# Grand Valley State University - Online/Hybrid Course Peer Review Rubric

Course: Instructor: Semester:

Peer Reviewer(s): Date(s) of Observation:

Delivery Format: ☐ Online ☐ Hybrid

RUBRIC KEY: E = Excellent | G = Good | F = Fair | P = Poor | N = Not Observed

Note: Please use "N" = Not Observed, if you are reviewing a course early in the semester and you are unable find an item below.

| I. Overall Course Design and Organization[1] | E | G | F | P | N | Comments/Suggestions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The course website is organized, easy to navigate, provides clear instructions and student guidance.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• There are on-going faculty announcements that provide personal connection with students and instructions for getting started, course requirements, and where to access course materials. (e.g., Course Announcements)<br>• A course orientation or tour is available for students. (e.g., Course Announcements or Content Area)<br>• The course menu is clear, organized and simple. (e.g., Course Navigation Menu)<br>• Course content follows accessibility guidelines (per ADA) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

| II. Course Expectations | E | G | F | P | N | Comments/Suggestions |
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| The course website includes a course description, clear measurable learning objectives, required textbook and/or course materials, schedule, grading, and assessment requirements. In addition, university policies and procedures along with student support services are included (tutoring, disability support resources, library, IT HelpDesk, etc.). Information is provided regarding expected time on task.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• Course description is included. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area)<br>• Learning objectives for both course and learning activities are included. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area)<br>• Required textbook or other course materials are clearly identified. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area)<br>• Grading policies, rubrics, due dates, etc. are identified for all graded learning activities or assessments. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area)<br>• Specific technology requirements are included. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area)<br>• Student participation expectations are provided for all activities and course communications. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area). Clearly communicated course schedule/outline with due dates, frequency and duration of assignments, course calendar, etc. (e.g., Syllabus, Content Area, Assignments)<br>• Estimated of amounts of time to spend on learning activities is clearly stated (e.g., Syllabus, Content Area, Assignments, Announcements) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

1 – Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric 2011 – 2013 Edition

2 – Adapted from Penn State Peer Review Guide and Chickering, A. & Gamson, Z. (1987) Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education. AAHE Bulletin (39)7.

| III. Faculty/Student Interaction[2] | E | G | F | P | N | Comments/Suggestions |
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| The faculty's online presence is demonstrated through frequent and timely faculty-student communication and contact.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• Welcome announcement (e.g., Announcements)<br>• Regular, timely course engagement, faculty feedback, and communication. (e.g., Announcements, Email, Discussion Board, Live Chat)<br>• Discussion board participation (e.g., Discussion Board)<br>• Faculty is available to students (e.g., Online Office Hours, Discussion Board, Live Chat, Email)<br>• Establish and maintain a positive online climate and course tone (e.g., Discussion Board, Announcements) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

| IV. Reciprocity and Cooperation Among Students[2] | E | G | F | P | N | Comments/Suggestions |
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| Students engage in formal and/or informal discussions of course topics, group assignments, etc.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• Student introductions (e.g., Discussion Board)<br>• Group assignments (e.g., Content Area and Grade Center)<br>• Group discussions (e.g., Discussion Board)<br>• Faculty models and facilitates students' discussion participation (e.g., Discussion Board) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

| V. Active Learning[2] | E | G | F | P | N | Comments/Suggestions |
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| Active learning methods engage students in the learning process by encouraging them to discover, process, and apply information in a variety of ways. Inclusive of students' diversity, talents, and ways of knowing.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• Varied student activities and assignments (e.g., Syllabus, Discussion Board, Assignments/Assessments, Content Area)<br>• Active use of writing, speaking, presentation (e.g., Assignments, Discussion Board)<br>• Student engagement in collaborative learning activities (e.g., Assignments, Course Content, Discussion Board)<br>• Provide alternative assignment options or student choice (e.g., Syllabus, Assignments)<br>• Supplemental online learning materials (e.g., Content Area)<br>• Timely, corrective feedback for online activities (e.g., Discussion Board, Grade Center)<br>• Accommodations and support resources provided for students with disabilities (e.g., Syllabus, Course Content, Technology) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

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| VI. Prompt Feedback[2] | E | G | F | P | N | Comments/Suggestions |
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| Faculty assist students in frequently assessing their knowledge and competence while providing them with opportunities to practice, receive suggestions, and reflect on their learning.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• Faculty participation expectations are provided for all activities and course communications. (e.g., Syllabus or Content Area)<br>• Meaningful feedback is clear, positive, specific and focused on learning objectives (e.g., Grade Center, Discussion Board)<br>• Assignments and activities are clearly communicated (e.g., Syllabus, Content Area, Assignments)<br>• Opportunity for draft or practice assignments (e.g., Content Area, Assignments) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| **VII. High Expectations[2]** | **E** | **G** | **F** | **P** | **N** | **Comments/Suggestions** |
| Faculty clearly communicate high, rigorous, appropriate expectations and provide support to students in meeting the expectations.<br><br>Examples of Evidence (Where to Look):<br>• Explicit communication of knowledge and skills required for the course (e.g., Syllabus)<br>• Explanation and reminders of learning objectives for each week, assignment, etc. (e.g., Syllabus, Course Content, Assignments)<br>• Context and rationale for assignments to motivate students (e.g., Announcements, Assignments, Course Content)<br>• Examples and counterexamples of high quality work (e.g., Course Content, Assignments)<br>• Assignments and learning activities elicit critical thinking (e.g., Discussion Board, Assignments, Course Content)<br>• Appropriate amount of assigned work (e.g., Syllabus, Course Content, Assignments) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

Additional Comments:

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# Nevada State College: Online Quality Assurance Best Practices

| Organization and Structure | Learning Design | Accessibility & Course Technology Tools | Instructor Presence | Feedback and Assessment |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Instructor provides a structured course timeline. | Course provides a variety of activities to develop problem solving skills and/or relevance to real world application. | Videos have closed captions and audio files have transcripts. | Instructor provides personalized welcome and introduction to the course. | Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the course information area or syllabus. |
| Course shell is well-organized and easy to navigate. | Course provides more than one modality (visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory) within activities and materials that enhance student engagement. | All course materials (PDF, Word, Power Point, etc.) are ADA compliant. | Instructor contact information is clearly stated and easily accessible. | Course includes formative and summative (low and high stakes) methods to assess students' learning. |
| An overview of weekly and/or module learning objectives, tasks and learning materials is presented. | Course offers opportunities for interaction and collaboration for student/student, student/instructor and/or student/content. | Necessary skills for required technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources. | Instructor presence is evident in every week/module. | Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, examples of work, etc.). |
| NSC-provided syllabus and course templates are present and not deleted. | | | | Students have an opportunity to assess their learning (pre-test, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.). |
| All external links work properly in the LMS (check using Canvas Course Link Validator). | | | | Course learning outcomes are clearly defined and at least one objective is linked to a key assessment |
| Course shell is free of typographical errors. | | | | |

**Online Quality Assurance Handbook**

**Organization & Structure**

| | **Annotation** |
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| Instructor provides a structured course timeline. | A course timeline gives adult learners a way to visualize the sequence of course modules and types of learning activities and assignments that assists the adult learner in scheduling time efficiently. |
| Course shell is well- organized and easy to navigate.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc.<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos<br>Assignments<br>Diagrams | Instructions provide a general course overview, present the schedule of activities, guide the learner to explore the course site, and indicate what to do first, in addition to listing detailed navigational instructions for the whole course.<br><br>Instructors may choose to incorporate some of this information in the course syllabus. In this case, learners should be directed to the syllabus at the beginning of the course. A useful feature is a "Read Me First" or "Start Here" button or icon on the course home page, linking learners to start-up information.<br><br>Examples:<br>1. A course "tour"<br>2. Clear statements about how to get started in the course<br>3. A "scavenger hunt" or "syllabus quiz" assignment that leads learners through an exploration of the different parts of the course<br>4. A table or diagram that depicts the relationship between the online and face-to-face portions of a blended course |
| An overview of weekly and/or module learning objectives, tasks and learning materials is presented.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc.<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos | Adult learners benefit from knowing what they are about to learn, as well as the scope of work and time commitment expected from them. Providing a course overview will help prepare learners for what, when, where, and why they will be learning, as well as what content, interactions, and assessments will take place within the week/module.<br>These "advance organizers" help learners plan around conflicting priorities (school, |

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| Readings<br>Assignments<br>Activities | family, work) and better manage their time. The week/module overview page should include at least a short introduction to the module topic and indicate what materials need to be reviewed and what activities and assignments need to be completed. Due dates should be included for every assignment and activity in the module. This will help your learners stay on track.<br><br>Examples:<br>• Week/Module Introduction/Expectations<br>• Week/Module Objectives & Goals<br>• Readings & Videos<br>• Activities<br>• Assignments |
| NSC-provided syllabus and course templates are present and not deleted. | The syllabus and course templates contain the most current information on NSC policies; Core Learning Outcomes; Netiquette; plagiarism; where to find technical support, Student Services, and Disabilities resources; and other useful information and resources to which students need to have access. The course name and number, as well as Instructor contact information are included on the landing page.<br>The templates provide avenues for communication and easy access to support and guidance. |
| Course shell is free of typographical errors. | |
| All external links work properly in the LMS (check using Canvas Course Link Validator). | Broken links to websites and other types of external content frustrate students. All links should function properly. |

**Learning Design**

| | **Annotation** |
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| Course provides a variety of activities to develop higher order thinking, problem solving skills, or relevance to real world application.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc.<br>Groups Assigned in Canvas | When the learner thinks critically he or she goes through the process of constructing knowledge, inquiring, exploring, and thinking. Cognitive presence relies on critical thinking skills and active learning, as well as helping learners to link existing ideas to the creation of new knowledge. With measurable objectives guiding the pathway to higher-order thinking skills, |

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| Collaborative Documents<br>Discussions<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos<br>Assignments<br>Diagrams<br>Peer Reviews<br>Discussions/Forums<br>Quizzes/Surveys/Tests | Bloom's Taxonomy can provide a framework for exploring different levels of thinking and associated skills and competencies.<br>When adult learners can apply a learning activity to practical value beyond the course, relevance is established between the stated learning objective, the learning activity, and the assessment of that activity.<br>Experiential learning, case studies, and problem- based activities are designed to immerse learners in real world scenarios, with the goal of having learners build on their existing knowledge and skills to analyze specific problems and find solutions.<br>Transparency of learning activities should also be followed. Ensure that learning objectives are clearly stated for learning activities.<br><br>Examples:<br>1. Include reflection as part of project assignments.<br>2. Create peer review groups to encourage learners to learn from each other and help each other construct new knowledge.<br>3. Create scenario-based discussion forums in which learners can interact.<br>4. Have learners create and facilitate course-related scenarios.<br>5. Have learners document their real-world experiences through digital storytelling.<br>6. Assign "offline" activities to learners and have the learners "debrief" in the online environment. |
| Course provides more than one modality (visual, textual, kinesthetic and/or auditory) within activities and materials that enhance student engagement. | Multimodal learning environments allow instructional elements to be presented in more than one sensory mode (visual, aural, written). Materials that are presented in a variety of presentation modes may lead learners to perceive that it is easier to learn and improve attention, thus leading to improved learning performance; in particular for lower- achieving students (Chen & Fu, 2003; Moreno & Mayer, 2007; Zywno 2003).<br>Examples:<br>• Images |

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| | • Video/Audio/Podcast clips<br>• Mnemonics<br>• Simulations/ Online Labs<br>• Drag and Drop Checks<br>• Concept Maps<br>• Discussions |
| Course offers opportunities for interaction and collaboration for student/student, student/instructor and/or student/content.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc.<br>Groups Assigned in Canvas<br>Discussions<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Announcements<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos<br>Assignments<br>Diagrams<br>Peer Reviews<br>Discussions<br>Quizzes/Surveys/Tests<br>Quick Checks | Collaboration in an online course fosters constructive learning by enabling learners to be active participants, take initiative, think critically, and engage each other in dialogue. (Palloff & Prat, 2007). By requiring learners to engage with each other, the design of such activities requires them to assume more responsibility for their own learning which often leads to a deeper level of engagement. Providing opportunities for learners to learn from each other is an integral part of constructive collaboration. Collaborative exercises can enable more advanced learners to help less experienced learners to maximize their abilities, and help construct new knowledge together (Vygotsky, 1978).<br><br>Examples:<br>1. Student↔student interaction-based activities include:<br>• group projects<br>• group case studies<br>• peer instruction<br>• synchronous or asynchronous discussions or debates<br>• collaborative brainstorming<br>• peer review of selected work<br>2. Student↔Instructor interaction include:<br>• providing feedback on assignments, learning journals, or other reflective activities<br>• participating in discussion forums or chats<br>• sending frequent announcements to summarize the previous week or describe the next week<br>3. Student↔Content interaction include: |

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| | • tutorials<br>• quizzes (if the feedback is useful and usable)<br>• web quests<br>• reading/video discussion or reflections<br>• simulations |

**Accessibility / Course Technology Tools**

| | **Annotations** |
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| Videos have closed captions and audio files have transcripts. | In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) all videos must be word-for-word closed captioned that is in standard sentence format, punctuation, and capitalization. Closed captioning benefits not only hearing impaired learners, but ELS and other learners viewing video content in a quiet location such as a library.<br>Only audio files should have transcripts. |
| All course materials (PDF, Word, PowerPoint, etc.) are ADA compliant. | Screen readers convert course text to speech so that learners can listen to the course content. Screen readers insert pauses for periods, semicolons, commas, question marks, exclamation points, and ends of paragraphs. Providing content that is accessible is critical to keep learners with visual disabilities on track. Screen readers, which make documents, etc., accessible to learners with visual impairments who rely on those readers, cannot read PDFs of book chapters or articles that have been scanned landscape style. Therefore, all PDF documents must be portrait style (8.5 x 11). All Word documents and those saved as PDF documents, and all content typed directly into a Canvas course must have titles, headers, and sub headers designated as Header 1, Header 2, etc. All numbered and bullet lists must be designated as numbered and bullet lists. Tables should include designated headers and are captioned. All links to external pages or documents should use the title of the link or document as the link. Do not list “click here” or “link” for the link indicator. Only text that serves as a link should be |

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| | underlined as screen readers read all underlined words as a link.<br>If images are used, ALT (alternative) text, descriptive text needs to be provided. For some images, alternative text is enough. If a complex photograph, chart, or diagram is displayed, visually impaired learners need more descriptive text, including a narrative that explains clearly what the image is and what it represents.<br><br>Closed captioning (above) also applies to PowerPoints with voiceovers. |
| Necessary skills for required technology tools (websites, software, and hardware) are clearly stated and supported with resources. | Technology problems and ambiguous instructions frustrate online learners. Access issues need to be mitigated early on in order for learners to succeed. Any hardware, software, or technology applications that are required for successful participation in the course need to be introduced along with resources that support a full range of learner mastery. This information needs to be communicated out to learners early on and reinforced throughout the term.<br>Additionally, if learners are required to use third party content (publisher websites, online labs, assignment utilities, web-based subscriptions, etc.) links to associated resources and explanations on how to access this content need to be included.<br><br>Technology requirements are part of the course shell template. Do not delete it. |

**Instructor Presence**

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| Instructor provides personalized welcome and introduction to the course.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom or Cafe, etc.<br>Discussions<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Announcements<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos | By welcoming learners to the course and providing context for what they will be learning, the instructor sets a tone for success from the start of the course. The course welcome should establish instructor presence and provide enough guidance to ensure that learners will get off to a good start in the online space. In essence, this is the learners' first impression of the instructor and the course.<br>Examples: |

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| Assignments<br>Diagrams<br>Peer Reviews<br>Discussions<br>Quizzes/Surveys/Tests<br>Quick Checks | 1. Create a course introduction video introducing learners to the course topic and learning content. Add your insight and expertise by contextualizing the learning activities alongside course and module learning objectives.<br>2. Create a course introduction video that highlights your achievements in the field and relate that knowledge and experience back to what the learners will learn in the course.<br>3. Create a course introduction tour via video, audio, or illustrated document that welcomes learners to your online course and explains how and where to get started.<br>4. Hold virtual office hours via Conferences or Cranium Cafe. |
| Instructor contact information is clearly stated and easily accessible. | In addition to providing this information in the syllabus, include contact information on the template landing (Home) page. Be sure that there is a printable version of the syllabus with instructor contact information for learners to have on hand in case they are unable to access the online class and need to get in touch. Opening avenues for communication and providing easy access to those channels support learner- instructor interactions and facilitate engaging in supportive contact and interaction, a key component of social presence. |
| Instructor presence is evident in every week/module.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom or Cafe, etc.<br>Groups Assigned in Canvas Discussions<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Announcements<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos<br>Assignments<br>Diagrams<br>Peer Reviews | Adult learners need assurances throughout the semester that there really is an instructor on the other end of the online course. Additionally, maintaining a strong instructor presence in every week/module nurtures a sense of connection between learners and the instructor and builds community and trust.<br>Examples:<br>1. Make short videos of one or two key concepts for the week/module.<br>2. Include a video or podcast on your week/module overview page, that goes into more detail about activities and assignments for that week/module. |

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| Discussions<br>Quizzes/Surveys/Tests<br>Quick Checks | 3. Provide feedback comments on rubrics used for grading.<br>4. Post regular announcements (these can be set for delayed posting).<br>5. Provide five-minute feedback videos as part of grading feedback.<br>6. Include discussion wrap-ups at the end of select weeks/modules.<br>7. Hold synchronous virtual office hours.<br>8. Hold synchronous Conferences with learners.<br>9. Make 15-minute mini-lectures and embed them in the modules. |

**Feedback and Assessment**

| | **Annotation** |
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| Course grading policies, including consequences of late submissions, are clearly stated in the course information area and/or syllabus. | Learners need to know how their work will be assessed in a clear and transparent manner. Grading policies can guide learner progress, and promote fair and objective review and assessment of all graded work. Research shows that grading policies directly impact learner motivation. Including clear course grading policies in the syllabus or course information documents area will also mitigate issues related to learner complaints about grades that they have received on assigned work. |
| Course includes formative and summative (low and high stakes) methods to assess students' learning.<br><br>Synchronous Tools:<br>Conferences, Zoom, Teams, Cranium Classroom, etc.<br>Groups Assigned in Canvas<br>Discussions<br>Exit Tickets<br><br>Asynchronous Tools:<br>Announcements<br>Yuja Videos<br>You Tube Videos<br>Assignments<br>Diagrams<br>Peer Reviews<br>Discussions<br>Quizzes/Surveys/Tests | Consistent and regular assessments help learners demonstrate their progress and deficiencies. As learners move through an online course, they should encounter regular assignments, activities, and interactions designed to assess how well they have mastered the learning content, and how close they are to meeting program, course, or module learning objectives.<br><br>Examples:<br>Low stakes-<br>• Mastery learning quizzes (required to reach a minimum score)<br>• Pre-tests/Self-checks<br>• Participation<br>• Muddiest Point<br>High stakes-<br>• Research Papers/Essays Exams |

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| Pre-tests<br>Quick Checks | • Problem Sets |
| Criteria for the assessment of a graded assignment are clearly articulated (rubrics, examples of work, etc.). | Elikai & Schuhmann (2010) found that grading policies, examples of work, and associated rubrics motivated learning by associating levels of mastery and performance with a specific grade, and guiding achievement progress.<br><br>Guidelines or rubrics for the assessment of graded work should include:<br>• performance criteria<br>• setting desired performance/proficiency levels for learners' performance descriptions. This includes detailing out what constitutes a full continuum of accomplishment, from unsatisfactory through to exemplary, and include associated grades along with each level along the continuum. |
| Students have an opportunity to assess their learning (pre-test, automated self-tests, reflective assignments, etc.). | Self-assessment plays a role in learner self-efficacy, fosters learners' abilities to construct meaning, and promotes metacognition. By asking learners to check their skill mastery levels or reflect on their own work, they learn to examine their own reasoning and decision making process (Cukusic et al, 2014).<br><br>Examples:<br>• Reflecting on personal goals statements<br>• End of module quizzes with required performance levels<br>• Evaluating own participation<br>• Using a rubric to analyze one's work |
| Course learning outcomes are clearly defined and at least one objective is linked to a key assessment (e.g., Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes, Program and/or Course Learning Outcomes) | The syllabus and or modules should contain learning outcomes that are connected to program or school outcomes based upon relevant content.<br><br>Examples:<br>• SOE-Key Assessment<br>• Core Curriculum Outcomes (Critical Thinking, |

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| | • Communication, Citizenship)<br>• Progression Portfolios |