Learner Handbook

2019 - 2020
Table of Contents

1.0 Gurteen College Vision and Mission Statement 5

2.0 Charter of Learners Rights and Responsibilities 5
  2.1 Mentoring System ........................................................................................................ 6
  2.2 Additional Learning Support ..................................................................................... 6

3.0 Rules and Code of Conduct for Learners 6
  3.1 Purpose of the Code ...................................................................................................... 6
  3.2 General Principles ......................................................................................................... 7
  3.3 Out of Bounds ................................................................................................................ 7
  3.4 Breaches of the Code of Conduct ................................................................................ 8
  3.5 Serious Misconduct ....................................................................................................... 9
  3.6 Guidelines for Disciplinary Procedures and Breaches of Discipline ......................... 10
  3.7 Implementation of Disciplinary Measures .................................................................. 11
  3.8 Time and Attendance ................................................................................................... 12

4.0 Child Safeguarding, Student Welfare and Equality Guidelines 14
  4.1 Teagasc Child Safeguarding Statement ................................................................... 14
  4.2 Bullying/Intimidation and Sexual Harassment ............................................................ 15
  4.3 Learner Welfare ............................................................................................................ 16
  4.4 Learner Equality .......................................................................................................... 17
  4.5 Learner Support ........................................................................................................... 18

5.0 Health and Safety 18
  5.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 18
  5.2 Gurteen College H&S Requirements ......................................................................... 18
  5.3 Safety Committee ......................................................................................................... 19
  5.4 Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures ....................................................................... 20
  5.5 First Aid ....................................................................................................................... 22
  5.6 Medical Services .......................................................................................................... 22
  5.7 Use of Vehicles ............................................................................................................ 24
  5.8 Excursions/Field Trips ............................................................................................... 24
  5.9 Bio-security ................................................................................................................ 25
  5.10 Use of Computers/Printers ....................................................................................... 25

6.0 Teagasc Student Maintenance Grant Scheme 27

7.0 Gurteen College / Teagasc education and training promotion 28

8.0 Data Protection Statement 28

9.0 Assessment Regulations for Teagasc - Programmes Leading to QQI Awards 28
  9.1 Assessment and Practice ............................................................................................ 29
  9.2 Written Examinations ................................................................................................. 29
  9.3 Practical Examinations ............................................................................................... 30
  9.4 Written Coursework (Assignments/Projects) .............................................................. 30
  9.5 Penalties for Breaches of Assessment Regulations .................................................. 31
  9.6 Assessment Appeals ................................................................................................... 32
  9.7 Results ......................................................................................................................... 32

10.0 QQI Certification 33
  10.1 Access, Transfer, Progression and Higher Education Link Scheme ....................... 33
  10.2 Other Progression Links ........................................................................................ 34
11.0 Services for Learners
11.1 College facilities ................................................................. 34
11.2 Lockers .............................................................................. 34
11.3 Lost and found .................................................................... 35
11.4 Notice boards ...................................................................... 35
11.5 Parking .............................................................................. 35
11.6 Bus Service ......................................................................... 35
11.7 Post .................................................................................... 36
11.8 College office ....................................................................... 36
11.9 Chaplain ............................................................................ 36
11.10 Night Supervisor ................................................................ 36
11.11 Welfare Team ................................................................... 36
11.12 Hospitality Coordinator ...................................................... 37
11.13 Catering ........................................................................... 37
11.14 Special diets ...................................................................... 38
11.15 Laundry facilities ............................................................... 38
11.16 Security / CCTV ................................................................. 38
11.17 Site layout ......................................................................... 39

12.0 Student Fees Policy and Refunds
12.1 Fee Payment Information ..................................................... 39
12.2 Withdrawing from Course .................................................... 39
12.3 Converting from a Residential to a Non-residential Student ... 40
12.4 The process of refunding fees ............................................... 41
12.5 Complaints and appeals concerning refund application ......... 41

13.0 Conditions of Residence
13.1 Legal status ......................................................................... 41
13.2 Accounts ........................................................................... 42
13.3 Allocation of rooms ............................................................. 42
13.4 Responsibility ..................................................................... 42
13.5 Inspection prior to return of deposit ..................................... 43
13.6 Security ............................................................................. 43
13.7 Visitors ............................................................................... 43
13.8 Overnight Guests ................................................................ 43
13.9 Parties ............................................................................... 44
13.10 Damage .......................................................................... 44
13.11 Defects / Repairs ............................................................... 44
13.12 Pets ................................................................................ 44
13.13 Fire Prevention .................................................................. 44
13.14 Fire Safety Equipment ........................................................ 45
13.15 Electrical Appliances, heaters, etc. ...................................) 45
13.16 Television and Radio ......................................................... 45
13.17 Room Cleaning ................................................................. 45
13.18 Inventory .......................................................................... 46

14.0 Students Under 18 Years of Age (Parent / Guardian should also read) 46
15.0 Information for Parents / Guardians ........................................ 47
16.0 Directions & Maps ............................................................... 48
17.0 Important Contacts ............................................................ 50
18.0 Learner Handbook Learner Agreement ................................. 51
Welcome to Gurteen College

Dear Learner,

You have enrolled on a Gurteen College course in conjunction with Teagasc and as Principal of Gurteen College I welcome you on behalf of the staff on to your chosen course.

We hope that you will find your studies interesting, challenging and rewarding. Every College course leads to a widely recognised award.

You may find the course and the new surroundings a little daunting at first. This is only natural as it takes time to adapt to a new location, to new ways of learning, to new friends, and to becoming a more independent person. Indeed, the aim of all Gurteen College courses is to assist people to become independent learners who are capable of identifying their own education and training needs. It is our role to help you through this transition process. One of the strengths of most courses offered by this College is that students can progress “up the ranks” right to degree level.

If you work hard and satisfactorily complete all the requirements asked of you, you should pass your assessments. We hope that you will be successful and be well qualified to pursue a worthwhile career of your choice.

Finally, I wish you well for your time with us. I hope that you will benefit from and enjoy your course and time spent at Gurteen College.

Yours Faithfully,

JON PARRY
Principal

Purpose of the Learner Handbook

This Learner Handbook has been produced for the benefit of all learners enrolling on Teagasc courses. It contains information you may need to refer to throughout your period of study at a Teagasc college/centre.

The handbook provides important guidelines for learners in regard to code of conduct, assessments, health and safety, bio security, college and centre facilities and guidelines in regard to learner welfare and support.

If you have any issues or concerns, please make sure you bring them to the attention of your course co-ordinator or college/centre management.
1.0 Gurteen College Vision and Mission Statement

Vision

Learning and working together to enhance life in rural communities.

Mission Statement

In a practical environment, our mission is to provide education and training which meets the highest international standards in order to empower all students to fulfil their potential, achieve their goals, implement social responsibility concepts, and develop an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

2.0 Charter of Learners Rights and Responsibilities

Gurteen College is dedicated to providing the highest quality education and training to students in a manner that meets their needs. Our aim is to achieve this goal by creating a dynamic, student-centred environment that promotes individual potential. The College is motivated and supported by the deep commitment of all staff to facilitate students to work to the full extent of their capabilities.

The staff are empowered to create and facilitate a learning environment that supports and stimulates students and enables them to realise their full potential. Belief and confidence in each student is at the heart of the College’s relationship with students and is central to everything the College does for students.

The College is committed to providing students with:

- Accessible, quality education at a time, place and pace that mutually suits both staff and the students’ situation and aspirations
- A learning environment and resources that support and stimulate students and enables them to realise their full potential
- An environment that promotes continuous personal development
- Courses of the highest quality
- Accurate information about all programmes and expectations
- Assessment of learning that is fair, valid and timely
- The opportunity to evaluate teaching and study programmes in confidence
- A skilled, qualified and supportive staff who will treat all students with dignity and respect and be responsive to student needs and concerns
- A fair and consistent enforcement of all rules and regulations
- A healthy and safe environment that promotes a positive learning experience.

The College expects students to:

- Take charge of their own learning and produce work to the best of their ability
- Participate actively in all learning situations
- Make effective use of the facilities and services provided
- Comply with assessment regulations and use assessment feedback to guide their continued learning
- Provide honest and constructive feedback within the opportunities provided
- Support and respect the rights of fellow students and staff
- Abide by all College rules and regulations
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety and to fully comply with college/centre health and safety requirements

2.1  Mentoring System

At the beginning of each year, full-time learners (Level 5 and Level 6) are assigned a member of staff as a personal mentor by the Course Co-ordinator. For adult courses (Part Time & Distance courses) a mentor may be assigned where a need arises. The mentor is responsible for supporting a learner’s academic performance and welfare during their time spent at the college. It is important to maintain contact with this mentor throughout the year.

A mentor speaks on a student’s behalf at examination meetings / staff meetings etc. if they are aware of any factors affecting the learner’s progress. Mentors can also provide references for employment.

The agenda for mentor meetings will include some or all of the following items:
- academic progress
- attendance record
- work placement
- projects and assignments etc.

In addition to timetabled mentor meetings, it is possible to meet a learner mentor informally to discuss any issues of concern. It is recommended that mentors are advised of relevant issues that might have implications for a learner’s welfare, and/or academic work, particularly with respect to attendance and completion of projects/assignments.

2.2  Additional Learning Support

Additional learner support is available where evidence of a support requirement is provided. Please contact your course co-ordinator for details.

3.0  Rules and Code of Conduct for Learners

3.1  Purpose of the Code

This section sets out a code of conduct to which learners are expected to adhere to in return for being admitted to Gurteen College and being provided with educational and other services and facilities. It also sets out the procedure which should be followed where the code of conduct is breached.
Breach of the Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action being taken against a learner and repeated breaches or a single serious breach may result in a learner being suspended or expelled from the college and or course.

This code applies to all learners, whether full-time or part-time and at all times during the year, whether or not during normal teaching times.

3.2 General Principles

Staff and “learners” (meaning learners participating in QQI accredited full time, part time and distance education programmes) are expected to behave responsibly at all times, to observe and abide by the Code of Conduct and not to engage in any activity which might bring the college into disrepute.

Learners are required to attend regularly and punctually all timetabled activities – classes, practicals, work practice, assessment, field trips etc. and to conform to the directions of the staff member(s) responsible.

Should any learner, during any timetabled activity, be responsible for a breach of good conduct, or fail to obey instruction from a staff member, the staff member may require the learner to withdraw from the particular timetabled activity and bring the matter to the notice of the Course Co-ordinator for appropriate action to be taken. Details of the code are in the following sections.

Learners must:

a) Conduct themselves, both inside and outside the college, in a manner which will maintain the good name of the learner and the college.

b) Act at all times with due regard for their own safety and that of others and follow all health and safety instructions and signs.

c) Respect the property of the college and of its staff, other learners and visitors.

d) Support staff and other learners in the maintenance of a clean and tidy environment throughout the college.

e) Inform the college office as soon as practicable if for any reason they are unable to attend a class/practical or other scheduled event.

f) Adhere to regulations regarding bio-security measures for the control of animal diseases.

g) Report at once all accidents to the Maura Campbell (Hospitality Coordinator & First Aider) or Ken Flynn (Farm Manager).

3.3 Out of Bounds

Students are not allowed in the following areas of the College without permission:

- Staff and Administrative Offices
- College Kitchen and Dining Room (outside meal times)
Print Room
- The Farm and Equine yards or buildings without proper reason.

3.4 Breaches of the Code of Conduct

The following sets out a non-exhaustive list of examples of behaviour which constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct and may result in the initiation of disciplinary procedures under this Code:

a) Breach of any of the general principles set out above (including any breach of health and safety or other regulations of the college).
b) Failure to follow the reasonable instructions of a member of staff.
c) Use of a mobile phone during class, practicals, and demonstrations (without permission from a staff member and all other parties who may be involved, i.e. in the case of taking a photo or recording a video). Mobile phones must not be used to record/photograph Gurteen College property, animals, staff etc. without permission from the Principal.
d) Smoking, including vaping, in non-smoking areas and adjacent to doors and windows. Smoking, including vaping, is restricted to designated smoking areas.
e) Residential learners permitting non-residential learners in their bedrooms after specified hours.
f) Unduly noisy or any unruly behaviour or the use of foul or abusive language.
g) Conduct which is disruptive of or which may disrupt teaching, work practice or study.
h) Causing damage to, defacing, stealing or misappropriating any college property or the property of others. See section 2.4 for further details on damage to property.
i) Dangerous or careless driving including failure to observe speed limits or parking regulations. Vehicles and bicycles must be parked in authorised places and are parked at the owner’s risk.
j) Operating machinery or equipment without permission and supervision.
k) Unauthorised interference with software, IT equipment or data belonging to or used by the college.
l) Theft of property or any other dishonest acts.
m) Use or possession of alcoholic drinks or illegal substances within the college or its grounds.
n) Drunkenness or substance abuse (i.e. use of illegal drugs and the misuse of prescribed drugs or substances) on college premises or on any activity associated with the college.
o) Obstruction of any member of staff or learner in the performance of duties, work or other Teagasc activity.
p) Bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, intimidation, taunting, verbal abuse or the use of any violence or threat of violence towards any person.
q) An illegal act which may have an adverse effect on the work of the college or on other learners.
r) Breaching assessment regulations including plagiarism (see Assessment Regulations - Section 8).
s) Acts or omissions by learners while outside college engaged in field trips, work experience, placement or club activities, organised by the college or while representing the college which would breach the Code of Conduct if committed in the college.

t) Activity, including but not limited to the posting of material on social media, which adversely affects, or is likely to adversely affect the reputation of the college, the learners or members of staff or bring the college into disrepute.

u) The furnishing during a course of study of any false or misleading information calculated to deceive or mislead the college or calculated to deceive or mislead any other person or organisation to which they are accountable while on work practice, assessment, field trips, and placement.

v) Incitement or encouragement of any other person or persons to do any of the aforementioned things.

3.5 Serious Misconduct

Breaches of the above requirements may, when necessary, be treated by the college as serious misconduct.

Further examples of serious misconduct include the following:

a) Assault or abuse physically or verbally of any other learner or staff member of the college or a serious threat of violence.

b) Behaviour which is racially or sexually offensive or which is offensive to those with learning and/or physical disabilities or impediments.

c) Off-campus conduct likely to bring the College into disrepute.


d) The possession or supply of any illegal drug or the inappropriate supply of prescribed or other drugs to learners or other individuals.

e) Sourcing pornographic material on the internet or dissemination of such material.

f) Endangering the health or safety of self or others.


g) Deliberate breach of college/centre guidelines relating to bio security issues.

h) Any criminal activities affecting the college/centre or other learners.

i) Inappropriate use of camera phones and uploading of inappropriate comments, images of staff or learners etc. online.

j) Reckless or negligent behaviour that results in damage or loss to the college or to any learner or staff member including damage to property.

k) Unwarranted interference or tampering with college/centre safety equipment, fire fighting equipment, security systems or alarm systems.

l) Setting of fires.

m) Mistreating livestock.

n) Use of or possession of any offensive weapon.

Personation
Personation of others, within or outside the college, in connection with academic attainments, awards or otherwise will be treated as serious misconduct. Only learners who are registered may be admitted to classes and assessments at the college and or centre.

**Damage to Property**

Learners are required to make good, to the satisfaction of the college, any damage or loss which they intentionally cause to any property of the college or for any such loss or damage which arises as a result of their being reckless or negligent. Learners are similarly required to make good any damage or loss which they cause to the personal property of any other learner or member of staff.

### 3.6 Guidelines for Disciplinary Procedures and Breaches of Discipline

Any act or omission, which affects adversely the rights of any staff/learner or which disrupts the orderly and responsible conduct of any college activity, or which violates the Code of Conduct, shall constitute a breach of discipline. Disciplinary action may result in a fine, suspension for a fixed period or permanent expulsion from the course.

It is emphasised that the examples of breaches of the Code of Conduct, outlined above, are non-exhaustive and demonstrative and in no way prevents the appropriate member of staff from considering and adjudicating upon the conduct or action of any learner which is thought to constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct.

**Informal Procedure**

Cases of minor breaches of discipline may be treated informally by staff or others acting on behalf of the college. However if it is not appropriate to deal with the matter informally or if it fails to resolve the issue, the procedures set out below will be followed.

**Formal Procedure**

There are a number of stages to the formal procedure and it is usual to progress sequentially through the stages. However, depending on the seriousness of the allegation, the disciplinary procedure may be invoked at any stage.

Before imposing any of the sanctions set out below, an appropriate investigation of the relevant facts will be conducted.

The purpose of an investigation is for the college to establish the facts in relation to any allegations made against (or suspicions existing in relation to) the learner before considering whether or not to impose one of the disciplinary sanctions set out below. The extent of investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegation(s) or suspicions and will vary from case to case.
At every stage in the formal disciplinary procedure, the learner will be furnished with details of the allegation(s)/complaint(s) made against him/her and will be given the opportunity to respond fully to such allegation(s)/complaint(s) before any decision is taken.

**Disciplinary Meeting**

A decision on who conducts the disciplinary meeting will be made at the time based on the nature of the concern and other relevant factors. The college decides, who on behalf of the college, will conduct disciplinary meetings.

The college will write to the learner setting out the allegation(s)/complaint in relation to him/her, the basis for the allegation(s)/complaint(s) and what the likely range of consequences will be if it is decided, at the conclusion of the disciplinary process, that the allegation(s)/complaint(s) are well founded.

The learner will be given written notice of the date, time and place of the disciplinary meeting. The meeting will be held as soon as reasonably practicable; having regard to the learner's entitlement to assess the allegation(s)/complaint(s) made against him/her and prepare his/her case. The meeting will take place at a time and place at which it is reasonably practicable for the learner to attend and the learner must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. A learner may be accompanied by a friend, learner representative, or relative at the meeting.

As soon as practicable, after the meeting, the staff member who conducted the meeting will notify the learner of his/her decision, in writing, together with details of the learner's right of appeal. Where a sanction is given (i.e. Stages 1-3 below) it should state the reason for the sanction, the behaviour which requires improvement (if any) and the consequences of failure to improve (if applicable) or the consequences for repeated breaches of discipline.

**Holding suspension**

A learner may be suspended pending an investigation or disciplinary process where the college has reason to believe that the learner has committed an act of serious misconduct or has ignored a previous written warning. The learner will be informed of the reason for any such suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Suspension pending a disciplinary interview or other disciplinary process is a holding suspension and is not an indication that a decision has been made that misconduct has occurred. No such decision will be made or sanction applied until after a disciplinary meeting.

3.7 **Implementation of Disciplinary Measures**

**Stage 1: Official Verbal Warning**

Where the minor breach of discipline is considered to warrant formal treatment, the learner may be given an official verbal warning. The official verbal warning will lapse after a period of 6 months.
Official verbal warnings or incidents whereby a learner is dismissed from a class or practical are recorded on a Learner Incident Report Form.

Stage 2: Formal Written Warning

Where the conduct complained of is of a more serious nature or where a further breach of discipline has occurred after an official verbal warning, the learner may be given a formal written warning. The formal written warning will lapse after a period of 9 months.

Stage 3: Serious Misconduct

Where the conduct complained of is of a serious nature or where a further breach of discipline has occurred after a formal written warning, a fine may be applied (normally where there is loss or damage to property) or a learner may be suspended for a fixed period or expelled from the college.

Right of Appeal

A learner will have the right of appeal to the college against formal disciplinary sanction. This right of appeal must be exercised in writing to Teagasc Head of Education setting out the grounds of appeal within 5 working days of the date of receipt of notification of the sanction. Having considered the appeal, the Appeal Panel may confirm the original sanction, revoke the original sanction or substitute one sanction for another.

Criminal Offences

Where any member of staff has reason to believe that a learner may have committed a criminal offence, the college may refer the matter to the Gardaí.

3.8 Time and Attendance

Learners must attend classes/practicals (and other events at which they are scheduled to attend) regularly and punctually. This is a requirement for all learners on Teagasc courses.

Attendance records are an essential management resource to support:

- Duty of care to minors
- Health and Safety management
- Student mentoring (attendance patterns)
- Student Maintenance Grant payments

Normal teaching hours are 9.00am - 5.00pm Monday – Thursday, and 9.00am - 12.30pm on Friday. Learners are required to attend regularly and punctually all timetabled activities (classes, practicals, work practice, assessment, field trips etc.) and to conform to the directions of the staff member(s) responsible.
Weeks when students are expected in College and on Placement are outlined on the Course Calendar – a copy of the calendar can be obtained from the college Secretary at any time by emailing info@gurteencollege.ie. Return to College for residential students on a Sunday evening is normally possible but must be approved by the Hospitality Coordinator (Maura Campbell).

Students not timetabled for classes must behave in a quiet, responsible manner, so as not to disrupt the activities of the College.

**Leave of Absence**

Permission to be absent from timetabled activities in exceptional circumstances must be obtained from either the Principal or your Course Coordinator. Please inform a member of staff upon your return.

**Notification of Absence/Illness**

A student who is unable to attend classes because of illness must report this to the Hospitality Coordinator (Maura Campbell) by 9.15am in the case of morning classes and 1.30pm for afternoon classes. Any illness after 5pm must be reported to the Student Supervisor. If you are resident at Gurteen and have to go home because of illness, please make sure your absence is reported to the Student Supervisor or the Hospitality Coordinator. You are also requested to inform a member of staff upon your return.

Learners absent for more than 3 days due to illness are required to present a doctors certificate to the college office on their return. If a learner is absent from class/practical for more than 5 days without a doctor’s sick certificate or other force majeure they will be required to account for their absence with college management. Where a learner is absent in excess of 10 days without a doctor’s certificate or force majeure circumstances it will be assumed that the learner has withdrawn from the programme.

Absence due to illness may affect grant payments for Agriculture students.

**Time and Attendance Recording**

Minors (under 18 years of age): the college reserves the right to contact parents/guardians where minors do not attend classes or practical instruction, or give cause for concern in other respects.

For full-time courses, time and attendance is recorded using biometric readers. **A minimum of two valid clockings per day is required for learners to be deemed as having attended for a full day.** Attendance data is considered necessary for the purposes of monitoring learner’s time and attendance and is also required by Teagasc to facilitate duty of care to minors, health and safety management and learner mentoring. Teagasc requires accurate records of learner attendance for the purposes of confirming learners’ attendance for maintenance grant payments. Personal data collected through the reader system will not be processed for any
other purpose nor will it be transferred to any third parties, unless necessary for lawful reasons under data protection legislation or in circumstances where Teagasc is compelled to do so by law.

The information collected through the use of the biometric readers is your personal data and will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679. Teagasc is the data controller in relation to this personal data.

In order to protect your personal data the biometric reader system does not record your full fingerprint. Instead, a biometric reader is used to measure the depth of a number of ridge points from your finger. This information is converted to a data string, which is then encrypted. The image of the fingertip is not stored other than in the form of an encrypted data string. This data string cannot be reversed to be used as a fingerprint for any other purposes.

This data is then stored for subsequent authentication both on the biometric reader and the Time Management System database.

Your personal data is retained as outlined in the Teagasc data retention policy. Biometric data is cleared from the system every August following completion of the Level 6 programme or earlier if the student doesn’t progress. Your personal data will not be retained for a longer period of time unless necessary for lawful reasons under data protection legislation or in circumstances where Teagasc is compelled to do so by law.

For further information, please contact the Teagasc Data Protection Officer at Data Protection Officer, Teagasc, Oak Park, Carlow, R93 XE 12, or by email to dpo@teagasc.ie.

4.0 Child Safeguarding, Student Welfare and Equality Guidelines

4.1 Teagasc Child Safeguarding Statement

Teagasc is committed to the safeguarding of all children (persons <18 years of age) participating in Teagasc education and training programmes. Teagasc’s Child Safeguarding Statement is prepared in accordance with the Children First Act 2015 and the Children First: National Guidance together with the other legal provisions. It sets out the principles and procedures to be observed to ensure, as far as possible, that a child availing of Teagasc’s services is safe from harm. Some of the aims of the Teagasc Child Safeguarding Statement include (but are not limited to) the following:-

- To create a safe environment for children in their interactions with Teagasc and minimise the possibility of harm, either deliberate or accidental.
- To encourage safe practices for those who work with children.
- To set out appropriate responses and procedures to adverse events or disclosures.

Teagasc has assigned staff to act as Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) in keeping with best practice in child safeguarding. The DLP and
Deputy DLP are the contact persons for any children protection concerns within Teagasc. At national level the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Mary O’Shaughnessy, Teagasc, Grange, Dunsany, Co. Meath. 076-1113202/mary.oshaughnessy@teagasc.ie. The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Karen O’Connell, Teagasc, Clonakilty College, Cork. 023-8832500/karen.oconnell@teagasc.ie.

Each college also has designated liaison staff. For Gurteen College the designated liaison persons (Welfare Officers) are:

- Day: Hugh O’Brien, Maura Campbell, Stephanie Scully, Anna Camon
- Night: Brendan Molloy

The Teagasc Child Safeguarding Statement is accessible on the Teagasc web site.

4.2 Bullying/Intimidation and Sexual Harassment

The College will not under any circumstances tolerate bullying or harassment. Any instances of this should be reported to a member of the Student Welfare Team.

Dignity and Respect

Teagasc is committed to the promotion of an environment for work and study which upholds the dignity and respect of the individual and which supports every individual’s right to study and/or work in an environment, which is free of any form of harassment, intimidation or bullying. This policy applies to the behaviour of learners and staff of the college and others on business or engaged in activities relating to the college or providing services to the college.

Bullying/Intimidation

All learners and staff are entitled to be treated with respect and their learning/work environment must be such that learners and staff are free to perform their studies/duties in a climate free from intimidation/bullying from other learners, staff members, or others. Intimidation/bullying are repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or a group against others.

Bullying should be reported to a Welfare Officer or Mentor or to someone of trust on the staff.

Sexual Harassment

The college/centre environment is such that all learners and staff are free to perform their studies/duties without sexual harassment from other learners, staff members, or others. Sexual harassment includes any single serious incident which the recipient finds offensive or repeated and/or unwanted verbal or physical advances which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient or which cause discomfort or humiliation or which interfere with the recipient’s study/job performance.
Sexual harassment should be reported to a Welfare Officer or Mentor or to someone of trust.

*Code of Conduct*

The prevention of bullying and sexual harassment is an integral part of the Code of Conduct. The college will seek to:

- (a) Promote an ethos which encourages learners and staff to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.
- (b) Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable conduct with college management, staff, learners, parents/guardians.
- (c) Implement procedures for noting and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.
- (d) Implement procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.
- (e) Offer a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and sexual harassment and for those involved in bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.
- (f) Review the effectiveness of the college measures on anti-bullying behaviour.

**4.3 Learner Welfare**

Learner welfare involves management, administration, catering, teachers, technicians and house staff, learner clubs and societies. All of these support the total wellbeing of the learner and help build up a sense of community.

*Student Assistance Programme (SAP)*

This is a counselling and information service provided by Vhi Corporate Solutions. The service is a stand-alone and separate service from Vhi Healthcare and does not require Vhi membership. All full time students and their family members are eligible to access the SAP service.

Through the SAP service, free professional counselling and information services will be available to you and your family. You will have access 24 hours a day for the duration of your course to a counsellor over the phone. You can also see a counsellor locally for face to face counselling. The service is totally confidential and can help you or your family with problems you may experience in your own life.

*Counselling at Gurteen College*

There is a student counsellor available to all students by appointment. Should you wish to avail of this service please speak to Maura Campbell. This service is available to any student experiencing difficulties.
The onsite student Welfare Team at the College is Hugh O’Brien, Maura Campbell, Stephanie Scully and Anna Camon during daytime hours and Brendan Molly overnight. Matters discussed with the student Welfare Team will remain private unless the student requests for issues to be brought to the attention of others.

*Mental Health*

If something is bothering you, no matter how big or small, you should raise it sooner rather than later with a college staff member or contact the Student Assistance Programme (SAP).

Additional information on mental health issues and events may be posted on college social media/notice boards from time to time.

*Illegal Substance Use*

If you have anxieties about someone using illegal substances or have personal concerns, talk to a staff member in confidence. It is important to know that substance use is prohibited and illegal.

*Alcohol and smoking*

It is important to be aware of the way in which alcohol and cigarettes affect your health and your behaviour. Consumption and possession of alcohol on college grounds is prohibited. Smoking is prohibited throughout college buildings. Designated smoking areas are provided. It is essential that there is no smoking anywhere in the vicinity of the main kitchen area. This is to comply with food hygiene regulations.

*Personal Safety*

  a) When travelling to your accommodation or sports club use well lit walkways – avoid dark or isolated areas.
  b) Walk facing traffic so vehicles cannot approach you from behind without you being aware of their presence. Wear high visibility clothing.
  c) Avoid situations that will necessitate you travelling alone at night. There is safety in numbers. Plan your journey with safety in mind.
  d) Do not leave valuables or personal documents in your car.

*4.4 Learner Equality*

Teagasc is committed to providing equal access to all learners. If any learner feels that they have not been treated equitably they have the right to lodge a complaint without fear of victimisation with the College Principal or the Teagasc Head of Education.
4.5 Learner Support

Each College has an Access/Disability Officer who can assess the learning support requirements of learners with recognised special needs or disabilities. Where appropriate and feasible Gurteen College will provide support to these learners at assessment.

5.0 Health and Safety

5.1 Introduction

Health, safety and welfare at work affect everyone. Brief lapses of care and attention can cause injuries, damage health and damage property which takes its toll both in human and monetary terms.

The main piece of legislation dealing with health and safety is the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Under this Act, Gurteen College has a duty to provide learners with safe entry/exit within buildings and around buildings and farms, safe equipment, adequate safety information, instruction, training and supervision and adequate welfare arrangements.

You should bear in mind that each learner also has a duty under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act to assist Gurteen College in maintaining a safe place to pursue your course and a specific legal duty not to interfere with anything which may compromise safety management at the college.

Relevant Health and Safety information is communicated to learners as part of induction and at other times applicable to ongoing course activities.

Additional health and safety information is available on request from the Farm Manager, Ken Flynn or Hospitality Coordinator, Maura Campbell. A full copy of the Gurteen College Safety Statement is available on the student section of the college computer network m:/student access)

5.2 Gurteen College H&S Requirements

Your course may contain instruction and practice elements pertaining to machinery, field trips, animals, laboratories, computing and information technology. Tutors will provide you with information, instruction and training which will allow for a safe system of work within these areas.

Gurteen college requires you to wear high visibility clothing and other safety clothing in designated areas of the college – learners should ensure they have with them at all times the items listed on the course equipment list.

Any act that compromises safety management will be treated as a serious offence by the College and will be the subject of disciplinary action.
Remember that the effects of alcohol and other intoxicants can last for many hours, well into
the next day, and that people with ‘hangovers’ can be just as dangerous to themselves and
others as people who are drunk. Safety around machinery and animals requires a clear head.
If a student is not in a fit state to attend a practical class, they will be sent away.

It is dangerous to use **CONTACT LENSES** when welding, so users of contact lenses should also
bring a pair of glasses.

Boiler suits are the permitted type of working overall. Long coats, anoraks with drawstrings,
and other loose clothing are dangerous and must not be worn.

Students are **NOT** permitted to take home their Wellingtons at weekends or at holidays,
because of the risk of disease transmission.

Students must wear overalls, a hi-vis vest and steel capped wellies/boots for all practicals. You
will not be allowed to take part in practicals unless you are dressed appropriately. If in doubt
about the instructions given please ask for more detail. Health, safety and disease control
guidelines must be observed at all times.

Hand hygiene is an important part of Health and Safety at the College. It is essential that the
disposable gloves provided are worn when taking part in practicals, doing farm work, on duty
etc. and that hands are washed thoroughly once practical work is completed and before meal
times.

Any act which may compromise safety management will be treated as a serious offence by
Gurteen College and may be subject to disciplinary action.

### 5.3 Safety Committee

We welcome student representatives on the College Safety Committee because management,
staff and students all have an important role to play. Contact Maura Campbell – College Safety
Officer – if interested.

**Safety Code**

The College actively promotes Safety. You should make yourself aware of our full Safety
Statement. These points are to be used as guidelines:

- Safety equipment must be worn or used as directed and whenever necessary.
- Safe work practices must be followed at all times, as outlined by staff and in the course
  materials.
- All persons are entitled to refuse to operate unsafe work practices or equipment, or to
  work without adequate protective gear.
- Interference with safety equipment and appliances is strictly forbidden.
- All persons may see a copy of the Safety Statement on request.
- All persons must immediately report any unsafe machinery, equipment or hazardous
  situation to a member of staff.
• All accidents causing injury must be reported to the Hospitality Coordinator.
• All near-misses and accidents causing damage to property must be reported to either: Maura Campbell (Hospitality Coordinator) or Ken Flynn (Farm Manager).

5.4 Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures

If you find a fire:

• Activate the alarm at the nearest Break Glass point to warn others (use a shoe or covered elbow, rather than a bare hand); do this BEFORE you tackle the fire.
• If you are sure your own escape route is clear AND there is no risk to yourself AND the fire is a small one, select the appropriate kind of fire extinguisher and try to put it out.
• Do not persist if the fire continues to spread – evacuate immediately. Avoid smoke: some kinds can kill in a few seconds – e.g. the smoke from some plastics or upholstery foam.
• Close the room door as you leave, to slow the spread of toxic smoke.
• If the fire seems to be extinguished, watch it for a while to make sure it does not reignite.

Alarm

The Fire Alarm sound is a continuous loud bell. Please note that the Fire Alarm in Gurteen House does not sound in the main building. If you heard the Alarm proceed immediately to the Fire Assembly Point (TENNIS COURTS) notifying others on your way.

If the Alarm sounds in Gurteen House, make sure staff in the Main College Building are informed since Gurteen House fire alarms do not sound in the main building.

Evacuation Routes

Buildings can be exited by a number of routes and these routes are clearly marked throughout the building.

AT NIGHT

• Put on warm clothes.
• Check the room either side of yours.
• Go straight to the Assembly Area (Tennis Courts).
• DO NOT GO BACK FOR ANYTHING.

BY DAY

• Go straight to the Assembly Area (Tennis Courts).
• DO NOT GO TO YOUR ROOM.
AT THE ASSEMBLY POINT:

- Meet on the TENNIS COURTS for roll call.
- STAY THERE until given the all clear by a member of staff.
- DO NOT hang around doorways – keep well away from the building.

Assembly Points

The Fire Assembly point is on the TENNIS COURTS at the designated sign. Example below.

Emergency Exits

NEVER block or leave anything (bags or equipment) to obstruct emergency exits or normal entry / exit points of any building / shed / car park.

Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting is provided for and will light in event of fire.

Break Glass Units

Break Glass points are strategically located near exits. Breaking the glass will sound the alarm and alert all occupants. We recommend these are broken with a covered elbow or the heel of a shoe, or any small implement. NOTE: It is a CRIMINAL offence to tamper with fire safety equipment.

Fire Drills

Fire Drills take place at least on an annual basis unannounced. If you hear the fire alarm, always treat it as a real event.

Fire fighting equipment

Fire Extinguishers are strategically placed throughout the building. Familiarise yourself with the different types of extinguishers, and their different uses.

NB: It is a CRIMINAL offence to tamper with or damage fire safety or fire protection equipment.
Room Notices

There are fire drill / emergency evacuation procedures in every room. Please become familiar with the information on this notice. It details the action to be taken on discovering a fire or hearing the fire alarm.

5.5 First Aid

All accidents and injuries, while attending timetabled activities, must be reported to a trained first aider so that injuries can be properly assessed and treated, and so that details as to how the accident occurred are recorded for the sake of preventing either a similar or a worse accident in the future.

Gurteen College’s trained First Aiders are: Maura Campbell (Hospitality Coordinator), Brendan Molloy (Night Supervisor), Rita Gorman (Head Chef), Ken Flynn (Farm Manager), Padraig Byrne (Dairy Unit Manager), and Gary Hayes (Farm).

Emergency Numbers

The Emergency Services (Garda / Fire / Ambulance) can be contacted by dialling 999 or 112. Note the Gurteen College EirCode is E53 TP93.

5.6 Medical Services

Local Doctors Surgeries may be contacted directly by students but please note they may not always be able to accommodate requests:

- Borrisokane Surgery: Telephone 067 27106. Surgery Hours: 9am – 11.15am & 2.15pm – 4.30pm. €40 charge for a visit to be paid direct and on the day.
• Cloughjordan Surgery: Telephone 0505 42129. Surgery Hours: 9am – 12pm. Afternoons by appointment only. €50 charge for a visit to be paid direct and on the day.

GP Out of Hours Service can be accessed via: Shannon Doc (Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary). Open each weekday evening, from 6pm - 8am, open 24 hours on Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holidays. Telephone: 1850 212 999. Website: www.shannondoc.ie.

Pharmacies: there are many Pharmacies in Birr Town, and one in Borrisokane village.

Emergencies (tel 999 or 112 if appropriate and necessary, EirCode E53 TP93):

• Nenagh Hospital 8am – 8pm for minor injuries.

• Tullamore Hospital A&E Department.

Costs for medical and pharmaceutical services are the responsibility of the learner.

*Medical Requirements and Considerations*

Learners on specific long-term medication or with a detailed medical history should declare these when asked (during the application / enrolment process) and are assured that everything declared will be treated in the strictest of confidence.

Courses may include handling livestock, soil, machinery and farm equipment, and other materials. If you have concerns, it is recommended that you consult with your medical practitioner in regard to any health risks that might arise and precautions you should take (e.g. tetanus). Learners are advised to have an anti–tetanus vaccination before starting a course.

Students should ensure that they are fully covered by either their own personal medical insurance or have a medical card.

*Pregnancy*

In event that you suspect you may be pregnant whilst attending Gurteen College please contact a Welfare Officer.

*Accidents*

All accidents and injuries, while on the Gurteen Campus and Farm, must be reported to Maura Campbell, so that injuries can be assessed, medical attention arranged and the College can ensure that accidents are prevented from reoccurring. This includes minor accidents and ‘near miss’ incidents – such a falling off a ladder without injuring yourself. Examining the causes of such events can help prevent a serious injury or death in future.
Students may bring everyday medicines, such as aspirin, to College for their OWN USE only. Note that College staff cannot supply any medicines, however simple, due to Health and Safety regulations.

5.7 Use of Vehicles

Gurteen College and Teagasc accept no liability in the event of accidents or damage to personal vehicles used by learners in connection with their studies for reasons of personal convenience.

The college is committed to an environment which ensures the health and safety of all staff, learners and visitors. To achieve this objective, certain rules apply to the use of vehicles at the college. We require the full co-operation of our employees, learners, contractors and visitors with these rules. Please take a few minutes to become familiar with these rules and observe them at all times for your health and safety:

- There is a general speed limit of 20Kph throughout all college grounds.
- Learner’s cars (and visitors of learners) must be parked in the designated parking areas (in the car park beside the Archway, in front of the Sports Hall or on the unsurfaced area behind the dining room). Cars parked elsewhere may be clamped or barred from campus.
- Arrangements for visitors’ cars can be made with Hugh O’Brien before 5.00pm. All visitors’ cars must leave the campus by 11.00pm. Residents and visitors should note that the security gate closes at midnight.
- Learners are required to register details of vehicles used in the college with the College Secretaries (whether requested on a form or through the student portal).
- Do not park on double yellow lines or yellow boxes
- Vehicles are not allowed to enter restricted areas (e.g. the college farm yard, or the farmyards of farms being visited) unless prior authorisation has been given.
- Only vehicles displaying authentic permits can park in designated disabled parking areas.

The college reserves the right to prohibit the keeping of a vehicle at the college where individuals fail to co-operate with these regulations.

5.8 Excursions/Field Trips

College staff will arrange for the provision of adequate transport for excursions/field trips in connection with the course. For reasons of personal safety and bio-security, learners are not allowed use personal vehicles for such trips, unless specifically approved and in such instances learner cars must be parked in the designated parking areas. Teagasc accepts no liability in the event of accidents, personal injury or damage to personal vehicles used by learners in connection with their studies for reasons of personal convenience.
5.9 Bio-security

Bio-security refers to measures taken to prevent the introduction of infections which can affect livestock or humans. For learner safety and bio-security on your home farm, around agricultural college farms and that of visited farms, the following precautions should be taken:

- You must provide a clean set of Wellingtons, solely for use on farm visits and college farm activities.
- You must disinfect these Wellingtons at the entrance and when leaving the college farm and visiting farms.
- You must wear and/or use personal protective equipment provided while on the college farm and on farm visits.
- You must follow instructions and visiting protocols.
- You must follow any bio-security regulations in place at the college. In the event of a notifiable animal or plant disease occurring at the college or in the area, or on your home farm, or in your home area, you may be requested to comply with more detailed bio security procedures.

5.10 Use of Computers/Printers

The college aims to promote an environment which is supportive of and conducive to the training and the personal development of all learners and staff. Computer facilities which are efficient and reliable play a very important role in this development.

Use of the Internet, mobile phones and e-mail

Accessing, downloading or sending indecent, obscene, pornographic, sexist, defamatory, racist or other inappropriate material and the circulation of these materials are a potential criminal offence, and will be treated in a very serious manner.

Passing information through email and the internet greatly increases the risk of computer viruses, and users should be aware of this when they receive suspicious emails especially. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you are sure the link / material is safe.

Use of WiFi must be through learners personal accounts and individual log in details. A learner is responsible for ensuring their log in details are kept secure and is responsible for the material accessed under their log in.

Internet use is monitored. Learners who do not comply with the regulations will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Acceptable Usage

Learners using computers, printers and college WiFi are expected to follow these general Acceptable Usage practices:

a) Learners must not interfere with the system settings on the computer.
b) When a user is finished he/she must log out of the computer.

c) Should a user have problems logging on, or with their password they should contact a member of staff.

d) The computer rooms are to be kept tidy at all times. Any personal item/s left in any classroom or computer room may be removed by cleaning staff.

e) Learners are not allowed to bring food or drink into classrooms or computer rooms.

f) Wilful damage to facilities in classrooms or computer rooms will be treated as misconduct.

g) Learners carrying out projects will have preferential access to computers.

h) If a computer user encounters a problem with a computer, this should be reported to a member of staff.

### Student Computer Room

In addition to the two main Computer Classrooms, there is a Student Computer Room which is available for students to work on College projects. The College has a policy of open access for students to the Student Computer Room from 9.00am to 11.00pm.

PLEASE NOTE: When a student logs on to a College Computer they use generic log in details; this means that the next user of the Computer will be able to see and access and use any document saved onto the Computer if you log off without having first removed them. It is a student’s responsibility to ensure they remove their work from a College Computer before logging off.

We recommend that students take the following steps (or equivalent) to safeguard their work from corrupted devices / failed emails / plagiarism before leaving a shared College computer:

- Save your work

- Open your personal email account (i.e. hotmail or gmail) and send yourself an email with your work attached – you will be able to access your work from your email sent items or inbox when you next want to work on it

- Save your work to a Memory Stick and “safely remove” the Memory Stick to avoid corruption of the device and loss of work

- Delete any files you saved onto the computer desktop or hard drive or the College Network and check the Recycling Bin is empty

### Printing

Projects and assignments can be printed from the computers in the Student Computer Room. There is no additional charge for printing – please respect the service and aim to minimise waste by using the Print Preview function to ensure documents are laid out as intended. Print
jobs are monitored and CCTV is in use in all Computer Rooms. Students found abusing the facilities will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

**WiFi**

The WiFi network for students and visitors to the College is called “Gurteen Hotspot” which requires each user to Register and create their own account.

When connecting to the Gurteen Hotspot network, the majority of devices will automatically bring up the Hotspot login page. In the event the Hotspot page does not appear, the user can navigate to http://gurteen.hs in order to log in. Clicking on the blue Register button will bring the user to the registration page.

On the registration page (http://10.212.85.8/register/) all fields are required; if a non-student is registering the course selected should be “Other”.

Once a user clicks the register button, the account will be created with the email address as the username and a randomly generated password which will be emailed to the user. They will require Internet access initially in order to retrieve their account details.

Further Internet access will be provided by the Hotspot upon login. There is no facility for users to change their details once their account has been created. On the majority of devices, the saving of credentials will allow for automatic reconnection to the wireless network. Users of older devices may have to manually log in.

### 6.0 Teagasc Student Maintenance Grant Scheme

The Teagasc Student Maintenance Grant Scheme is the means testing of maintenance grants for students attending full time Level 5 and Level 6 courses at Teagasc and Private Agricultural Colleges. Teagasc maintenance grants are paid through Teagasc and the grant scheme is managed by Teagasc. The scheme is implemented along the lines of the national Student Grant Scheme but varies in respect of items added back to determine overall reckonable income.

The Student Maintenance Grant is a contribution towards the living costs of students. Students will not be paid for non-attendance unless specifically allowed. See section 2.7 on time and attendance.

All scheme information including application form and guidance notes are available at https://www.teagasc.ie/education-going-to-college/grants/.
7.0 Gurteen College / Teagasc education and training promotion

Gurteen College and Teagasc use various means to promote education and training. The list below, not exhaustive, includes:

- Educational videos
- Event promotional material
- Conference presentations
- Testimonial videos
- Teagasc Course Prospectus

A consent form is required for learners to participate in such promotional materials. This consent allows for the use of the learners image, and sound of the learners voice as recorded on audio or video devices, without payment or any other consideration, for Gurteen College / Teagasc educational, training or promotional purposes. The image and/or voice recording may be edited, copied, exhibited, published or distributed and this personal data may be used in diverse educational / promotional settings and mediums within an unrestricted geographic area. Learners will be asked to complete a consent form as part of their online application.

8.0 Data Protection Statement

Gurteen College and Teagasc will comply with all obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679. Teagasc and Gurteen College are the data controllers in relation to any personal data which you provide to us.

Teagasc and Gurteen College will process your personal data for purposes which are necessary to comply with the Learner Handbook. We may, on occasion, share your personal data with third parties such as host farms or units, education contractors employed by the college, Central Statistics Office, QQI and college service providers (e.g. catering companies, security companies).

Teagasc applies different retention periods for different categories of your personal data. The personal data supplied by you will be retained according to Teagasc Data Retention polices and Gurteen College intends to operate in the same way. Your personal data will only be processed for purposes other than compliance with the Learner Handbook where such processing is necessary for lawful reasons under data protection legislation or in circumstances where Teagasc is compelled to do so by law.

Teagasc and Gurteen College have taken the appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect your personal data from loss, abuse and unauthorised access. For more information on how Teagasc may process your personal data, please contact the Teagasc Data Protection Officer at: dpo@teagasc.ie

9.0 Assessment Regulations for Teagasc - Programmes Leading to QQI Awards
It is your duty to familiarise yourself with the regulations relating to written examinations, assignments and practical assessments and the consequence of infringing these regulations.

9.1 Assessment and Practice

Teagasc adhere to QQI guidelines in regard to fairness and consistent assessment practice. Assessment Policy and Practice within Teagasc Courses was developed with reference to international theory and best practice.

9.2 Written Examinations

a) You must sit at your assigned desk during all written examinations unless otherwise directed. An attendance record will be taken according to the seating plan, therefore if you are not sitting at your assigned desk there is a risk that you may be marked absent and your paper may be in danger of not being accepted. You must remain in your assigned desk for the duration of the examination.

b) Any writing on your assigned desk must be brought to the attention of the superintendent before the exam commences otherwise you may be held accountable and disciplined accordingly.

c) You must carefully note the date, time and location for all written examinations.

d) You are required to be in attendance at the examination room/hall prior to the commencement of the examination. If you are late you will be in danger of not being permitted to enter the examination room/hall.

e) You will not be admitted into the examination room/hall once any learner has surrendered their examination script and left the examination room/hall.

f) You will not be allowed to leave the examination room/hall and re-enter it during the time of the examination.

g) If you leave the examination centre before the end of the examination you must surrender to the superintendent the examination papers, answer books and all other stationery supplied for the assessment.

h) It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure his/her name has been entered onto the examination script, answer book and any additional stationery used during the examination.

i) You must not bring any books, paper or notes into the examination room/hall or have any of these within reach, under your control or in your possession.

j) You must not, use or attempt to use a mobile phone, while in the examination room/hall.

k) You must not while in the examination room/hall, aid or attempt to obtain aid from another candidate.

l) You must not, while in the examination room/hall, communicate with or attempt to communicate with another candidate.

m) You must not write in the answer book anything that is not directly connected with the subject matter of the questions to be answered.

n) You must not damage the examination room/hall or its furniture.
At the conclusion of the examination, you should immediately stop writing and remain in your seat until the superintendent has collected the scripts.

At the end of the examination, you should hand examination papers and answer books to the superintendent.

You must obey the directions of the superintendent in all matters relating to the examination.

You may be expelled from the examination room/hall if your behaviour, in the opinion of the superintendent, is such as to jeopardise the successful conduct of the examination.

Expulsion from the examination room/hall may result in more serious disciplinary action.

Each learner may be asked to sign that they have read and understand the Teagasc Assessment Policy and Practice before undertaking written examinations.

9.3 Practical Examinations

The regulations applying to the written examination will be adopted as appropriate for the conduct of practical assessments. In addition learners must:

a) Wear personal protective equipment appropriate for the practical examinations in question.

b) Use safe procedures and practices at all times.

c) Ensure that they do not compromise their safety, the safety of the assessor, the safety of the public, the safety of the environment and/or the safety/welfare of the animal (if applicable).

d) Inform the assessor of any factors which may influence the learners’ ability to sit a practical assessment.

Where a learner has not attended instruction in practical skills, the college reserve the right to refuse the learner to attempt the practical examination for health and safety reasons.

Learners may not be permitted to attend repeat practical assessments if attendance level is below 80%.

9.4 Written Coursework (Assignments/Projects)

Learners must observe deadlines for submission of written coursework for assessment.

If coursework is submitted late it will be treated as a repeat assessment thereby capping the associated module grade at a PASS.

a) Learners must sign a declaration that all coursework (assignments, projects, records, collection of work, portfolios etc) submitted for assessment is their own original work.
Downloaded material or material submitted directly from the internet is not a learners own work and may be regarded as plagiarism.

b) Where group projects/assignments are to be undertaken, all candidates must indicate which part of the work is their own and submit supporting evidence of each individual’s contribution to the group projects/assignment.

c) Learners must not interfere with the work of other learners.

9.5 Penalties for Breaches of Assessment Regulations

It is an offence, under the Assessment Regulations for Teagasc, to procure, or to attempt to procure a breach of the regulations, whether on your own behalf or on behalf of any other person.

A breach of assessment regulations shall be deemed to have occurred when there has been an actual or attempted form of:

   a) Cheating
   b) Copying
   c) Plagiarism
   d) Misrepresentation
   e) Bribery
   f) Falsification
   g) Personating or other such form of deception. Personation will be treated as serious misconduct.
   h) Breaching examination paper security
   i) Aiding another candidate
   j) Untrue claim to have carried out assignments, work based learning, projects etc.
   k) Untrue claim to the acquisition of results is committed by a learner, whether acting alone or with any other person or persons.

The penalties to be imposed for breach of assessment regulations may constitute any or all of the following:

   a) No credit in the assessment or part of the assessment.
   b) No credit for a module.
   c) No credit for all of the modules associated with a particular programme.
   d) Ineligible for an award.
   e) Suspension of the candidate, from all course activities, for a fixed period of time.
   f) A recommendation to the College Principal for formal expulsion from college.

You will be notified in writing if a suspected breach of assessment regulations is being investigated.
9.6 **Assessment Appeals**

There is a system of appeal for learners unhappy with their assessment results. All written assessment scripts, assignments, projects and skills assessment record sheets are retained by tutors for verification by the External Verifier.

*Procedure*

If a learner is unhappy about an assessment result they should firstly contact their tutor, who will explain how the assessment was marked. If the learner is still unhappy about the result they then have the option of lodging a formal assessment appeal. There is an application form on which the appeal must be made. A fee of €20 is charged for an appeal. This fee is refundable if the appeal is upheld. Appeals can only be considered where a valid reason for the appeal is given. Valid reasons include:

a) Perceived inequity in the marking of scripts or practical assessments

b) Perceived errors in the Record of Education and Training

The Application Form for an Assessment Appeal can be provided by the Course Co-ordinator.

Any unresolved disputes between learners and assessors are referred to the External Verifier.

9.7 **Results**

Results of assessments will be available to view on Quercus using learners log in details (username and password). It is important to note that all results are provisional until verified by an appointed External Verifier.
10.0 QQI Certification

QQI stands for Quality and Qualifications Ireland. QQI awards framework allows for progression through the education system. Learners qualifications are awarded by QQI and are part of the awards framework below.

National Framework of Qualifications

The QQI Learner Charter can be read and downloaded from the QQI website at www.qqi.ie

10.1 Access, Transfer, Progression and Higher Education Link Scheme

Teagasc is committed to the promotion of access, transfer and progression to facilitate enhancement of opportunities for learners to gain access and to education leading to major awards and to progress within it. Normal progression is from one level to the next on the QQI framework.

The Higher Education Links Scheme provides for holders of both a QQI Level 5 Certificate and a QQI Level 6 Advanced Certificate to apply for reserved places on a variety of higher education programmes. Applicants must have achieved a QQI Major Award. Higher Education Institutions operating the scheme may have other requirements for access to programmes. It is essential that learners intending to apply should check with the Central Applications Office (www.cao.ie) and with the Applications Office of the individual Institution.
Further information on the Higher Education Links Scheme is available from the QQI website [www.qqi.ie](http://www.qqi.ie)

10.2 **Other Progression Links**

For information on progression and links to other courses and institutions, contact the Course Co-ordinator and check with the relevant institution itself.

11.0 **Services for Learners**

11.1 **College facilities**

Student sports and recreational facilities are open upon request; the student lounges are open all day and are closed each night. Facilities at Gurteen College include:

- Floodlit sports field for hurling, football, rugby and soccer
- Heated outdoor swimming pool (May-October)
- Floodlit all weather basketball and tennis courts
- Indoor soccer / badminton / volleyball court (runners required)
- Table tennis tables
- Student lounges with TVs, DVD players and student kitchens
- Two student computer rooms which have a total of 25 computers
- Wireless Internet access (WiFi)
- Vending machines (drinks, snacks)
- Pool tables
- Snooker table.

**Sports Clubs**

Gurteen College GAA Club (Hurling and Football)

We participate in the Inter-Agricultural college competitions.

**Other Competitions**

- Inter-Agricultural Colleges Macra Day
- Friendly Rugby and Soccer matches

**Outings / Activities**

Subject to approval from the Principal, students may organise trips to the cinema in Tullamore or Nenagh; swimming in Birr, Roscrea or Nenagh; karting in Tynagh; Bowling in Tullamore or Athlone Leisure World; or night clubs in Tullamore, Athlone, Limerick and Galway.

11.2 **Lockers**

Learners on full time courses will be provided with a locker where they must keep all their work clothes, boots, coats etc. Learners are to provide their own padlock for the locker. Work
boots, Wellingtons, overalls and work clothes are not allowed to be worn in the main College Building.

11.3 Lost and found
During the daytime any items found will be handed in to the Secretary’s Office. During nighttime any items found can be handed in to the Night Supervisors office. If a learner has lost some of their property they should check with the College Secretary, Night Supervisor, and Maura Campbell.

11.4 Notice boards
There is a Notice Board at the start of the main corridor for general information relevant to all students. There are two other Notice Boards beside the Secretary’s Office: one for Level 5 and one for the Level 6 course information. Learners should check these boards on a daily basis for updates.

11.5 Parking
Vehicles must be parked in the designated car parks only. Cars parked elsewhere may be clamped or barred from campus. Parking regulations apply at all times.

   Staff and Visitors only:
   Front and back of main building
   (Learners are not allowed to park in this area at any time.)

   Learners and their visitors:
   Yard beside Gurteen House
   Front of Sports Hall
   Un-surfaced area behind dining room (beside rooms 1-11)

Arrangements for visitors’ cars can be made with Hugh O’Brien before 5.00pm. All visitors’ cars must leave the campus by 11.00pm. Residents and visitors should note that the security gate closes at midnight. The College accepts no responsibility for the safety of learner / visitor vehicles or any damage resulting from their use.

11.6 Bus Service
The College provides a shuttle service to connect with scheduled buses in Birr at lunchtime on Fridays and also on Sunday nights when students return after the weekend. This service runs only if pre-booked, by signing up on the sheet provided on the notice-board (please inform the College if you are pre-booked and your plans change).
11.7  **Post**

Post sent to the College for learners can be collected from the Secretary’s Office. When post is delivered for a student, a Post Notice is put on the appropriate course Notice Board.

If a student wishes to send post they can drop it into the Secretary’s Office and the post man will collect it before 11am daily. Students may purchase occasional stamps at cost price from the Secretary’s Office if they cannot obtain stamps easily themselves.

11.8  **College office**

The Secretary’s Office / Main Reception is open every week day with the exception of Bank Holidays and Public Holidays, as follows:

- Monday – Thursday: 09:00 – 17:15
- Fridays: 09:00 – 16:45

Tutors and the College Principal are generally available at the same times as above, unless in meetings, timetabled for teaching or working on a Part Time basis.

11.9  **Chaplain**

Rev. Clodagh Yambasu (Ph: 057 9120200) is available at any time to provide support or assistance in the event of a sudden illness, family matter or any personal problem that you may prefer to discuss with someone outside the college.

11.10  **Night Supervisor**

Brendan Molloy is resident in the main student accommodation block from teatime until breakfast of the next morning. He is generally on duty all evening and on call to deal with emergencies overnight from Sunday evening to Friday morning each week. Students should enter his work phone number on their mobile so that they can call him quickly if necessary: 087 62 52 486.

Students can talk to Brendan in confidence about anything that is causing concern, in or out of College: see above under Counselling. It is a student’s duty to call Brendan in the event of an urgent problem or an emergency, whatever the time - do not assume he already knows. Note especially that the Gurteen House fire alarms do not sound in the main building.

11.11  **Welfare Team**

Hugh O’Brien or Maura Campbell can usually help with everyday issues; for more personal problems, feel free to talk to any of the above or to Anna Camon or Stephanie Scully. The
Student Supervisor (Brendan Molloy) is available during the evenings and overnight, others are available during daytime office hours.

### 11.12 Hospitality Coordinator

Maura Campbell is situated in the main college building and is available (excl breaks and lunch) from:
- 9.00a.m. – 5.00pm Monday to Thursday
- 9.00a.m. – 1.00pm Friday

Maura manages the following areas in the college:
- the catering unit; the domestic team; helps organise doctors appointments if needed, and administers any immediate First Aid (trained Occupational First Aider)
- any absence / sickness must be reported to Maura by 9.15am

You must report any damages to rooms to Maura immediately, and can talk to her in confidence about any welfare issues in private that maybe worrying you and she will also help you with any of the following:
- Dietary needs
- Accommodation allocation
- Housekeeping issues.

### 11.13 Catering

Meals are provided for learners when Timetabled classes are taking place.

Full time residential learners are provided with breakfast, lunch and tea Monday – Thursday, and breakfast and lunch on Fridays. Full time non-residential learners are provided with lunch 5 days per week (Mon-Fri). The canteen is for use only by students who have paid for meals.

Distance Education learners may avail of meals at the College if offered as an optional extra (for all days spent in the college), and Part Time learners may avail of lunches at the College as an optional extra for their Block Week.

HYGIENE: Students may enter the dining room when they are suitably dressed and with clean hands – if clothing and hands are not suitably hygienic then students should not be offended if they are asked to leave.

There are student tea/coffee facilities in the pool room, including microwave, fridge and toaster. All learners may use these facilities.
11.14 **Special diets**

Learners will be asked about any special dietary requirements as part of the application / enrolment process. Our College Canteen caters for all dietary requirements. Queries regarding College Food should be directed to the Hospitality Coordinator: Maura Campbell.

11.15 **Laundry facilities**

Full time residential learners may avail of laundry facilities provided at the College (washing machines and indoor and outdoor drying areas). Learners provide their own washing powder / fabric conditioner.

11.16 **Security / CCTV**

Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) is operated on campus by Gurteen College for security reasons, protection of property including animals and for animal welfare purposes, and for safety reasons. Students may be recorded on CCTV in accordance with the College’s CCTV policy (available from the server on request) and legal obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College access and entrance points</td>
<td>College security &amp; bio-security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College farmyard</td>
<td>Health and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College security &amp; bio-security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education facilities</td>
<td>College security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facility management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential accommodation access /</td>
<td>College security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corridors</td>
<td>Learner safety and security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.17 Site layout

![Site layout diagram]

12.0 Student Fees Policy and Refunds

12.1 Fee Payment Information

Amounts payable and dates by which installments are due are made available on the Course Charges information sheet and schedule.

12.2 Withdrawing from Course

If a student withdraws from a course before the 01 October of the academic year a refund of some elements of the total fees may be possible.

- Teagasc Course Fee (Agricultural Students) - 100% refund
- Student Facilities Fee - 100% refund
- Inclusive / Non-inclusive Residential Charges - Total fee adjustment for the number of weeks that the student attended the course.
If a student withdraws from a course after the 01 October but before the 01 December of the academic year a refund of some elements of the total fees may be possible.

- Teagasc Course Fee (Agricultural Students) - 50% refund
- Gurteen Student Facilities Fee - 50% refund
- Inclusive / Non-inclusive Residential Charges - Total fee adjustment for the number of weeks that the student attended the course.

If a student withdraws from a course after the 01 December of the academic year NO refund of fees will be possible.

12.3 Converting from a Residential to a Non-residential Student

If a student changes accommodation type before the 01 October of the academic year a partial refund will be due on their Inclusive Residential Charge at a rate of 100% of the weekly charge adjustment for the number of weeks that the student was a residential student the course.

If a student changes accommodation type between the 01 October and the 01 December of the academic year there is no refund payable. The student will become a day student from the date of the next installment of the student fees (January)

There comes a point after which the College has committed resources to a student attending a course at Gurteen whereby it is impossible to recoup the expenditure. After this point it is no longer possible to refund any fees paid. At that stage the College will only consider a refund because of "special circumstances".

Special circumstances include those circumstances that are beyond the person's control; that do not make their full impact on the person until on or after 01 December for the course of study for the academic year; and which make it impracticable for the person to complete the course.

Some examples of "special circumstances" include:

- Medical reasons where a person's medical condition has changed to such an extent that he or she is unable to continue studies
- Family/personal reasons such as death or severe medical problems within a family, or unforeseen family financial difficulties, so that it is unreasonable to expect a person to continue their studies
• Employment-related reasons where a person's employment status or employment arrangements have changed so that the person is unable to continue his or her studies, and this change is beyond their control.

Special circumstances do not include a lack of knowledge or understanding of the course content or requirements, or a person's capacity to pay, or in the event that a student has been removed from residence or a course due to a disciplinary ruling.

12.4 The process of refunding fees

The College will endeavor to forward a cheque by way of refund for fees within one month after the date that a student informs us in writing that they are leaving the course or after the agreed outcome of an appeal. Refund cheques are made payable to the student – if a refund is to be made payable to a parent / guardian then this needs to be requested of the College in advance.

12.5 Complaints and appeals concerning refund application

The College Principal reserves the right to make the final decision in the rejection of a request for a refund or an appeal for a refund on behalf of the College Board of Governors.

Note: Accommodation Fees are based on a 5-day week. Weekends and term holidays are not included. Accommodation has to be vacated at weekends and over holiday periods unless by prior agreement with Maura Campbell.

13.0 Conditions of Residence

The College wishes to develop a vibrant community that supports the social and academic aspects of College life. Residents must respect the rights of all staff and students, so that living on campus is a rewarding experience for everyone.

13.1 Legal status

Students are accommodated on a 'licence to occupy' basis, as at all Colleges. Such a licence (i.e. permission) can be withdrawn at any time without notice. No College would do this without good reason but students must understand that tenancy rights do not apply to College rooms. Accommodation is therefore conditional on acceptable behaviour and residents must permit entry to duly authorised members of staff. Residents are in effect on probation.

A standard fee is charged for all rooms, except where a reduction applies in cases of approved double occupancy. Fees will not be varied to take account of differences between rooms.
Students are offered accommodation on a term-time basis. Rooms must be vacated and personal property removed during vacation and placement periods and keys returned to the Bursar. The college from time to time may allocate a different room, if deemed reasonably necessary.

Accommodation is offered for the 5-day week only (Sunday night until Friday lunchtime during weeks when there are classes). You are not permitted to stay in the College at weekends unless by express permission. On occasion, due to duty, you may be required to stay. Where an overseas student is in residence or a student that is from a long journey away (3+ hours) permission may be granted for weekend residence. Students staying at weekends will be charged €40 per weekend.

Accommodation is offered on a fully-catered basis only, inclusive of all meals (except at weekends if weekend permission is sought and granted). The College does not provide self-catering facilities.

Accommodation may be withdrawn without notice in the event of misconduct or late payment of fees.

The College reserves the right to access all allocated accommodation without prior notice.

13.2 Accounts

Continued accommodation at the College depends on fees being paid up to date. Course results will be withheld until your account is cleared. Where a student is resident at the College, if their account is in arrears at the end of January they will be asked to find alternative accommodation. It is College policy that accounts which remain in arrears will be handed over to our legal representatives for pursuant of payment.

13.3 Allocation of rooms

The Hospitality Coordinator, acting on behalf of the Principal, allocates rooms at the College. Students are not allowed to move to another room without permission from the Hospitality Coordinator. Rooms are to be occupied only by the student(s) to which they have been allocated; no other person is allowed to reside therein, even on a temporary basis.

13.4 Responsibility

From the moment you receive your key until you surrender it, you are responsible for the condition of your room and any activities undertaken in the room (including noise levels). It is essential that you keep the room clean and tidy and the fixtures and fittings in good condition.
If you are going to be absent from your room for a week or more, you may, if you wish, leave the key(s) at the Bursar’s Office. In the case of loss or theft, new keys, for which you will be charged (€50.00), are available from the Bursar. You are not permitted to give your keys to others or to have copies made. In certain areas of College, electronic/magnetic locks are in place. In such cases, your responsibility is the same as with keys. Replacement key fobs for electronic locks are available from the Bursar at a cost of €50.00 (this also applies to Equine student lockers).

13.5  **Inspection prior to return of deposit**

At the conclusion of your period of residence in College, the Hospitality Coordinator, or a nominated representative, will inspect your room. These parties are the sole arbiter in the matter and the cost of any missing items or of any damage not due to fair ‘wear and tear’ will be charged directly.

13.6  **Security**

*College Insurance does not cover any personal belongings on the campus. You are therefore strongly advised to exercise due care and consideration with your valuables and take out personal insurance cover. Students should be aware that a CCTV system is in operation at all times.*

*Make sure you lock your room whenever you leave and also close any ground-floor windows. Note that cleaners and other staff are under instruction to lock all rooms which they find open after they have finished cleaning.*

13.7  **Visitors**

Students are permitted to have visitors on campus only on week days but they must remain in the downstairs recreational areas and must leave the campus by 11.00 pm. Residential sleeping areas are strictly out of bounds to visitors at all times. Students are responsible for the conduct of their visitors, so make sure you remain with them at all times. Evening visitors must be introduced to the Student Supervisor at the earliest opportunity, to distinguish them from uninvited intruders. The College reserves the right to refuse admission or to ask a visitor to leave College property at any time.

13.8  **Overnight Guests**

Due to recent changes in Health and Safety legislation, we are not in a position to allow non-residential students or visitors to stay overnight in an occupied student bedroom.
13.9 Parties

If numerous students congregate in one room it is invariably noisy and can cause a nuisance, inconvenience or annoyance to residents occupying adjoining rooms, especially late at night. Please respect your neighbours.

13.10 Damage

Students will be charged for making good any damage done. Damage done in a students’ own room is the responsibility of that student (as the key holder), unless someone else accepts responsibility.

Damage includes:
(a) Removal of bedding, soft furnishings or furniture from any room
(b) Use of nails, drawing pins, ‘Blu-tak’, sticky tape etc on the walls or woodwork
(c) Putting up pictures, posters, bunting, flags etc.

13.11 Defects / Repairs

When taking up occupancy students should, for their own protection, check that the room is in good order and that the keys are correct. All defects (stains and/or burns on carpet; damaged paint-work or furniture; evidence of damp; broken fire surrounds; broken or cracked window panes, etc.) should be reported immediately to the Bursar or Hospitality Coordinator - failure to do this may result in students being charged with these defects on vacating the room.

13.12 Pets

No pets may be kept on College property/stables/ outside spaces.

13.13 Fire Prevention

All students must acquaint themselves with fire safety procedures:
(i) The alternative fire escape routes from your room
(ii) Action in the event of fire (Section 11)
(iii) Fire prevention check list for students
(iv) The compulsory fire safety lecture

Fire Wardens will inspect equipment and rooms and will conduct fire drills. Students must not under any circumstances use candles, incense burners, oil lamps or any device which emits a naked flame.

SMOKING is NOT allowed in the College building. It is only allowed outside in the smoking shelter (not at reception or rear entrance to the College building).
### 13.14 Fire Safety Equipment

All residences in College are equipped with fire safety systems including detection, alarms and emergency lighting, and first aid fire fighting equipment. All students are required to take every reasonable precaution to ensure that fire alarm systems are not accidentally activated. In particular, students are required to ensure that cooking fumes are contained within kitchens and do not reach adjacent detectors.

The College has resolved that tampering with or misusing fire equipment or means of escape will be considered a major offence - this includes activating a fire alarm or discharging an extinguisher without good reason. It is a criminal offence to activate a fire alarm without good reason. Students are referred to the Fire Services Act 1981. The penalties therein include both a SUBSTANTIAL fine and a six-month jail sentence at the discretion of the court.

### 13.15 Electrical Appliances, heaters, etc.

Students may **not** introduce any additional portable electrical, gas or paraffin heaters into their rooms or use any electrical apparatus consuming more than 500 watts (fuses and circuit breakers will trip out). Fridges and cooking equipment are expressly prohibited.

Residents must realise that bedrooms are not designed for cooking. Student kitchens are equipped with a fridge, microwave, toaster, kettle, wash up sink etc.

### 13.16 Television and Radio

Students may use a small TV, radio, CD-player etc. in their bedrooms provided that the noise from these devices cannot be heard outside the room.

*Note that the law requires that you must buy a TV licence for your room. Neither your parents’ licence nor the college licence can cover your room.*

### 13.17 Room Cleaning

Students are responsible for keeping their rooms tidy so that the College housekeeping staff can clean their room weekly. Vacuums and cleaning materials are available upon request. In order to maintain the condition of rooms the staff of Housekeeping Services will make periodic inspections. If rooms are found to be in an unsatisfactory condition by the Hospitality Coordinator, students will be asked to clean them up to an acceptable standard or they will be fined.
13.18 Inventory

The following are provided by the College in each room:

- Bed and mattress
- Desk chair
- Desk (or worktop style desk)
- Curtains
- Waste bin

Double rooms have two of each.

Students, when they first inspect their room, must report to Maura Campbell if any of the above-listed items are missing from their room.

14.0 Students Under 18 Years of Age (Parent / Guardian should also read)

As a result of changes in responsibility governing how Colleges deal with residential students who are under eighteen years of age, Gurteen College and all of the Colleges in our educational sector have modified the rules of residence and our Child Protection policy to come in line with the new position.

What has changed:

- Students under 18 years of age, until further notice, will not be allowed to be resident in College at weekends.
- Students must participate in a "sign out" and "sign in" system when leaving the campus in the evenings to visit the local village. Students must also return to campus by 12.30am (with a 15minute grace period)
- The College is required to verify that students are attending class. As a result if a student has not signed our attendance registers the student room will be checked. If the student is not in the bedroom then parents / guardian must be contacted to see whether the student has left the campus and is at home.
- If for any reason a residential student under 18 years of age is absent due to illness or for any other legitimate reason, please inform the College as soon as possible. This will prevent unaccounted-for absence and eliminate unnecessary phone calls to parents / guardians.

Once a residential student turns eighteen years of age these additional rules above and beyond the normal rules contained in the student handbook will no longer apply. A copy of our child protection policy is available from Maura Campbell or on the Student Access area of the server.
15.0 Information for Parents / Guardians

If you are still dependent, financially or otherwise, on a parent or guardian, they might find the following information useful.

There are other ways in which they can help, as well as financially. They may or may not have experienced college life themselves – but it has probably changed considerably since their college days, so they may not know quite what to expect. So you are asked to discuss these issues with them – or simply give them this section to read.

Study Time

Parents / Guardians must understand that students will not pass their course if they miss a lot of class or practical time. Of course there are occasional emergencies, in this case the College must be notified by the parent / guardian.

It follows that staff should be consulted immediately if a long-term problem arises at home, such as the serious illness of a family member. Such circumstances might require a student to miss a lot of classes, so please alert us before he or she falls behind on college work. It may be possible to find an alternative path to completion of the course.

Transport

Many students find it easy to manage without a car (depending on where home is). The College runs a shuttle bus into Birr at the start and end of every week, to link with bus services to many areas. (These include local operators, as well as Bus Éireann’s network via Athlone: timetables will be posted in the College). A parent or guardian who can give lifts to and from a suitable bus stop near home may be able to save a student the cost of running a car that would only be really needed to get to College and back at weekends. A car has few legitimate uses mid-week – the local pub provides free transport every evening for those who want it – much safer.

College Fees

Students may be suspended from the course and/or required to find accommodation off campus if fees fall into arrears without consent. Consequently, the College should be consulted at an early stage in the event of financial difficulties, rather than simply allowing arrears to mount up. Where parents or guardians are paying the fees, as is usually the case, make sure they are aware that fees must be a higher priority than pocket money or helping to cover the costs of a student’s car. Where accounts are in arrears in January, students will be asked to move out immediately.
Medical & Personal Problems

Students are encouraged to disclose any areas of concern when they register. However, it can be hard to go into enough detail in a form. Parents worried that a long-standing problem might not be fully understood by staff are welcome to call the Hospitality Coordinator (Maura Campbell) during office hours or the Student Supervisor (Brendan Molloy) any weekday evening to brief them in confidence. The College has access to all relevant sources of professional help.

Teagasc Grants

Teagasc grants will be affected by non-attendance; records of attendance from the Biometric registration system will be used to calculate deductions.

16.0 Directions & Maps

Find us by using our EirCode: E53 TP93 or GPS co ordinates N53.0468°, W008.01150° in a SatNav, Maps App or equivalent.

Warning: there are many other Gurteens in Ireland and some very close to Gurteen College, so if you search by place name make sure you search for Gurteen College (not just Gurteen).

Full Address: Gurteen College
Ballingarry
Roscrea
Co. Tipperary
E53 TP93

Don’t be misled by the inclusion of Roscrea in our postal address – we are about 27km from the town (by main road):

- If you are coming from the north (Sligo, Roscommon, Athlone) or the east (Dublin, Portlaoise, Kilbeggan, Tullamore) you should head to Birr. In Birr, at the tesco roundabout, take the exit signposted for the N52. Go through Riverstown and Carrig villages then turn right at the 2nd cross-roads. The college is on your right after 1km.

- If you are coming from Limerick direction you would go to Nenagh and follow signs for N52 / Borrisokane, through Borrisokane, through Ballingarry. After 3km turn left at the cross roads. The college is on your right after 1km.
• If you are coming from Cork direction you would come through Thurles, through Roscrea heading for Birr, to Birr and then left onto the N52, through Riverstown and Carrig villages, then right at the 2nd cross-roads. The college is on your right after 1km.

• If you are coming from Galway direction: head for Loughrea, left and through Portumna, left in Carrigahorrig (just before the bridge), straight over a staggered cross-roads & after 7km the College will be on your left.
17.0 Important Contacts

We recommend all students save Brendan’s work mobile number into their phones in case of an emergency during night time.

Access Officer: Stephanie Scully, via 067 21282
Accident / Near Miss Reporting: First Aiders (see below)
Accommodation: Maura Campbell, via 067 21282
Bursar: Hugh O’Brien, via 067 21282
Catering: Maura Campbell, via 067 21282
Chaplain: Rev. Clodagh Yambasu, 057 9120200

**Emergency Services: Garda / Fire / Ambulance, 999 / 112**

NOTE: Gurteen College EirCode is E53 TP93 (use this if phoning emergency services)

Farm Manager: Ken Flynn, via 067 21282
First Aiders: Maura Campbell, via 067 21282
Brendan Molloy, 087 62 52 486
Rita Gorman (Kitchen, via 067 21282)
Ken Flynn (Farm, via 067 21282)
Padraig Byrne (Dairy Unit / Farm, via 067 21282)
Gary Hayes (Farm, via 067 21282)

Garda Station (Borrisokane), 067 27101
GP Out of Hours: Shannon Doc, 1850 212 999, website: www.shannondoc.ie
Garda Station (Nenagh District HQ): 067 50457
Housekeeping: Maura Campbell, via 067 21282
Night Supervisor: Brendan Molly, 087 62 52 486
Placement Officer: Joe Daly, via 067 21282
Principal: Jon Parry, via 067 21282
Tutors / Mentors: via 067 21282
Welfare Officers: Day: Hugh / Maura / Stephanie / Anna, via 067 21 282

**Gurteen College Eircode:**

E53 TP93
18.0 Learner Handbook Learner Agreement

DETACH AND RETURN TO THE COLLEGE SECRETARY (manual applicants only)

Name of Course ________________________________________________________

STUDENT DECLARATION:

- I have received the learner handbook.
- I have read and understood the learner handbook.

**Print Name**: ________________________________

**Signature**: ________________________________

**Date**: ________________________________

PARENT / GUARDIAN DECLARATION (STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE)

The section below must be completed if the student is under 18 years of age:

- I have received the learner handbook.
- I have read and understood the learner handbook.

**Parent / Guardians Name (print)**: ________________________________

**Parent / Guardians Signature**: ________________________________

**Date**: ________________________________