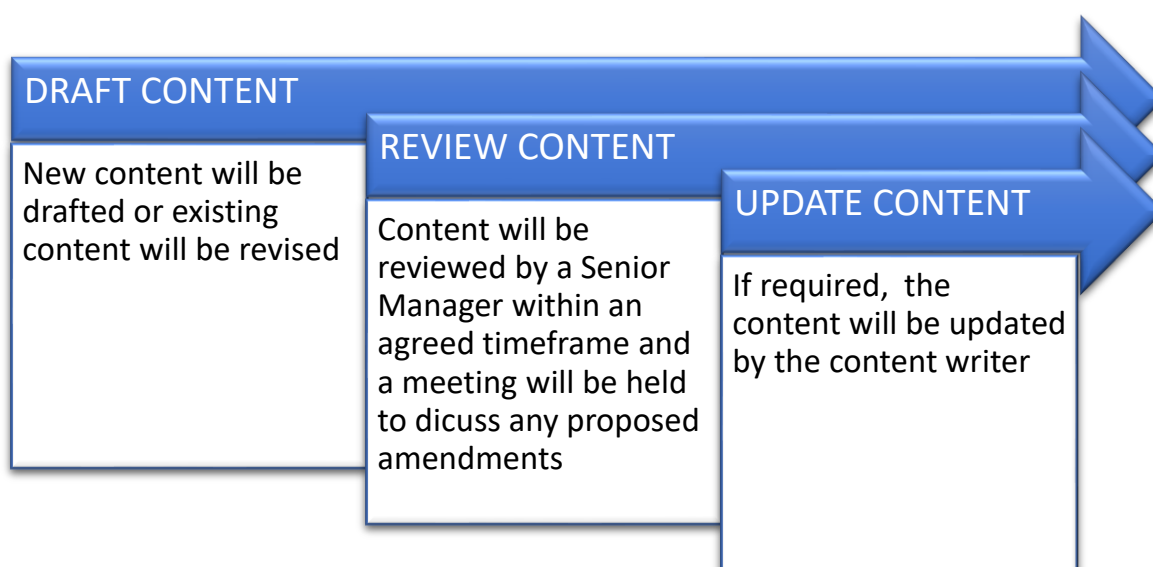| Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	July 2019	September 2019

10.2 Public Information & Communication

GBS ensure that its public communication is:

- Reflective of the original validated programme
- Honest and transparent about information pertaining to facilities and programmes
- Honest and transparent about information pertaining to GBS Quality Assurance polices and procedures
- Easily accessible, easy to navigate and published in full
- Clear in relation to accreditation for each programme
- Clear in relation to access, transfer and progression for each programme

When public communication is targeted specifically at prospective and/or current learners, GBS will ensure that:

- Information is transparent regarding whether a programme leads to an award
- The name of the awarding body is transparent if a programme does not lead to an award
- The title of the award, NFQ level and award type (if applicable) is clear
- Any required PEL arrangements are clearly outlined
- Learner information is monitored and updated as required

Figure 10.1: Procedure for approving Public Communications content

DRAFT CONTENT

New content will be drafted or existing content will be revised

REVIEW CONTENT

Content will be reviewed by a Senior Manager within an agreed timeframe and a meeting will be held to dicuss any proposed amendments

UPDATE CONTENT

If required, the content will be updated by the content writer

11 Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

11.1 Purpose

GBS promotes excellence in Teaching and Learning throughout the organisation and must, as such, ensure that any education provision by outside parties is delivered to that same standard and that the relationship maintains its merits.

Document Name: Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	July 2019	September 2019

11.2 Other Accreditation Bodies

In instances where GBS is engaged with other accreditation bodies, it will follow its QQI accredited quality assurance policies and procedures. These policies and procedures will be supplemented with accreditation specific policies and procedures where necessary.

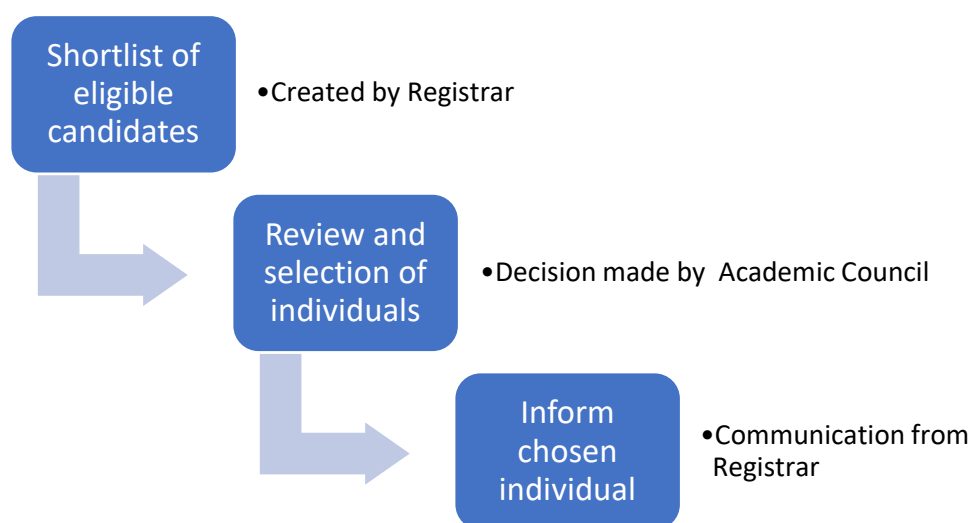## 11.3 External Partnerships and Second Providers

GBS does not currently utilise external partnerships or second providers for the delivery of its programmes. Should such agreements be planned in the future, appropriate policies and procedures will be developed.

11.4 Expert External Advisors

GBS utilises the expert opinions of our Governing Body and panel of External Examiners for various elements of the quality assurance process. When seeking such expertise, GBS ensures the advisors meet the following criteria before engagement:

- Have established experience (academic/industry/accreditation) in the cognate area
- Ensure that there is no conflict of interest between the advisor and their required duties with GBS

Fig. 11.4: Procedure for selection of External Advisors

Shortlist of eligible candidates	• Created by Registrar
Review and selection of individuals	• Decision made by Academic Council
Inform chosen individual	• Communication from Registrar

12 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review

12.1 Purpose

The aim of this policy is to outline the procedures GBS utilises to ensure that it has a clear structure for the review of its administration, operations and management of education. In addition, this policy outlines the procedures used by GBS to review its provision of education programmes, both on an on-going basis and periodically.

Document Name: 12 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review	
Owner: Registrar	GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL
Approved by: Governing Body	
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	July 2019	September 2019

12.2 Scope

This policy covers the review of all validated GBS programmes and the associated quality assurance of the school.

12.3 Internal Self-Monitoring

Internal Self-Monitoring in GBS is a continuous process that evaluates relevant data that is incorporated into the formal GBS Annual Monitoring Report in order to inform the decision making within the school. The specific quality indicators that GBS uses for its internal self-monitoring are:

- Module Reports (including learner feedback and suggestions on module level, lecturer feedback and suggestions on module level, grade analysis on module level, attendance rates on module level, e-activities participation on module level)
- Programme Annual Reports (including learner feedback and suggestions on programme level, lecturer feedback and suggestions on programme level, grade analysis on programme level, attendance rates on programme level, e-activities participation on programme level, attrition and retention rates for each stage of the programme)
- External Examiner's Reports
- Graduate employability derived from a graduate survey
- Marketing Analysis (including assessment of marketing strategy in both national and international context)
- Programme Viability Report

Table 12.2 below assigns the individual responsibilities for compiling all reports outlined above:

Report	Personnel Responsible
Module Report	Registrar and Individual Lecturers
Programme Annual Reports	Programme Leaders
External Examiner's Report	External Examiner
Graduate employability Report	Academic Co-ordinator
Marketing Analysis	Marketing Director
Programme Viability Report	Managing Director
GBS Annual Monitoring Report	Registrar

The Registrar presents the Annual Monitoring Report to the Academic Council. The aim is to discuss various recommendations made by the relevant stakeholders involved in the programmes and draft an Improvement Plan.

13 Risk Management Policy

Document Name: Risk Management Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	04.11.2019	06.01.2020

13.1 Introduction

The QQI Statutory quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers coming to QQI on a Voluntary Basis (2016, Section 3, pp.2) states that voluntary providers must have QA procedures to manage risk. In addition, it needs to be assured that there are effective systems of control and risk management. Risk management informs strategic development through identification and treatment of risk so that strategic objectives are more likely to be achieved, damaging events are avoided or minimised and opportunities are maximised.

Risk Management involves the planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of risk. It is concerned with evaluating the measures that GBS has in place already to manage identified risks and then suggesting actions that the organisation should take to control these risks more effectively. For threats, the outcome of risk management is the reduced likelihood of a risk occurring or limiting the consequences should the risk occur by implementing appropriate methods of control. The opposite is the case for opportunities.

GBS's risk management framework aims to increase the probability of success and reduces the probability of failure and uncertainty of achieving GBS's long term objectives as stated in the Strategic Plan 2019-2024. The purpose of the Risk Management policy is, therefore, to explain GBS's underlying approach to risk management and to document the roles and responsibilities of the Academic Council and its sub-committees, the senior management and other stakeholders. In addition, the policy outlines key aspects of the risk management process and identifies the main reporting procedures. GBS's Risk Management Policy sets out the following:

- •   Definitions
- •   Roles & Responsibilities
- •   Risk Management Framework

Risk Management aims to identify opportunities related to, for example, improving transparency in school processes and good practice; improving the effectiveness of management decisions and internal organisational processes; improving effectiveness of change management processes associated with sustainable competitive advantage; prioritising immediate risk, and fostering a positive attitude while implementing risk controls.

13.2 Definitions

13.2.1 Risk

A Risk may be defined as GBS's limited benefit from opportunities available, suffering damage or disadvantage, or not achieving its strategic objectives due to an internal or external event. Risks, by their very nature, may or may not occur and fall into a variety of categories, most of which are listed below in Table 13.2.1 In addition, risk can exist at different organisational levels such as corporate or strategic level, faculty level, and programme level.

Table 13.2.1: Risk Categorisation

Risk	Details
Strategic Risks	The inability to achieve GBS's strategic and operational objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan 2019-2024 and also, not availing of opportunities when they arise.
Operational Risks	The inability to prevent losses resulting from inadequate internal processes and systems.
Financial Risks	Exposure to losses arising as a result of inadequate controls or the need to improve the management of GBS's financial assets.
Reputational Risks	Exposure to losses arising as a result of bad press, negative public image and the need to improve stakeholder relationship management.
Learner Experience	Exposure to losses arising from learner dissatisfaction with the school operations.
Legal / Regulatory / Compliance Risk	The inability to prevent losses resulting from breaches of legislation or regulations.

13.2.2 Risk Identification

Risk identification refers to the process of determining what risks can occur, the reasons for them and how they may be mitigated.

13.2.3 Risk Analysis

Risk Analysis refers to the systematic use of available information to determine the likelihood of specific events occurring and the magnitude of their consequences and impact on the school.

13.2.4 Risk Assessment

Risks are assessed and prioritised on a combined basis of the likelihood of their occurrence and the resulting impact should they materialise.

13.2.5 Risk Register

A Risk Register is a risk recording and monitoring tool for the management of risk within GBS. It is a hierarchical database and it is a review of the risks that occurred in the past or a review of risks that may occur in the future on all organisational levels.

13.2.6 Risk Appetite

Risk appetite is the amount of risk an organisation is prepared to accept based on the expected return of the development or on the activity in question. The school can be risk-taking or risk-averse and different levels of risk appetite can apply to different activities. In deciding its risk appetite the school will decide the threshold beyond which risks move from being monitored to being serious, or to the abandonment of the particular activity. The clarity in relations to the schools' risk appetite is important in determining the best management strategies for a particular risk.

13.3 Roles & Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for the identification and mitigation of risks within the school lies with the Risk Management Committee. The membership of the committee and its detailed responsibilities are presented in Table 13.3 below.

Table 13.3: Roles and Responsibilities within GBS Risk Management Committee

Membership of the RMC	The functions of the RMC
Managing Director (Chair) Financial Controller Sales & Marketing Director Registrar Academic Co-ordinator IT Security Provider Head of Teaching & Learning	• Implementing GBS's Risk Management Policy • Identifying and monitoring risks that could impact on the achievement of GBS's strategic objectives • Review of the risk register on a bi-annual basis • Ensuring compliance with relevant QQI policies and Codes of Conduct • Ensuring the coordination and promotion of risk management by ensuring that risk processes, including the identification, assessment and management of risks operate efficiently and effectively • Ensuring that fundamental risks, which threaten the achievement of GBS's objectives, are identified, assessed and included in the school's Risk Register, which will be reviewed regularly • Ensuring that there is an overarching corporate culture of risk management • Ensuring that each member of the committee is responsible for the risk management in their departments and keeping the Risk Management Committee updated. • Ensuring that there is appropriate communication with staff on risk, risk policy and controls • Ensuring that effective systems are in place to identify new or emerging risks and seek external / expert advice as necessary • Ensuring that a risk management culture is encouraged throughout the school and ensuring that risk is embedded as part of the school's decision making processes and operations • Ensuring in conjunction with the Financial Controller that risk is considered as part of the annual planning and budgetary process • Ensuring that reports are received on GBS insurance • Ensuring that adequate training is in place to support staff in fulfilling the requirements of the GBS Risk Management Policy • Ensuring that risk registers are received from each member of the Risk Management Committee and referring any risk that may require escalation to the Governing body for consideration

13.4 Risk Management Framework

The Risk Management Framework is a process consisting of steps that enable continual improvement in decision making. It constitutes a fit for purpose method of identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and communicating risks associated with any activity in a way that will enable the school to minimise losses and maximise opportunities. GBS's Risk Management Framework provides assurance from academic and administrative departments to the senior management team and to the Governing Body. Effective risk management focusses on understanding and measuring risk and control rather than necessarily avoiding or eliminating it and comprises of the steps described in following sections.

13.4.1 Risk Identification

The purpose of risk identification is to produce a list of the potential risks that could impact on GBS's ability in achieving its objectives. Risks will be identified under four categories (Section 13.4.2) and prioritised based on the likelihood of their occurrence. A formal risk identification and review exercise will be undertaken on a bi-annual basis in order to update the Risk Register with any departmental risks as required. The risk identification process will commence with the establishment of a Risk Register by GBS's Risk Management Committee. The relevant form for a risk identification within GBS's Risk Register is set out at the end of Section 13.8.

13.4.2 Risk Assessment

Appropriate quantification of risk is critical to an effective Risk Management Framework. Not all risks are equal and effective risk management is only possible if risks are prioritised appropriately. The risk will be assessed using a 4x4 scale for the likelihood and impact of each risk before and after mitigating actions according to the criteria shown in Table 13.4.2a and in Table 13.4.2b.

Table 13.4.2a: Risk Probability Criteria

Rating	Description	Likelihood
5	Highly Likely	75-100% (3 out of 4 possibility or more frequently)
4	Probable	51-74% (1 in 2 possibility to 3 out of 4)
3	Possible	26-49% (1 in 4 possibility to 1 in 2)
2	Remote	6-25% (1 in 4 possibility or less frequently)

Table 13.4.2b: Risk Impact Criteria

Impact Rating	Financial Risk	Strategic Risk	Operational Risk	Reputational Risk	Learner Experience	Legal / Regulatory / Compliance Risk
4 Extreme	Impact on a budget or additional expenditure over €150,000.00	Prevents successful achievement of several strategic priorities resulting in the strategy needing to be revised.	Closure/disruption of the school for greater than 2 days Cancellation of exams	Severe level of criticism in the national press. Permanent impact on student recruitment	Severe impact affecting a large number of learners which will have a significant effect on learner results or retention.	Major legislative breach resulting in a suspension of business Serious injury/loss of life
3 Serious	Impact on a budget or additional expenditure over €75,000.00	Prevents successful achievement of one strategic priority resulting in parts of the strategy needing to be revised.	Unavailability of service of the school for more than 2 days Postponement of exams	School criticised in the national press. Long term impact on student recruitment	High impact affecting a large number of learners which will have a material impact on learner results or retention.	Serious legislative breach resulting in intervention, sanction or legal action Injury requiring hospitalisation
2 Moderate	Impact on a budget or additional expenditure over €50,000.00	Restricts the ability to achieve one or more strategic priorities requiring some modification to parts of the strategy.	Closure/disruption of the school for up to 1 day Delay in exams	School criticised in the local press. Medium term impact on student recruitment.	Moderate impact affecting a smaller number of learners which will have a material impact on learner results or retention.	Significant legislative breach resulting in an investigation. Major reversible injury to staff, learner or member of the public. Not life-threatening.
1 Minor	Impact on a budget or additional expenditure over €20,000.00	Impacts on some aspects of one or more strategic priority but not significant enough to require modifying the strategy.	Non-delivery of classes for up to half a day Disruption to individual exams	Programme criticised in the local press. Short term impact on student recruitment.	Minor impact affecting a smaller number of learners which is unlikely to have a material impact on learners results or retention.	Moderate individual breach leading to a warning Some minor reversible injuries

When rating the risk identified, GBS will use the Risk Rating Map in Figure 13.4.2a to calculate the risk score and then the Classification of Risks in Figure 13.4.2b to identify the Risk Rating. Generally, risks should be prioritised according to their ability to affect the school achieving its objectives and therefore may change as objectives change. Certain risks will be deemed to be Fundamental Risks and will be recognised as being of greater strategic or operational importance to the school than Non-Fundamental Risk. This approach enables risk management resource to be targeted to the most crucial areas whilst still recognising less important risks.

Figure 13.4.2a: Risk Rating Map

		Impact			
		Remote (1)	Possible (2)	Probable (3)	Highly Likely (4)
Likelihood	Extreme (4)	4	8	12	16
	Serious (3)	3	6	9	12
	Moderate (2)	2	4	6	8
	Minor (1)	1	2	3	4

Figure 13.4.2b: Classification of Risks

Classification of Risks		Score
Extreme	Red	12-16
Serious	Amber	8-11.9
Moderate	Yellow	4-7.9
Minor	Green	1-3.9

13.5 Control and Risk Mitigation

Based on the risk assessment, controls and mitigating actions are put in place to reduce exposure to the risk materialising. Heads of each Department (members of RMC) are responsible for implementing and enforcing controls that effectively manage and mitigate risks identified, to a level that is within the tolerance limits approved by the Governing Body.

Controls implemented must be relative and reflect the likelihood and impact of the risk, if it occurred. An efficient and effective control will have the appropriate balance between the cost of implementing, the likelihood and the potential impact of the risk event (if it occurred) and any

residual risk. Mitigation actions and controls include all the policies, procedures, practices and processes in place to provide reasonable assurance of the management of risk.

The RMC monitors the implementation of the mitigating control action plans and reports on a bi-annual basis to the Governing body in relation to their progress.

13.6 Risk Monitoring & Reporting

Each Head of Department will consider their departmental risks. A review of risks will take place at least twice per annum and/or following major changes to the structure of school or its operations. The RMC will meet bi-annually to consider local risks presented by Heads of Departments, to consider on-going developments within the school and any emerging risks. Based on such consideration, the Risk Management Committee will review GBS's Risk Register and amend the Register as required.

Where deemed necessary by the Chair of RMC, the emergence of new risks may be considered immediately by the Governing Body. The RMC will submit a report to the Governing body on the Risk Register and the effectiveness of the Risk Management Framework annually.

13.7 Risk Appetite

The school's risk appetite defines how it accepts and manages risk. Risk elements arising from proposed or actual developments/activities within the school may fall into the categories listed below. The concept of risk appetite applies to major activities undertaken by the school and is concerned with the placing of a boundary between the categories listed below. It, therefore, reflects the school's tolerance of risk.

- **Trivial Risks** – risks that are minor and therefore acceptable and do not need to be managed
- **Acceptable Risks** – risks that are acceptable and do not need to be managed
- **Manageable Risks** – risks that are acceptable but need to be managed
- **Unacceptable Risks** – risks that are unacceptable and therefore the activity associated with the risk should not proceed.

13.8 Management of Risk

Upon completion of a risk assessment and taking account of the school's risk appetite, there is a number of options available to GBS when deciding on how to deal with the risks facing the company. These are listed below.

- **Terminate** – avoid the risk
- **Transfer** – transfer the risk to the third party
- **Treat** – retain and control the risk
- **Tolerate** – exposure to the risk is tolerable without any further action.

GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL

RISK DESCRIPTION

ID *(Unique identifier for the risk)*	
Category *(Type of risk e.g. financial, operational)*	
Owner *(The senior member of the team with responsibility for managing risk)*	
Probability *(The likelihood of the risk happening)*	
Impact *(The effect of the consequences should the risk occur)*	
Proximity *(The earliest the risk is likely to occur)*	
Risk Causes *(The events or circumstances which may trigger the risk)*	
Mitigating Actions *(The current or intended actions wit the timescale to reduce the probability and impact of risk)*	
Response Category *(Terminate / Transfer/ Treat / Tolerate)*	
Escalation level *(The level to which the risk is escalated – Head of Department, RMC or Governing Body)*	

14 Social Media Policy

Document Name: Social Media Policy	
Owner: Registrar	
Approved by: Governing Body	GALWAY BUSINESS SCHOOL
Review frequency: Every 2 years	

Version	Description of Amendments	Approval Date	Implementation Date
V1.0	Approval in full of the policy by the Governing Body	04.11.2019	06.01.2020

14.1 Introduction

Social networking and social media are powerful communication tools which can have a significant impact on organisational and professional reputations. Galway Business School embraces the responsible use of social media to communicate and build relationships with prospective and current students, alumni, employees, parents and community members.

At Galway Business School (GBS), we recognise that social media have become increasingly important and influential communication channels that involve the expression of both personal and professional opinions, the sharing of links, images and other information.

GBS recognizes the exposed and ever-changing purposes of social media, which can blend, at times, personal and professional roles. GBS supports free and open expression and the use of social media as a tool to accelerate teaching and learning. Both in professional and institutional roles, employees and students need to follow the same behavioural standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, media and other Galway Business School associates apply online as they do in the real world.

This policy provides guidance to staff and students on how to safely and productively use social media to maximise the range of benefits it offers whilst mitigating associated risks.

14.2 Policy Purpose

- To provide staff and students with information on GBS's requirements and expectations regarding social media
- To protect GBS, its staff and students' personal and professional profiles and reputations in the social media space
- To ensure that the image and reputation of GBS as an institution is not compromised in any way
- To promote the effective and innovative use of social media
- To ensure a consistent approach to social media across the faculty
- To set out the responsibilities of users of corporate social media accounts
- To clarify the expectations of staff and students using social media in an individual professional or personal capacity

14.3 **Definitions**

Social media are websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. Examples of social networking websites are Blogging, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Wikis etc.

Social media is a fundamental way in which we communicate:

- Social media is about connecting, conversing, helping others and sharing.
- Social media is a valuable resource to learn, be entertained, conduct research, promote news and events and also to contribute to topical conversations.
- Social media content is indexed in search engines, which means that the content you post on public networks is traceable on Google for example.
- Social media is a resource for news, but you should fact-check any news or information that you are sharing. Fake news is a growing trend on social media.

Examples of popular social media sites include, but are not limited to:

- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Flickr
- Yammer
- Yahoo/MSN messenger
- Wikis and blogs
- Weibo 5
- WeChat
- Whatsapp

Page administrators reserve the right to remove user-generated content or comments in accordance with this policy for the safety and security of GBS and our audiences.

14.4 **Social Media Etiquette**

Users must at all times use social media sites in a responsible manner, having due regard to the rights and reputation of GBS and of others. In particular, users are required to comply with the following rules:

- Do not use social media so as to contravene or breach the laws of Ireland, specifically concerning privacy rights, defamation law and data protection law.
- Conduct themselves in a manner which demonstrates respect for GBS's staff, fellow students and property, and for other members of the local community in general.
- Do not use social media sites to engage in any form of bullying or behaviour which is illegal or likely to cause harassment to others (e.g. stalking, grooming of minors, etc.).
- Do not excessively duplicate previously posted communications (other Users may consider this as spam).
- Do not breach others' privacy through sharing or promoting private information, images or other content.
- Do not impersonate any other person nor engage in trolling (i.e. intentionally insulting and harassing people via the Internet).
- Do not post any material which breaches the intellectual property rights of third parties (e.g. logos, written works, diagrams, pictures, music, video/film clips, etc.).
- Do not post material which is confidential and proprietary to the university or which could have the effect of damaging the reputation of the university or the privacy or reputation of any third party.
- Ensure that information posted is accurate and not misleading.
- Do not post or promote content which harasses, bullies or otherwise intimidates.
- Do not repeatedly make unwanted or unsolicited contact with another person.
- Do not post material for the purpose of embarrassing people or which will bring that person or GBS into disrespect.
- Do not use the name of GBS, including any emblems or logos, to promote their own commercial objectives or activities.
- Respect GBS time and property: GBS IT Resources are reserved for the use of Staff and Students for academic-related business, research and study.

Failure to act in line with the above may result in GBS taking disciplinary action.