



EXECUTIVE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB)

OCTOBER 6, 2017

LIMERICK AND CLARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD (LCETB)

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Marshal House, Dooradoyle Road, Co. Limerick

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1. Introduction, Purpose and Objectives

This document describes the Executive Self-Evaluation Report (ESER) for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB). This Executive Self-Evaluation was conducted in line with QQI Statutory Core Quality Assurance and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the Education and Training Boards, and within nationally agreed Terms of Reference. See Appendix 1.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is committed to quality assurance of all its programmes and support services. This Executive Self-Evaluation process is enhancement based and is focused on improvements and enhancements to policies, structures and processes to improve the quality of learning opportunities for all learners within LCETB. It is a quality objective of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board to ensure compliance with QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

2. ETB Profile

Introduction

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) is the State Authority for Education and Training in the Limerick and Clare region. LCETB was established in 2013 following the amalgamation of three (3) Vocational Education Committees. It delivers educational services to over 36,000 learners across the region, and the authority has responsibility for:

- 18 post-primary schools;
- 33 Further Education and Training Centres;
- in addition, it works with over 300 community groups.

Schools Division

- 18 multi-denominational post-primary schools in the region;
- provision for in excess of 9,000 students;
- LCETB schools provide quality learning opportunities through broad curricular experiences;
- in addition, the authority is an advocate for the rollout of the multi-denominational Community National School model within the region.

Further Education and Training Division

- full and part-time programmes provided by day and evening;
- provision for over 25,000 learners;
- 300 locations participating across the Limerick and Clare region every year;
- provision is aimed at those who want to:
 - return to education and training in order to enhance their opportunities for employment or progression to further studies;
 - develop a new skill/hobby or want to become more involved in their community.

Range of Provision

- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC)
- Specific Skills Training
- Local Training Initiatives
- Specialist Training Provision (e.g. Training for Persons with Disabilities)
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- Youthreach & Community Training Centres
- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)
- Community Education
- Literacy
- Prison Education
- Evening Courses
- Teaching Services to 27 other institutions

In addition, it provides a range of **Hospitality**-related education and training programmes at its Hospitality Education and Training Centre, Roxboro, Limerick. This centre was the first in the country to receive the coveted European 'Excellence Framework for Quality Management' award in 2016.

The FET Division is also responsible for the management of **Music Education** provision across the region. Limerick School of Music has been providing music tuition to over 1,300 young people and adults yearly for many decades. It also supports Maoin Cheoil an Chláir which provides music tuition to over 300 students annually in the Ennis area, and LCETB is also the lead partner in two (2) Music Generation programmes based in Limerick City and in Co. Clare.

Underpinning the above education and training provision are several support services. These include:

- **Research and Development Support Service –**
 - *Professional Development and European Projects*
 - promotes and supports a collaborative, co-operative and integrated approach to professional development across LCETB's FET Division;
 - supports the development of cross-regional structures, systems, policies and procedures for professional development taking into account local regional and national priorities, staff skill-sets and employer and learner requests;
 - develops, coordinates and delivers a range of innovative staff professional development activities, resources, events etc. to support staff in their teaching, learning and assessment and other roles across the FET Division;
 - works with the FET Steering Group and other FET team members and key external stakeholders to explore possibilities across the FET Division as they relate to professional development including European Projects that contribute to the development of staff and organisational capability.
 - *Learning Technology Development*
 - developing and implementing eLearning strategies and initiatives, referencing from LCETB's Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan, its associated thematic areas and identified actions.
 - *Planning and Evaluation Development*
 - develops the capacity of FET staff around Programme Cycle Management – from Planning to Implementation and Monitoring & Evaluation of programme activities, through facilitation work, development of tools and resources, using consultative and participatory approaches;

- supports programmes to use participatory approaches for customer consultations, and uses feedback to inform Quality Assurance, Programme Development and Organisational Learning;
 - supports Strategic Planning at all levels of the Organisation – whole organisation, Programmes and Projects, etc.;
 - focuses on Result-based Management – an outcome oriented rather than output oriented approach to project planning, management and quality assurance;
 - conducts context analysis and environmental scanning – synthesising information and policy developments for dissemination in various formats across the organisation, and externally.
- **Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service** - a free, local and confidential service offering further education and training information, one-to-one guidance, meetings and group guidance workshops to support learners to make informed educational, career and life choices.
 - **Enterprise Engagement Support Service** – facilitates ongoing dialogue with employers, employees and skills fora in responding to identified skills and training needs in the region. The service harnesses regional skills intelligence to enable skills development opportunities through apprenticeships, traineeships and other provision.
 - **Quality Assurance Support Service** - responsible for the development, implementation, evaluation and review of an effective Quality Assurance system across all LCETB Further Education and Training centres.
 - **FARR and PLSS Planning Support** – facilitates the rollout of FET MIS systems to support the planning of provision and analysis of inputs, outputs and outcomes; supporting the gathering of learner details for reporting purposes at a Regional, National and European level.
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LCETB FET Strategic Framework

As stated by Mr. Paul Patton, LCETB Director of Further Education and Training, in his introduction to the **Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Strategic Framework 2015-2020**¹

“Strategic Framework....will chart the path for our programmes and services over the next five years. It is the product of a consultative process, which gave multiple opportunities to learners, managers, staff, employers and community partners in Limerick and Clare to have a say in our future direction. It is steeped in the belief that further education and training changes lives and equips people with the attitudes and skills they need to be successful in their personal and professional lives. This strategy also emphasises the role the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will play in the cultural, social and economic development of our region.

Recognising that learning is a lifelong pursuit, the design concept for this strategy is based on the journey that a learner can undertake when engaging with Further Education and Training. It uses the structure of an underground transport system to reflect the priorities of the Framework, with stations/stops where the learner can transfer, arrive/depart or continue their learning journey. This design is about connectivity - the learner is connected to FET through LCETB, and the FET Service is in turn connected to the community and employers by providing routes to learners.

This Strategy is built around key guiding principles of respect/equality, quality/professionalism, integration, responsiveness, support and collaboration. As an umbrella framework, it will promote a shared vision across our service and guide our FET centres, colleges, programmes and services in the development of integrated implementation plans for their full-time and part-time provision. It sets out four service-wide strategic priorities, which are in line with the LCETB Corporate Plan and the SOLAS Strategy 2014-2019: 1) Access and Progression 2) Quality Teaching & Learning, 3) Stakeholder Engagement and 4) Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership.

For each strategic priority, key outcomes have been identified as measures of success and will include the wider benefits of lifelong learning, as our sector must strike a balance between the delivery of sustainable economic and social outcomes. These outcomes will be monitored and analysed through a structured FET Service Evaluation Framework, which will report progress on a regular basis. Achieving the outcomes outlined in this strategy will require commitment and collaboration among LCETB staff, learners, managers, administrators and all our key partners.”

The Strategic Framework defines the following –

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Quality further education and training will inspire people to realise their personal and professional potential and contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of the region.

OUR CORE PURPOSE

We provide relevant and innovative further education and training opportunities that address the needs and aspirations of our learners, local communities and employers.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Access and Progression
2. Quality Teaching and Learning
3. Stakeholder Engagement
4. Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership

¹ Appendix 4 - Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Strategic Framework 2015-2020

The final element of this LCETB FET Strategy is the development of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

For each outcome, measurable performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, will be developed and monitored on an ongoing basis to help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic priorities. From an initial baseline assessment, data will be systematically collected to ensure the results of our work match the strategic intentions we set ourselves for the next five years. Findings will be shared widely with our key stakeholders to highlight what works and to contribute to the development of the FET sector for the benefit of learners. For each strategic priority, key outcomes have been identified during the consultation process, clarifying expectations of what we want to achieve as a FET service in the next 5 years.

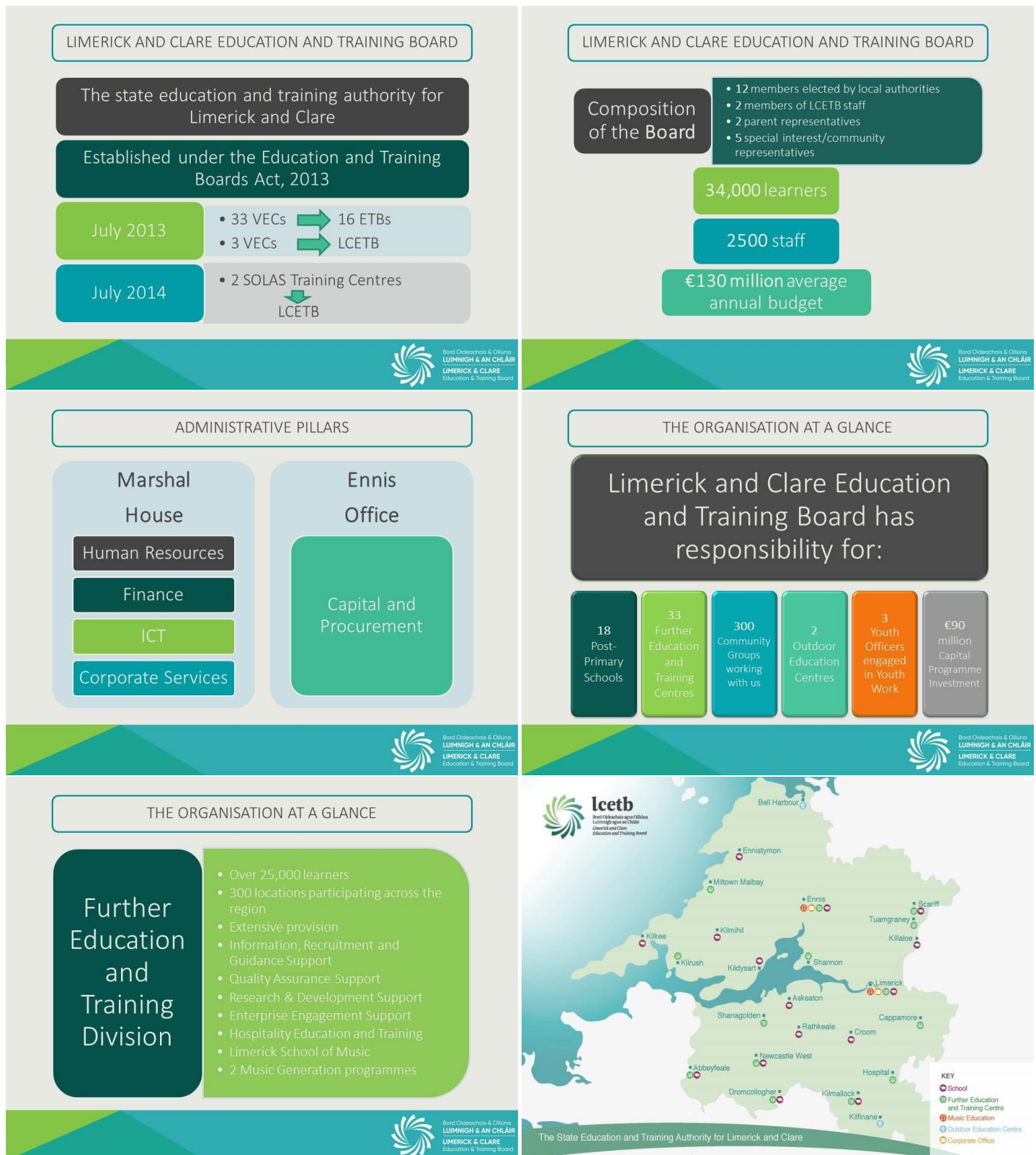
LCETB FET Strategic Framework – PROGRESS MONITORING SYSTEM ²

There are a number of tools and templates used to monitor the progress of the implementation of the Strategic Framework. These documents have various purposes: Planning, Reporting, Self-Evaluation/Review and Information-Sharing/Promotion. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Group will meet to overview the system and identify key areas of progress/blockages to highlight for the FET Steering Group.

STEPS	PURPOSE	TEMPLATE	LEAD	FREQUENCY	Location
PLANNING					
LCETB FET Strategic Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-Annual Service-wide Planning document 	✓		5 years	StaffConnect
LCETB FET Service Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To plan provision specific work across the FET Division To present a rationale for the annual funding allocation request to SOLAS To provide projected outputs for funding request 	✓	Director of FET Managers Operations Manager Planning & Evaluation Officer	Annually	StaffConnect FARR Database
FARR Networking Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review regional LCETB FET provision to avoid duplication, identify gaps and emerging trends/issues 		FET Senior Managers	Each Term	
New FET SG Workplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Planning tool for SG focused on implementation of high level local strategies (LCETB FET SG) and national Goals (SOLAS implementation plan) 	✓	Director of FET	Once to be reviewed annually	
REPORTING					
Activity Report to CE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To keep CE & Board informed of FET progress at provision / services level To provide data for compiled FET 		All Managers/ Development Team FET Admin	Monthly	StaffConnect

² LCETB Strategic Framework Monitoring – Detailed Implementation Plan.

	Annual Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New format will facilitate thematic reports as well 				
FARR Reports	To provide updates to SOLAS/Management on actual outputs against original request	✓	Managers/ Operations Manager	Quarterly	
Annual Report	To provide an overview of the range of LCETB FET to all stakeholders	✓	Planning & Evaluation Officer	Annually	
SELF-EVALUATION /REVIEW					
M & E Framework	To identify key outcomes re. four key priority areas and corresponding indicators to monitor progress and facilitate analysis	✓	Planning & Evaluation Officer Operations Manager	Annual Baseline data	
Programme self-evaluation	To review course provision at centre level to inform course planning and delivery. <i>Potential area of duplication</i> (Programmes and QA Support Service) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learner's questionnaires ➤ Employer's questionnaires ➤ Staff questionnaire 		QA Support Service Programmes Individual centres Development Team		
Best Practice Toolkit	To gather examples of best practice for organisational learning and dissemination	✓	Staff Planning & Evaluation Officer	Ongoing	StaffConnect
INFORMATION SHARING / PROMOTION					
StaffConnect Promotion page	To gather all promotional material / logos / guidelines (e.g. LCETB, ESF, ETBI, etc.) / Images / Articles / Press releases				



LCETB FET PROVISION 2016

PART-TIME PROVISION – 19,607 beneficiaries

BTEI Groups	4,809
Community Education	4,456
Adult Literacy Groups	4,276
FET Cooperation Hours	2,038
ESOL	1,498
Evening Training	1,202
ITABE	646
Skills for Work	361
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	245
Refugee Resettlement	76

FULL-TIME PROVISION – 7,844 beneficiaries

PLC	2,612
Specific Skills Training	1,451
Apprenticeship Training	1,011
VTOS Core	895
Youthreach	568
Local Training Initiatives	512
Traineeship Training	306
Community Training Centres	218
Specialist Training Providers	192
Bridging and Foundation Training	56
Justice Workshop	23

NUMBER OF COURSE INSTANCES BY CAREER CLUSTER – 3,554

General Learning	2,581
Health, Family other Social Services	218
Information Technology	130
Business, Admin & Management	118
Art, Craft and Media	106
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	71
Manufacturing	69
Built Environment	61
Food and Beverage	39
Hairdressing, Beauty & Complementary Therapies	39
Tourism and Sport	39
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	38
Sampling Skills	11
Animal Science	10
Sales & Marketing	10
Science and Technology	10
Financial Services	2
Natural Resources	2

Charts

There are two (2) organisational charts included:

- Limerick and Clare ETB Management Organisational Chart³
- Organisational Chart of QA Governance, including each of 33 centres of Further Education and Training⁴

³ Figure 5 – LCETB FET Division Management Organisational Chart.

⁴ Figure 6 – LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance Management and Governance Structure

3. Executive Self-Evaluation Process

The Terms of Reference for the Executive Self-Evaluation (ESE) process was agreed nationally between the FET Directors and QQI. A project lead for the ESE process was assigned within Limerick and Clare ETB to co-ordinate the process. An external facilitator was identified to work with the project manager and FET management team in advising and facilitating the process. The process was outlined to the LCETB FET QA Steering Group at meetings on 13th March and 22nd June 2017, with the ESE project lead attending ETBI briefings on 31st May and 18th September. The LCETB FET Steering Group met on 2nd October to consider the draft ESE report and input into Programme Improvement plan. In parallel to this process and aligning with its objectives, an ETBI sectoral quality improvement project on Quality Assurance Governance and Management has been undertaken. ETBI external consultant, Dr. Trish O'Brien has engaged with LCETB in the form of a QA Governance and Management questionnaire, with follow up site visit to LCETB FET offices. Feedback and recommendations from this intervention form the basis for much of the ongoing reflection and realignment of LCETB governance structures, and will be referred to extensively in this report.

4. Governance, Planning and Management of Quality

Quality Assurance Governance in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division is as described by the following structure.

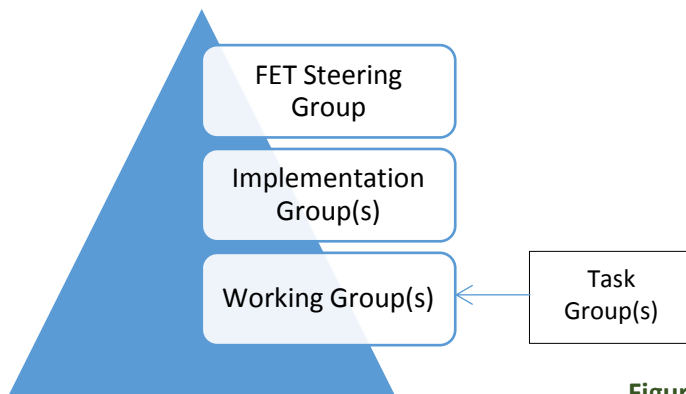


Figure 2 – LCETB Governance and Management

The FET Steering Group, comprising of LCETB FET Senior managers⁵, meets monthly. The LCETB FET QA Support Service is represented by the QA Support Officer at this meeting.

Based on feedback from the ETBI Governance and Management project, this new structure is a clearer alignment of reporting, hierarchy, oversight, decision making and approval.

Similarly, the functions of the FET Steering Group are clearly distinguished between Operational and Strategic functions. In this newly aligned structure, each FET Implementation Group will report to the FET Steering Group, with each of the Implementation Groups having associated Working Groups and Task Groups as required.

The existing and planned Implementation Groups are as follows:

- Enterprise Engagement
- Integrated Guidance
- Language, Literacy & Numeracy
- Quality Assurance
- Professional Development
- Technology Enhanced Learning

⁵ Figure 5 - LCETB FET Division Management Organisational Chart.

Purpose of Implementation Groups

- to provide leadership and make decisions on implementation priorities;
- to implement monitoring and evaluation activities to show evidence of change/impact of action plan;
- to identify barriers to implementation and report to FET Steering Group;
- to review progress and suggest changes as appropriate;
- to nominate sub-groups to manage specific projects (events, pilot projects, etc.)

Group Structure

The Implementation Group structure is designed to combine maximum involvement from a Leadership & Implementation perspective.

- each member of the FET SG will sit on a minimum of one and a maximum of 2 Implementation Groups;
- there will be an opportunity for provision / service managers to sit on one (only) Implementation Group;
- those who have key roles related to the specific Action Plans or Framework within provision / service are involved.

Membership

- Group Chair (lead person responsible for Action Plan / Framework Coordination);
- 2 members of the FET Steering Group;
- 1 - 2 Members from regional development / support roles (QA Support Service or Development Worker);
- 4 - 5 Members from provision / service managers;
- others as designated with key roles related to the specific Action Plan/Framework.

Quality Assurance in LCETB's FET Division is a multi-layered process, complying with the QQI Sector Specific Guidelines for the ETB Sector 'Given the distributed, diverse and evolving nature of ETBs, it is important that a multi-layered system be in place so that quality and its assurance is monitored in a consistent and appropriate way within and across the various constituent divisions or institutions of an ETB.'⁶

- **Teaching and Learning - Centre Level**
Tutor/teacher/instructor and learner, with communication, instruction, teaching, assessment briefs, marking schemes, assessment, feedback, portfolio preparation and submission, etc.
- **Centre QA Management Level**
Selection, Recruitment, Induction, Assessment planning, portfolio receipt, QBS entry, Internal Verification management, External Authentication coordination, Results Approval Panel, Learner results notification, Appeals, staff allocation and development, self-evaluation
- **Cross-Centre QA Functions**
Programme development, Communities of Practice, central appeals, common EA panel, CPD schedule, Self-Evaluation process, Monitoring and self-improvement, etc.
- **LCETB Quality Assurance Support Service**
Develops, implements, manages, supports all cross-centre and centre level QA activities, monitoring, reviewing and improving quality of service and provision.
- **LCETB FET Implementation Groups and FET Steering Group**
Corporate planning, oversight, governance. Considers LCETB quality provision, reviewing monitoring, self-evaluation, certification, risk factors, critical indicators.

⁶ QQI Sector Specific QA Guidelines for ETB Sector (page 5) -

<https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Sector%20specific%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20ETBs.pdf>

Governance and Management of Quality

1. Quality Assurance Support Service
2. Quality Assurance Implementation Group
3. Quality Assurance Working Groups

1. Quality Assurance Support Service⁷

LCETB's FET QA Support Service was established in September 2016, with the recruitment of three Quality Assurance Support Officers with the broad role responsibility of (a) to provide regional QA support to LCETB centres, colleges and schools, and (b) to provide development and management support for cross-centre LCETB Quality Assurance processes.

Managed by the LCETB FET Quality Assurance Officer, the QA Support Service has as its goal 'to develop, implement and monitor an effective, integrated Quality Assurance system for all LCETB Further Education and Training provision'.

LCETB's FET Division is the amalgamation of 33 centres, representing seven former FETAC providers, including two training centres operating under TQAS (Transitional Quality Assurance System).

Examples of Quality Assurance Initiatives Undertaken by LCETB's QA Support Service in 2016/17

- Centre queries
 - Responding as point of contact for all centre, programme and tutor specific queries.
- Staff Professional Development
 - Staff Day briefings including rollout of assessment templates - 8 sessions to 173 staff;
 - Assessing learner evidence in FET - 14 sessions to 166 staff;
 - New Work Experience Modules - 4 sessions to 61 staff;
 - Internal Verifier Training - 5 sessions to 22 staff;
 - QA Induction for new tutors - 3 sessions to 12 staff.
- Module specific consistency of practice workshops
 - Healthcare Modules (briefing session on best practice from experienced External Authenticator);
 - Work Experience Modules;
 - Infection Prevention and Control Module.
- External Authentication
 - Direct management of External Authentication process for FE centres in Limerick City and Clare;
 - Introduction of online estimate posting for all FE Centres, including Co. Limerick;
 - Addition (in June 2017) of indirect management (collating estimates, standardising process, recruiting EA's) of FE centres in Co. Limerick.
- Results Approval
 - Standardisation of RAP processes and chairing meetings for Centres in Limerick City & County and Clare;
 - Attendance at all RAP meetings, including Training Centres and LCFE (the LCETB Centres that QA Support Service as yet not directly recruiting EAs);
 - Collation of all feedback from EA reports and RAP meetings, feedback to QA Steering Group, improvement initiatives for action by QA Support Service.

⁷ LCETB Quality Management System – Governance Structure (January 2016)

- External Appeals
 - Management of External Appeals process for all LCETB FET Centres.
- Assessment procedures working group
 - Two QA Support Officers are members of the ETBI Assessment Procedures Working Group.
- Assessment Templates
 - Consolidation of all assessment templates agreed at Assessment templates Working Group meetings and implemented across all Further Education Centres in September 2017.
- Module Descriptor Review
 - Review and consolidation of all LCETB level 5 and 6 module descriptors, single version of descriptors for all Further Education Centres, streamlining of Individual Candidate Marking Sheet signatures.
- FET SharePoint site Update
 - Aligning with FET update of *StaffConnect* SharePoint site, LCETB Quality Assurance site documentation update.

2. Quality Assurance Implementation Group

LCETB's FET QA Implementation Group is a new governance structure to replace the FET QA Steering Group following advice from ETBI's Management and Governance project.

The FET QA Implementation Group's Terms of Reference are as outlined in Appendix 4.⁸

The LCETB FET Quality Assurance Implementation Group is responsible for:

Providing overall strategic direction for quality assurance

- Setting direction of LCETB Quality Assurance Unit as appropriate in Legislative, National and Local contexts;
- Directing Quality Assurance Policy, Procedure and Process development;
- Ensuring review of LCETB quality policies on an 'as required' basis for two years from the implementation of the policy. This will change to an annual review when adoption of the policy meets the levels set by the Steering Group.

Governance of LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance system

- Oversight of the implementation of procedures for the assessment of learners to ensure fairness, consistency and fitness-for-purpose and monitor this at centre level and at ETB level;
- Promotion of quality teaching and learning in all relevant learning environments;
- Ensuring the reliability and integrity of learner records and results of learner assessment;
- Protection the integrity of academic processes and standards.

Systems of Self-Evaluation and Monitoring

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of self-evaluation and monitoring procedures;
- Considering risk;
- Overseeing quality assurance activity to ensure that protocol is followed and provide advice and troubleshoot where necessary;
- Ensuring that the requirements set out in LCETB quality policies are complied with;
- Assigning actions for improvement to individuals and groups who have been assigned responsibility for quality assurance;
- Ensuring effective communication across LCETB quality stakeholders.

⁸ Appendix 3 - LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms of Reference

The Group has met on two occasions in 2017, 13th March and 22nd June.

3. Quality Assurance Working Groups⁹

LCETB FET QA Working Groups provide a structured mechanism and forum for communication between LCETB's FET Steering Group, LCETB FET Implementation Group(s), LCETB FET QA Support Service and LCETB FET Centres.

The LCETB FET Quality Assurance Working Groups role is to –

- Inform and direct all LCETB centres on recent updates, activities, developments, priorities;
- Provide a forum for:
 - LCETB FET QA centres to communicate, query and inform QA Support Service and QA Implementation Group on local QA Implementation initiatives and challenges;
 - Communication forum on Quality Assurance Issues between
 - LCETB FET Steering Group
 - LCETB FET Implementation Group(s)
 - LCETB FET Quality Assurance Support Service
 - LCETB FET Centres
 - Communication and dissemination on National and LCETB policies.
 - Collaboration and scheduling on cross centre QA initiatives
 - Function specific (e.g. Internal Verification or External Authentication)
 - Programme Specific (e.g. programme development or review)
 - Resource development (e.g. handbooks, templates)
 - Supports (e.g. communities of practice)
 - CPD (e.g. LCETB directed QA training & centre/individual requirements)

County Limerick QA Working Group	County Clare QA Working Group	Limerick City QA Working Group
FET Centre, Abbeyfeale Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - BTEI	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - BTEI
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Literacy (CABES)	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - BTEI (Upskill Workplace)
FET Centre, Newcastlewest Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Community Education	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Literacy
FET Centre, Cappamore Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.		FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Community Education
FET Centre, Dromcollogher Campus - An tIonad Glas PLC & VTOS	FET Centre, Ennis Campus - Ennis Community College PLC	FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus - LCFE PLC
FET Centre, Croom Campus - Colaiste Ciarán PLC	FET Centre, Ennistymon Campus - Ennistymon PLC	FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus - LCFE Evening
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - Colaiste Iosaef PLC		
FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus - VTOS
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Kilrush Campus - VTOS	
	FET Centre, Scariff Campus - VTOS	FET Centre - Prison Education
FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Kilrush Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Miltown Malbay Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Watch House Cross Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Tuamgraney Campus - Youthreach	
	FET Centre, Shannon Smithstown Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre - Hospitality Education and Training
FET Centre, Raheen Business Park Campus	FET Centre, Shannon Industrial Estate Campus	Training Services - Contracted and Community Training
LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team	LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team	LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team

Areas for Improvement

- Implement newly defined QA Implementation Group to replace current QA Steering Group structure – update Terms of Reference;
- Formalise communication policies and processes in relation to Quality Assurance; roles, procedures, methodologies, schedules, recording, reporting;

⁹ Appendix 4 - LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Terms of Reference

- Develop processes and procedures related to LCETB City & Guilds SuperCentre Provider registration, aligned to existing QA Governance and Management system.

5. Delivery of FET

Programme design, development, approval, monitoring and review

LCETB Programme Delivery Request, Development & Validation Policy¹⁰ establishes the Terms of Reference for the LCETB Programme Group. The policy has been devised to ensure that LCETB has a robust governance process in place to deal with programme delivery, development and validation requests and to ensure that LCETB complies with the requirements of the QQI Sector Specific Guidelines 'An ETB is responsible for the design, development, approval, monitoring and review of all programmes, including programmes leading to QQI awards'¹¹.

An LCETB centre must submit a '*Programme Request Proposal Form*' for approval to the LCETB Programme Group where it plans to:

- access and deliver existing validated programmes/modules/awards for the first time;
- access and deliver existing validated programmes/awards where that programme has not been delivered in-centre for the past three years;
- develop new programmes/modules for validation with a view to their delivery;
- request to develop a shared programme;
- request to participate in the development of a joint programme/module.

The proposal must contain a 'Needs Identification' which outlines a rationale for the programme such as:

- how it might be meeting learner needs, national and/or local skills needs, an educational need in community etc.;
- evidence of how the programme fulfils national policy recommendations e.g. in terms of activation, active inclusion etc.;
- evidence of stakeholder engagement e.g. employer engagement in identifying local skills needs, engagement in programme development, review etc.;
- identification of the award that best meets the needs of the programme;
- staffing requirements;
- funding requirements;
- development requirements.

Meeting six times per year, the programme group is scheduled to provide timely decision making for centres, ensuring centres can respond effectively to labour market demands.

Programme request approvals are closely linked to the functions of the QA Support Service, with associated centre visits, staff professional development, verification of specific validation requirements.

Reviewing the immediate history of the programme group, since January 2016 the group has met 10 times, approving 58 programme requests, with 7 programme requests not approved.

¹⁰ Appendix 2 - LCETB Programme Delivery, Development and Validation Policy

¹¹ QQI Sector Specific QA Guidelines for ETB Sector -

<https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Sector%20specific%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20ETBs.pdf>

Programme Development

Limerick and Clare ETB works collaboratively with other ETBs, ETBI and the Further Education Support Service whenever possible to develop new programmes. This allows for a sharing of expertise and helps to maintain a national standard for the award.

Programme development is limited at present. Individual programme module development is coordinated by the LCETB QA Support Service. As progress is made with the QQI process of reviewing its award standards, there will be an increase in programme development activity across the ETB sector.

Limerick and Clare ETB has validations for multiple programmes leading to the same awards at levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. These exist as former VEC and FÁS providers in Clare, Limerick City and Limerick County had developed their own individual programmes at these levels.

Programme Review

Limerick and Clare ETB does not have a periodic review schedule for programmes at ETB level to ensure that programmes remain appropriate and are achieving their objective.

Individual requests are communicated to the LCETB QA Support Service for review and update of specific modules as required.

Compliance with Section 9.2.3, General Conditions, of QQI Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training (April 2016)¹², which lists the 12 general conditions (in addition to the statutory conditions of validation, section 9.1) will require explicit procedure and process updates to ensure all conditions of programme validation are adhered to.

Areas for Improvement

- Review of role of Programme Group, process of new programme application submission, management of programme planning, formalising QA follow up to approved centres and programmes, QQI notifications.
- Multiple versions of programmes at lower levels across LCETB regions – need to develop single programmes. Relying on QQI completion of Awards Standards review.
- Programme review cycle to be developed, formalise evaluation and review of validated programmes.

Assessment of Learners - Policy and Procedures

LCETB's FET Division is an amalgamation of seven (7) former FETAC providers, consisting of 33 individual centres of Further Education and Training.

All LCETB FET centres have agreed policies and procedures in relation to assessment of learners, these have all been adopted as LCETB procedures as part of the regularisation agreement between QQI and LCETB.

LCETB's FET Division works closely with the National QA Initiatives as established by ETBI and are working towards developing a common set of QA policies and procedures, with an aim to "Develop and Implement a

¹² https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Initial_Validation_policy_7_10_13.pdf

structured LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance system that demonstrates our commitment to quality standards and continuous improvement.

Developments to integrate LCETB FET QA policies has included such actions as:

- Co-ordinated approach to staff development between QA Support Service and FET Professional Development Officer, resulting in a comprehensive suite of staff professional development being offered;
- Introduction of Moodle and Digital Badges to distribute development courses and award staff for attendance at professional development events;
- Structured QA management and governance processes including publication of Terms of Reference for QA Implementation Group and QA Working Groups;
- Streamlining assessment processes by:
 - Standardising assessment templates;
 - Introducing single versions of module descriptors for all level 5 and 6 modules;
 - Standardising External Authentication process and Results Approval Process;
 - Managing a single learner appeals process;
 - Developing communities of practice for developing exemplars of assessment;
 - Inputting into ETBI Assessment procedures working group.

LCETB are committed to developing a single set of QA policies for all FET centres, incorporating all National and International Awarding Bodies. These sets of policies will be developed into context specific policies appropriate to the nature of provision, in line with the recommendation from the QQI Sector Specific Guidelines “While taking on board the individual context of each ETB, quality assurance procedures established will have regard to ETB sectoral policies and frameworks established by ETBI to ensure commonality and consistency of approach across the sector.”¹³

LCETB have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with City & Guilds to realign the three existing City & Guilds providers as part of an LCETB SuperCentre QA management structure, with the LCETB QA Governance and Management structures managing all City & Guilds quality assurance across these centres and associated satellite centres.

Areas for Improvement

- Integration of training centre TQAS policies and former VEC policies into one agreed set of policies for LCETB;
- From a common set of LCETB QA policies, agree provision appropriate procedures across centres.

¹³ QQI Sector Specific QA Guidelines for ETB Sector (page 5)-
<https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Sector%20specific%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20ETBs.pdf>

Consistency of Assessment

Consistency of Assessment is considered an area of critical importance and continues to inform the priorities of LCETB's QA Support Service.

As presented at an LCETB QA conference in February 2016, 'Ensuring Consistency of Assessment across Multi-Centre Provision', analysis of certification results data showed a significant variance in achievement of results in centres across the ETB, over 30% variance was observed.

The following table, as completed by LCETB's QA Officer as part of a case study developed by a working group to develop resources for EQAVET+¹⁴ 'Assuring a consistent approach to assessment', outlines the actors and actions initiated to develop more consistent certification processes.

Potential Causes	Solutions put in place
The centres were using different versions of the module descriptors	Common versions of module descriptors put in place
The centres were using different versions of the assessment documents	Development of common assessment documentation for all FET centres
The amount of continuing professional development (CPD) which had been provided for tutors	Development and delivery of common CPD on Quality Assurance to all staff – with an initial focus on assessment standards
The centres used different mechanisms to set standards in relation to assessment	Establishment of Communities of Practice - tutors from common fields developed materials to show good practice in assessment
Communication and instructions provided by each centre to their external moderators	Development of a common communication system to recruit all external moderators. The Quality Assurance Support Service managed the recruitment and allocation of external moderators
The quality of the feedback from external moderators	Development of a consistent approach (and standards) to feedback from the external moderators to tutors
Different approaches to quality assure a proposal to change a centre's provision	The LCETB Programme Group was established - this managed centre approvals, identified and managed quality assurance risks
The centres used different mechanisms to ensure the reliability, integrity and results of learner assessment. There were different ways to protect the integrity of academic processes and standards	The LCETB Quality Assurance Implementation Group reviewed the academic results to identify trends and developed a set of themes which emerged from the external moderators' reports and centres' examination panels
The centres used different approaches to communicate with centre managers, quality assurance and assessment staff	The LCETB's Quality Assurance Working Groups established formal communications between the Quality Assurance Support Service and centre staff. This included regular updates on national and local quality assurance issues

The conclusion of the case study is relevant *"It is now evident that significant changes and support is required if the organisation wishes to guarantee the validity of assessment of learning outcomes in each centre. The process*

¹⁴ http://www.eqavet.eu/qc/gns/case-studies/all-case-studies/ireland/17-05-15/Ireland_-_Assuring_a_consistent_approach_to_assessment.aspx

of using valid, accurate and reliable assessment processes to measure learner outcomes is critical to the quality of learners' experience, employer confidence and staff satisfaction. Effective processes increase transparency in the ETB. Open engagement with the data and a focus on quality factors support staff at the programme and organisational level. The process of collecting data; collating information and analysing the results has resulted in significant organisational learning and increased awareness and understanding of provider-owned quality assurance at all levels in the organisation."

Areas for Improvement

- Development of LCETB exemplars of assessment evidence, briefs, marking schemes, exams, outline solutions in programme thematic areas;
- Formalised structure and process for analysing EA and RAP reports, data derived critical indicators, automated reporting systems;
- External Authentication Process is critical to ensuring consistency of assessment. Development and implementation of the revised process by ETBI.

Staff Recruitment and Development

LCETB has recruitment policies and procedures in place, managed by a Human Resources Department in line with nationally agreed policies and procedures.

LCETB-level QA oversight of staff qualifications with respect to modules taught currently exists in the context of approval for validation of new programmes, where the centre manager is asked to state the qualifications of staff who will be delivering the module, or else state that delivery will only commence once appropriately qualified staff are hired. However, a similar mechanism is not yet in place where approval to run a course is being sought by a centre for a previously validated programme.

Identification of staff professional development needs remains at centre manager control or self-declaration of need. There is no formalised method, for example, to automatically identify new tutor QA induction training from QA Support Service.

LCETB QA CPD as supported and delivered by the QA Support Service is detailed earlier in this report, is extensive in its scope and breadth of provision, and is a testament to the value of a resourced ETB Quality Assurance Support Service.

These systems are in place to comply with QQI Core Statutory QA guidelines section 4.3, Staff Development 'Staff members have access to support and opportunities for development based on a systematic approach to the identification of their continuing professional training and development needs. An internal system of support for newly-qualified staff, or staff with minimal experience, is documented and in operation. A mechanism is in place to impart feedback to staff members on their strengths and on areas requiring improvement. Planning and resources are committed to identifying and addressing staff training needs.'¹⁵

¹⁵ <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

Areas for Improvement

- Automatic notification of new staff recruitment to QA Support Service for QA induction Training;
- Formalised tutor mentor process, to have trained tutors as mentor to new tutors, with roles and responsibilities agreed;
- Competency matrix of existing staff to manage qualifications of staff to deliver programmes, both subject specific knowledge and core QA competencies.

Technology Enhanced Learning

Attached extract from introduction to LCETB's Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan 2017 – 2020¹⁶ as developed by LCETB's Learning Technology Development Officer.

'This LCETB Further Education and Training Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Action Plan (2017 – 2020) has been informed by a number of key European, National and LCETB strategies. At EU Policy level, the Digital Agenda for Europe proposes to 'better exploit the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in order to foster innovation, economic growth and progress' with pillar six of the agenda focused on 'promoting digital literacy, skills and inclusion'. The Irish Governments' Action Plan for Education sets out an ambition that Ireland will be best in Europe at 'equipping learners of all ages and capacities to participate and succeed in a changing world'.

The recently published national Strategy for Technology Enhanced Learning in Further Education and Training (SOLAS) defines TEL as 'using technology to facilitate and support innovative teaching and learning practices' and sets out a vision where 'by 2019 Technology enhanced teaching and learning is providing greater access to Further Education and Training and is achieving positive outcomes for learners, enterprise, and our wider society and economy'. It sets out eighteen actions under three themes including the development of 'action plans within each ETB' (Action 1.3).

The LCETB FET Service Strategic Framework (2015 – 2020) defines our core purpose as the provision of 'relevant and innovative further education and training opportunities that address the needs and aspirations of our learners, local communities and employers'. We are currently living in an age of globalisation and whilst this brings many benefits, the OECD in a recent publication emphasised how it also 'contributes to economic inequality and social division' and have highlighted a need for 'curricula to be comprehensive, interdisciplinary and responsive to an explosion of scientific and technological knowledge'.

It is therefore essential that we strategically develop our provision to enable our learners to thrive in the digital age.

This Action Plan therefore sets out to ensure that LCETB FET programmes and services are enabled and supported to effectively use existing, new and emerging technologies to deliver the highest quality learning opportunities to all our learners'.

The Plan details 27 Actions under 4 Themes namely:

1. *Staff and Learners' digital capacity*
2. *TEL Infrastructure*
3. *Internal resource sharing and collaboration*
4. *External partnerships*

¹⁶ LCETB FET Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan 2017-2020

6. Learner Recognition and the Learner Experience

Learner Admission

Management of learner admissions policies and procedures remain at centre level across LCETB centres. Single admissions policy or agreed procedures at LCETB level have not been defined. Centres continue to operate previously approved procedures in relation to learner admissions, with local variances in approach to advertising, information, interview, pre-entry assessment, English language testing as appropriate. Best practice in the context of centre provision, appropriate to the literacy/technical/vocational/etc. needs of the target cohort. Development of LCETB policy is required, complying with the requirements of the QQI Core Statutory QA guidelines Section 3.2, Learner admission, progression and recognition “Access policies, admission processes and criteria are established and implemented consistently and in a transparent manner and in accordance with national policies and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP).”¹⁷

It is expected that any learner seeking to access a particular course would have knowledge, skills and competencies at the level of the NFQ detailed in the programme descriptor for access on to that programme. Depending on the centre, it is the responsibility of the course coordinator or other identified staff member, to determine that the learner has the knowledge, skill and competence to successfully participate on the course. Typically, prospective learners would attend an interview to assess their suitability for the course for which they are applying. The admissions interview is conducted by the course coordinator or an experienced teacher on the course. The purpose of the interview is to assess whether the learner meets the entry criteria for the course where these exist, or to facilitate the learner to find the course most suitable for their needs. Further, course specific, information will be given to learners upon entry to the course.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

LCETB does not currently have agreed quality assured processes to support the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for any purpose other than access, as outlined above. Where a learner has previously achieved a non-CAS module that has been migrated to a component listed in the programme structure (i.e. old FETAC/NCVA) that is not more than 5 years old, they may receive an exemption from that module. Applications for exemptions using certified learning from other non-CAS awards will be processed in line with the QQI list of exemptions.

LCETB is currently involved in two RPL pilot projects: VISKA Erasmus + project supported by ETBI and QQI, and the other a national RPL project with Defence Force personnel with low qualification levels. Both projects aim to facilitate learners to achieve certification for their non-formal and informal learning. It is anticipated that the learning from these pilot projects will inform the development of an RPL policy in the future.

Learner Information and Guidance

All LCETB learners will receive an induction session/s in which they receive general information about the centre, as well as course-specific information such as modules to be covered, the course calendar and timetable, assessments and assessment deadlines, centre attendance policies and procedures, assessment policies and procedures, supports available to learners, SUSI grants, code of conduct, complaints procedure and other relevant information. These inductions session will be facilitated and managed by the local centre.

Throughout the course, learners are kept informed of activities and assessment requirements through briefs distributed in class, course notice boards, and where available, through a VLE.

Upon receiving notification of final results, learners are informed of their right to appeal their grade in accordance with the LCETB Appeals Policy.

¹⁷ <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

Learner Supports

Learners are encouraged, upon application for admission, to disclose any special needs or disabilities they may have, in order that appropriate supports or reasonable accommodations may be put in place. Where such a disclosure is made, an appropriate staff member will meet the learner to discuss the nature of the supports that may be required. Depending on the nature of those supports, and the centre in which the course is being delivered, that staff member may be the centre manager/deputy centre manager, guidance counsellor, the FE/course coordinator, or the class tutor. The nature of the supports may involve application for a HEA grant in the context of an FE learner (e.g. for laptop, Lightscribe pen, sign language interpreter etc.) and other reasonable accommodations, such as extra time in an exam.

New guidelines around reasonable accommodations are being developed by the ETBI Assessment Procedures Working Group, and these will inform the development of the common LCETB policy on reasonable accommodations.

Every reasonable effort is made to support learners with differences, either before admission or once they have started on the course. Such differences might include prior learning or experience, maturity, differing capabilities or other. In this case, the supports needed will be agreed in consultation with the learner, and could include one-to-one learning supports around additional literacy or maths needs, or other additional tutoring where this may be required. However, it is acknowledged that not all support needs may be able to be met within the physical, financial and staffing restrictions within which the centre and LCETB must operate.

Development of LCETB's 'Framework for the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ILLN)'¹⁸ is core to the vision and core purpose of the LCETB FET Division, with the aim of the framework defined as "The LCETB FET service provides a diverse range of education and training options, our learners are young people and adults of all ages, full-time and part-time, based in classrooms, the community, workplaces or at home. The LCETB FET Framework for the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) is part of a wider strategy to 'increase levels of active inclusion through the provision of high-quality, more accessible and flexible education, training and development interventions and supports to suit the individual' (SOLAS, p.91).

'Active inclusion means enabling every citizen, notably the most disadvantaged, to fully participate in society, including having a job.' (SOLAS, p. 91) In a further education context, 'active inclusion' means enabling every learner to fully participate in the educational opportunities available to them. Since language, literacy and numeracy skills are essential to all areas of learning, it is necessary to ensure that literacy and numeracy interventions and supports are available to all learners.

The LCETB Framework for the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) outlines our approach to providing language, literacy and numeracy interventions and supports to meet the needs of all learners who participate in the programme strands that comprise the LCETB FET sector education and training opportunities. These interventions and supports aim to:

- Increase access to education, training and skill development opportunities by introducing language, literacy and numeracy supports across all programmes;
- Increase levels of active inclusion by improving learner engagement, participation and achievement;
- Strengthen learner resilience by better preparing learners for further education, employment and career mobility."

¹⁸ Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Further Education & Training Framework for the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ILLN) – December 2016

Learner Feedback

Learner feedback is an essential element to the life cycle of a course within LCETB. Feedback is sought for the significant majority courses through mid-term and end-of-term evaluations, and the information gathered can be used to address issues arising throughout the course, and informs future iterations of the course, e.g. with respect to module choice etc., as well as new course development. In addition, learners can raise any concerns or feedback they may have with either the course tutor or course coordinator at any time between the formal feedback opportunities.

Currently, other than those grievances that are highlighted through centre management structures, there is no process to review learner feedback at LCETB-level on a systematic basis.

Areas for Improvement

- development of a single admissions policy and agreed procedures for learner admission across all LCETB centres;
 - agreed template for advertising and promotion of courses, in media and on PLSS/FETCH Courses descriptions;
 - development of LCETB RPL processes following on from learning from VISKA and defence forces projects;
 - national agreement from reasonable accommodation procedures as devised by assessment procedures working group;
 - development and implementation of learner feedback process, on an ETB-wide systematic basis, as part of the overall LCETB self-evaluation process.
-

7. Information and Data Management

Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS)

PLSS is a national SOLAS/ETBI initiative and data is hosted by SOLAS. The system incorporates the National Programme Database, the National Course Calendar, National Learner Database, and Funding Allocation Requests and Reporting (FARR) system. It is in the third year of its rollout, with a focus on on-going collaborative development and improvements nationally.

LCETB's rollout of PLSS means that centres plan courses annually on FARR; they schedule courses on the National Course Calendar; they manage applicant referrals and direct applications to their courses, and they record retention, completion, accreditation, and progression rates on those courses. As the Learner Database is rolled out, and learner records are entered, these will remain available for historical purposes. Older records will remain available through legacy databases such as Salespulse for VEC provision, and DCS for self-financing hobby and leisure courses.

Other Data Management and Information Storage Systems

LCETB uses a range of other data management systems in addition to the ones mentioned above, such as the QBS (QQI Business Systems) used by former VEC centres to enter learners for certification, and the RCCRS (Results Capture and Certification Request System), which used in training centres to upload results on to QBS, and still being done through SOLAS. The training centres also use AppClient Management System for apprenticeship programmes and SAP for administration and reporting purposes.

The StaffConnect SharePoint site is available to all staff in all LCETB, and host the latest versions of programme and module descriptors, assessment resources, coordinators resources, and all templates and policies that have been revised since amalgamation, and are common across LCETB.

The CAMS (Centralised Assessment Management System) used by the training centres, for storage of and access to assessment instruments. A decision with respect to the future of AISs and the CAMS will be made at ETBI level.

Moodle is available to all LCETB centres through SOLAS, and is currently in use in many centres, particularly those in further education, as well as for the apprenticeship programmes in the training centres.

8. Collaborations and Stakeholder Relationships

LCETB is involved in a number of collaborative projects throughout Limerick and Clare. LCETB works collaboratively with Employers, Community/Voluntary Groups, Contracted Training, Other Providers, Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP), European FET projects etc.

[Clare Local Development Company](#), Paul Partnership in Limerick City, Limerick Community Education Network, West Limerick Resources Ltd., Ballyhoura Development are some of the community partnerships that have been developed.

The Learning Limerick collaboration culminated in Limerick receiving a UNESCO Learning City award (2017) in recognition of its partnership approach to building an inclusive lifelong learning framework in the City incorporating . communities, further education and training and higher education. LCETB was recognised for promoting inclusive learning from core skills to higher education; revitalizing learning in communities and families and providing effective learning for and in the workplace:

LCETB is a partner with Limerick and Clare County Councils in the delivery of the Age Friendly Strategies and Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP). The age friendly strategies promotes provision of lifelong learning opportunities for adults contributing to the decline of rural isolation and an increase in positive active age projects with libraries, sports partnerships etc.

LECP sees LCETB work collaboratively with SICAP and DEASP on two themes:

- Economic Development, Employment and Enterprise-Providing the county's adult population with relevant education/training to increase their qualifications/skills to compete for job opportunities (p. 40).
- Quality of Life, Health and Wellbeing.

9. Apprenticeships/Traineeships & Work Based Learning

Craft Trade Apprenticeships

The FET Centre, Raheen Campus and the FET Centre, Shannon Campus offers craft apprenticeship / trade training in the areas of:

- Aircraft Mechanics
- Brick and Stonelaying
- Carpentry & Joinery
- Electrical
- Electrical Instrumentation
- Mechanical Automation
- Metal Fabrication
- Motor Mechanics
- Plastering
- Plumbing
- Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
- Toolmaking
- Wood Manufacturing and Finishing

New Apprenticeships

Limerick and Clare ETB is a collaborating provider with Kerry ETB in the delivery of the new 'Commis Chef' Apprenticeship programme which will be delivered in the Hospitality Education and Training Centre, Roxboro, Limerick City.

Traineeships

Limerick and Clare ETB works very closely with the Innovation Unit, SOLAS, and other ETBs in designing Career Traineeships. Currently, LCETB offers the Career Traineeship in 'Food & Beverage' and is participating in a working group to develop a Career Traineeship in 'Digital Sales and Marketing'.

Work Based Learning Initiatives

LCETB's Director of Further Education and Training and the Enterprise Engagement Manager is a member of the SOLAS Working Group to develop a national 'Employee Development Framework'. This framework has identified different elements of FET provision to develop work-based learning initiatives. LCETB will soon publish its 'Enterprise Engagement Implementation Plan'.

10. Conclusions and Planned Actions (Improvement Plan)

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training's vision and approach to develop capacity and provide resources to the areas of quality assurance is evident in the establishment of the LCETB QA Support Service and the appointment of three QA Support Officers to support the LCETB QA Officer. This support service is unique to LCETB within the sector and is a testament to the considerable managerial support and the culture of Quality Assurance within LCETB.

LCETB's FET Division had established Quality Assurance Governance processes – FET Senior Management Team, FET Steering Group, Quality Assurance Steering Group and Implementation Groups, Programme Group and associated terms of reference. This Executive Self Evaluation Process, considering the Core and ETB Sector Specific Guidelines and the Validation Policy, in conjunction with the ETBI QA initiative on governance and the MOU with City & Guilds has led to a review of these structures, with further actions identified to implement and review these structures and terms of reference.

Consistency of assessment in multi-centre provision, and the unique challenges this presents in a post-amalgamation environment has been of core focus for the LCETB QA Support Service since its inception in September 2016. Significant progress has been achieved thus far, and there are a number of specific initiatives identified in this report which will advance the process further, such as: marking seminars and assessment exemplars; implementation of agreed procedures, input and rollout of revised external authentication process; and importantly, development of system to monitor and flag critical quality indicators.

Closely linked to the previous point, staff professional development continues to be of critical importance. Tutor and Teacher autonomy to devise assessment instruments, deliver education and training material, then assess and judge learner evidence has the competence of the assessor as its core, specifically in the further education environment without a centralised system of standardised assessments and an external assessment process. Staff Professional Development in relation quality assurance has been extensive to-date, and this report identifies a number of areas in which the identification of need, analysis of competence, process of delivery and evaluation of effectiveness is implemented.

Development of LCETB level Quality Assurance policies, then adopting these policies in the form of provision specific procedures has been identified through the analysis process of this report. National QA procedure development has recently been focussed on assessment procedures as a result of risk analysis conducted by an ETBI QA working Group, and the QA policy areas of Communication (both internal and external), and also of Access, Transfer and Progression have as yet to be reviewed. Within LCETB there are a number of legacy policies and procedures in relation to these and other quality assurance areas, and in the current post-amalgamation environment, the agreement, consideration of QA guidelines and National policies, approval process for local provision specific procedures has been identified as an area of focus. It is envisaged that the identification of such policy development initiatives by individual ETBs will input into a National initiative of policy development for the ETB sector.

Programmes of Education and Training, as referenced both in the Sector Specific Guidelines for the ETB sector and the Validation policy, set ambitious goals for the ETBs, for example in the responsibility for the "design, development, approval, monitoring, and review of all programmes, including programmes leading to QQI awards.... quality reviews of staff performance, training, academic, administrative and service areas or units as appropriate in all constituent centres and colleges." Again referencing the post-amalgamation environment of the VEC/ETB sector, a fit-for-purpose process to replace the legacy programme approval processes, review and consolidation of validated programmes, ETB wide self-

evaluation, provider owned monitoring processes are all desirable, if aspirational in the timeframe of improvement actions related to this report. A number of improvement initiatives have been identified to begin progressing this work.

In conclusion, this has been an interesting and very useful process, reflective and thought provoking. It has resulted in a comprehensive executive level self-evaluation of the approaches and systems relating to quality assurance in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. The resulting Quality Improvement Plan will provide strategic direction to quality enhancements initiatives for the period to December 2018.

Figure 3 – QQI Infographics Data of LCETB Certifications 2016



Figure 4 – QQI Certificatoin history by LCETB FET Centre, 2015 and 2016

	Major 2015	Comp 2015	Major 2016	Comp 2016			Major 2015	Comp 2015	Major 2016	Comp 2016
FET Centre, Clonroad Campus	109	359	39	246		FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus	522	304	639	259
FET Centre, Abbeyfeale Campus	25	217	29	109		FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus	43	1,069	58	1,316
FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus	19	214	18	267		FET Centre, Ennis Campus	78	33	57	34
FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus	18	44	17	39		FET Centre, Croom Campus	38	14	31	18
						FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus	32	15	34	8
FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus	43	210	31	277		FET Centre, Dromcollogher Campus	28	35	23	46
FET Centre, Clonroad Campus	24	342	12	343		FET Centre, Ennistymon Campus	7	3	10	6
FET Centre, Newcastlewest Campus	21	34	17	61		St Michaels Community College	57	30		
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus	19	99	13	171		Saint John Boscoss Community College, Kildysart	10	2	4	3
FET Centre - Prison Education	0	27	0	19		FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus	56	115	50	140
						FET Centre, Clonroad Campus	29	64	24	60
Training Services - Contracted and Community Training	1,379	452	1,242	467		FET Centre, Kilrush Campus	19	48	18	47
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	110	554	90	515		FET Centre, Scariff Campus	8	22	7	21
FET Centre, Shannon Industrial Estate Campus	90	230	94	184		FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus	7	12	30	17
						FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus	6	12	8	8
						FET Centre, Clonroad Campus	10	6	14	6
						FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus	9	18	8	14
						FET Centre, Kilrush Campus	5	7	4	7
2015 Total	2,833	4,628				FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus	4	8	4	4
2016 Total			2,631	4,724		FET Centre, Shannon Smithstown Campus	4	0	4	2
						FET Centre, Miltown Malbay Campus	2	3	2	0
		7,461		7,355		FET Centre, Watch House Cross Campus	2	20	0	5
						FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus	0	6	0	5

Figure 5 – LCETB FET Division Management Organisational Chart.

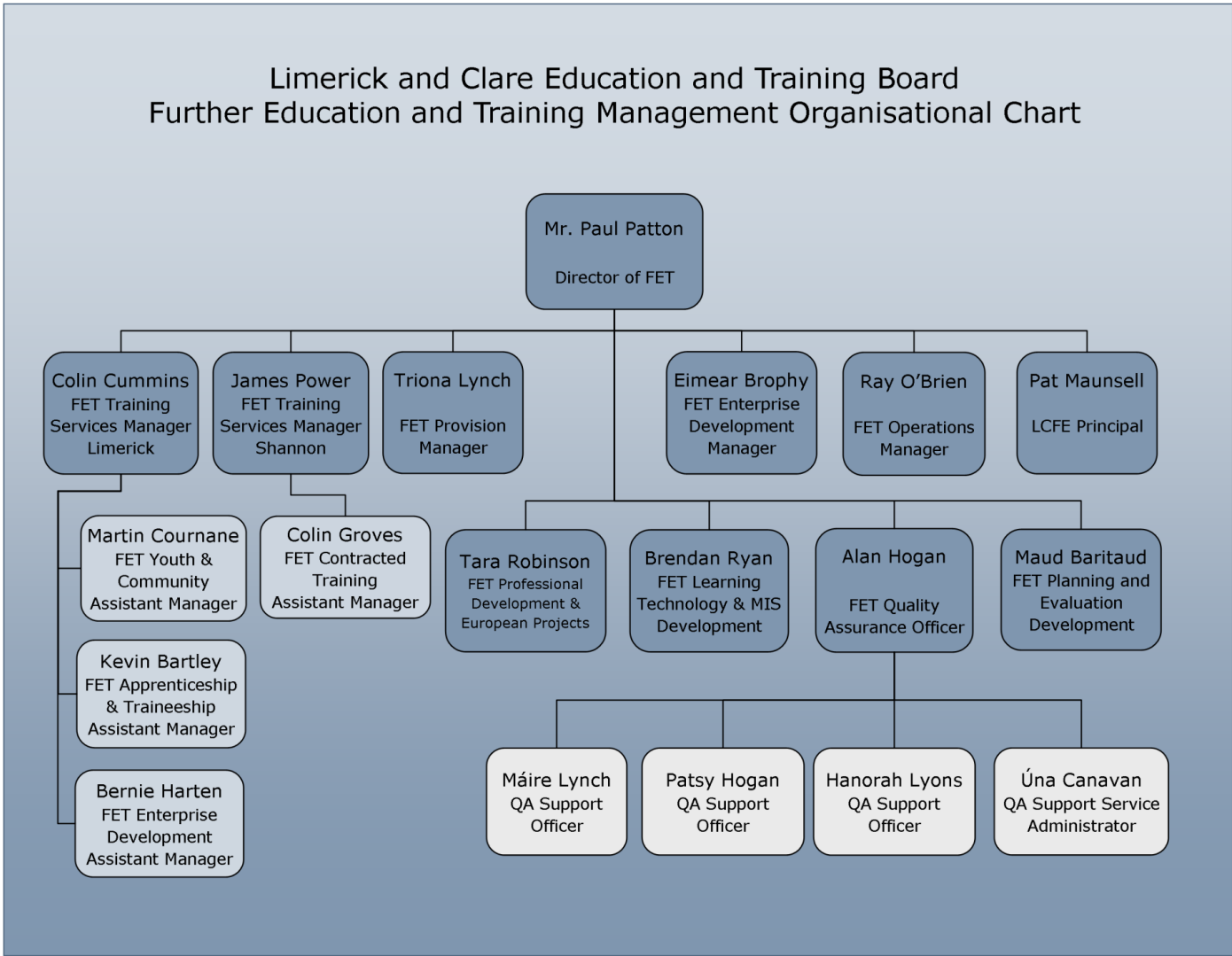
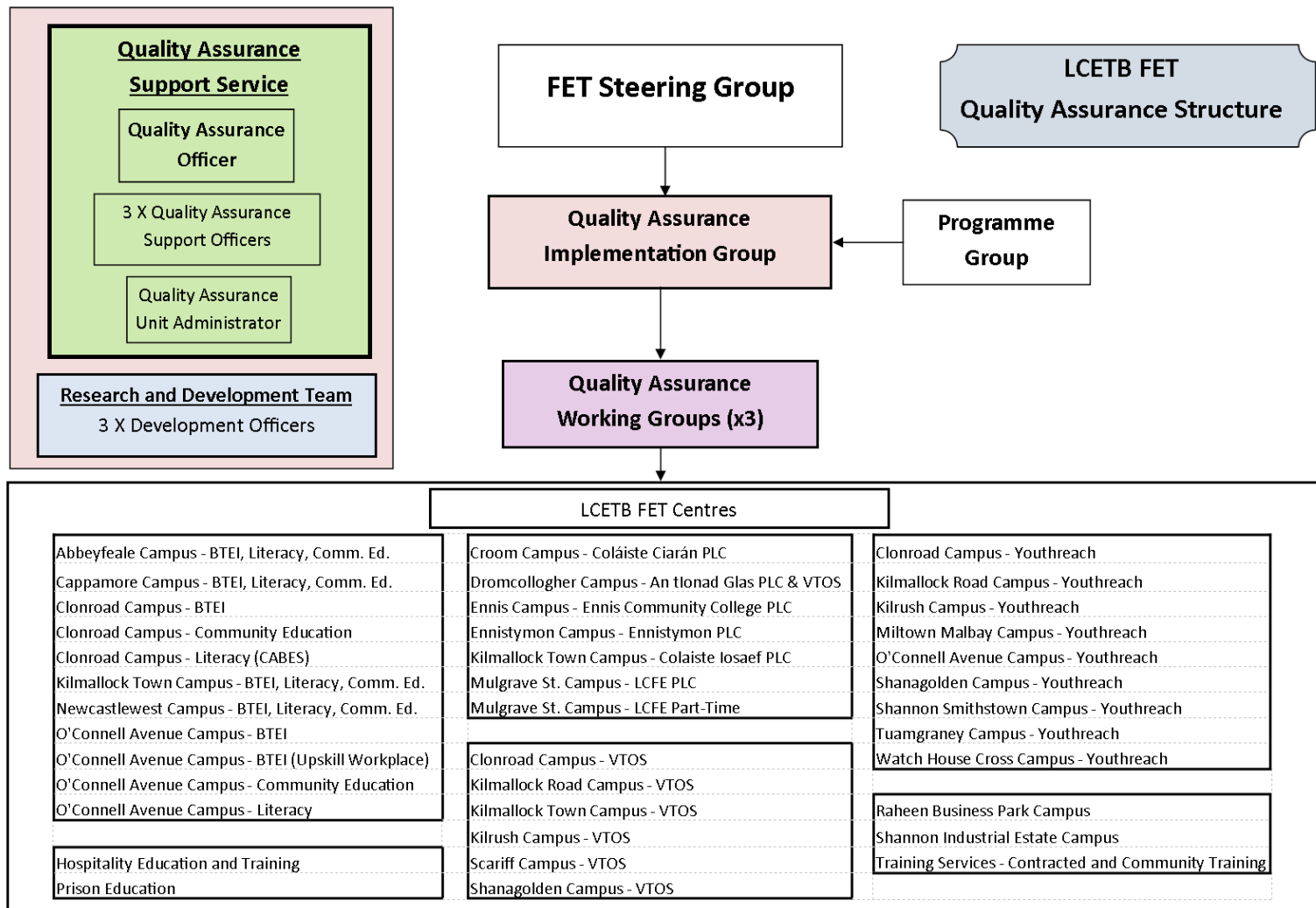


Figure 6 – LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance Management and Governance Structure



ETB EXECUTIVE SELF-EVALUATION [2017] TERMS OF REFERENCE [Version 0.1]

1. Background and Context

The 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established in 2013 following the amalgamation of former Vocational Education and Training Committees (VECs) and the transfer of 13 former FÁS training centres.

The 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012 sets out detailed responsibilities that apply to the ETBs for quality assuring their programmes of education and training and related services. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) published Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines in April 2016 and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the Education and Training Boards in May 2017.¹⁹ Since establishment in 2013 ETBs have been operating legacy quality assurance arrangements which transitioned to QQI under section 84 of the Act.

The FET Strategy 2014-2019 provides a clear policy context for quality in further education and training (FET). One of the five goals within the strategy is 'Quality Provision - *that FET will provide high quality education and training programmes and will meet national and international quality standards.*'²⁰ ETBs are moving now to new phase of quality assurance and establishing the foundations for the development of a sectoral QA Framework that will assure quality across the sector and enable the sector to deliver on both its statutory and policy objectives for quality. This is a transformational change and developmental process; several sectoral development projects are progressing and will impact in this regard.

2. Executive Self-Evaluation

It is the responsibility of each provider, i.e. ETB, to devise procedures for quality assurance and to have its own systematic processes for evaluating its own activity and for formulating plans and recommendations for its own improvement. The self-evaluation process needs to be flexible and appropriate to the provider and its stage of development. ETBs are relatively new statutory entities, within a significant transformational change process, including for structures and governance. In the context of the requirements of QQI Core and Sector Specific QA Guidelines, there is need to evaluate the effectiveness of legacy QA procedures which may no longer fit for purpose. Within the current developmental context of ETBs, this self-evaluation process is designed to:

- assist in building capacity and identify gaps within ETBs to ensure compliance with QQI statutory core and sector specific QA Guidelines
- enhance ownership of quality and quality enhancement processes
- demonstrate leadership within the ETB
- result in recommendations for improvement and priority actions for each ETB
- recognise the environment, contexts and emerging structures of the ETBs

This is an ETB executive management level self-evaluation which will be undertaken in the context of QA sectoral development projects and in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the ETB executive self-evaluation process is to evaluate the governance and management of quality assurance and the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures, and to contribute to the

¹⁹ <http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Sector%20specific%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20ETBs.pdf>

²⁰ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

development of an improvement plan which will support the ETB in meeting its statutory requirements for the establishment and operation of internal quality assurance procedures, recognising the developmental and transitional contexts.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the ETB Executive Self-Evaluation are:

- I. To contribute to and support the ETB quality improvement planning and ETB ownership and governance of quality and quality enhancement.
- II. To promote the improvement of quality assurance and further embedding of a quality culture in the ETB.
- III. To support sectoral level improvement by ensuring there is a consistency in the approach to the executive self-evaluation process, thematic focus and criteria applied self-evaluation report format and improvement plan.
- IV. To identify current gaps and priorities for improvement in the context of QQI statutory QA guidelines.

4. Process and Methodology

The executive self-evaluation will be conducted with an external advisor/facilitator(s). A project lead for the executive self-evaluation process will be identified in the ETB.

The FET management team in the ETB, in collaboration with the external facilitator(s) will identify the evidence basis for the self-evaluation, and will produce the ETB executive self-evaluation report addressing the agreed objectives, criteria and terms of reference.

The final report will be agreed and signed off through the ETB Chief Executive and will form the basis of the ETB Improvement Plan.

Programme Delivery Development & Validation Policy

Policy Area	Quality Assurance
Version	1.6
Date	Created: September 2014 Revised: July 27 th 2016
Monitored	Annually
Responsibility	Programme Curriculum and CPD Officer, Quality Assurance Officer
Approval	FET Division
This policy document is a controlled copy. Each staff member should consult StaffConnect for the latest version of this document.	

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

LCETB Programme Delivery Request, Development & Validation Policy

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB) is committed to providing quality assured programmes for learners in its various FET centres. This policy has been devised to ensure that LCETB has a robust governance process in place to deal with programme delivery, development and validation requests.

This policy relates primarily to requests from former Limerick and Clare VEC providers and Training Centres, including Community Training and Contracted Training.

Training Centres for the purpose of abiding with internal QA processes will also provide notification to the Programme Group if new but already validated programmes/programme modules are being offered.

Policy Objectives

1. To have a clear and well understood quality management structure and process in place governing the service wide programme approval process
2. To ensure all programmes meet the expected standards of quality in order to be approved
3. To promote efficient LCETB wide programme planning and safeguard against contributing to an oversupply/duplication of programmes unless there is a clear rationale for doing so.

1.0 Quality Assurance

- 1.1** LCETB is responsible for ensuring that an effective and efficient quality assurance management process exists, governing requests from its centres for programme delivery, development and validation.
- 1.2** This policy outlines the process for approving programmes in LCETB for all awarding bodies and should be read in conjunction with any Quality Assurance Agreements or Guidelines from that awarding body.²¹

²¹ While the process of gaining LCETB approval to offer a new programme is a first step individual awarding bodies may require centres to undergo site visits, inspections, development of individual QA agreements and to pay fees etc. before becoming a registered and having access to their awards. Further amendments and clarifications to this policy are to be expected as LCETB enters in to new QA agreements with different awarding bodies.

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

2.0 New Programme Delivery/Development Request

2.1 An LCETB centre must submit a '*Programme Request Proposal Form*' for approval to the LCETB *Programme Group* where it plans to:

- access and deliver existing validated programmes/modules/awards for the first time
- access and deliver existing validated programmes/awards where that programme has not been delivered in-centre for the past three years
- develop new programmes/modules for validation with a view to their delivery
- request to develop a shared programme
- request to participate in the development of a joint programme/module

2.2 The proposal must contain a '*Needs Identification*' which outlines a rationale for the programme such as:

- how it might be meeting learner needs, national and/or local skills needs, an educational need in community etc.
- evidence of how the programme fulfils national policy recommendations e.g. in terms of activation, active inclusion etc.
- evidence of stakeholder engagement e.g. employer engagement in identifying local skills needs, engagement in programme development, review etc.
- identification of the award that best meets the needs of the programme
- staffing requirements
- funding requirements
- development requirements

All applications, where possible, should be backed up by evidence including reference to local/national data in support of the rationale. Centres must demonstrate in their applications that they have or can access the resources, facilities and staff expertise to deliver the programme. To avoid unintentional oversupply or duplication of provision in LCETB, centres when making applications are also advised to consider whether programmes are already available to their target group within the immediate catchment area. Centres by completing this application are agreeing to have the Special Validation requirements for the award in place. The PC-CPD Officer/QA Officer will follow up with centres to request evidence that all requirements are in place.

2.3 Proposals can be submitted to the *Programme Group* who will meet up to six times annually or at shorter notice where an immediate need arises.(see Appendix 4 for Terms of Reference)

2.4 In advance of an application being prepared the PC-CPD Officer will confirm whether or not the programme/module is available and validated or whether development is required.

2.5 Initially, the PC-CPD Officer will screen proposals and assess whether it contains all the required information.

2.6 The PC-CPD Officer will notify all FET centres of the proposal(s) and provide a duration of one week by which any centre can submit comment using Appendix 10.The PC-CPD Officer will call a meeting of the '*Programme*

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

*Group*²² who using the criteria set down in the Appendix 11, will determine whether or not the centre is approved to deliver and/or develop the proposed programme/component²³. centre

- 2.7** The PC-CPD Officer will circulate a draft agenda and related documentation to members of the '*Programme Group*' at least a week in advance of the meeting. In certain circumstances, the '*Programme Group*' may ask the centre(s)²⁴ to provide an oral submission to support its request.
- 2.8** Where the programme/module is available and validated and the '*Programme Group*' approves the delivery request, the PC-CPD Officer will communicate the decision to the centre(s) using the Programme Delivery Approval Notification Template (appendix 8)
- 2.9** In turn, the PC-CPD Officer will communicate the decision to the '*Quality Assurance Officer*' (QA Officer) who will arrange for the programme/module to be made available to the centre(s) and register the centre(s) for delivery of that programme/module via the QBS.
- 2.10** Where the '*Programme Group*' does not approve the delivery or development of a programme/module, the PC-CPD Officer will communicate the decision to the centre outlining the rationale for same.
- 2.11** Where further information is needed by the Programme Group to make a decision an RFI (Request for Further Information) and/or a meeting may be requested by the Programme Subgroup (See 3.0 below and Appendix 4 for Terms of Reference)

3.0 Request for Further Information and the Programme Subgroup

- 3.1** Where it has not been possible for the Programme Group to make a decision regarding an application a Programme Subgroup may be called on to investigate the following:
- concerns that programme approval may contribute to an oversupply or duplication of provision
 - concerns or objections to programme approval raised by other centres
 - the rationale for the programme where insufficient details are contained in an application to allow a decision to be made
- 3.2** The Programme Subgroup will issue a Request for Further Information and where necessary a meeting request. The RFI will outline the areas where more information is required.
- 3.3** Following receipt of information and/or a meeting, the Programme Subgroup will then make a recommendation to the Programme Group around approval/refusal of programme(s). This will be considered at the next scheduled Programme Group Meeting.
- 3.4** Where there is an urgency to make a decision a request to fast-track a meeting of the Programme Group can be made. Alternatively decision making can be conducted through phone/email correspondence.

²² Programme Group comprises AEOs, PLC Representative, Training Centre and Contracted Training Representative and PC-CPD Officer acting as Secretary.

²³ Criteria to be found in Appendix 12

²⁴ Centre here refers to both the Centre proposing and the Centre(s) commenting on the proposal.

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3.5 The Programme Group will make final decisions.

3.6 All decisions can be appealed to the ETO and/or the CEO if required (see 10.0)

4.0 Access to Award Documentation

4.1 The Programme Group will instruct centres to follow the policies and procedures laid out in the Quality Assurance Agreements or Guidelines for other awarding bodies in order to access programme documentation.

4.2 The following sections 5 to 9 deal specifically with QQI processes.

5.0 QQI New Programme Development, Evaluation and Approval²⁵

5.1 Where approval is received and the related programme/module is not available or has not previously been validated, a Programme Development intervention is required. The PC-CPD Officer, in liaison with the QA Officer and the proposing centre Manager will devise a programme development and evaluation plan for each approved development request. (see Interim Programme Development Procedure Appendix 3)

5.2 The new programme/module will be developed in line with QQI 'Guidelines for Preparing Programme Descriptors' and in line with LCETB's quality assurance policy 'Programme Development, Delivery and Review'.

5.3 **The programme development team may use the programme development facility in the SOLAS National Programme Database to manage this process.**

5.4 The PC-CPD Officer, Process Co-ordinator or another nominated person will arrange the evaluation of the programme and related programme modules.

5.5 The criteria for the selection of programme evaluators and an outline of their role and duties are contained in LCETB's '*Programme Evaluators' Handbook*'.

5.6 When the evaluation process is complete, the PC-CPD Officer/Process Co-ordinator presents the programme information to the Programme Group for discussion and decision.

5.7 Additional information as follows will also be available if required for examination by the Programme Group

- Programme Specification
- Evaluation Forms
- Requests for Further Information, if relevant

5.8 The Programme Group may select and examine any of these documents to ensure that the evaluation process has been carried out in accordance with procedure and that the recommendation of the Programme Evaluators is consistent with the evidence.

5.9 Having examined the evidence, the Programme Group may:

- Find that the recommendation of the Programme Evaluators is inconsistent with the evidence and refuse to approve the Programme

²⁵ Please refer to Appendix 1, Process Flowchart.

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

- Find that the process has not been carried out in accordance with the agreed procedures and refuse to approve the Programme
- Find that the recommendation of the Evaluators is not consistent with the evidence or process and request the carrying out of a new evaluation
- Concur with the recommendation of the Programme Evaluators, approve the programme and make a recommendation to QQI to validate the programme.

5.10 The PC-CPD Officer will record the findings of the Programme Group in respect of each programme reviewed using the Programme Approval Decision Form (Appendix 5 & 6). The PC-CPD Officer will arrange for this form to be signed by the chair of the Programme Group as a declaration of approval.

5.11 The minutes of the meeting will record the Programme Group decision in respect of each of the programmes.

5.12 A recommendation for approval by the evaluators will normally result in the PC-CPD Officer making a request to QQI to validate the programme. Otherwise, the PC-CPD Officer will communicate the outcome to the relevant centre(s).

5.13 Once validation is received from QQI, the PC-CPD Officer will communicate this decision to the local centre. It is noted that a programme developed, as described, may be validated for the sole use of the centre or for use by a group of named centres.

5.14 It is also noted that a programme developed, as described, may be validated for the sole use of the registered provider and approved for sharing with a group of named providers or provider types. In this instance, these providers or provider types must apply to QQI for validation in their own right.

6.0 Notifications and Access to QQI Programmes/Modules

6.1 Within a week of each Programme Group Meeting, notifications of approval/non-approval will be sent by the PC-CPD Officer to the requesting centres, outlining the decision of the group and any next steps that need to be taken.

6.2 The Register of Programmes kept on OneDrive will be updated by the PC-CPD Officer.

6.3 When a request for a QQI programme is approved- the QA Unit Administrator will register the centre(s) for delivery of that programme-via the QBS.

6.4 Where the Programme Group approves delivery of a new QQI programme the QA Unit Administrator will place a 'Cover Sheet' on the programme/module. Only programme/modules with the official LCETB cover sheet are deemed validated and ready for delivery. Newly approved modules will be transferred over the StaffConnect by PC-CPD Officer.

6.5 The FET Division will utilise a single version control system (version, date, etc.) to ensure that only the latest version of the programme/module documentation is available to a relevant centre(s). All programmes will be kept up to date in master folder by QA Unit and any new LCETB descriptors needed prepared by QA Unit.

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6.6 It is the responsibility of centre management to ensure that only the latest version of all programmes/modules are currently available to and delivered by teaching staff.

6.7 It is the responsibility of centre management to ensure that only programmes that have prior approval for at that centre are actually delivered.

7.0 QOI Programme/Module Review

7.1 As all programmes/modules are subject to review, each centre must complete a programme/module review as scheduled in the programme descriptor and in line with quality assurance procedure 'Programme Review'.

7.2 Recommendations from the review will be two-fold:

- recommendations that are the responsibility of the centre e.g. extra resources required for delivery.
- recommendations that are the responsibility of the LCETB FET Division e.g. making amendments to descriptors.

8.0 Request to Participate in the Development of a Joint QOI Programme/Module

8.1 Joint validation describes a programme jointly developed by a group of providers and successfully submitted to QOI for validation for use by all the providers listed in the validation application.

8.2 A centre, on behalf of LCETB as provider, planning to enter into an arrangement with a group of external centres to develop and submit a programme/module for joint validation to QOI must complete and forward a 'Programme Request Proposal Form' to the PC-CPD Officer, as per the steps outlined at Section 2 above. If the proposal is not approved, the PG Group will provide a rationale for this decision.

8.3 In the case of a joint application to QOI for validation, one Provider within the group will take a lead in coordinating the development of the programme, its evaluation, approval and submission to QOI for joint validation, on behalf of the group. This provider will also liaise with the group at each stage to keep them informed of developments.

8.4 Once notice of validation is received from QOI, the local PC-CPD Officer will liaise with the local centre(s) to finalise the programme/module approval process.

8.5 In turn, the PC-CPD Officer will register the centre(s) for delivery of that programme/module via the QBS and communicate such decision to the QA Officer who will arrange for the programme/module to be made available to the centre(s)

9.0 Request to Deliver a Shared QOI Programme

9.1 Shared Validation describes a programme developed by a provider, validated by QOI for use by that provider and approved for sharing with other listed providers/provider types.

9.2 In this instance, these providers or provider types must apply to QOI for validation in their own right, having had an opportunity to review/amend the programme to meet their specific needs, as required.

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- 9.3** An LCETB centre planning to deliver a programme/module approved for sharing with LCETB, must complete and forward a 'Programme Request Proposal Form' to the PC-CPD Officer. The proposal will be considered at the next 'Programme Group' meeting. If the proposal is approved, the PC-CPD Officer will put in place the necessary arrangements for evaluation and validation.

10.0 Appeals

- 10.1** Where a centre does not agree with the decision of the '*Programme Group*', the centre can appeal same to the Education and Training Officer (ETO). Centres may also call for an appeal where there are unhappy with how the process has been handled.
- 10.2** To call for an appeal a letter outlining details of the why the appeal is being requested should be sent to the ETO.
- 10.3** The ETO will review all relevant materials and will either uphold or amend the decision of the 'Programme Group'. The ETO's decision will be communicated to the centre.

11.0 The SOLAS National Programme Database

- 11.1** To allow centres schedule their courses on the SOLAS PLSS National Course Calendar all programmes and modules will need to be on the National Programme Database (NPDB), either in the national partition or the local LCETB partition.
- National partition - all programmes that were centrally devised up to December 2013 are locked down in the SOLAS partition. These are national programmes so therefore they cannot be modified by any particular ETB.
 - Local partition - when an ETB develops a new programme for use, it is published on a secure local partition within the NPDB. Published programmes developed in one partition are not available to other partitions, except as read-only. Details of newly published programmes will be available in the course calendar system to facilitate course scheduling and certification requests in the RCCRS.
- 11.2** When making a programme approval request, applicants will be asked whether their request will require either/or a
- a) new programme to be created on the NPDB
 - b) module added to either a national or local programme.

Applicants will need to check the NPDB for this information using the search facility (see SOLAS National Programme Database User Guide).

- 11.3** Where approval is granted for a programme that does not exist on the NPDB, the PC-CPD Officer through the LCETB PLSS Liaison Person will make a request to SOLAS to create an instance of that programme. SOLAS will inform us whether the programme will be set up at national level or whether it should be added to the local partition. Once we are informed of this decision the appropriate process will be put in place. Generally SOLAS will only create a new national NPDB programme where a request has been made by two or more ETBs.

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- 11.4** Where approval is granted for additional modules to be added to a programme on the NPDB, the PC-CPD Officer through the LCETB PLSS Liaison Person will complete and submit the 'Inclusion of additional modules for existing awards in PLSS National Programme Database' (Appendix 13) form.
- 11.5** Where approval is granted for a locally devised module to be added on to a programme on the local partition of the NPDB, this will be managed by the PC-CPD Officer and/or QA Unit.
- 11.6** When a programme needs to be created on the local partition of the NPDB, this will be the responsibility of the PC-CPD Officer and/or QA Unit to co-ordinate. The PC-CPD Officer will create a new programme shell and applicants will be given temporary user rights to enter the programme content. Instructions for this are contained in the National Programme Database Use Guide. When the data entry process is complete programmes should be checked back in for review and publication by PC-CPD Officer/QA Unit.
- 11.7** Where a programme or module was approved prior to amalgamation and needs to be added to the NPDB national or local partition, the Manager or QA Co-ordinator should contact the PC-CPD Officer who will organise for the appropriate process to be put in place. As these programmes have prior approval through a local or national PAA the request can be made at any time. Evidence of approval may be required.

12.0 Notifying External Agencies and Awarding Bodies

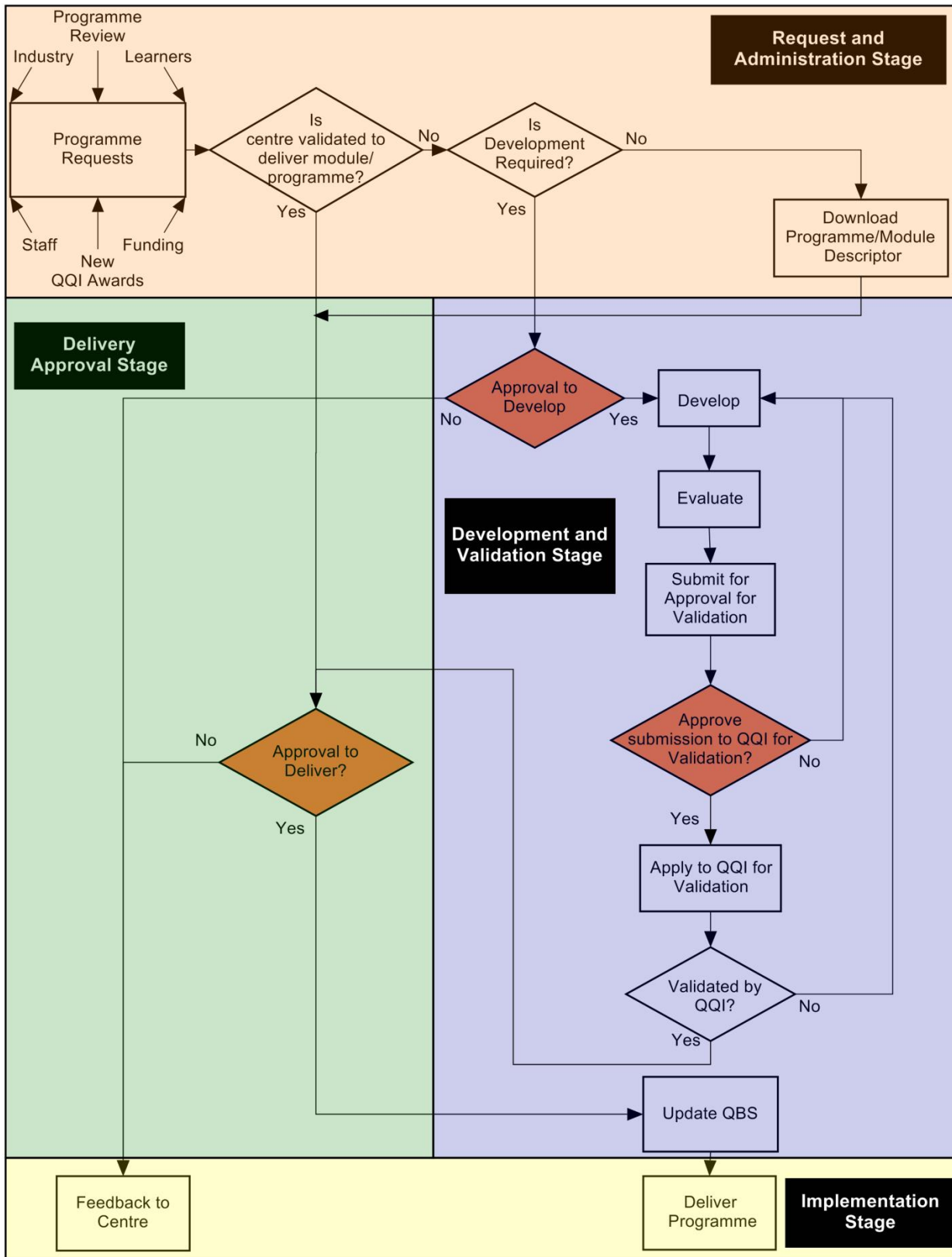
- 12.1** The programme approval process is often just a first step and requires that several external agencies be informed of new programmes or module additions for example QQI, City and Guilds, ITEC.
- 12.2** Where an application for a module to be added to a national programme has been approved, the PC-CPD Officer will inform QQI. This will be done on a bi-annual basis. LCETB will need to ensure that additions to programmes do not go over the 20% limit.
- 12.3** Where requests for City and Guilds and other programmes have been approved, centres will follow the next steps as set out in the QA agreement with the awarding body.

13.0 Transparency

- 13.1** In the interests of transparency all documentation, minutes, agendas etc. related to the Programme Delivery, Development and Validation Process can be made available upon request.

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13.2 Appendix 1: QQI Process Flowchart



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Appendix 2: LCETB Programme Request Proposal Form

1. Service/Centre Details											
Service/Centre Name											
Director/Manager/Principal											
Email											
Contact Person											
Email											
2. Programme Request Type <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>											
Request to develop and deliver											
This a request to develop and deliver		<i>a new programme leading to a major award</i>					<i>new programme module(s)</i>				
Type of programme		<i>shared programme</i>				<i>joint programme</i>				<i>for sole use</i>	
Request to access and deliver validated programme/ additional programme modules											
This a request to access and deliver		<i>an already validated programme leading to a major award</i>					<i>new module(s) to be added to already validated programme within 20% limit)</i>				
<i>State the Centres where the proposed programme will be delivered.</i>											
Registered Centre Name						Registered Centre Code					
3. Details of Proposed Programme <i>(refer to QQI Guidelines for Preparing Programme Descriptors)</i>											
Programme Title											
Award Title											
Award Code											
Programme Profile											
Learner Profile											
Programme Objectives											
Entry Criteria											
Programme Duration											

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Estimated Date of first Delivery					
Indicate the overall duration for the programme.					
Full or Part-time	<i>Full-time</i>		<i>Part-time</i>		
Hours per week	<i>Full Time</i>		<i>Part-time</i>		
Overall duration	<i>Years</i>		<i>Months</i>		
Additional Comments					
Delivery Mode <i>(Select one or more of the following)</i>					
Centre Based					
Blended Learning					
Workplace learning					
e-Learning					
Distance learning					
If other, please specify					
Delivery Methodologies <i>(Select one or more of the following)</i>					
Directed learning experiences (class/lecture)					
Group discussions/interactions					
Practical sessions/laboratories/studio					
Simulated work environment/experience					
Tutorials/one to one					
Self-directed learning					
Field trips					
On the job/work based training					
e-Learning					
If other, please specify					
4. Proposed Programme Modules					
<p><i>Please list the components your centre intends to offer. Please ensure that the mix of components offered meets the requirements of the certificate set out in the award specification. Include only those components which will be fully achieved (all learning outcomes achieved) as part of the programme.</i></p>					
Component Code	Component Level	Component Title			
5. Rationale					

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<i>Please provide an educational/business case or rationale for the Proposed Programme</i>				
6. Facilities and Resources Needed				
<i>Please confirm whether the proposed programme can be delivered within existing resources. If not, identify additional resources and allocations required, including estimated costs. If not, identify additional resources and allocations required, including estimated costs.</i>				
7. Special Validation Requirements				
<i>Centres by completing this application are agreeing to have the Special Validation requirements for the award in place. The PC-CPD Officer/QA Officer will follow up with centres to request evidence that all requirements are in place. Please list below the Special Validation requirements of the award. For each requirement please state whether it is currently in place or when you intend</i>				
Requirements	In place/Not in place	If not in place what is the timeline for organising?	Who is the person responsible?	
8. Staffing Requirements				
<i>Please confirm whether the Proposed Programme can be delivered within existing resources and allocations. If not, identify additional resources and allocations required, including estimated costs. Where a centre is requesting access to new programmes/modules outside the usual curriculum they may be asked for information about staff qualifications. Organising a pre-application support meeting with the QA Unit may also be recommended.</i>				
9. Proposed Programme Delivery/Development Team				
<i>Please name the subject specialists who will be part of the Programme Delivery/Development Team.</i>				
10. National/ Local Programme Database National Programme Database (NPDB) (new)				
Does this major award exist on the NPDB?			Y	N
Does this module need to be added to the structure of a national programme on the NPDB?			Y	N
Is this a locally devised module that needs to be added to a local programme on the NPDB?			Y	N
SIGNED (Director/Manager/Principal)				
Date				

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Appendix 3 – Interim Programme Development Procedure

1.0 Programme Development Process

Programmes will be developed in accordance with the Programme Development, Delivery and Review Policy as detailed in LCETB's QA Agreements. Centres should follow the procedures laid out in the Quality Assurance agreement of the respective awarding body.

This section refers to the policies and associated procedures which are part of LCETB's Quality Assurance Agreements with QQI.

The programme development process has as a first step the development and approval of a Programme Request Proposal. The proposal establishes the educational/business case or rationale for the programme and enables LCETB to co-ordinate programme development across its provision.

Programme Proposals are submitted to the *Programme Group* (PG) within LCETB for approval, (Appendix 2). Once a proposal is approved, programme development work can commence.

The PC-CPD Officer and/or other delegated persons will take a lead in the programme development process in collaboration with QA Development Officer, centre managers and principals, QQI Co-ordinators, TSO's tutors/teachers/trainers, process co-ordinators and other stakeholders in the process.

This role may include completing the following tasks which support the programme development process; devising development and evaluation timelines, preparing development resources and guidelines, recruiting subject specialists for the Programme Development Team, organising and delivering training, supporting writers from first to final draft, working with process co-ordinators etc.

Programme Development may also be delegated to other bodies as appropriate such as the Further Education Support Service.

The *Programme Group* will oversee the programme evaluation and approval process.

2.0 Programme Descriptor (Specification)

The LCETB Programme Development Team will use the LCETB Programme Specification to present programme information. (To be developed). The specification includes information on a range of programme elements relevant to the national standards for the awards and in line with the criteria set by QQI. The Programme Specification will be presented to the PC-CPD Officer/PG Process Co-ordinator for evaluation.

3.0 Programme Evaluation Process

Once a programme is submitted for evaluation it is screened by the PC-CPD Officer/PG Process Co-ordinator in accordance with the criteria in LCETB QA. LCETB will also ensure that all programme details are measured against published criteria to ensure that the programme offers the learner the opportunity to achieve the standards for the awards to which they are designed to lead.

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Appendix 4 – Terms of Reference for LCETB Programme Group and Programme SubGroup

Group Name

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training (LCETB FET) Programme Group

Purpose

This group was set up to provide management oversight of LCETB FET centre submissions for programme delivery, development, evaluation and submissions for validation.

Scope

The group will review the following application types submitted from Centres via *'Programme Request Proposal Form'* and screened by the PC-CPD Officer.

- access and deliver existing validated programmes for the first time
- access and deliver existing validated programmes where that programme has not been delivered in-centre for the past three years
- develop new programmes/modules for validation with a view to their delivery
- request to develop a shared programme
- request to participate in the development of a joint programme/module

Authority

In respect of applications made to the LCETB FET Programme Group, the group may

- Approve application
- Refuse application
- Request oral submission from applicant centre

In order to provide a fair and unbiased decision, the criteria for programme approval must be clearly defined and agreed. The programme group are tasked with devising these criteria on the occasion of the first meeting.

Membership

The membership of the group will comprise of a representation from the following groups. Actual membership to be decided at LCETB FET SMT meeting. Group will appoint a chair at initial meeting. Chair to be rotated on an annual basis.

- Adult Education Officer(s),
- PLC Representative
- Training Centre Manager(s)
- Contracted Training Manager
- PC-CPD Officer acting as Secretary
- QA Officer may be requested to attend meetings in an advisory capacity

Meeting arrangements

- Group will meet up to 6 times annually or where an urgent response is required.
- The Group may also be asked to meet following the recommendation of the Programme Subgroup
- Meetings will take place in LCETB FET offices, Cecil Street, Limerick.
- A quorum of 4 members must be available for meeting to take place.
- PC-CPD officer, acting as secretary to Programme Group will schedule meetings, communicate agendas and meeting minutes.

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Reporting

- PC-CPD officer will report meeting summaries to LCETB FET SMT.

Resources and budget

- LCETB FET boardroom will be available for the group meetings.
- Administrative support will be available to take minutes of meetings

Deliverables

Output of Programme Group will be one of a set of notifications in response to applications. Centres will be notified directly by PC-CPD Officer, with copies retained on SharePoint.

- Programme Delivery Request
 - Notification of Approval to Deliver
 - Notification of refusal to Deliver
- Programme Development
 - Notification of Approval to Develop
 - Notification of refusal to Develop
- Programme Approval for QQI Validation
 - Find that the recommendation of the Programme Evaluators is inconsistent with the evidence and refuse to approve the Programme
 - Find that the process has not been carried out in accordance with the agreed procedures and refuse to approve the Programme
 - Find that the recommendation of the Evaluators is not consistent with the evidence or process and request the carrying out of a new evaluation
 - Concur with the recommendation of the Programme Evaluators, approve the programme and make a recommendation to QQI to validate the programme.

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

Group Name

LCETB FET Programme Subgroup.

Purpose

The purpose of this subgroup is when called upon to examine in more detail centres requests for Programme Approval. The subgroup can then make recommendations to the Programme Group to allow them come to a more informed decision.

Scope

The subgroup may request information and/or a meeting with a centre in the following instances:

- To investigate concerns that programme approval may contribute to oversupply /duplication
- Where concerns or objections to the programme have been raised by other centres
- Where the programme group feel there is insufficient detail in an application to allow a decision to be made

Authority

In respect of applications made to the LCETB FET Programme Subgroup may

- Recommend approval of an application to the wider Programme Group
- Recommend refusal of an application to the wider Programme Group
- All recommendations are to be considered at the next scheduled Programme Group meeting
- Where there is urgency around a decision a request for a meeting of the Programme Group can be made or alternatively decision making can be conducted through phone/email correspondence.

Membership

The Programme Subgroup will consist of

- PC-CPD Officer acting as Secretary
- Chair of the Programme Group
- Members of the Programme Group who have not raised concerns/ objections to requests
- QA Officer may be asked to attend meetings in an advisory capacity

Meeting arrangements

- The Subgroup will meet if any when necessary at the request of the Programme Group
- Meetings will take place in LCETB FET offices, Cecil Street, Limerick.
- A quorum of 4 members must be available for meeting to take place.
- PC-CPD officer, acting as secretary will schedule meetings, communicate agendas etc.

Reporting

- PC-CPD Officer will report meeting summaries to LCETB FET SMT.

Resources and budget

- LCETB FET boardroom will be available for the group meetings.
- Administrative support will be available to take minutes of meetings

Deliverables

Output of Programme Sub-Group will be

- Requests for Further Information/Meeting Requests
- Recommendations for approval/refusal to the Subgroup
- Request for Programme Group follow on meeting

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

Appendix 5 Declaration of Programme Approval

LCETB (Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board) Declaration of Programme Approval

The programmes listed below have been submitted to the LCETB Programme Group. Each programme has been evaluated in accordance with the processes and criteria detailed in LCETB Programme Delivery Request, Development & Validation Policy.

As per its Terms of Reference, the LCETB Programme Group has reviewed the evaluation process as applied to these programmes so as to ensure its validity.

For each programme listed, the Group's decision to recommend this programme to QQI for validation is indicated.

Programme title	Awards	Decision
		Recommended for Validation
		Recommended for Validation
		Recommended for Validation

Signed:

Date

Chair of LCETB Programme Group

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

Appendix 6 Declaration of Programme Refusal

LCETB (Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board) Declaration of Programme Refusal

The programmes listed below have been submitted to the LCETB Programme Group. Each programme has been evaluated in accordance with the processes and criteria detailed in LCETB Programme Delivery Request, Development & Validation Policy.

As per its Terms of Reference, the LCETB Programme Group has reviewed the evaluation process as applied to these programmes so as to ensure its validity.

For each programme listed, the Group's decision to refuse to recommend this programme to FETAC for validation is indicated.

Programme title	Awards	Decision
		Not recommended for Validation
		Not recommended for Validation
		Not recommended for Validation

Signed:

Date

Chair of LCETB Programme Group

LCETB Programme Delivery Approval Notification

To:

From:

Date:

Subject:

The LCETB Programme Group meeting of XXth XX XXX considered and approved the XXXXX requests to deliver the following Major Awards Award, as outlined in documentation submitted to the PG:

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme delivery is approved subject to:

Programmes are approved subject to:

1. The centre continuing to have both the capacity and resources to provide the programme. Where either of these conditions fail to be met, programme approval will become void
2. Each programme and its modules being delivered as processed through Programme Group, as validated by QQI and within the context of the prevailing Quality Assurance Agreement with QQI.
3. Observance of all Certificate Requirements and Specific Validation Requirements, as published in the related Certificate Specification and Component Specifications on the QQI website.
4. Each programme and its modules being reviewed, in line with B5.9 Programme Review of the prevailing QA agreement with QQI. A module that is subject to substantial revision must be re-evaluated through the PG before delivery. Up to 20% of programme content can be changed, through the PG, including the addition of further programme modules, before the entire programme has to be re-evaluated.
5. Teaching staff and tutors having access only to current versions of all programme/module related documentation.

Signed:

Date

Chair of LCETB Programme Group

Appendix 8: Notification of Programme Development Approval

LCETB Programme Development Approval Notification

To:

From:

Date:

Subject:

The LCETB Programme Group meeting of XXth XX XXX considered and approved the XXXXX requests to develop the following Major Awards/Minor as outlined in documentation submitted to the PG:

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

PG approval subject to:

1. All Programmes and modules developed by XXX being evaluated through the PG and presented for approval to the PG pre submission to QQI for validation.

Signed:

Date

Chair of LCETB Programme Group

Appendix 9: Notification of Programme Delivery/Development Refusal

LCETB Programme Delivery/Development Refusal Notification

To:

From:

Date:

Subject:

The LCETB Programme Group meeting of XXth XX XXX considered the requests to deliver/develop the following Major Awards/Minor as outlined in documentation:

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

Programme Level Code and Title

The programme group regretfully would like to inform you that your requests have been refused for the following reasons:

1. XXXXX
2. XXXXX
3. XXXXX

Signed:

Date

Chair of LCETB Programme Group

Comment on Programme Approval Request	
Service/Centre Details	
Service/Centre Name	
Director/Manager/Principal	
Email	
Contact Person	
Email	
Programme Details	
<i>Please list the programme approval requests you have concerns/objections around</i>	
Centre Name	Programme Name
Outline of Concerns/Objections including supporting information	
<i>Please outline your concerns/objections to the above Programme Approval Requests including an outline of any data/information you have gathered in support of your comments.</i>	
SIGNED (Director/Manager/Principal)	
Date	

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

Appendix 11 Programme Subgroup/Request for Further Information/Meeting Request

To:

From: LCETB Programme Group

Date:

Subject:

The LCETB Programme Group (PG) met XXXXX consider the following requests for programme approval from XXXXX

1. XXXXX
2. XXXXX
3. XXXXX

The Programme Group would like to inform you that some questions were raised which need to be addressed for the PG to be in a position to make an informed decision. The questions raised in relation to the above mentioned applications included:

1. XXXXX
2. XXXXX

(In order to progress the matter, **the Programme Group would like to invite XXXXX meeting of a PG subgroup.** The focus of the meeting would be to discuss in more detail the rationale to support the requests in the following areas.)

1. XXXXX
2. XXXXXX

(The Chairperson of the Programme Group may be in touch soon to arrange a meeting. Once the subgroup meeting has concluded, recommendations will then be presented to the next meeting of the Programme Group.)

Should you need any more information, please don't hesitate to contact XXXXX

Signed:

Date

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

Appendix 12 Criteria For Evaluating Programme Delivery And Development Requests

The following are the criteria against which the Programme Committee will evaluate requests	
Headings	Criteria
Service Centre Details	Service Centre Details completed correctly
Programme Request Type	Completed in line with whether the centre is looking to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a new programme/module or access an existing award/programme/module
Proposed Programme Modules	Completed in line with the award structure set out in Programme Specification or Validated Programme Descriptor
Programme Details (Programme and Award Title and Code, Programme Profile, Learner Profile, Programme Objectives, Entry Criteria, Programme Duration, Duration, Delivery Modes and Methodologies)	Development: referred as appropriate to the QQI Programme/Component Specifications for the award(s). Delivery of existing award/programme/module: centres refer to the validated QQI Programme Descriptor or
Rationale A strong educational/business case presented for the programme containing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how the programme is meeting learner needs, national and/or local skills needs, an educational need in community etc. data/evidence of how the programme fulfils national policy recommendations e.g. in terms of activation, active inclusion etc. data/evidence of stakeholder engagement e.g. employer engagement in identifying local skills needs, engagement in programme development, review etc. a consideration of whether a similar LCETB programme is on offer in close proximity and a clear justification presented to support new programme
Facilities and Resources Needed Programmes must show that they have the facilities and resources in place to deliver the programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reference to venue or facilities where the programme may take place identification of additional resources needed along with estimated costs where appropriate
Special Validation Requirements: Centres by completing this application are agreeing to have the Special Validation requirements for the award in place. The PC-CPD Officer/QA Officer will follow up with centres to request evidence that all requirements are in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> list of each Special Validation requirement for the award state whether the requirements are currently in place where not in place intended date given Name of the person responsible
Staffing Requirements All programmes must be delivered by appropriately qualified staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of any additional staff/allocations needed along with estimated cost
Proposed Programme Delivery/Development Team (Please list subject specialists who may be part of the Programme Development Team)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of Subject experts who will deliver/develop programmes Identification of any additional programme writers needed along with estimated costs

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

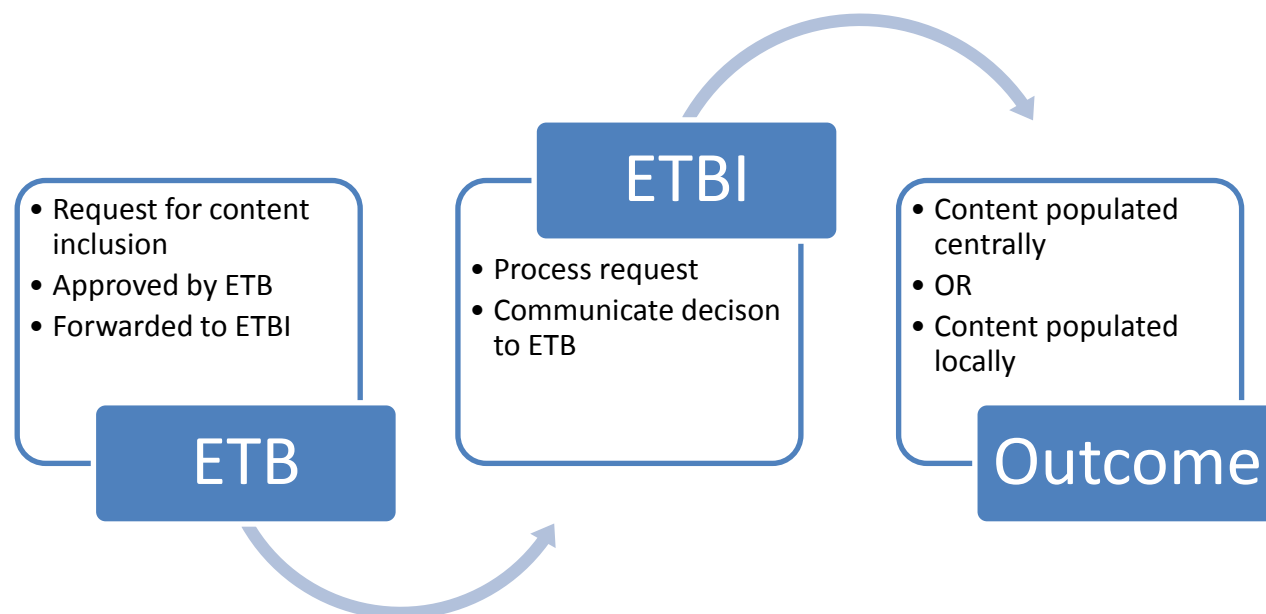
Appendix 13: Inclusion of additional modules for existing awards in PLSS National Programme Database

All modules requested for inclusion must have undertaken the approval process within LCETB prior to requesting population of same to PLSS National Course Database. Proof of validation must be submitted with application. Modules being used in more than one ETB should be populated to the National PLSS Programme Database rather than several iterations in local ETB portals.

All FET centres within an ETB are requested to follow the following process in order to have additional modules included in the PLSS National Programme database.

1. Request for module inclusion in the PLSS National Programme database made to local ETB PLSS Liaison Person via the PC-CPD Officer.
 - a. Appendix 1 ETB Request for content inclusion the PLSS National Programme database
 - b. Appendix 2 List of ETB PLSS liaison persons.
2. Appendix 1 Request for content inclusion in the PLSS National Programme database will be completed by PC-CPD Officer and approved in ETB by Head of FET. This will be forwarded to ETBI PLSS Coordinator via the LCETB PLSS Liaison Person.
3. ETBI PLSS Coordinator confirms the programme to be either:
 - a. Populated to PLSS National Programme Database
 - b. Populated to PLSS Local ETB Programme Database portal
 - c. And provides documentary evidence from the relevant awarding body website to support the request for change. New award information must list overall award information and new award information (where applicable) for modules listed on programme.
4. ETBI PLSS Coordinator confirms decision to ETB PLSS liaison person and agreed follow up on same.

Process for inclusion of modules in PLSS National Programme Database



Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

ETB Request for module inclusion the PLSS National Programme database

Name of ETB: _____ ETB Centre: _____

Request the following module be included in the PLSS National Programme database

Awarding body: _____

Code: _____

Title: _____

Is the above named module currently available in a local ETB PLSS National Programme database portal?

Yes

No

☐☐

In the case of **Yes**; please indicate the code and ETB portal it is currently populated in:

Code:

ETB Portal:

Rationale for inclusion:

Signed: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

ETB Approval

Signed: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Proof of validation enclosed:

Yes

☐

No

☐

Documentary evidence from relevant awarding
body to support the request for change attached:

Yes

☐

No

☐

Appendix 2 – Programme Delivery, Development & Validation Policy

ETB Stamp:

ETBI Decision

Local portal

National Portal

Comments:

Proof of validation and awarding body documentation received: Yes No

Signed: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____



An tSeirbhis Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority

NATIONAL PROGRAMME DATABASE

USER GUIDE

Edition –January 2015



LCETB FET Quality Assurance Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Policy Area	FET Strategic Framework
Version	1.0
Date	Draft Created: 1 st November 2016 V1.0 Agreed: 21 st December 2016
Monitored	N/A
Responsibility	FET Division
Approval	

Document Management

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
0.1	01/11/2016	First Draft For Review
0.2	07/11/2016	Corrected – Director of FET, Further Education and Training Officers, LCETB FET QA
0.3	30/11/2016	Corrected – Youthreach Kilmallock Road Campus
0.4	15/12/2016	Update LCETB FET Logo and Organisational Chart
1.0	21/12/2016	Edits and Updates – Agreed version 1.0

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Appendix 3 – LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms Of Reference

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the Terms of Reference for the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board - Further Education and Training - Quality Assurance (LCETB FET QA) Steering Group. It will identify the mandate, as well as the operation and function of the Group.

2.0 Background and Context

QQI defines QA governance as follows: “In the context of these quality assurance guidelines, governance refers to a system in place to oversee the education and training, research and related activity of a provider to ensure its quality” (White Paper Core Statutory QA Guidelines).

The Draft Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines outlines as follows what the QA procedure for governance and management will do:

- Take account of the overall corporate responsibility of the ETB driven and supported by the senior management of the ETB in all aspects of the strategy, governance and management of quality assurance throughout the corporate entity. The corporate commitment to quality and the development of a quality culture is essential in this regard.
- Clearly establish how the oversight of the quality assurance system is maintained with regard to specific responsibilities for quality assurance at a senior planning level, and across the educational and training institutions established and maintained by the ETB (i.e. centres).
- Clearly establish how the oversight of the quality assurance system is maintained and operated in tandem with the local decision-making of the various educational or training institution established and maintained by an ETB.
- Clearly establish how the roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and decision-making relate to educational and training activities and the quality roles and responsibilities within these activities.

Describe what role(s) and responsibilities exist for coordinating quality assurance activities and governance of teaching and learning both locally in the various educational or training institutions established and maintained by an ETB; and at the senior corporate level within an ETB. These should include collaborative quality assurance activities and cooperative developments with ETBI, with other ETBs and with other education and training bodies and stakeholders.

LCETB FET Quality Assurance Governance Structure (Appendix 1) describes the structure the multi-layered LCETB FET QA Governance system.

- The LCETB Quality Assurance Unit has responsibility for the management of the LCETB Quality Assurance System, with development, implementation, review and continuous improvement as core functions.
- LCETB Quality Assurance Support Unit (QA Officer and QA Support Officers) assist LCETB schools, colleges and centres in the provision of relevant and timely advice, information and support on matters relating to: assessment processes; processing of certification; teaching/training materials; training aids; methodologies and practices to meet the requirements of the certifying agencies associated with the delivery of FET programmes.
- The LCETB FET Quality Assurance Steering Group is responsible for providing overall strategic direction for LCETB FET Quality Assurance, governance of LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance system including systems of Self-Evaluation and Monitoring.
- Three (3) Quality Assurance Implementation Groups provide a structured mechanism and forum for communication between LCETB FET QA Steering Group, LCETB FET QA Unit and LCETB FET Centres.

Appendix 3 – LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms Of Reference

3.0 The Role of the Group

The LCETB FET Quality Assurance Steering Group is responsible for:

(I) Providing overall strategic direction for quality assurance.

- Setting direction of LCETB Quality Assurance Unit as appropriate in Legislative, National and Local contexts;
- Directing Quality Assurance Policy, Procedure and Process development;
- Ensuring review of LCETB quality policies on an 'as required' basis for two years from the implementation of the policy. This will change to an annual review when adoption of the policy meets the levels set by the Steering Group.

(II) Governance of LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance system.

- Oversight of the implementation of procedures for the assessment of learners to ensure fairness, consistency and fitness-for-purpose and monitor this at centre level and at ETB level;
- Promotion of quality teaching and learning in all relevant learning environments;
- Ensuring the reliability and integrity of learner records and results of learner assessment;
- Protection the integrity of academic processes and standards.

(III) Systems of Self-Evaluation and Monitoring

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of self-evaluation and monitoring procedures;
- Considering risk;
- Overseeing quality assurance activity to ensure that protocol is followed and provide advice and troubleshoot where necessary;
- Ensuring that the requirements set out in LCETB quality policies are complied with;
- Assigning actions for improvement to individuals and groups who have been assigned responsibility for quality assurance;
- Ensuring effective communication across LCETB quality stakeholders.

3.1 The Scope of the Group

This policy refers to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Centres. In order to ensure that LCETB Quality Assurance policies and procedures are fair, consistent, realistic, representative, measurable and integrated, as well as meeting the requirements of QQI and other awarding bodies, it is necessary to have a governance structure in place to oversee the development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of Limerick and Clare ETB FET Quality Assurance policies and procedures.

3.2 Group Membership

QA Steering Group membership shall consist of representation from each of the following management, programmes and support services groups as listed below:

- Further Education and Training Officers
- Training Services Management
- FE College/PLC Centres
- Part Time Programmes
- Full Time Programmes
- LCETB Development Team
- LCETB FET Quality Assurance Unit

The Director of FET, while not a member of the group, can attend any or all of the group meetings.

3.2.1 Group Quorum

A quorum of 4 members must be available for meeting to take place

Appendix 3 – LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms Of Reference

4.0 Method of Operation

4.1 Meetings

QA Steering Group will meet on 3 occasions in each academic calendar year

- September - December
- January - March
- April - June

Any papers for review will be provided at least 10 working days in advance.

The Group will be chaired by the LCETB FET QA Officer, who will nominate a deputy chair to cover absence.

4.1.1 Inputs

The Group will expect written updates prior to a Group meeting from:

- LCETB FET QA Unit
- LCETB Programme Group Minutes
- LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Meeting Minutes
- ETBI/QQI FET Forum Meeting Minutes
- Any other individual or group that have agreed to produce an update for a specific meeting

4.1.2 Group Escalation Process

The group will escalate items such as:

- Non-compliance with quality policy directives without the group agreeing the reasons for non-compliance
- Failure to carry out actions in the agreed timescales where no reason for delay has been provided to the group
- Persistent non-attendance at meetings by a group member or their nominated deputy

The Steering Group will escalate issues as appropriate to:

- LCETB Director of FET
- LCETB Chief Executive

4.1.3 Outputs

- Meeting minutes
- Actions log

The group will agree any other outputs with other bodies as and when required.

4.2 Administration Support

QA Steering Group will be administered by the LCETB FET QA Unit.

- schedule meetings and notify members
- invite specialists to attend meetings when required by the implementation group
- prepare and provide in advance to members, a meeting agenda and relevant briefing documents
- record minutes
- issue minutes, in a timely manner, to implementation group members
- prepare reports as required by the implementation group

5.0 Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1 – LCETB FET Quality Assurance Governance Structure

5.2 Appendix 2 – LCETB FET Implementation Groups

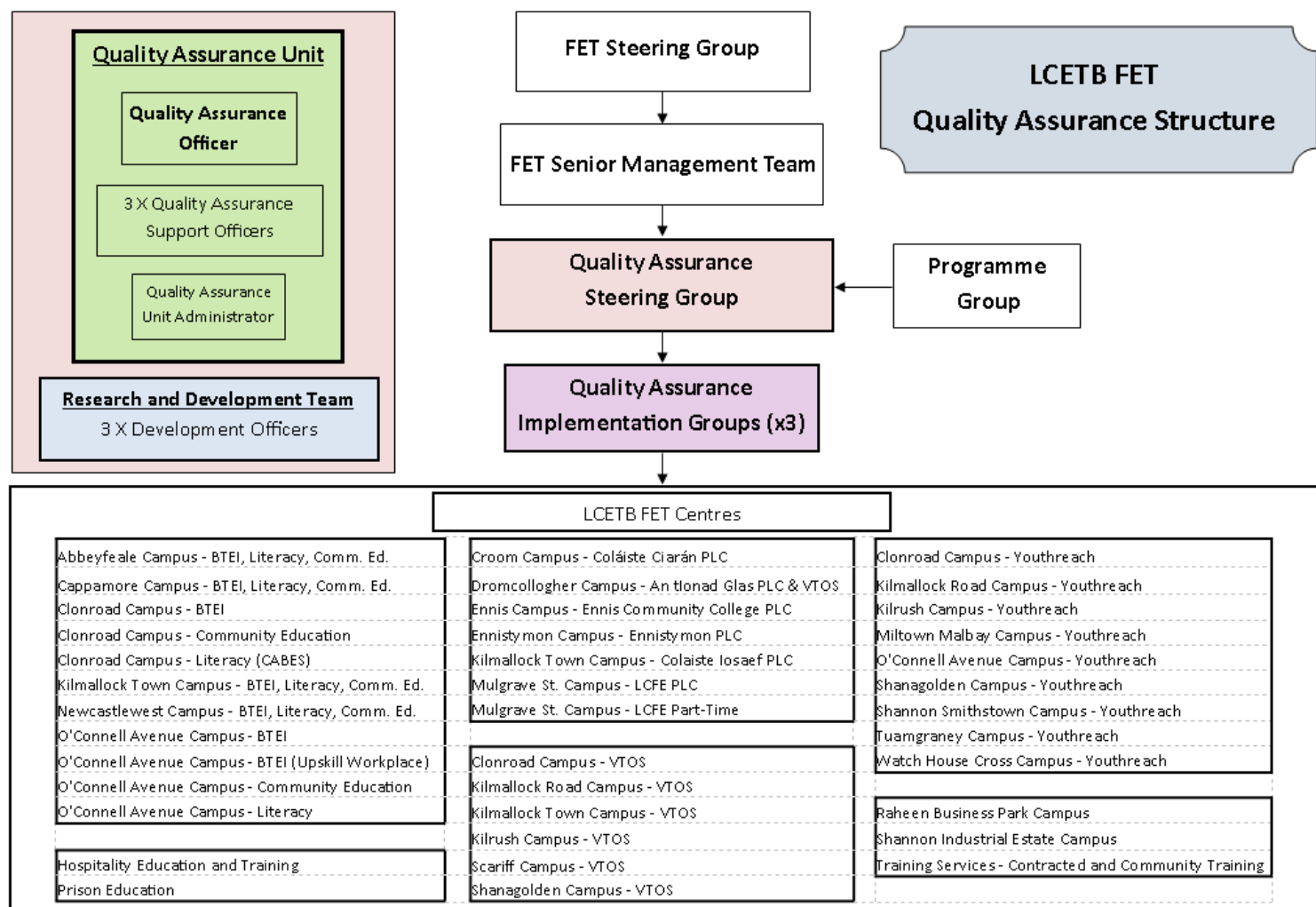
5.3 Appendix 3 – Schedule of Meetings

5.4 Appendix 4 – Statutory Obligations

5.5 Appendix 5 – National and Local Strategy Requirements

Appendix 3 – LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms Of Reference

Appendix 1 – LCETB Quality Assurance Governance Structure



Appendix 3 – LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms Of Reference

Appendix 2 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Groups

County Limerick QA Implementation Group	County Clare QA Implementation Group	Limerick City QA Implementation Group
FET Centre, Abbeyfeale Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - BTEI	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - BTEI
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Literacy (CABES)	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - BTEI (Upskill Workplace)
FET Centre, Newcastlewest Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Community Education	Fet Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Literacy
FET Centre, Cappamore Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.		FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Community Education
FET Centre, Dromcollogher Campus - An tIonad Glas PLC & VTOS	FET Centre, Ennis Campus - Ennis Community College PLC	FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus - LCFE PLC
FET Centre, Croom Campus - Coláiste Ciarán PLC	FET Centre, Ennistymon Campus - Ennistymon PLC	FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus - LCFE Evening
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - Colaiste Iosaef PLC		
FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus - VTOS
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Kilrush Campus - VTOS	
	FET Centre, Scariff Campus - VTOS	FET Centre - Prison Education
FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Kilrush Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Miltown Malbay Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Watch House Cross Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Tuamgraney Campus - Youthreach	
	FET Centre, Shannon Smithstown Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre - Hospitality Education and Training
FET Centre, Raheen Business Park Campus	FET Centre, Shannon Industrial Estate Campus	Training Services - Contracted and Community Training
LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team	LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team	LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team

Appendix 3 – Schedule of Meetings

	September - December	January - March	April - June
LCETB FET QA Steering Group	Week 1	Week 1	Week 1
County Clare QA Working Group	Week 2	Week 2	Week 2
Limerick City QA Working Group	Week 3	Week 3	Week 3
Limerick County QA Working Group	Week 4	Week 4	Week 4

Appendix 3 – LCETB FET QA Steering Group Terms Of Reference

Appendix 4 – Statutory Obligations

QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (EDUCATION AND TRAINING) ACT 2012

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Qualifications%20and%20Quality%20Assurance%20Act%202012.pdf>

Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines Statutory QA Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers - April 2016/QG1-V1 © QQI

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training - April 2016/QP.17-V1 © QQI

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Validation%20Policies%20and%20Criteria%20QP17.pdf>

Topic Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines Statutory QA Guidelines developed by QQI for providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes - June 2016/QG3-V1 © QQI

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Apprenticeship%20Programmes%20QAG%20Topic-Specific.pdf>

City & Guilds “Our Quality Assurance Requirements” Version 5.2 - July 2016

http://www.cityandguilds.com/~/_media/Documents/ProvideTraining/Centre%20Document%20Library/Quality-Assurance-documents/our-quality-assurance-requirements-v5.1-jun16%20pdf.ashx

Appendix 5 – National and Local Strategy Requirements

Department of Education and Skills - Action Plan for Education 2016-2019

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Department-of-Education-and-Skills-Strategy-Statement-2016-2019.pdf>

SOLAS FET Strategy – 2014-2019

<http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/FETStrategy2014-2019.pdf>

LCETB FET Strategic Framework – 2015–2020

https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/planning/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?guestaccesstoken=P6VgvxnDF3olM9Gy39YAj5cSHNCmp4macnolnCsF21U%3d&docid=2_1abb5420acd4345c8823dca4f8730e967&rev=1

SOLAS FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019

<http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/SolasFETPDS.pdf>



LCETB FET Quality Assurance Implementation Groups

Terms of Reference

Policy Area	FET Strategic Framework
Version	1.0
Date	Created: 3 rd November 2016 V1.0 Agreed: 21 st December 2016
Monitored	N/A
Responsibility	FET Division
Approval	

Document Management

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
0.1	03/11/2016	First Draft For Review
0.2	07/11/2016	Corrected – Director of FET, Further Education and Training Officers, LCETB FET QA
0.3	30/11/2016	Corrected – Youthreach Kilmallock Road Campus
0.4	15/12/2016	Update LCETB FET Logo and Organisational Chart
1.0	21/12/2016	Edits and Updates – Agreed version 1.0
1.1	04/04/2017	Change QA Unit to QA Support Service

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Appendix 4 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Terms of Reference

2.0 Purpose

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- Clearly establish how the roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and decision-making relate to educational and training activities and the quality roles and responsibilities within these activities.
- Describe what role(s) and responsibilities exist for coordinating quality assurance activities and governance of teaching and learning both locally in the various educational or training institutions established and maintained by an ETB; and at the senior corporate level within an ETB. These should include collaborative quality assurance activities and cooperative developments with ETBI, with other ETBs and with other education and training bodies and stakeholders.

LCETB FET Quality Assurance Governance Structure (Appendix 1) describes the structure the multi-layered LCETB FET QA Governance system.

- The LCETB Quality Assurance Support Service has responsibility for the management of the LCETB Quality Assurance System, with development, implementation, review and continuous improvement as core functions.
- LCETB Quality Assurance Support Service (QA Officer and QA Support Officers) assist LCETB schools, colleges and centres in the provision of relevant and timely advice, information and support on matters relating to: assessment processes; processing of certification; teaching/training materials; training aids; methodologies and practices to meet the requirements of the certifying agencies associated with the delivery of FET programmes.
- The LCETB FET Quality Assurance Steering Group is responsible for providing overall strategic direction for LCETB FET Quality Assurance, governance of LCETB FET Division Quality Assurance system including systems of Self-Evaluation and Monitoring.
- Three (3) Quality Assurance Implementation Groups provide a structured mechanism and forum for communication between LCETB FET QA Steering Group, LCETB FET QA Support Service and LCETB FET Centres.

Appendix 4 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Terms of Reference

4.0 The Role of the Group

The LCETB FET Quality Assurance Implementation Groups role is to –

- Inform and direct all LCETB centres on recent updates, activities, developments, priorities on all aspects of QA.
- Provide a forum for
 - LCETB FET QA centres to communicate, query and inform QA Support Service and QA Steering Group on local QA Implementation initiatives and challenges.
 - Communication forum on Quality Assurance Issues between
 - LCETB FET Quality Assurance Steering Group
 - LCETB FET Quality Assurance Support Service
 - LCETB FET Centres
 - Communication and dissemination on National and LCETB policies.
 - Collaboration and scheduling on cross centre QA initiatives
 - Function specific (e.g. Internal Verification or External Authentication)
 - Programme Specific (e.g. programme development or review)
 - Resource development (e.g. handbooks, templates)
 - Supports (e.g. communities of practice)
 - CPD (e.g. LCETB directed QA training & centre/individual requirements)

3.3 The Scope of the Group

This policy refers to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Centres. In order to ensure that LCETB Quality Assurance policies and procedures are fair, consistent, realistic, representative, measurable and integrated, as well as meeting the requirements of QQI and other awarding bodies, it is necessary to have a governance structure in place to oversee the development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of Limerick and Clare ETB FET Quality Assurance policies and procedures.

3.4 Group Membership

QA Implementation Group membership shall consist of at least one representative of each of the following centres, programmes and services as per appendix 2.

Representatives should be one of the following categories. Centres may appoint more than one representative to attend the meetings.

- Centre/programme managers or assistant managers
- Centre QA coordinators
- Resource Workers
- Personnel with QA responsibilities

3.4.1 Group Quorum

To be quorate, the meeting must have representation from at least 6 centres. In the event that a quorum cannot be reached, the meeting will be rescheduled to the next most immediate available date.

4.0 Method of Operation

4.1 Meetings

QA Implementation Groups will meet on 3 occasions in each academic calendar year

- September - December
- January - March
- April – June

QA Steering Group Meetings and QA implementation Group meetings should be scheduled as per schedule Appendix 3.

Appendix 4 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Terms of Reference

Any papers for review will be provided at least 10 working days in advance.

The Group will be chaired by a member of the LCETB FET QA Support Service, who will nominate a deputy chair to cover absence.

4.1.1 Inputs

The Group will expect written updates prior to/during the meeting from:

- LCETB FET Steering Group Minutes
- LCETB FET QA Support Service
- LCETB Programme Group Minutes
- ETBI/QQI FET Forum Meeting Minutes
- Any other individual or group that have agreed to produce an update for a specific meeting

4.1.2 Group Escalation Process

The group will escalate items such as:

- Non-compliance with quality policy directives without the group agreeing the reasons for non-compliance
- Failure to carry out actions in the agreed timescales where no reason for delay has been provided to the group
- Persistent non-attendance at meetings by a group member or their nominated deputy

The Implementation Groups will escalate issues as appropriate to:

- LCETB FET QA Support Service
- LCETB FET QA Steering Group
- LCETB FET Senior Management Team

4.1.3 Outputs

- Meeting minutes
- Actions log

The group will agree any other outputs with other bodies as and when required.

4.2 Administration Support

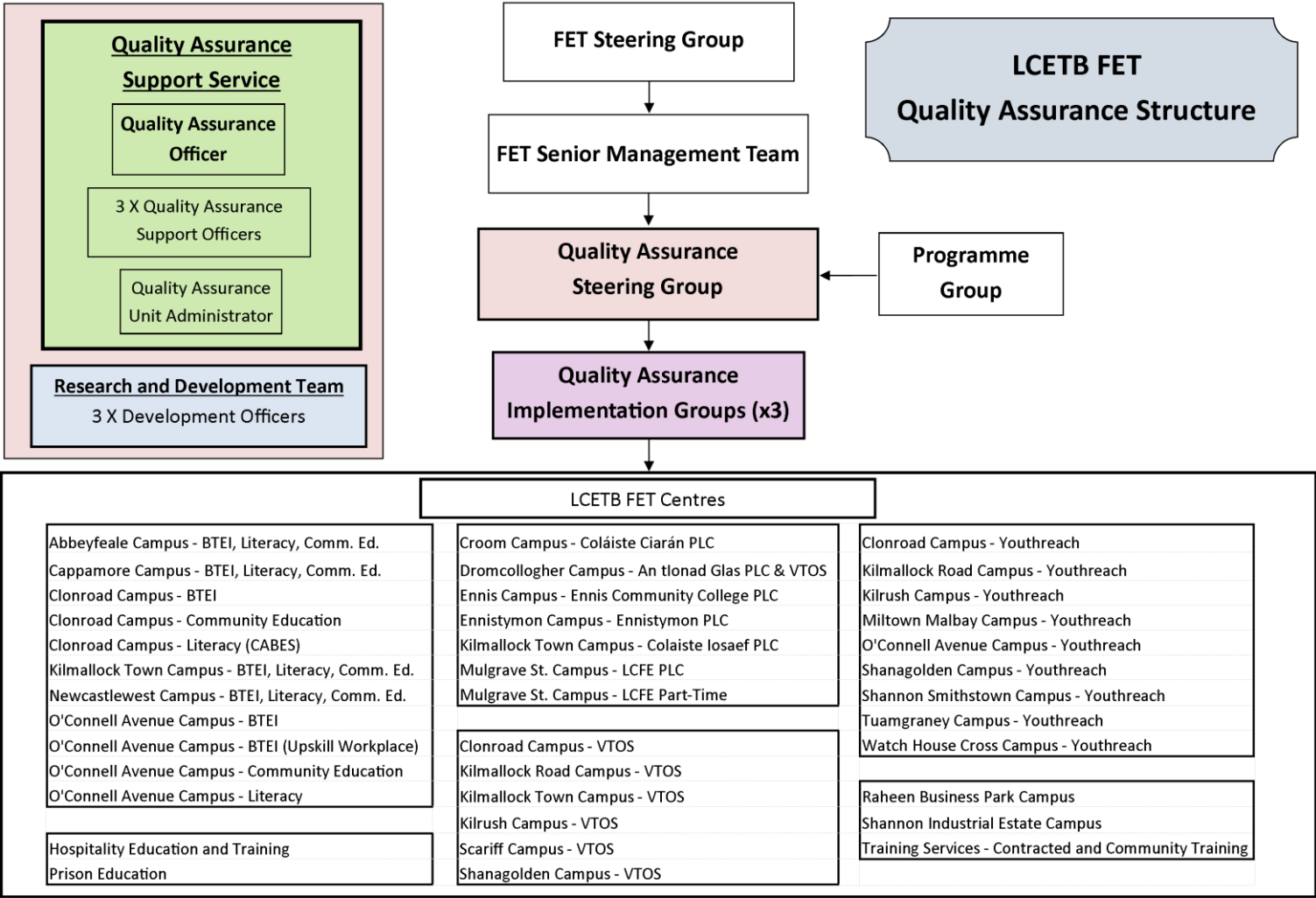
QA Implementation Groups will be administered by the LCETB FET QA Support Service Administrator.

- schedule meetings and notify members
- invite specialists to attend meetings when required by the Implementation Group
- prepare and provide in advance to members, a meeting agenda and relevant briefing documents
- record minutes
- issue minutes, in a timely manner, to Implementation Group members
- prepare reports as required by the Implementation Group

5.0 Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – LCETB FET Quality Assurance Governance Structure
- 5.2 Appendix 2 – LCETB FET Implementation Groups
- 5.3 Appendix 3 – Schedule of Meetings
- 5.4 Appendix 4 – Statutory Obligations
- 5.5 Appendix 5 – National and Local Strategy Requirements

Appendix 1 – LCETB Quality Assurance Governance Structure



Appendix 4 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Terms of Reference

Appendix 2 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Groups

County Limerick QA Implementation Group	County Clare QA Implementation Group	Limerick City QA Implementation Group
FET Centre, Abbeyfeale Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - BTEI	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - BTEI
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Literacy (CABES)	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - BTEI (Upskill Workplace)
FET Centre, Newcastlewest Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Community Education	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Literacy
FET Centre, Cappamore Campus - BTEI, Literacy, Community Ed.		FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Community Education
FET Centre, Dromcollogher Campus - An tIonad Glas PLC & VTOS	FET Centre, Ennis Campus - Ennis Community College PLC	FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus - LCFE PLC
FET Centre, Croom Campus - Coláiste Ciarán PLC	FET Centre, Ennistymon Campus - Ennistymon PLC	FET Centre, Mulgrave St. Campus - LCFE Evening
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - Colaiste Iosaef PLC		
FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus - VTOS
FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus - VTOS	FET Centre, Kilrush Campus - VTOS	
	FET Centre, Scariff Campus - VTOS	FET Centre - Prison Education
FET Centre, Shanagolden Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Clonroad Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Kilrush Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Miltown Malbay Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre, Watch House Cross Campus - Youthreach
	FET Centre, Tuamgraney Campus - Youthreach	
	FET Centre, Shannon Smithstown Campus - Youthreach	FET Centre - Hospitality Education and Training
FET Centre, Raheen Business Park Campus	FET Centre, Shannon Industrial Estate Campus	Training Services - Contracted and Community Training
LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team	LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team	LCETB FET Integrated Guidance Team

Appendix 3 – Schedule of Meetings

	September - December	January - March	April - June
LCETB FET QA Steering Group	Week 1	Week 1	Week 1
Limerick County QA Implementation Group	Week 2	Week 2	Week 2
Limerick City QA Implementation Group	Week 3	Week 3	Week 3
County Clare QA Implementation Group	Week 4	Week 4	Week 4

Appendix 4 – LCETB FET QA Implementation Group Terms of Reference

5.4 Appendix 4 – Statutory Obligations

QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (EDUCATION AND TRAINING) ACT 2012

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Qualifications%20and%20Quality%20Assurance%20Act%202012.pdf>

Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines Statutory QA Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers - April 2016/QG1-V1 © QQI

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training - April 2016/QP.17-V1 © QQI

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Validation%20Policies%20and%20Criteria%20QP17.pdf>

Topic Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines Statutory QA Guidelines developed by QQI for providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes - June 2016/QG3-V1 © QQI

<http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Apprenticeship%20Programmes%20QAG%20Topic-Specific.pdf>

City & Guilds “Our Quality Assurance Requirements” Version 5.2 - July 2016

<http://www.cityandguilds.com/~media/Documents/ProvideTraining/Centre%20Document%20Library/Quality-Assurance-documents/our-quality-assurance-requirements-v5.1-jun16%20pdf.ashx>

5.5 Appendix 5 – National and Local Strategy Requirements

Department of Education and Skills - Action Plan for Education 2016-2019

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Department-of-Education-and-Skills-Strategy-Statement-2016-2019.pdf>

SOLAS FET Strategy – 2014-2019

<http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/FETStrategy2014-2019.pdf>

LCETB FET Strategic Framework – 2015–2020

https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/planning/_layouts/15/guestaccess.aspx?guestaccesstoken=P6VgvxnDF3oIM9Gy39YAj5cSHNCmp4macnoInCsF21U%3d&docid=2_1abb5420acd4345c8823dca4f8730e967&rev=1

SOLAS FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019

<http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/SolasFETPDS.pdf>



INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present the LCETB Further Education and Training Service Strategic Framework 2015-2020, which will chart the path for our programmes and services over the next five years. It is the product of a consultative process, which gave multiple opportunities to learners, managers, staff, employers and community partners in Limerick and Clare to have a say in our future direction. It is steeped in the belief that further education and training changes lives and equips people with the attitudes and skills they need to be successful in their personal and professional lives. This strategy also emphasises the role the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will play in the cultural, social and economic development of our region.



Recognising that learning is a lifelong pursuit, the design concept for this strategy is based on the journey that a learner can undertake when engaging with Further Education and Training. It uses the structure of an underground transport system to reflect the priorities of the Framework, with stations/stops where the learner can transfer, arrive/depart or continue their learning journey. This design is about connectivity - the learner is connected to FET through LCETB, and the FET Service is in turn connected to the community and employers by providing routes to learners.

This Strategy is built around key guiding principles of respect/equality, quality/professionalism, integration, responsiveness, support and collaboration. As an umbrella framework, it will promote a shared vision across our service and guide our FET centres, colleges, programmes and services in the development of integrated implementation plans for their full-time and part-time provision. It sets out four service-wide strategic priorities, which are in line with the LCETB Corporate Plan and the SOLAS Strategy 2014-2019: 1) *Access and Progression* 2) *Quality Teaching & Learning*, 3) *Stakeholder Engagement* and 4) *Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership*.

For each strategic priority, key outcomes have been identified as measures of success and will include the wider benefits of lifelong learning, as our sector must strike a balance between the delivery of sustainable economic and social outcomes. These outcomes will be monitored and analysed through a structured FET Service Evaluation Framework, which will report progress on a regular basis. Achieving the outcomes outlined in this strategy will require commitment and collaboration among LCETB staff, learners, managers, administrators and all our key partners.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'P. Patton'.

Paul Patton
Head of Further Education & Training
LCETB FET Service

Further Education & Training Service
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OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Quality further education and training will inspire people to realise their personal and professional potential and contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of the region.

OUR CORE PURPOSE

We provide relevant and innovative further education and training opportunities that address the needs and aspirations of our learners, local communities and employers.



lcetb

Bord Oideachais agus Ollkine
Lúimnigh agus an Chláir
Limerick and Clare
Education and Training Board

**FURTHER EDUCATION
& TRAINING SERVICE**

Access & Progression

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITY

1

This is about supporting learners to access and sustain participation in education and training and to progress in key aspects of their lives, including personal development, further education and/or employment.

What We'll Do...

- 1 Develop a **LCETB FET PR/Marketing Strategy** to facilitate advertising, branding and learner recruitment.
- 2 Develop an integrated **FET Service educational and careers guidance strategy**.
- 3 Agree **learner enrolment strategies** at FET level, including clear referral protocols, to ensure appropriate learner placement and enhance participation and retention on programmes.
- 4 **Recognise learners' prior learning**, in line with national guidelines, to facilitate access to FET programmes.
- 5 Develop a strategy to **embed core literacies** (i.e. literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, interpersonal skills, digital literacy, etc.) **in all our provision**.
- 6 Provide a **range of learner supports** (e.g. referrals to other agencies, disability supports, placements, etc.), to help address barriers to participation, retention and progression.
- 7 **Map out the wide range of learners' progression options** within LCETB programmes.
- 8 Develop LCETB FET-wide **learner progression tracking** systems, including the use of relevant learner management information systems.

Quality Teaching & Learning

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITY

2

This is about promoting a culture of continuous improvement and organisational learning in the LCETB FET Service, so that staff, learners, employers and communities have confidence in the quality and relevance of FET in Limerick and Clare.

What We'll Do...

- 1 Develop an **evidence-based CPD strategy** for the FET service, informed by latest research on teaching, learning and assessment, stakeholder feedback and skills audits to update staff subject and educational expertise, and enable them to better support learners' individual needs.
- 2 Promote a **culture of innovation and reflective practice**, by fostering teamwork, supporting communities of practice and networks, creating opportunities for all staff to exchange ideas and share best practice.
- 3 Strategically **use existing, new and emerging technologies** to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
- 4 Promote **curriculum and programme development approaches** that enable us to tailor our provision to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities, and prioritise key regional and national skills areas.
- 5 Continue to **celebrate learner and staff excellence and achievements** to highlight the positive impact of our work.
- 6 Document the **wide range of outcomes and benefits** from individuals, communities and employers' participation in FET programmes.
- 7 Use findings from organisational learning to inform improvement plans, **influence policy and advocate** for appropriate structures and resources for the FET sector at local and national level.
- 8 Ensure LCETB FET learners have access to **welcoming, safe and fit-for-purpose learning environments**.

Stakeholder Engagement

OUR
STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

3

This is about communicating with learners, staff, community partners, employers, other agencies and education providers and using feedback to enhance the quality and relevance of our work.

What We'll Do...

- 1 Develop and implement tailor-made and inclusive **consultation mechanisms for our stakeholders** (learners, staff, community partners, employers, etc.)
- 2 Ensure consultation feedback is used to inform planning, and contribute to **continuous improvement** of our programmes and services.
- 3 Build on existing linkages to develop an **Employer Engagement Strategy** that ensures our provision responds to key regional and national skills demand, and equips learners to participate successfully in the workforce.
- 4 Set up **effective partnerships** with community groups, other agencies including education providers, to share information, agree protocols, and encourage joined-up planning and delivery of local programmes and services.
- 5 Engage in meaningful **dialogue with awarding bodies**, including QQI to enhance FET learners' opportunities.
- 6 Ensure the **FET Service is represented on local, regional and national fora** to promote the strategic advancement of FET for social inclusion and economic development.

Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership

OUR
STRATEGIC
PRIORITY

4

This is about ensuring that the quality of our education & training provision is supported by LCETB management and administration systems that meet the highest standards of accountability, transparency and compliance.

What We'll Do...

- 1 Develop an **internal communications strategy** that clarifies FET organisational structures, roles and responsibilities, and sets out effective communication and decision-making processes within the FET service and with the LCETB Administrative pillars and the Schools Division.
- 2 Develop transparent **operational planning procedures for budget & financial management**.
- 3 Ensure **all key personnel are involved in planning for the introduction of new management and administrative systems, procedures and practices** (e.g. CPD, implementation timeframes, roles and responsibilities, etc.)
- 4 **Enhance planning and operational management capacity** at all levels of the organisation, through CPD, self-managed teams and devolved decision making where appropriate.
- 5 Develop and use fit-for-purpose FET management information systems to ensure **up-to-date, relevant and accurate data** is available at local and regional levels for returns to national bodies (e.g. SOLAS, DES, etc.), and to inform planning.
- 6 Develop and implement a structured **LCETB FET Quality Assurance system** that demonstrates our commitment to quality standards and continuous improvement.
- 7 Develop an **outcome-based evaluation framework for the LCETB FET Service**, including effective monitoring and reporting systems for returns to national bodies and to inform planning.

The final element of this LCETB FET Strategy is the development of a **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**.

For each strategic priority, key outcomes have been identified during the consultation process, clarifying expectations of what we want to achieve as a FET service in the next 5 years.

Some of the outcomes identified include:

- Increased learner retention and progression rates.
- Evidence of change of practice/innovation in Teaching & Learning and use of technologies.
- Flexible curriculum development process, responsive to local skills demand.
- New connections with employers and staff and learners' increased exposure to the world of work.
- Evidence of effective inter-agency collaboration with DSP, HSE, LCDC, SOLAS, QQI, etc.
- Enhanced communication within the FET Service and with the LCETB Administrative Pillars.
- LCETB FET Service Quality Assurance system is implemented and evaluated across the Service.
- Enhanced recognition of a clearly defined LCETB FET brand.
- Evidence of clear and robust data used for planning and organisational learning.

For each outcome, measurable performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, will be developed and monitored on an ongoing basis to help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic priorities. From an initial baseline assessment, data will be systematically collected to ensure the results of our work match the strategic intentions we set ourselves for the next five years. Findings will be shared widely with our key stakeholders to highlight what works and to contribute to the development of the FET sector for the benefit of learners.