



POLICY TITLE: Learning Resources Policy

POLICY CATEGORY: ACADEMIC

POLICY NUMBER:

POLICY OWNER: Provost / Vice-President Academic

POLICY APPROVER: Board of Governors

APPROVAL DATE: 11/12/2025

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/2026

REVIEW PERIOD: Every 5 Years

REVIEWED: N/A Click or tap to enter a date.

REVISED: N/A Click or tap to enter a date.

1. Purpose

George Brown Polytechnic's Learning Resources policy seeks to ensure that all course-based learning resources are approved and maintained in a transparent, consistent manner to ensure high quality and relevancy while supporting student achievement of course and program learning outcomes. Costs associated with educational resources will be examined through an equity lens and, wherever possible, required costs for educational learning resources are minimized and no-fee alternatives prioritized.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all course-based learning resources in credit courses and non-credit programs at George Brown Polytechnic, whether they are associated with a cost or not.

3. Definition of Terms

Ancillary Fees: Fees charged to support services and activities distinct from academic programming or general overhead for the institution in addition to tuition fees. Ancillary fees are required to be published through the Tuition and Ancillary Fees Minister's Binding Policy Directive and must follow the Ontario Operating Funds Distribution Manual.

Course Learning Outcomes: Clear statements that specify the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students are expected to demonstrate by the successful completion of a course. Course learning outcomes must align with program learning outcomes.

Conflict of Interest: A private or personal interest that influences the exercise of duties and responsibilities. This may include authorship or co-authorship of learning resources in which the faculty member may benefit from selection. See the College policy: GBP Conflict of Interest Policy (2019).

Digital Assessment Tools (DAT): An individual or bundled portion of a Digital Learning Resource (DLR) that is used for assessment purposes.

Digital Learning Resource (DLR): Digital materials (e.g. online software applications, online textbooks/readings, or other online course materials including pictures, videos, and audio files) as well as associated devices (e.g. clickers) that would aid or facilitate instruction, learning, and assessment.

Educational Costs: Includes ancillary fees, other learning materials and resources that come at a cost that will be borne by the College as an operating cost or covered by the student.

Program Learning Outcomes: Statements that specify the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students are expected to demonstrate by the completion of an educational credential. In vocational programs, Vocational Learning Outcomes (VLOs) define the

specific skills and knowledge students are expected to demonstrate prior to successful program completion.

Learning Resource: Learning resources are printed or digital texts, media, and other digital assets and tools (uniforms, protective gear and equipment) used for teaching, learning and assessments. Resources are needed to meet learning outcomes and gain entry to practice knowledge and skills.

Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security: The Ministry responsible for the administration of laws relating to post-secondary education and skills training. For more information go to the [Ministry Website](#).

Policy: A statement of basic principles, rules, regulations and/or guidelines, developed and enforced to direct and/or limit actions and activities.

Procedure: The operational processes required to implement college policy, to be provided as a clear sequence of instructions to be followed.

Program Ancillary Fee Committee: A college committee that approves compulsory program ancillary fees.

Program Curriculum Team: A team that regularly reviews a program or course cluster's curriculum, including course and program learning outcomes, and recommendations of learning resources.

4. Policy

4.1. Selection of Learning Resources

- 4.1.1. All learning resources, materials and tools must be directly linked to approved course learning outcomes and be in alignment with current Ministry of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security (MCURES) [Tuition and ancillary fees policy framework for colleges of applied arts and technology | ontario.ca](#) and any other MCURES policy directive.
- 4.1.2. Learning and material resources must be necessary. Only required materials, equipment, tools, and uniforms will be considered for inclusion in program/course-related fees, as noted in the [Minister's revised directive on the costs of educational materials to publicly assisted colleges and universities | ontario.ca](#) issued by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Research Excellence and Security.
- 4.1.3. Learning resources for individual courses must be reviewed by the relevant Curriculum Team for recommendation to the Associate Dean for approval. Curriculum Teams ensure learning resources are aligned to program and course learning outcomes, relevant College policy,

MCURES requirements and professional regulators. (See Appendix 1 for approval procedure)

- 4.1.4. Priorities for recommending learning resources include:
 - 4.1.4.1. ensuring high quality and relevancy.
 - 4.1.4.2. aligning to the College's commitment to equity, diversity, anti-racism, inclusion and indigenization; and minimizing or eliminating cost to students.
- 4.1.5. Students who wish to raise concerns about learning resources in their courses or program, should refer to the Expression of Educational Concerns and Complaints policy.
- 4.1.6. Any GBP employee affiliated with the selection or approval of learning resources for the course must communicate any actual or perceived conflict of interest to their Associate Dean and remove themselves from these discussions as required.
- 4.1.7. If two or more learning resources are evaluated equally, the one without the conflict of interest must be selected.
- 4.1.8. To remove barriers for students, George Brown Polytechnic programs are encouraged to use resources that are available at no cost to the students from GBP's Library and Learning Commons, Open Educational Resources, and no-cost online tools.
- 4.1.9. Communication to students via a college website or the course outline, related to learning costs will clearly indicate:
 - 4.1.9.1. The costs of all learning materials clearly differentiating mandatory and optional resources.
 - 4.1.9.2. Descriptions of learning resource features (e.g. personalized online study tools, assessments).
 - 4.1.9.3. Individual costs for all learning resources. Note: Pricing support is provided by the GBP Campus Store. (In the event that the educational cost for the current year is not available when the course outline is made available to students, the most recent cost will be included, indicating that this amount is an estimate and may change.)
 - 4.1.9.4. Any restrictions that would prevent students from using differing versions of a learning resource (e.g. a second-hand copy of a

textbook, a previous edition) or sharing a learning resource with a peer.

- 4.1.9.5. Course outlines may list optional learning resources and associated costs that are not included in compulsory program ancillary fees.
- 4.1.10. No other educational material costs should be added to a course after the distribution of the course outline unless approved by the Dean.
- 4.1.11. Costs for educational resources must be balanced with the learning opportunities they provide.
- 4.1.12. The cost of tuition should cover all instruction and assessment activities.
- 4.1.13. Faculty must consider the cost of learning resources, materials and tools to ensure they are not a barrier to student learning. No-fee alternative should be prioritized when possible.
- 4.1.14. Learning and material resources required by students at a cost must have a lasting benefit. Students must be able to own and use the materials beyond their college program and have immediate access to these learning resources as they launch their careers (examples include equipment, clothing and artifacts that become students' personal property). Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees must be approved by the College's Ancillary Fees Committee and must fall into the Ministry defined categories.
 - 4.1.14.1. Fees for travel and accommodation expenses for compulsory field placements.
 - 4.1.14.2. Fees for travel and accommodation expenses for compulsory field trips.
 - 4.1.14.3. Fees for program specific learning materials, equipment and clothing retained by the students.
 - 4.1.14.4. Fees for materials which are used in the production of items which become the property of the student.
 - 4.1.14.5. Fees for which the college acts as a broker.
 - 4.1.14.6. Fees for co-op programs.

- 4.1.15. The Dean will notify the Provost / Vice-President, Academic of any course outline that does not include the cost of learning materials and provide a plan for full compliance.
- 4.1.16. Materials and supplies consumed over the course of program delivery must be covered by the program's operational costs. Students cannot be charged separately for these materials.
- 4.1.17. Programs that require students to cover materials and supplies fees, such as those used in culinary labs, must be approved by the College's Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Registrar to determine if they qualify under relevant categories.
- 4.1.18. Learning resources must follow Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards. George Brown Polytechnic is committed to accommodating the needs of students with disabilities to prevent and remove barriers that might impede students from participating fully in the educational environment, including any learning resources required by the program. Faculty, Associate Deans and Deans must undertake due diligence to ensure that resources are AODA compliant.

4.2. Curriculum Teams

- 4.2.1. Associate Deans are responsible for convening a Curriculum Team for each program or course cluster under their purview on an annual basis.
- 4.2.2. The majority of the membership of a Curriculum Team must be involved directly in instruction and assessment for the relevant program and/or course clusters.
- 4.2.3. Each Program Curriculum Team shall meet a minimum of once per year. Ad-hoc meetings in addition to scheduled meetings may take place as needed.
- 4.2.4. Curriculum Teams will review and provide recommendations to the Associate Dean on the most appropriate learning resources for courses across the program on an annual basis [see "roles"]. The Curriculum Team provides input on both suggested (optional) and required (mandatory) resources. All required (mandatory) items that are associated with a student cost must be approved by the Program Ancillary Fee Committee.

4.3. Digital Learning Materials and Assessment

- 4.3.1. Digital learning materials that are included in course or program material fees must align with course learning outcomes and the principles of authentic assessment. See the Assessment of Student Learning Policy.
- 4.3.2. Any digital learning material that is to be included in a course or program material fee must first be approved by the relevant Associate Dean prior to being reviewed by the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee.
 - 4.3.2.1. Following this approval, the Associate Dean is responsible for presenting this request to the Program Ancillary Fee Committee for approval, as per the Ministry's Binding Policy.
 - 4.3.2.2. The application to the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee must be approved by the Dean of Record.
- 4.3.3. Following this approval, the Associate Dean is responsible for presenting this request to the Program Ancillary Fee Committee for approval, as per the Ministry's Binding Policy
- 4.3.4. The application to the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee must be approved by the Dean of Record.

4.4. Reporting

- 4.4.1. The Provost / Vice-President, Academic and Registrar will compile an annual report on Learning Resources for the GBP Board of Governors in accordance with the Ministry's Binding Policy.

4.5. Institutional Regulations

- 4.5.1. This policy, sanctioned by George Brown Polytechnic, is an institutional regulation requiring compliance. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal commensurate with the offence in accordance with relevant academic and administrative codes of conduct and collective bargaining agreements.

5. Appendices

- Appendix 1: Review and Approval Steps
- Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities
- Appendix 3: Curriculum Team Terms of Reference
- Appendix 4: Learning Resource Requirements

- Appendix 5: Learning Resource Checklist
- Appendix 6: Reporting Guidelines

6. Forms and Templates

See Appendix 5: Learning Resource Checklist

7. Related Materials

georgebrown.ca

8. Related Policies

- [Accessible Learning Policy](#)
- [GBC AODA Accessibility Policy](#)
- Assessment of Student Learning Policy (2024)
- Compulsory Ancillary Fee Directive (new)
- [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- [Cyber Security Policy Jan 15](#)
- [Expression of Educational Concerns and Complaints](#)
- [Privacy Policy - Policies | George Brown College](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Review and Approval Steps

1. On an annual basis, Program Curriculum Teams will review and recommend adoption of the most appropriate learning resources for each course across the program or course cluster.
2. The Curriculum Team recommends whether resources are optional or required (mandatory) based on program and course learning outcomes.
3. All mandatory items that are associated with a student cost must be approved by the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee. If there are costs associated with optional resources, the GBP Campus Store will determine if they will be stocked in campus stores.
4. If fees are required by students to purchase mandatory learning resources, the faculty or curriculum team must submit a request to their Associate Dean.
5. The Associate Dean discusses the value of the selected mandatory learning resource(s) and any alternatives. They will either approve or ask the Program Curriculum Team to identify an alternative.

- a. To proceed for review and approval by the Dean, the Associate Dean is required to provide a written rationale for the program charging the extra fees for the selected learning resource.
 - b. Liaison librarians can assist with identifying alternative resources.
6. The Dean receives the final list of learning resources for review and approval.
7. The list, with estimated costs, goes to the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee for review and approval.*
8. The Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee will review, seek clarification, if necessary, and approve or deny the request.
9. Once approved, the list of confirmed learning resources goes to the Campus Store for sourcing and final costing.
 - a. Confirmed list of resources should be submitted in a timely manner and follow the sequence of process steps (e.g. annual review, identification of resources, approvals).
10. If the actual costs exceed the estimate by more than 10%, the Campus Store will flag the discrepancy for the Dean for review and decision. The Dean will work with the academic team to find a more affordable solution, or seek the approval of the Provost / Vice-President, Academic if no other alternative is available.

*If a learning resource is not approved, the Dean and Associate Dean must decide if the School will pay for these materials as a program-related cost that will be solely absorbed by the Program. Alternatively, they may request that the Program Curriculum Team works with the Associate Dean to identify a no- or low-cost alternative.

Appendix 2 - Roles and Responsibilities

Curriculum Team: As part of an annual review, the Curriculum Team reviews and makes recommendations for the most appropriate learning resources that are tied directly to program and course learning outcomes, will support authentic learning and assessment. The learning resources will facilitate career readiness and equip students to meet labour market needs.

Academic Operations Coordinator: Prepares costing for materials fees with the Manager of Academic Operations and Associate Dean. Highlights any concerns and discusses with Program Coordinator and Associate Dean as required.

Administrative Leaders and Support Staff: Supports the process by providing timely information and coordinating communications and meetings with Faculty, Associate Deans and Deans.

Associate Dean: Leads the School's academic activities and is responsible for program quality and supporting faculty teaching and learning. Forms and maintains Program Curriculum Teams for all relevant Programs and course clusters under their purview. Reviews and approves learning resources and provides a rationale for additional costs to the student (or School) for discussion with the Dean.

Associate Vice-President, Program Quality, Development and Integration: Monitors compliance with Ministry Directives, including the publication of learning resource costs in course outlines. Supports changes in the program review process including the annual reviews.

Campus Store: Works with Deans on estimated costs. Once the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee approves learning resources to be added to student ancillary fees, provides finalized costs per student. The Campus Store has the authority to decide if it will stock optional learning resources.

Dean: Leads the Centre's academic activities and is responsible for School quality and supporting faculty development. Reviews and approves all learning resource requests that require student payment (through compulsory material ancillary fees) or may need to be charged to the School as a program cost. Submits list of courses, learning materials and estimated costs to the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee.

Library Learning Commons (LLC): The LLC will provide access to a digital repository (such as the [Reading List Builder](#)) to include low- or no-cost learning resources for access. As members of the Program Curriculum Team, or through consultation with the Team, the liaison librarian will provide recommendations on the suitability of learning resources or recommend alternatives.

Manager of Academic Operations: Supports the program review process and approval process for program fees. MAOs provide support for the annual review process and assist the Associate Dean in approving the selection of learning resources, as required.

Office of the Registrar: Jurisdiction over student fees and is accountable for aligning with provincial fee directives and binding policy. Oversees the Ancillary Fee Policy, establishes Committees to adjudicate fee decisions and institutes reviews on fees. Once approved, includes approved learning resources as part of student fees.

Provost / Vice-President Academic: Oversight of all college academic policies, processes and procedures. Accountable for academic quality, teaching and learning. Is notified of any gaps in estimated and confirmed final learning resources costs.

Appendix 3 - Curriculum Team Terms of Reference

Program Curriculum Teams are responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the relevant Associate Dean to ensure learning resources are aligned to program and course learning outcomes, relevant College policy, MCURES requirements and professional regulators. On an annual basis, Program Curriculum

Teams will review and recommend adoption of the most appropriate learning resources for each course across the program or course cluster.

The **scope** of the Curriculum Team is to ensure a programmatic overview and advise on Learning Resources to ensure all learning resources, materials and tools are directly linked to approved course learning outcomes and in alignment with current MCURES Binding Policy Directives and Procedures on Tuition and Ancillary Fees and any other MCURES policy directive.

Priorities for recommending learning resources include the assurance of high quality and relevancy, alignment to the College's commitment to equity, diversity, anti-racism and inclusion; and minimizing or eliminating cost to students.

Curriculum Teams shall operate under the following guidelines:

- Annually, all Associate Deans convene a Curriculum Team for each program or course cluster under their purview.
- The majority of the membership of a Curriculum Team must be involved directly in instruction and assessment for the relevant program and/or course clusters. Faculty shall make up a minimum of 50% of the Curriculum Team.
- Each Program Curriculum Team shall meet a minimum of once per year. Ad-hoc meetings in addition to scheduled meetings may take place as needed.
- The Associate Dean is responsible, in consultation with the Curriculum Team, for prioritizing the learning resources that will be under discussion for each meeting.
- The discussion and recommendations made by the School Curriculum Team related to all Learning Resources shall be documented in meeting minutes and the minutes forwarded to the Associate Dean.
- A record of the committee's meetings and decisions shall be kept in the Associate Dean's office.
- The Associate Dean is responsible for reviewing and taking actions based on the Curriculum Team's recommendations.

Appendix 4 - Learning Resource Requirements

- Resources must meet AODA standards.
- Resources are needed to achieve learning outcomes, gain knowledge and skills to complete the task are curated.
- The purpose of instructional materials and how the materials are to be used for learning experiences are clearly explained.
- Low cost or free resources for students to use are prioritized.

- The distinction between required and recommended materials is clear.
- A variety of instructional materials are used with respect to medium (e.g., videos, reading, digital interactives).
- A variety of voices, faces, and perspectives is apparent in the instructional materials.
- Instructional materials used in the course are appropriately cited. Instructional materials are current (ideally within 5 years publication).

Appendix 5 - Learning Resource Checklist

Purpose:

This checklist ensures that all learning resources selected for use in courses meet institutional, academic, accessibility, and ethical standards. AODA compliance and the absence (or proper management) of conflicts of interest are mandatory requirements for approval.

Requirements:

AODA Compliance – The Learning Resource meets all AODA standards (accessible formats, alt text, captions, navigable design, etc.)

Conflict of Interest – No conflict of interest exists. Resources that pose a conflict of interest (financial, authorship, or supplier relationship) must be disclosed, and Dean approval required if a potential conflict of interest is identified. If two or more resources are evaluated equally, the one without the conflict of interest must be selected.

The resource supports the stated learning outcomes and helps students develop required knowledge and skills.

The purpose and intended use of the material are clearly explained within the course.

The resource is free or low cost, and the cost justification is provided, if applicable.

The resource reflects diverse voices, faces and perspectives.

The materials are current (ideally published or updated within the past five years, or still pedagogically relevant).

Appendix 6: Reporting Guidelines

In accordance with the Ministry Binding Policy Directive, reporting guidelines require

- If the percentage is less than 100%, the report will include a plan on how and when the college will reach full compliance with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Research Excellence and Security Directive on the Costs of Educational Resources.
- Information on the ancillary fees as approved by the Board of Governors through the tuition and fees approval process.
- Percentage of courses that included the cost of textbooks and other fee-based learning and related materials (e.g. digital licences, equipment and uniforms) in course outlines.
- Summary of current and planned communication to students on where to find information on educational costs.
- Any digital learning material that is to be included in a course or program material fee must first be approved by the relevant Associate Dean prior to being reviewed by the Compulsory Program Ancillary Fees Committee.