



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna  
**LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR**

**LIMERICK & CLARE**  
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# FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

## QUALITY ASSURANCE NEWSLETTER

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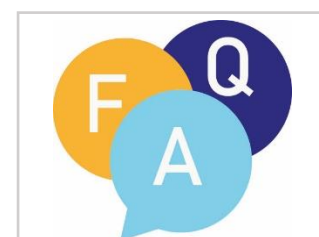
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The importance of robust and effective organisational quality assurance is increasingly relevant in times of change. QQI, in their study on the impact of Covid-19 on teaching, learning and assessment, acknowledge the oversight and guidance provided by Quality Assurance Governance, Processes and Services in managing change, and the flexibility that these quality assurance structures have enabled.

2020 has shown how significant change and flexibility can be managed and implemented very effectively, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff.

This newsletter captures the significant developments in our quality assurance system that have been implemented in recent months, and will provide staff with a valuable reference and information on these important updates.

I commend this document to all staff as an invaluable resource to learn more about the various Quality Assurance developments in the Further Education and Training Division.

Paul Patton,  
Director of FET  
Chair of Limerick and Clare Education and Training  
Board Quality Council.

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# 1. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLANNING OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT.

All of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Teaching, Learning and Assessment have been published on the Quality Assurance page of the learningandskills.ie website - <https://learningandskills.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance>

## TEACHING AND LEARNING ONLINE – SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINES <sup>1</sup>

This guide, developed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Support Service, aims to provide guidance and support for all, particularly those who are new to teaching and learning online. It was designed to provide useful, clear and concise guidance.

Online learning, which is any form of learning conducted partly or wholly over the Internet, requires of learning practitioners a different skillset than classroom or workshop based activities. Teaching online is fundamentally different to teaching offline and requires skills including the ability to use eLearning and video-conferencing platforms, set e-tivities, lead and moderate online activities and set and grade online assignments.

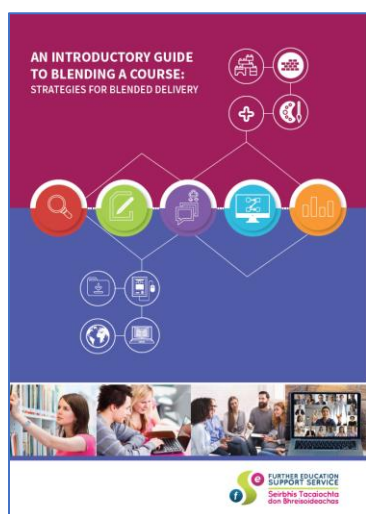
"In planning future provision...blended learning approaches that combine online components with face-to-face interactions (where possible) may represent a more supported learning experience that better meets the needs of some FET learners." QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020 <sup>2</sup>

The guide is an invaluable resource to learning practitioners, offering practical advice; a guide to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training supported platforms; synchronous teaching tips and etiquette; digital wellbeing; digital inclusion; tools for teaching and learning; universal design for learning; online assessment; guidelines to support young adult learners; external covid-19 and online learning resources, and much more.

As a resource to any learning practitioner delivering any element of their course online, this guide is an essential read.

The one-stop shop for online resources is the TEL Learning Zone in Teams – [FET DIV TEL Learning Zone](#) <sup>3</sup>. The TEL Learning Zone is a public team that is open to all Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board staff. Everyone is encouraged to join; it is packed with useful resources.

## AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO BLENDING A COURSE: STRATEGIES FOR BLENDED DELIVERY <sup>4</sup>



Further Education Support Service (FESS) have developed a handbook to support those delivering FET programmes who have been tasked with converting a fully face-to-face course to one with an online/remote element (i.e. the blended element) for learners. Blended learning is a mode of delivery allowing learners to complete their course of study by a combination of in centre face-to-face, work based and online learning.

This handbook focuses primarily on the online element of the blended learning activity.

"Providers may need to reflect on how to maximise opportunities for **interaction** e.g. through live video calls/classes, chat and message board functions etc., and for group work and engagements with a primarily social orientation to sustain motivation and to support the development of relationships and interpersonal skills." QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

<sup>1</sup> <https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Teaching-and-Learning-Online-Web-Doc-Final.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/The%20Impact%20of%20COVID-19%20Modifications%20to%20Teaching%2c%20Learning%20and%20Assessment%20in%20Irish%20Further%20Education.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3a4bf15d53b4944ff5a95b636321908118%40thread.skype/conversations?groupId=610989d6-1f5a-4b12-ac0f-b2696e93a162&tenantId=fb874001-fba4-4ff1-bf1f-b7b25b52ad4b>

<sup>4</sup> [https://fess.ie/images/stories/Blended\\_Learning/BlendedLearningHandbook2020.pdf](https://fess.ie/images/stories/Blended_Learning/BlendedLearningHandbook2020.pdf)

“In order to mitigate some of the disadvantage to learners arising from the ‘digital divide’, both staff and learners have emphasised that **induction processes** should include information/training for learners on how to access and use online learning platforms and that learners should also know how to access resources/supports to help troubleshoot technical issues thereafter.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

Programmes validated by QQI have a set of learning outcomes associated with them at programme and/or module level. It is vital to ensure that the delivery of the programme, whatever delivery mode is used, provides learners with a range of appropriate learning opportunities. Opportunities will also have to be provided to learners to allow them to demonstrate achievement of the relevant learning outcomes.

This handbook forms part of a suite of resources developed by FESS, and available from their [Guidance on programme delivery and assessment of learners in light of disruption due to Covid-19](#)<sup>5</sup> webpage.

## GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLANNING OF ASSESSMENTS<sup>6</sup>

Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Assessments (Revision 1.1, September 2020) is an update to, and replaces Revision 1.0 of the Contingency Assessment Document (April 2020).



Contingency planning for Teaching, Learning and Assessment has been extended to incorporate the academic year 2020-2021, and as such, this document has been updated to reflect this extension. ([Extension to QQI guidance on teaching, learning and assessment](#)<sup>7</sup>, QQI, October 2020)

These guidelines and procedures are intended to inform and support the development of alternative forms of assessment in order that learners can achieve the qualification they have been working towards while maintaining the integrity of the award.

The QQI Principles of Assessment must apply and all assessments must be Fair, Reliable, Valid, Transparent and Quality Assured.

Alternative assessments, in order to be Quality Assured, must comply with and adhere to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board’s Assessment Procedures available on StaffCONNECT.

The approach to, and choice of alternative assessment must be agreed between assessor and FET Centre management, with local development of alternative assessment complying with these published guidelines and procedures. FET Centres should retain copies of alternative assessments applied for future Quality Assurance monitoring purposes.

## ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Contingency in Assessment is focussed solely on providing alternatives to the Examination assessment technique. Two options are defined, one of conducting the assessment online, the other to replace the examination with an assignment.

This use of alternative assessments allows for identified Learning Outcomes, previously assigned to the examinable component of a given programme, to switch to being assessed by assignment. Alternative assessments are assignments devised to replace “Examination” assessment technique with “Assignment” or “Project”.

Exemplars of alternative assessments to replace end-of-year examinations have been developed by the Quality Assurance Support Service as a guide to how an alternative assessment could appropriately assess the required Learning Outcomes of a module.

“Learner survey data suggest that the majority of learners felt confident in their ability to complete their assessments and felt that they were fair. Practitioners – particularly at Levels 5-6 – also commented that many of the written assessments and open-book examinations worked well and, in several cases that the alternative assessment was found to be a better assessment instrument than the original.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

<sup>5</sup> <https://fess.ie/guidance-on-programme-delivery-and-assessment-of-learners-in-light-of-disruption-due-to-covid-19>

<sup>6</sup> [https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20\\_09\\_10\\_Covid-19\\_Contingency-Planning-for-Assessment-Version-1.1.pdf](https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20_09_10_Covid-19_Contingency-Planning-for-Assessment-Version-1.1.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/News/Pages/Extension-to-QQI-guidance-on-teaching,-learning-and-assessment-.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> [https://twitter.com/QQI\\_connect](https://twitter.com/QQI_connect)

## WORK EXPERIENCE / WORK PLACEMENT CONTINGENCY

1. Learners who may not have the opportunity to complete their work placement as part of Work Experience may be suitable for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for this part of their module. Recognition of Prior Learning evidence will include: up-to-date Curriculum Vitae, a Reference letter from a relevant Employer, and if required, a Work Experience Assignment which includes an essay reflecting on past work experience.
  - a. Recognition of Prior learning evidence must be relevant and within the vocational area of the particular award the learner is following.
  - b. The Work Experience module makes allowances for a number of placements as highlighted in the marking scheme for the Skills Demonstration. However, all placements must be signed off by a workplace supervisor.
  - c. Recognition of Prior Learning can be used for the skills demonstration section of the Work Experience modules for vocationally specific modules, such as Healthcare and Childcare in the following scenarios:
    - i. If the learner has previously worked in the industry in a recognised setting (e.g. ECCE setting, Nursing Home), then they can use this placement for Work Experience provided it is within the last 5 years. They must submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae and Reference letter from this Employer.
    - ii. If the learner is undertaking a course of study at Level 6, then they can use the placement undertaken for Work Experience at Level 5, provided it is in the same vocational area and is within the last 5 years. They must submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae, a Reference letter from Employer where placement was undertaken, and reflective essay Assignment that will demonstrate the prior achievement of Level 6 Work Experience (6N1946) Learning Outcomes.
2. The Contingency Planning for Assessment document goes on to define how another elective has been added to the work placement pool in certain awards, effectively making a work placement elective rather than mandatory for those awards; -
  - o The employment/work-based learning award pool for a number of defined programmes has been modified to include Career Planning at Level 4, and Personal and Professional Development at Levels 5 and 6. Modification is limited to the list of specific programmes.
  - o Please note the exceptions and credit values associated, there are specific exceptions at levels 4, 5 and 6.
  - o Discussions are ongoing with the ETB sector and QQI to clarify the arrangements for the more vocationally focused awards at L5 and L6. These discussions also include proposals for a number of awards at L4. Updates will be issued to all Provision Co-ordinators/Managers/Principals.

## LEARNER PLACEMENTS IN EARLY LEARNING AND CARE SETTINGS

### **Covid-19 guidelines and protocols for course providers and Early Learning and Care settings**

A set of "[Guidelines and Protocols](#)" <sup>9</sup> has been developed by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Department of Education and Skills for educational course providers and Early Learning and Care providers to follow in respect of learner placements in Early Learning and Care settings in the context of the Covid-19 situation and public health guidance.

This has been prepared having regard to public health advice, and following consultations with representatives of Early Learning and Care providers and of educational course providers. While the primary concern of this note relates to supervised practice placements in Early Learning and Care settings for learners on courses leading to relevant qualifications, it is applicable to any situation in which a learner might be placed in an Early Learning and Care setting.

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<sup>9</sup> [https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Programmes/New%20Work%20Experience/20\\_10\\_13\\_Learner\\_Placements\\_ELC\\_Settings.pdf](https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Programmes/New%20Work%20Experience/20_10_13_Learner_Placements_ELC_Settings.pdf)



## SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE AND BLENDED ASSESSMENT IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING <sup>10</sup>

These guidelines were developed by a cross-functional working group in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board to provide clarity and consistency to assessors and learners, in line with guidance provided by QQI.

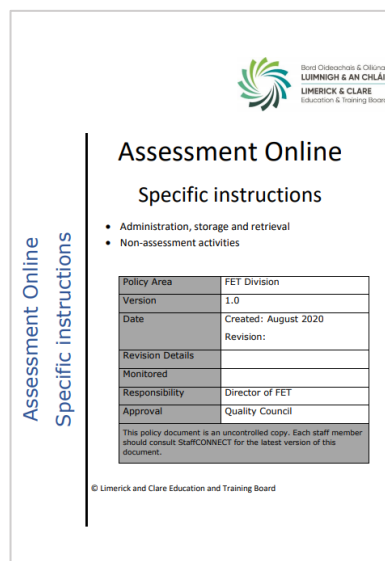
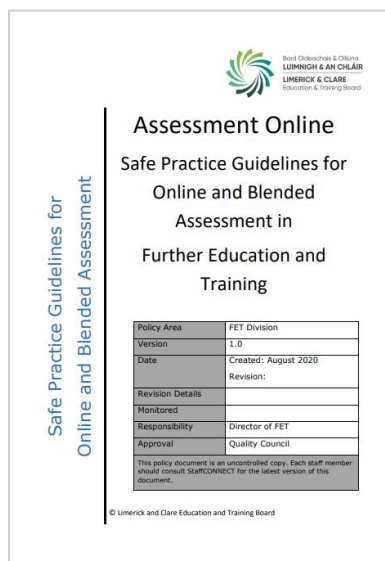
Online assessment can provide Assessors with numerous possibilities to replace existing classroom based assessment or examinations with online alternatives. Online quizzes, assignments, ePortfolios and video submissions are just some of the possibilities to replace or supplement traditional examinations or portfolios of evidence, however, such methods present Assessors with a number of challenges with regard to ensuring fairness and equity for all learners.

This safe practice guideline document provides clarity for learning practitioners in conducting online assessment, through exploring each of the following areas in detail.

- Guidelines for Communicating with Learners / Induction to Online Assessment
- Online Assessments – Assessment Techniques
- Developing and Conducting Online Assessments
- Reasonable Accommodation Procedure
- Procedure for Conducting an Online Examination
- Guidelines for Learners for Remote Recording of Digital Evidence
- Guidelines for Administration, Storage and Retrieval of Electronic Evidence
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Word Count Guidelines for alternate assessments

“The submissions indicate an awareness that remote/online provision poses new challenges for academic integrity and that practitioners need to be equipped with appropriate technology (e.g. antiplagiarism software) and expertise to navigate these challenges with greater confidence and to ensure the continued confidence of all stakeholders in the integrity of awards.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

## ASSESSMENT ONLINE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS



The Assessment Online guidelines (**Assessment Online - Safe Practice Guidelines for Online and Blended Assessment in Further Education and Training**) have now been uploaded to StaffConnect (Quality Assurance - Assessment Resources – [Assessment Online Guidelines folder](#) <sup>11</sup>). This document outlines guidelines in relation to: developing and conducting online assessment; remote recording of digital evidence etc.

A second document has also been uploaded which gives specific instructions in relation to administration, storage and retrieval of assessment material. This is a working document and will be amended to reflect any updates with technology.

The QA Support Service is also working with the Technology Enhanced Learning Support Service to develop a suite of instructional videos to help guide assessors in the organisation and storage of digital evidence.

<sup>10</sup> [https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20\\_08\\_25\\_Assessment-Online-Guidelines.pdf](https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20_08_25_Assessment-Online-Guidelines.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> [https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/fetdivision/QAS/EggIUCU2849PvzLeQgMVBsMBIwXW03w8CC99I\\_J1maq\\_5w?e=12whst](https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/fetdivision/QAS/EggIUCU2849PvzLeQgMVBsMBIwXW03w8CC99I_J1maq_5w?e=12whst)

## ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE MODIFICATIONS

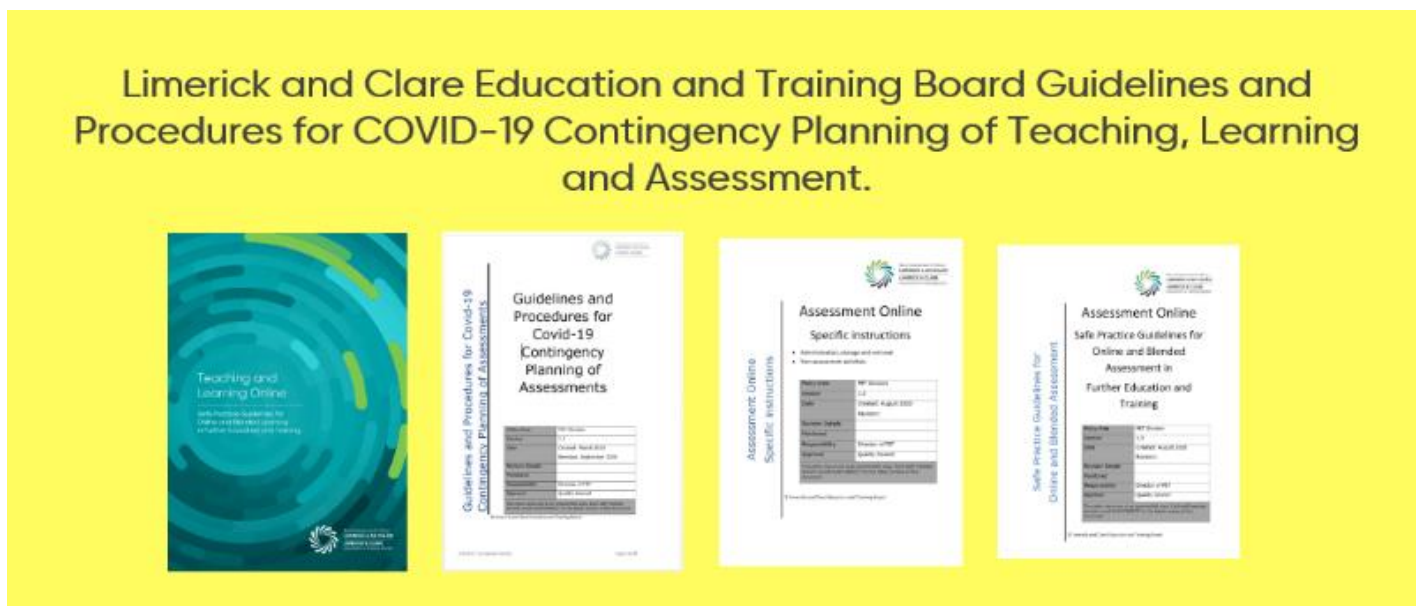
As a result of the move to blended and online delivery it was necessary to make some changes to the existing templates. Four of the original templates have been modified and one new template has been added to the suite of assessment templates. The table below outlines some of the changes made.

Template	Modification
<b>03a_Assessment Cover Sheet Levels 1-3</b>	Learners can type their name into the coversheet if they are unable to sign or insert a digital signature.
<b>03a_Assessment Cover Sheet Levels 4-6</b>	As above
<b>03a_Assessment Cover Sheet Online or Open Book Exam</b>	This is a new template and must be completed by the learner when undertaking an online or open book exam.
<b>11a_Portfolio Checklist</b>	Assessors must indicate where assessment evidence is located.
<b>14a_IV Checklist Online</b>	Additional information added to take into account the delivery of blended and online courses.

If you are teaching an online or blended learning course you will find all templates on StaffCONNECT – Quality Assurance - Assessment Resources – Assessment Templates – [Online or Blended Learning Templates](#).<sup>12</sup>

If you are delivering a face-to-face course all original templates can be found in Quality Assurance - Assessment Resources – [Assessment Templates](#).<sup>13</sup>

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Teaching, Learning and Assessment can also be found in the Quality Assurance section of the learning and skills website ([learningandskills.ie](http://learningandskills.ie)).



<sup>12</sup> <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/fetdivision/QAS/Eg-IJGL1jNRDtCUY1tEAVnIBfWxs32IHHi6DyWhLqXSsZA>

<sup>13</sup> [https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/fetdivision/QAS/Ete9468VlcNAI\\_XnLcPwILAB4G9IOKyF9krNVzrgb8Sk6A](https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/fetdivision/QAS/Ete9468VlcNAI_XnLcPwILAB4G9IOKyF9krNVzrgb8Sk6A)



## 2. THE LEARNING NETWORK – SHARING IDEAS AND GOOD PRACTICE

The Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Support Service have created the [FET DIV The Learning Network – Sharing Ideas and Good Practice team](#)<sup>14</sup> on MS Teams. The aim of this learning network is to allow learning practitioners to come together to share ideas and good practice in relation to teaching, learning and assessment.



This collaboration space is for all Learning Practitioners across all levels to come together to share ideas and good practice and develop teaching and assessment resources. A number of channels have been created, including a Professional Development and Career Planning channel, with more to be added over time. The network is for learning practitioners teaching across all the levels.

Through this network it is hoped to foster a culture of working together to develop shared teaching resources, assessment briefs and marking schemes. Groups of learning practitioners teaching the same module in a college or centre are encouraged to come together and develop a shared set of teaching and assessment material.

If learning practitioners are willing to share what they have developed with the wider ETB, please contact the Quality Assurance Support Service, as they are facilitating the development of an exemplar bank of assessment material. This exemplar bank will be very successful if people are willing to contribute.

As outlined in the Contingency Planning for Assessment document, “it is possible at programme level, to replace Work Experience/Work Practice module with a Career Planning or Personal and Professional Development in certain programmes, removing the requirement for a work placement in certain programmes”. Please refer to the Contingency Planning document for the list of programme exceptions or contact [qa@lcteb.ie](mailto:qa@lcteb.ie).

In light of this change the QA Support Service initial focus for the Learning Network is the Personal and Professional Development and Career Planning modules. The QA Support Service organised meet-ups and are encouraging learning practitioners to work together to develop a shared set of teaching resources and assessment material. They are requesting that any Learning Practitioners who are currently teaching either the Personal and Professional Development (Level 5 and 6) or the Career Planning (Level 4) module or may have taught it in the past to contact the QA Support Service, as they are researching and collating ideas and resources to share with other learning practitioners.

“The **sharing of practice** and the development of case studies and exemplars across communities of practice, providers and on a sectoral basis will continue to help reduce the ‘trial and error’ nature of some of the COVID experience and provide greater confidence to providers and practitioners in more effective approaches and methodologies.” QCI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

Details regarding meet-ups can be found in the Personal and Professional and Career Planning channels within the Learning Network Team.

<sup>14</sup> <https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3ae648d8907bc6454da04fdd41eab4414b%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=e2edd702-0dc2-471b-bd35-433b5c53b15c&tenantId=fb874001-fba4-4ff1-bf1f-b7b25b52ad4b>

### 3. QUALITY ASSURANCE INAUGURAL REVIEW (QAIR) PROCESS

The Quality Assurance Inaugural Review by QQI aims to encourage a quality culture and enhancement of Teaching and Learning experience in ETBs; provide feedback to ETBs about organisation-wide quality and the impact of mission, strategy, governance and management on quality and the overall effectiveness of their quality assurance. It also aims to offer assurance to learners and the public that the learning experience is being monitored for good practice, and effective arrangements are in place for the quality assurance of its services. Overall its goal is to support system level improvement of the quality of Further Education and Training in ETBs. A key intended outcome of the reviews is the stimulation of an intra-organisational discourse on quality within each ETB through critical analysis and meaningful discussion.

Over the past few months, an internal self-evaluation process has taken place. Thank you to all FET staff and learners who took part in consultations to feed back on the effectiveness of our QA processes. The feedback was central to our self-evaluation process, and has been used as evidence to make recommendations for improvement. All consultation reports can be found on StaffCONNECT - Evaluation and Monitoring – [QQI QA Inaugural Review folder](#) <sup>15</sup>



The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a revised schedule for the QA Review. QQI have also confirmed that the planning and main review visit meetings will take place using online video conferencing and will not involve the physical presence of the review team at the ETB.

#### Revised Schedule for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board:

Schedule	
Submission of <a href="#">Provider Regional Profile</a> <sup>16</sup> to QQI	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
Submission of Institutional Self-Evaluation Report	18 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
QQI Planning Visit	10 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
QQI Review Team Main Visit	12 <sup>th</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
Draft QQI Review Report due	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2021

The next steps to our self-evaluation process are:

- 14<sup>th</sup>&15<sup>th</sup> October 2020: Final plenary meetings of QA Review Task Group to agree recommendations.
- Drafting of final version of SER Report – The version will be available on StaffCONNECT.
- 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020: Meeting of Quality Council to Approve Final Report
- Final Self-Evaluation Report to be sent to QQI by 18th December 2020.

<sup>15</sup> <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Evaluation%20and%20Monitoring/QQI%20QA%20INAUGURAL%20REVIEW/>

<sup>16</sup> [https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Evaluation%20and%20Monitoring/QQI%20QA%20INAUGURAL%20REVIEW/20\\_10\\_16\\_LCETB\\_Provider\\_Profile\\_QAIR\\_Final.pdf](https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Evaluation%20and%20Monitoring/QQI%20QA%20INAUGURAL%20REVIEW/20_10_16_LCETB_Provider_Profile_QAIR_Final.pdf)

## 4. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Reporting on Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is in alignment QQI's routine monitoring function. QQI's [Policy on Monitoring](#)<sup>17</sup> includes an expectation that providers will routinely provide information to QQI. This process assures the provision of public information on the operation of a provider's system of quality assurance.

### QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN – REVIEW OF 2019 QIP AND PLANNING FOR 2020/2021

Significant progress was achieved against the agreed 2019 Quality Improvement Plan. Some examples of the work carried out in 2019 include:

**1. Governance and Management of Quality**

Quality Council Working Groups established and developmental work advanced in areas of Policy Development and Curriculum Review.

**2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance**

Assessment processes and procedures developed to align the legacy providers within Limerick and Clare ETB to a single common set of processes.

**3. Programmes of Education and Training**

Curriculum Development and Quality Assurance support for the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship – a significant focus of developmental and QA support work.

**4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development**

Extensive QA professional development offered, including mandatory QA induction training being introduced.

**5. Teaching and Learning**

Centre Quality Improvement planning process reviewed, extended and embedded – providing a direct and documented link between organisational QA and teaching, learning and assessment at centre, programme and module level.

**6. Assessment of Learners**

Implementation of standardised assessment procedures across FET division – assuring consistency and standardisation of practice across centres.

**7. Supports For Learners**

Assessment procedures and forms, published on [learningandskills.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/](#)<sup>18</sup> website - clear, transparent and consistent process for application for reasonable accommodation in assessment.

**8. Information and Data Management**

Strong organisational processes of records and documentation control, SharePoint StaffCONNECT site as central resource for policy, procedure, curriculum.

**9. Public Information and Communication**

Development of learningandskills.ie website to incorporate information for staff, learners and stakeholders, publication of three Quality Assurance newsletters in 2019.

**10. Other Parties involved in Education and Training**

Building existing relationships, including formalising Memorandum of Understanding with Limerick Community Education Network centres and incorporating member representation in Quality Council subgroups.

**11. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review**

Extensive research and development towards conducting the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance.

Incorporation of Youthreach Centre Evaluation and Improvement Planning in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Governance structures, with the CEIP 2019 annual reports for 8 Youthreach Provisions completed, submitted and approved at Quality Council.

More information on the 2019 QIP can be found on [learningandskills.ie](#)<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/QQI%20Policy%20on%20Monitoring%202014.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://learningandskills.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://learningandskills.ie/>

## 2020/2021 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

	Quality Area	Key Tasks/Activities	Responsible	Timeline	Measure/Benchmark [how will you know it was achieved]	Status/Update
1.1	Governance and Management of Quality	Maintain governance structures of Quality Council and its associated sub-groups of Quality Assurance and Programme Governance.	LCETB Director of FET, LCETB Innovation, Development and Quality and Programme Governance members.	Ongoing	Continue to embed, support and develop established Quality Council and Quality Assurance and Programme Governance Sub-groups.	
1.2	Governance and Management of Quality	Establish working groups of Quality Assurance and Programme Governance sub-groups as required.	LCETB Director of FET, LCETB Innovation, Development and Quality and Programme Governance members.	Ongoing as required	Working groups identified from QA and Programme Governance sub-groups, projects identified for action.	
2.1	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	Development of Limerick and Clare ETB FET Policies and Procedures in line with Quality Council Subgroup (Quality Assurance) development schedule and requirements.	LCETB Director of FET, LCETB Innovation, Development and Quality and Programme Governance members.	Ongoing	Published policies for FET division.	
2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	Development of Limerick and Clare ETB Blended Learning policy	LCETB Innovation, Development and Quality, TEL Support Service	December 2020	Develop Limerick and Clare ETB Blended Learning policy based on guidance framework from ETBI, to support the transition from Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning to a managed and developed Blended Learning provision.	
3.1	Programmes of Education and Training	Development, Evaluation and Review of Programmes of Education and Training as governed by Quality Council Subgroup (Programme Governance)	LCETB Innovation, Development and Quality and Programme Governance members, QA Support Service	Ongoing	Published programmes of education and training.	
3.2	Programmes of Education and Training	Support continued development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of National Hairdressing Apprenticeship as coordinating provider.	LCETB QA Officer, QA Support Service, National Apprentice Programme coordinator	Ongoing	Management of National Hairdressing Apprenticeship by "Innovation, Development and Quality". Embedding NHA QAP governance processes as NHA rolls out to collaborating providers during 2021.	
4.1	Staff	Implementation of Limerick and Clare FET	LCETB QA Officer, HR Manager	Ongoing	Professional Development Strategy managed by	

For Each Quality Assurance area there is a high level action, linked to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board governance, management and support structures.

Examples of the Quality Assurance actions, linked to immediate QA priorities are –

- National Hairdressing Apprenticeship Operations, Management and Quality Assurance Governance structures critical as the NHA expands to incorporate multiple collaborating providers.
- Provide PD, TEL and QA support to provider and centre level initiatives, developing staff competencies and improving practice as identified through individual centre Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) meetings.
- Focus on developing policies and procedures to evolve from emergency remote teaching and learning, with blended teaching, learning and assessment as a contingency arrangement – towards alignment to a developed and approved Blended Learning policy. Specific focus in developing, increasing, supporting staff competencies in delivery of blended and online programmes
- Management of dual further education, and training curriculum. Development of exemplars of assessment – to continue development to align Further Education and Training curriculum.
- Development and integration of Single Quality Assurance Management system at organisational level.
- Complete and engage with Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance process. Development and implementation of learner feedback process, on Limerick and Clare ETB-wide systematic basis, as part of overall Limerick and Clare ETB self-evaluation process.
- Information to Staff/Learners/Stakeholders – Provision of QA, TEL and PD updates to staff, via meetings, seminars, emails, newsletters and StaffCONNECT, continued development and update of learning and skills Quality Assurance webpage.

“The FET quality assurance governance groups (e.g. Quality Councils), FET management groups and quality assurance services provided oversight and guidance for the management of change with the required flexibility. This inspires confidence in the reasonableness of those changes.” QCI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020



## 5. THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 MODIFICATIONS TO TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT IN IRISH FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION – A QQI EVALUATION<sup>20</sup>

In response to COVID-19-related social restrictions, further education and training (FET) institutions including community education providers, and higher education (HE) institutions established modified arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment starting in mid-March 2020. Institutions implemented these modifications rapidly on an emergency basis over days to weeks to enable learners where feasible to complete the academic year under the COVID-19 social distancing regime. QQI carried out an evaluation project on the impact of these modified teaching, learning and assessments between May and June 2020, with the subsequent report published in August.

### SELF-EVALUATION REPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COVID-19 MODIFICATIONS TO TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT. <sup>21</sup>

This report presents the key findings from a series of consultations held in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division in June 2020. It provides valuable insights from the perspectives of key FET stakeholders to facilitate institutional reflection on our response to Covid-19, and to assess the effectiveness of the modified arrangements for Teaching, Learning and Assessment put in place by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division.

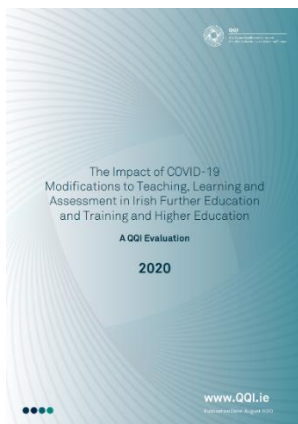
Section 1: FET Learners' Feedback. The FET Division worked in partnership with AONTAS to encourage learners to take part in a national survey in order to evaluate ETBs response to Covid-19.

Section 2: FET Learning Practitioners' Feedback. An internal survey was designed and implemented by the FET Division Research, Planning and Evaluation Officer to give an opportunity to all FET Learning Practitioners to feedback on the effectiveness of the modified arrangements around Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

Section 3: FET Quality Assurance Management Perspective. A summary of core documents and timeline for the development and implementation of modified arrangements in the FET Division, as well as an analysis of key QA data, provided further evidence on the effectiveness of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division's response to the Covid-19 emergency.

Section 4: Case Studies. Case studies were drafted by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET learning practitioners, to provide evidence of best practice in the development and implementation of modified arrangements in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

### THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 MODIFICATIONS TO TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT IN IRISH FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION – A QQI EVALUATION

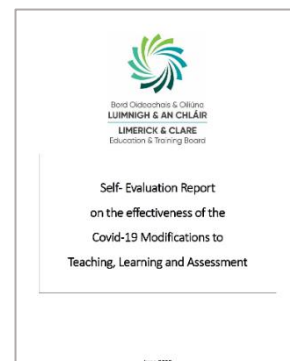


This QQI Impact Report is a high-level preliminary analysis of experiences from a wide range of organisations including universities, institutes of technology, education and training boards, private HE institutions, the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), AONTAS, AHEAD, and others.

Chapter 4 of the report deals with the Further Education and Training (FET) sector. The chapter focusses on Change Management, Teaching and Learning, and Assessment, and discusses the findings of: approaches, outcomes, challenges, what went well.

The report also importantly outlines "Future Considerations" for the Further Education and Training sector, and it is excerpts from these that are populated throughout this newsletter for consideration and reflection.

All staff are strongly encouraged to read and reflect on this report, as it forms the reflective foundation for approaches to Teaching, Learning and Assessment in a Covid-19 blended learning environment.



<sup>20</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/The%20Impact%20of%20COVID-19%20Modifications%20to%20Teaching%2c%20Learning%20and%20Assessment%20in%20Irish%20Further%20Education.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> [https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/20\\_06\\_18\\_LCETB\\_TLA\\_Covid19\\_Response\\_Self\\_Evaluation\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/20_06_18_LCETB_TLA_Covid19_Response_Self_Evaluation_Report_Final.pdf)



## 6. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

### REVIEW OF PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE INPUTS AND OUTCOMES

The Terms of Reference<sup>22</sup> of the Quality Council subgroup (Programme Governance) include the recommendation for the development, review and provision of programmes to the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Council.

The table below highlights provision application to deliver new or existing awards, both for individual or full awards, for each of the past six Programme Governance subgroup meetings.

Date	Applications	Applications for full awards	Approved	Requests for Further Information	Approved with conditions	Rejected
September 2019	8	1	8	0	4	0
December 2019	16	3	16	4	2	0
February 2020	20	6	19	1	7	0
April 2020	14	3	14	0	0	0
June 2020	13	5	10	1	2	0
August 2020	12	0	10	2	0	0

### Further Education Module Descriptor Updates As Of September 2020

Module Name	Module Code	Updates
Work Practice	5N1433	Revisions to Mapping of LOs 10 and 11 and to the associated Assessment Criteria and Marking Sheets. Revision of criteria and marking of Employers Report. Alignment of work placement hours to 240 hours (2 months).
Physics	5N1460	Revision of requirements in Learner Record.
Handling Food Hygienically (Lim City only)	4N1119	Handbook and descriptor updated to remove reference to FETAC and VEC.
Exercise and Fitness	5N2668	Changes to individual learner marking sheets - Skills Demo Marking Sheet 1, divide total by 2 (All marking sheets /2).
Breads, Pastry & Desserts (Co. Clare)	3N0522	Update LO9, Assessment Criteria and AIS to reflect change. Leave reference to almond paste in as an example.
Customer Service	5N0972	Add word compliment to the marking sheet 2 (first point).
National Tour Management	6N20230	Updated for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board approval to deliver.
Review of Work Placement Hours on L5 and L6 HC/CC and Nursing Programme Descriptors		Standardisation of 120 Hours work placement requirement.
Review of L5 and L6 Programme Descriptors		Revision of work placement requirements in terms of hours. Please check relevant Programme Descriptor for update.

<sup>22</sup> [https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/19\\_01\\_11\\_LCETB\\_FET\\_Programme\\_Governance\\_Subgroup\\_ToR\\_v1.4.pdf](https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/19_01_11_LCETB_FET_Programme_Governance_Subgroup_ToR_v1.4.pdf)

## PROGRAMME MODULE REVISION FORM

To request changes or updates to module descriptors please complete the [Programme Module Revision Form](#)<sup>23</sup> (Further Education modules only) which is available to download from StaffCONNECT. All teaching staff can submit this form where they feel there are changes or updates to be applied to:

- Module objectives
- Indicative content
- Mapping of learning outcomes to assessment techniques
- Guidelines to assessment activities
- Marking sheets

Programme Module Revision forms are currently in development for training provision Assessment Instrument Specifications (AISs) and also for curriculum relating to the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship.

“Practitioners have identified that the lessons learned and knock-on effects of the past few months may require consideration of **programme content, structure and resourcing** for future delivery.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

## DEACTIVATION OF CAS AWARDS IN 2020

QQI has now completed its second annual analysis of unused and little used CAS awards. Following consultation with Providers and Stakeholders, including internal consultation with all Provision in LCETB, the final list of CAS awards has been published and these awards will no longer be available as of 31st October 2020. [List of CAS Awards to be Deactivated](#)<sup>24</sup>

## DISCONTINUATION OF CACMS SITE BY SOLAS FOR QQI ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT SPECIFICATIONS (AIS)

SOLAS have advised that the IBM platform hosting the Curriculum, Assessment Content Management System (CACMS) which houses both the Apprentice Phase 2 assessments, and the former FÁS training curriculum and assessments (Assessment Instrument Specifications, or AISs) is being discontinued.

SOLAS will be hosting the Apprentice phase 2 assessments on a new “CASCADE” platform, however it the responsibility of each individual ETB to host the Assessment Instrument Specifications for QQI modules.

- All of the AIS documentation is available to download via an ETBI Moodle site.
- FET Centre Raheen and FET Centre Shannon have supplied the Quality Assurance Support Service with the list of all modules that are currently running and are likely to run in the near future.
- Quality Assurance Support Service will download the SOLAS AISs from the ETBI Moodle site, add in the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board logos, format and convert to pdf. (Also taking opportunity to update to reflect Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board assessment procedures).
- Quality Assurance Support Service will upload the AISs to a secure site (Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Moodle), where access is limited to Quality Assurance Support Service and Training Standards Officers.
- Once initial demand is uploaded, then Quality Assurance Support Service will work through remaining AISs over a longer schedule.

As the Curriculum and Assessment for FET Centre, Raheen Campus and FET Centre, Shannon Campus will now be locally housed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and version controlled by the Quality Assurance Support Service, the process for FET centres to request updates to AISs will then be available via the AIS Revision Form (in development) process on StaffCONNECT managed by Quality Assurance Support Service.

<sup>23</sup> <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:u:/s/fetdivision/QAS/Ef1K7f-FsthMoQEgXW6GPQIBaaunpmlvcV7uu57T4Q1jA>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/2020%20CAS%20Deactivation%20List.pdf>

## QUALITY ASSURED GOVERNANCE OF ONLINE AND BLENDED PROGRAMMES.

As approved by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Council, each Provision has been asked to submit details on the mode of delivery of their courses for 2020/21. In order to capture this information, the Quality Assurance Support Service have created and distributed a Provision specific spreadsheet and an MS Form.

### 1. Spreadsheet

Programme and module delivery for academic year 2020/2021 have been listed, with provision asked to submit the details to reflect planned delivery for each module.

- Delivery Mode (Classroom / Blended / Online)
- Total Module Tutor Contact Hours
- Face to Face Classroom Hours
- Directed Online Delivery Hours

### 2. Quality Assured Governance of Online and Blended Learning Delivery – MS Form

In order to quality assure the delivery and assessment of online and blended learning, managers have been asked to complete a “Quality Assured Governance of Online and Blended Learning Form”. By submitting this form, coordinators confirm that the requirements as listed on the form are in place before the commencement of each course.

4. Staff have access to and have been informed of online teaching and learning and assessment resources  
i.e. Safe Practice Guidelines for Online and Blended Learning in FET, Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Assessments, Assessment Online Guidelines and Specific Instructions documents (available on <https://learningandskills.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance>) \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

5. All relevant staff have completed Limerick and Clare ETB's "Teaching and Learning" online course \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

6. Staff and learners have access to the appropriate and necessary technology \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

7. "Course Assessment Schedule" Template is completed for each planned programme \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ N/A

8. "Module Outline" Template is complete for each planned module \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ N/A

9. Assessment Brief(s) and Marking Scheme(s) will be completed for each assessment and agreed and approved by centre management in advance of delivery \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ N/A

**“Clear communication** of expectations and goals over the duration of a programme, a manageable workload, and tracking of progress, may also assist in sustaining motivation and **supporting learners to pace their work**. Both staff and learners have noted that the remote learning experience impacted the pace of learning, which may have implications for scheduling, resource requirements and programme timelines.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

## 7. CERTIFICATION SUMMARY

### QQI CERTIFICATION HISTORY

#### June Certification 2020

Region	Number of portfolios presented for certification	Number of Portfolios Externally Authenticated	Number of External Authenticators	Number of Grade Changes	Number of Appeals
Limerick College of Further Education	6,076	1,080	11	5	38
Limerick College of Further Education Evening Provision	1,122	307	5	0	5
County Clare FET Centres	885	273	4	3	5
County Limerick FET Centres	485	101	5	2	0
Limerick City FET Centres	96	0	0	0	0
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	83	0	0	0	0
FET Centre, Shannon Campus	76	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,823</b>	<b>1,761</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48</b>

#### July Certification 2020

Region	Number of portfolios presented for certification	Number of Portfolios Externally Authenticated	Number of External Authenticators	Number of Grade Changes	Number of Appeals
Limerick City FET Centres	660	259	3	4	0
County Clare FET Centres	456	133	4	1	0
County Limerick FET Centres	342	102	3	0	0
Limerick Community Education Network Centres	213	41	1	1	0
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	43	0	0	0	0
Limerick College of Further Education	6	0	0	0	0
FET Centre, Shannon Campus	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>

#### October Certification 2020

Region	Number of portfolios presented for certification	Number of Portfolios Externally Authenticated	Number of External Authenticators	Number of Grade Changes	Number of Appeals
FET Centre, Shannon Campus	158	59	2	0	0
County Limerick FET Centres	131	60	2	0	0
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	21	21	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## OTHER AWARDING BODIES CERTIFICATION HISTORY

	2017	2018	2019	Total
	Courses	Courses	Courses	Courses
<b>ADOBE</b>	2	2		4
<b>Approved EN Certifying Body</b>	33	29	38	100
<b>ATI (Accounting Technicians Ireland)</b>	4	4	4	12
<b>British Horse Society</b>	1		2	3
<b>Cambridge English Language Assessment</b>	2	3	4	9
<b>CIBTAC (Confederation of International Beauty Therapy &amp; Cosmetology)</b>	2	3	2	7
<b>CIDESCO (International Committee of Aesthetics and Cosmetology)</b>			1	1
<b>City &amp; Guilds</b>	15	18	62	95
<b>COMPTIA (Computing Technology Industry Association)</b>	1	1	1	3
<b>Department Of Education And Skills</b>	38	38	34	110
<b>Department Of Transport, Tourism And Sport</b>		1	3	4
<b>EASA (European Union Aviation Safety Agency)</b>	2	5	6	13
<b>EHAI (Environmental Health Association Award)</b>	2	1	2	5
<b>ICS Skills (Irish Computer Society)</b>	19	12	12	43
<b>ISA (Irish Sailing Association)</b>		1	1	2
<b>ITEC (International Therapy Examination Council)</b>	4	4	7	15
<b>Microsoft</b>	2	1	2	5
<b>PHECC (Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council)</b>		5	5	10
<b>RSA (Road Safety Authority)</b>	20	16	16	52
<b>RTITB (Road Transport Industry Training Board)</b>	28	8		36
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>529</b>



## FEEDBACK FROM EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATORS FOLLOWING JUNE AND JULY CERTIFICATION PERIODS

To further ensure the quality of the External Authentication process, all External Authenticators (EAs) employed in the Further Education authentication process during the June and July Certification periods, including the Appeals Process, were surveyed post authentication. This was in addition to the feedback submitted as part of their EA Reports and it facilitated a deeper reflection and analysis of their experience after the event. They were asked to comment on their experience of the EA process with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, the strengths of our process along with suggestions for improvement. As these were challenging authentication periods, EAs were also asked to comment on how Covid-19 impacted on their work.

Responses were received from 13 External Authenticators. Comments included:

- Everything was very well organised, and the designated contact responded swiftly and efficiently to queries.
- Exceptionally organised, super pre-EA training (especially in relation to current Covid-19 guidelines), excellent designated contacts.
- I had no concerns with the process and the measures in place. All was communicated effectively by the QA Dept. in relation to what to expect and what was important in relation to this particular round of EA work.
- It just took longer to complete the EA process and I completed one module remotely from home
- All material and systems were organised well. One area that was problematic was accessing Teams for an external person outside of Limerick and Clare ETB.
- I found the Appeals process to be very well organised, both in terms of advance communication and information given to examiners, and also the organisation of the actual appeals on the day. It was all very straightforward and worked very well.

“Providers...described an element of peer review either by colleagues or external authenticators to quality assure the standard of assessment. Some providers received very positive feedback on arrangements for online external authentication and have indicated that sharing of good practice in this area would be useful.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

## PLANNING FOR 2020 AND 2021 CERTIFICATION PERIODS

Estimate Sheets and Authentication Calendars are available on StaffCONNECT and have been shared with provision.

As contingency arrangements for assessment remain in place for 2020/2021 academic year, the practice of Risk Classification sampling for External Authentication will remain in place.

Based on the Risk Classification and in consultation with the Provision Co-ordinator, the QA Support Service will classify modules from the Estimate Sheets into high, moderate and low risk. External Authentication will focus on those modules that are considered high risk. This will primarily include modules where alternative assessments have been applied. This sampling strategy will ultimately result in approx. 10-20% of all class groups being externally authenticated.



QQI have published “[Key Dates and Information, Awards and Certification 2021](#)”<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the published dates, QQI have advised that a July 2021 Certification period, similar to the additional July 2020 Certification period, is available to providers again if required.

The Quality Assurance Support Service will be liaising with provision co-ordinators to determine centre demand for a July 2021 Certification period.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/QQI%20Key%20Dates%202021.pdf>

## RENAMING OF QQI QBS CENTRES

In line with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board College and Centre naming, a revised list of centre names has been submitted to QQI. Centre numbers will remain the same, however centre names, addresses, contact names and email addresses have been forwarded to QQI for QBS updating. The updated centre list is as follows: -

	Centre Number	Centre Name
1	70830N	College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus (Ennis College of Further Education)
2	40020G	College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus (VTOS Provision)
3	42352S	College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus (VESD Provision)
4	42282A	College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus (Core Skills Provision)
5	40709A	College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus (Youthreach Provision)
6	79069	Further Education and Training Centre, Raheen Campus (Training Services)
7	722362	Further Education and Training Centre, Raheen Campus (Community Services)
8	40008Q	Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus (VTOS Provision)
9	38510L	Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus (Youthreach Provision)
10	40105O	Further Education and Training Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus (VESD Provision)
11	40467C	Further Education and Training Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus (Youthreach Provision)
12	40927K	Further Education and Training Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus (Core Skills Provision)
13	40095O	Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus (VTOS Provision)
14	40980O	Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus (Part-time Provision)
15	40787U	Further Education and Training Centre, Shanagolden Campus (VTOS Provision)
16	40627V	Further Education and Training Centre, Shanagolden Campus (Youthreach Provision)
17	40075I	Further Education and Training Centre, Kilrush Campus (VTOS Provision)
18	40803P	Further Education and Training Centre, Kilrush Campus (Youthreach Provision)
19	71930W	Limerick College of Further Education (Full-Time Provision)
20	38418A	Limerick College of Further Education (Part-Time Provision)
21	79155	Further Education and Training Centre, Shannon Campus
22	71840V	Croom College of Further Education
23	71850B	Further Education and Training Centre, Dromcollogher Campus (An tIonad Glas)
24	70840Q	Ennistymon School of Art
25	40457W	Education Unit, Limerick Prison
26	40096Q	Further Education and Training Centre, Scariff Campus
27	38509D	Further Education and Training Centre, Watch House Cross Campus
28	40679R	Further Education and Training Centre, Hospital Campus
29	42511M	Further Education and Training Centre, Abbeyfeale Campus
30	38135L	St Mary's Community Adult Education Group
31	38900B	Limerick City Community Development Project (CDP)
32	40493D	Northside Family Resource Centre
33	40500U	Moyross Adult Education Group
34	40742V	Our Lady of Lourdes Adult Education Centre
35	40769S	ADAPT Services
36	41120P	Southill Family Resource Centre
37	38710T	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Administrative Centre

## 8. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### QA INDUCTION FOR NEW TEACHING STAFF

**If a member of teaching staff has not previously attended a Quality Assurance Induction Training and is new to delivery of QQI based modules, attendance is required.**

This Quality Assurance Induction Training has delivered in different models and formats in recent years and following consultation and feedback, it has been decided to revert to the original two-part model. This puts less pressure on those attending to absorb all the information, facilitates discussion on the day and then allows for reflection on and use of the learning from Part 1 in the classroom. Teaching staff should then be ready to prepare assessment instruments when it comes to Part 2.

All are required to attend Part 1. Teaching staff then choose the most appropriate session for Part 2. If teaching staff are delivering across different levels, then it is recommended to attend Part 2 for Levels 4-6. Links to sign up have been sent to all Provision Co-ordinators/Managers/Principals. There are opportunities on the day to ask questions and attendees can always correspond with the QA team after the event. The sessions will be delivered over MS Teams and are number dependent and may have to be cancelled if there are insufficient numbers.

Content		Online via MS Teams
<b>Part 1 Attendance required by all</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Role of the Assessor</li><li>• Overview of QQI and Quality Assurance in LCETB</li><li>• Standards</li><li>• Preparing for Assessment</li></ul>	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> November 9.30am – 11.00am
<b>Part 2 Levels 1-3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing Briefs for your own module</li><li>• Giving Feedback</li></ul>	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2pm – 4pm
<b>Part 2 Levels 4-6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing Briefs, Marking Schemes and Exam Questions (for your own module)</li><li>• Giving Feedback</li></ul>	

### Recognition Of Prior Learning (RPL) - STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Congratulations to the six members of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board staff, three of whom are from the QA Support Service, who successfully completed a Level 9 RPL: Policy, Practice, Pedagogy module with Cork Institute of Technology. The module had to move to online delivery from March and the course participants were very well supported by their lecturer Deirdre Goggin throughout.

In addition to this, 11 members of staff are currently participating in a Level 9 RPL module with Letterkenny Institute of Technology which is also being delivered online. As well as the staff from Limerick and Clare, staff from Donegal ETB are also participating. This course was designed as part of a collaborative RPL project between Limerick and Clare ETB and Donegal ETB with the aim of increasing RPL staff capacity. The **Validating Competencies of Care Sector Employees (VCCSE)** collaborative project plans to use Recognition of Prior Learning as a mechanism to support care sector employees to engage with Further Education and Training (FET).

Project Aims –

- Providing an alternative and accelerated route to the acquisition of qualification for care sector employees.
- Improve mobility opportunities within the sector and support the development of career paths.
- Test the replicability of the RPL process.
- Support the development of a formal RPL structure for the FET sector.
- Develop skills, knowledge competence and confidence of ETB staff to implement the RPL process.

Developing Recognition of Prior Learning as a viable option for all learners outside of the discrete projects it is currently applied to is going to be a major focus for our ETB for this academic year. Having staff trained with the necessary knowledge, skill and competencies required to become a Recognition of Prior Learning Practitioner is one of many steps being taken to make this happen.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BLENDED LEARNING SUPPORT

Tara Robinson, Professional Development Officer, takes us through the 9-Step Roadmap developed by the Technology Enhanced Learning and Professional Development Support Services.

### Developing Staff Capacity to Deliver Online and Blended Learning



In August this year the Technology Enhanced Learning and Professional Development Support Services released a Roadmap detailing 9 steps that LCETB FET Learning Practitioners should take to ensure they are prepared for safe online or blended delivery. Here are some of the key initiatives on the Roadmap.

**Step One: The Online Teaching and Learning Course** is designed to prepare Learning Practitioners to teach remotely. A supported version of this fully online six module programme has run since August with 150 people having fully completed and a further 200 engaged. We are preparing to release a version of the programme on Moodle in the coming weeks.

**Step Five: Connecting with Key Staff.** We have a network of Digital Champions and Learning Hub staff across the FET Division who have been doing amazing work to support the development of staff digital skills at local level - using peer to peer and small group work or through CPD events or creation of video tutorials.

**Step 7: Many staff have been engaging with national programmes** and initiatives. Over 100 people have completed the eCollege Moodle Course, 260 staff have been provided with 3 month subscriptions to the Wriggle Connect Platform to help build skills in the use of Office 365 and Teams. We also have 16 staff participating on the national rollout of the AHEAD Universal Design for Learning Digital Badge and 7 people on NCI TEL Programmes.

We have been encouraging all staff to sign up to the [TEL Learning Zone](#)<sup>26</sup> where you can find resources such as our [Safe Practice Guidelines](#)<sup>27</sup> and [Skills Checkers and Builders](#)<sup>28</sup> for Padlet, FlipGrid and Teams. There are links to our [TEL Channel](#)<sup>29</sup> where you can watch back training and [Laura's Channel](#) which has lots of TEL how-to videos. The TEL Learning Zone is also a great place to drop by if you have a question on any aspect of the use of Teams, Moodle, Padlet etc.

After mid-term we will be scheduling online Show and TEL PD clinics on our [calendar](#)<sup>30</sup> –these short sessions will focus on sharing learning and best practice related to our supported platforms.

This year, given the challenges we have been facing, we have placed a big emphasis on flexible and informal learning options allowing staff to learn at their own pace and at times that suit them. As we move towards the end of the year we will need to evaluate how effective the supports that have been provided have been and where we need to go next. For now we should be very proud of all we have achieved in the last 7 months.

“As a degree of online teaching and learning is likely to be an ongoing feature of FET provision for some time, providers have indicated that **professional development** for practitioners is required to build on learning to date and further enhance capacity.” QQI Evaluation: Impact of Covid-19, 2020

<sup>26</sup> <https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3a4bf15d53b4944ff5a95b636321908118%40thread.skype/conversations?groupId=610989d6-1f5a-4b12-ac0f-b2696e93a162&tenantId=f874001-fba4-4ff1-bf1f-b7b25b52ad4b>

<sup>27</sup> <https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Teaching-and-Learning-Online-Web-Doc-Final.pdf>

<sup>28</sup>

[https://teams.microsoft.com/\\_/#/school/files/General?threadId=19%3A4bf15d53b4944ff5a95b636321908118%40thread.skype&ctx=channel&context=Skills%2520Checkers%2520and%2520Skills%2520Builders&rootFolder=%252Fsites%252FBlendedLearningHub%252FShared%2520Documents%252FGeneral%252FSkills%2520Ch](https://teams.microsoft.com/_/#/school/files/General?threadId=19%3A4bf15d53b4944ff5a95b636321908118%40thread.skype&ctx=channel&context=Skills%2520Checkers%2520and%2520Skills%2520Builders&rootFolder=%252Fsites%252FBlendedLearningHub%252FShared%2520Documents%252FGeneral%252FSkills%2520Ch)

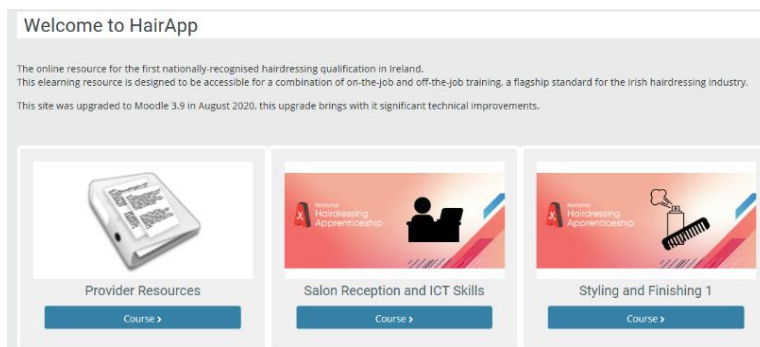
<sup>29</sup> <https://web.microsoftstream.com/channel/fdbd05ec-00d5-418b-98c5-d2334941b246>

<sup>30</sup> <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/PD/Lists/Calendar%20of%20Events/calendar.aspx>



## 9. NATIONAL HAIRDRESSING APPRENTICESHIP

### EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT



The National Hairdressing Apprenticeship (NHA) programme is a case study model of a programme that moved very successfully from the classroom to fully online during the Covid-19 emergency centre closures. As highlighted in previous editions of the QA Newsletter, Technology Enhanced Learning has played an important role in the NHA from the initial stages of programme development through to implementation and it is this that made the transition to remote teaching, learning and assessment so successful.

During normal programme operations the apprentices spend one day a week in the FET Centre and four days a week in the salon. During the crisis all salons were closed but the NHA continued delivering course content remotely and increased FET Centre delivery from one to two days per week. This was achievable seamlessly due to the volume of module content and assessments available to the apprentices and teacher via the NHA Moodle site HairApp.ie and the continued and ongoing support from members of the TEL Support Service.

The NHA course teacher delivered theoretical content, demonstrated practical skills and managed assessments remotely. The apprentices themselves had access to all their module content, support from the NHA team in Raheen, technical support from the TEL team and were able to take their hairdressing kits home with them including a mannequin head on which they could practice their practical skills.



**Pictured above – Recently re-developed hairdressing salon, Further Education and Training Centre, Raheen Campus, Limerick**

The apprentices also completed several of their assessments remotely and this process was underpinned by the QA Support Service *Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Assessments* ensuring that all assessments carried out remotely were done so in line with Quality Assurance requirements and that the integrity of the assessment process was maintained throughout.



## COLLABORATING PROVIDER PROGRAMME DELIVERY

In what is a huge milestone for the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship, six collaborating providers will begin roll-out of the programme on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2021. Delayed due to the Covid-19 emergency this exciting new step for Ireland's first national post-2016 apprenticeship marks the beginning of another new phase in the NHA's history.

### The collaborating providers are:

1. Tallaght Training Centre, Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB
2. Finglas Training Centre, City of Dublin ETB
3. Coláiste Dhúlaigh, City of Dublin ETB
4. St John's Central College, Cork ETB
5. Waterford College of Further Education, Waterford and Wexford ETB
6. In addition, there will be two instances of the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship commencing in Limerick and Clare ETB at FET Centre, Raheen Campus.



Apprentices are currently being registered and they will formally begin their apprenticeship in the week beginning Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November with an Induction Briefing day. They will then spend the following weeks in the salon under the guidance of their Workplace Mentor before commencing their off-the-job training in the FET Centre on January 4<sup>th</sup>.

The NHA team in FET Centre Raheen have been working tirelessly with the support of TEL and QA to prepare for roll-out of the programme nationally. Training and briefing sessions are currently being delivered to the collaborating provider's key staff such as Programme Managers, QA staff and teachers.

The collaborating providers will be starting Stage 1 of the programme with a full bank of teaching and learning resources which were developed by Subject Matter Experts in Raheen, along with other supports such as an NHA TEL Handbook and key QA documentation and supporting guideline documents. All of these supports will be available to the collaborating providers via HairApp.ie which has been custom designed, supported and populated by Limerick and Clare ETB's TEL Support Service.

The NHA team have also collaborated very closely with the Communications and External Relations team to produce NHA assets such as an Apprentice Handbook, a Work-based Competency Task Book for each Stage of the programme, and many more. These assets have been designed and produced locally and are currently being distributed to collaborating providers.



## 10. QQI UPDATES

QQI publish a regular newsletter, the most recent – “[The QT - News and Views from QQI June 2020](#)”<sup>31</sup>. A sample of some of the very useful content is reproduced below.

### **New Provider Portal**

QQI has developed a new online platform for stakeholders to allow us to engage more efficiently and effectively with providers. QHub currently supports business processes such as programme validation, revalidation and extension. In the future, the portal will also support re-engagement, quality reviews, certification and the administration of QQI's new regulatory functions such as the International Education Mark, protection for enrolled learners and corporate fitness.

### **The New Europass**

The new Europass online platform went online Wednesday 1 July 2020. It provides a secure, accessible and user-friendly platform and set of web-based tools and information to support individuals in managing their career and learning. Europass will be particularly important in helping individuals find employment and training opportunities as they deal with the new labour market challenges presented by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The new Europass includes:

- the Europass e-Portfolio: an online tool for users to describe their skills, find interesting job and learning opportunities, to manage their applications, and create CVs and cover letters.
- Information on working and studying in different EU countries.
- Digitally signed credentials: free tools and software for institutions to issue digital, tamper-proof qualifications and other learning credentials.
- Interoperability: Europass can connect with employment and learning services to allow users connect and make applications.

QQI is the national reference point in Ireland for Europass and can provide more information. Find out more about the service at <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Europass.aspx>

### **Academic Integrity in Challenging Times**

The adoption of new online methodologies (hybrid or remote digital teaching, learning and assessment) for the academic year 2020-21 raises questions about their vulnerability to academic misconduct or cheating.

The work of the [National Academic Integrity Network](#)<sup>32</sup> continues in raising awareness of the core importance of academic integrity and developing a common approach to this key aspect of quality assurance.

Through its working groups, the Network is developing practical support for higher and further education institutions, their staff and students. This will include a common Academic Integrity lexicon which will help institutions better understand and define instances of academic cheating; guidance on how to safeguard academic integrity; and dedicated communications to raise awareness of the risks of academic cheating, and the available mitigating supports, amongst students.

QQI have also compiled a list of [Academic Integrity resources](#)<sup>33</sup> that will be of use to providers in developing new modes of remote and online learning, teaching and assessment.

### **National Academic Integrity Week - Monday 19<sup>th</sup> to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020**

This programme of 14 online events aims to share guidance and best practice in upholding and cultivating academic integrity, including issues arising from academic misconduct and cheating, showcasing the voices of teaching and learning practitioners, as well as those of students themselves. View the full programme [here](#)<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/News/Pages/The-QT---News-and-Views-from-QQI-June-2020.aspx>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/Academic-Integrity.aspx>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/COVID%2019%20Academic%20Integrity%20Resources.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Academic-Integrity-Week-2020.aspx>

## 11. FEATURED ARTICLE: College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus

PLC provision previously offered at Ennis College of Further Education's Harmony Row site officially moved to the College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus in Clonroad Business Park on 1st September.

The move, agreed in springtime before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, was driven by strong enrolment numbers and the availability of brand new, state-of-the-art facilities at the new campus focused on Further Education and Training delivery.

In a recent interview for this newsletter, Marie O Callaghan, PLC Co-ordinator, expressed her excitement and enthusiasm for this new chapter. She felt that learners and staff are really positive about the transition to a new dedicated Further Education and Training environment. Ennis Campus has undergone a multi-million euro investment at the site over the past year. Marie said: "We were delighted, as it meant that we would be part of the broader vision for Further Education and Training and it would enable us to focus our energies on the Quality Assurance system and structures within the FET Division."

A total of 6 full-time teachers and 1 part-time teacher made the transition from Harmony Row to the new College of Further Education and Training at Clonroad Business Park. The courses that were previously offered at the Harmony Row site have, for now, remained the same as last year and the team is working very effectively as part of the delivery of full-time provision at the new campus. Marie highlighted the dedication and hard work of the teaching staff during this transition. She said: "COVID-19 threw a curve ball at everything but the staff are settling in well in the new environment. Initially it was a huge culture change, as normally in the first week in September we would have been in classes and have the buzz of secondary students around us.

However, there was a lot of preparation and upskilling done in the first weeks of September, as teachers adjusted to the new campus and the demands of blended delivery. Teachers completed the Teaching and Learning Online Course which kept everyone focused and busy for these weeks. The pace of this distracted everyone from the move."



The learners also appear to be enjoying the transition, especially those who are progressing on to their second year within PLC provision. "It feels like a proper college" is the general feeling.

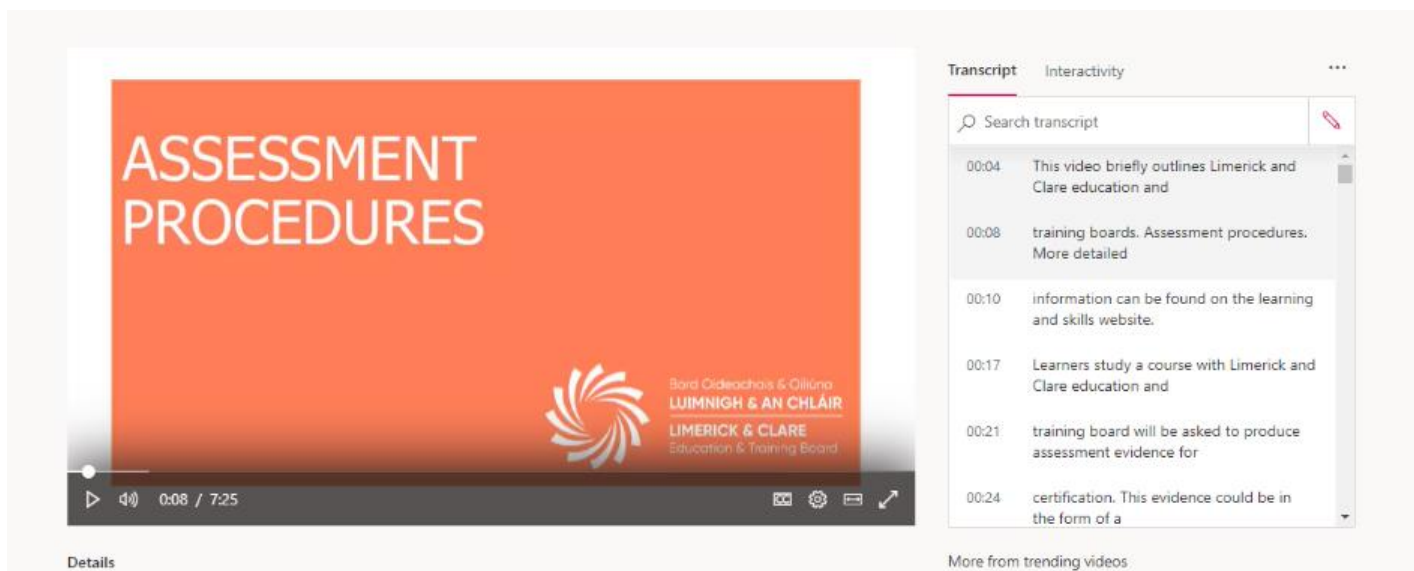
According to Marie: "They can see a huge enhancement in facilities and support services and the focus is now on 'college'. PLC learners always want to feel like they are progressing on. They don't want to feel like they are going back to secondary school.

The visibility of support services like the Information and Guidance Service and the dedicated Healthcare room and Childcare space give the learners a very positive focus. The teachers are also delighted to have all this support. For the large number of school leavers who didn't get their Higher Education place, being on this new campus makes it particularly feel like they have moved on to college."

Classes are currently classroom-based, as teachers get to know the learners and also to enable them to experience the 'college' environment. This will move to a more blended approach when they feel learners are more capable of using technology and the required platforms. Staff are mindful of the need to make sure learners can handle the technology before the class can transition successfully to a fully blended approach.

Overall, Marie feels the move to Ennis Campus has been very positive: "It should be a better experience for the team and the learners. Without COVID-19, it would have been a dream!"

## 12. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES VIDEO AND INFORMATION LEAFLET



In September 2019 Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board launched a suite of Assessment Procedures. The procedures relate to Assessment Malpractice, Compassionate Consideration, Short-term Extensions, Reasonable Accommodation, Appeals - Results or Process, Recognition of Prior Learning, Examinations and Secure Storage. In order to inform the learners of these assessment procedures the Quality Assurance Support Service has developed a short information video and leaflet which takes the learner through all 8 procedures.

The video can be accessed via [Stream](#)<sup>35</sup> and the information leaflet will be made available on learning and skills website ([learningandskills.ie](#)) and StaffCONNECT – Assessment Resources – [Assessment Procedures](#)<sup>36</sup> folder. The video is approximately 7 minutes long and a transcript of the video is available when viewed through Stream.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board

# ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

### Malpractice Procedure

Malpractice includes plagiarism and unacceptable behaviour in an assessment event. Plagiarism refers to the submitting of work by the learner for assessment that is not their own work. This could be any percentage of work that has not been referenced and has been copied from the internet, published works or other sources.

### Unacceptable behaviour

in an assessment event can include using a mobile phone, talking to others or assisting others in an examination.

### Sanctions for Malpractice

could include any of the following - a learner would receive a written warning and the assessment evidence is marked as zero or the entire module is marked as zero or the entire award is not submitted to the awarding body for certification.

### Assessment Deadlines

During the course, learners will be informed of assessment deadlines. If a learner is unable to submit an assignment on the due date it is their responsibility to submit the assignment in advance of the date. However, if this is not possible a learner can apply for either a Short-term Extension or Compassionate Consideration.

### Short-term Extensions Procedure

Short-term Extension refers to a defined period of time in which an assessment deadline will be extended. Learners on a full-time course may receive 2 extra working days. Learners on a part-time course may receive 5 extra working days.

### Compassionate Consideration Procedure

If a learner is unable to submit an assignment or attend an examination due to extenuating circumstances, they can apply for Compassionate Consideration to defer the date for the assignment or to defer the examination.

### Extenuating Circumstances

Extenuating circumstances are situations or events which unexpectedly interfere with the learner's ability to complete an assessment activity. For example, recent physical injury, bereavement etc.

### Late Submissions

If a learner tries to submit an assessment after the deadline date and they have not applied for an extension the assessor cannot accept the evidence for marking.

### Reasonable Accommodation Procedure

Reasonable Accommodation is the term used to describe the adaptation of assessment to cater for the needs of the learner whose personal situation means that the assessment would otherwise be unfair. Under Reasonable Accommodation, depending on the learners needs, a centre or college may organise a scribe/reader, technology supports, extra time etc.

### Appeals Procedure Results or Process

A learner can appeal their approved results or the assessment process. Learners will be informed of how and when to appeal when they receive their results.

### Examinations Procedure

The Examination Procedure outlines the process for planning, conducting and concluding an examination. Learners should be aware of their responsibilities in an examination.

### Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure

The Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure provides information on how a learner can gain entry to a course or gain credit towards an award using either Prior Certified Learning or Prior Experiential Learning.

### Secure Storage Procedure

The Secure Storage Procedure ensures that all evidence submitted by a learner is securely stored and tracked as it moves through the certification process.

For more information  
[www.learningandskills.ie](http://www.learningandskills.ie)

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<sup>35</sup> <https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/fcb75831-cca4-47c6-a7a9-0871ce10d9de>

<sup>36</sup> [https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:b/s/fetdivision/QAS/EfNA\\_UJfEAdBs5jQZtU6ADQB-aBRJMKq5aYiWMQJ5J5a6w](https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:b/s/fetdivision/QAS/EfNA_UJfEAdBs5jQZtU6ADQB-aBRJMKq5aYiWMQJ5J5a6w)



## 14. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. If a learner has already completed a degree programme, can they claim an exemption from any part of a Level 5 or Level 6 programme?

*Yes, the learners can apply for exemptions toward a major award based on a range of non CAS awards already completed by a learner. There are 44 Exemptions listed on the [QQI website](#)<sup>37</sup>, including Junior Certificate subjects, Leaving Cert Subjects, ECDL, Microsoft awards, accounting technician awards, ITEC, HETAC Higher Certificate, or any Higher Education Degree.*

*If a learner is applying for an exemption the provision must complete the Limerick and Clare ETB's [Exemption Claim Form](#)<sup>38</sup>, located in the Quality Assurance / Certification folder in StaffCONNECT. This form will need to be verified and signed by an External Authenticator during authentication.*

2. I am an instructor in FET Centre Raheen or Shannon and there is an error or update required to an assessment in an Assessment Instrument Specification (AIS), what can I do?

*As the Assessment Instrument Specifications are all now local to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, and not centrally developed and updated by FÁS Curriculum Development Unit, then it is now possible to review, amend and update the AIS documents.*

*The documents are currently being populated onto a local Moodle site from CACMS, and when complete, an update request form will be made available by the Quality Assurance Support Service.*

3. My programme now includes the module Personal and Professional Development instead of Work Experience, where can I go for help or direction in delivering and assessing this new module?

*QASS have created a new team - [FET DIV The Learning Network – Sharing Ideas and Good Practice](#).<sup>39</sup> This collaboration space is for all Learning Practitioners across all levels to come together to share ideas and good practice and develop teaching and assessment resources. A number of channels have been created including a Professional Development and Career Planning channel. Online meetings have taken place over the past few weeks and the meetings notes, links to resources and recordings are available in the channels. We are currently in discussion with other ETBs and QQI on modifications for the relevant award structures at Levels 4, 5 and 6. Please contact [qa@lclctb.ie](mailto:qa@lclctb.ie) if you have any queries on this as this process is currently ongoing.*

4. How do I know when I need to submit learner portfolios for Internal Verification (IV) to my FET Centre?

*For each authentication period the Quality Assurance Support Service creates an authentication calendar for each region – Co. Clare, Co. Limerick and Limerick City. These calendars outline all the key dates including when portfolios should be submitted for IV (Internal Verification), External Authentication (EA), dates for RAP (Results Approval Panel and Appeals). These calendars are available to download from [StaffCONNECT \(Quality Assurance – Certification\)](#)<sup>40</sup>*

5. Where can learners get access to Assessment procedures and forms?

*Learners can access the Assessment Procedures and Forms on [learningandskills.ie](#).<sup>41</sup> To navigate to the procedures and forms click on Our Courses – Quality Assurance, scroll down the page and click on the 4<sup>th</sup> heading Quality Assurance Procedures and Forms.*

<sup>37</sup> <https://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=exemptions>

<sup>38</sup> [https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/certification/Exemption\\_claim\\_form.doc](https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/certification/Exemption_claim_form.doc)

<sup>39</sup> <https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3ae648d8907bc6454da04fdd41eab4414b%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=e2edd702-0dc2-471b-bd35-433b5c53b15c&tenantId=fb874001-fba4-4ff1-bf1f-b7b25b52ad4b>

<sup>40</sup> <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Certification/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

<sup>41</sup> <https://learningandskills.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/>



**6. I am applying alternative assessment in the form of an assignment instead of an exam. Do I need to get this approved by QA?**

As outlined in [Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Assessments](#) <sup>42</sup>

- Choice of alternative assessment must be agreed between assessor and FET Centre management.
- Local development of alternative assessment must comply with these published guidelines and procedures.
- FET Centres should retain copies of alternative assessments applied for future Quality Assurance monitoring purposes.

*Learning Practitioners and/or Provision Co-ordinators are welcome to seek advice from the QA Support Service in relation to the development and design of alternative assessments.*

**7. In 2019-20, in certain modules it was not necessary to carry out examinations as the learners had completed all learning outcomes in earlier assessments. Is it ok to apply this in the 2020-2021 academic year as well?**

*No, this was an arrangement introduced in response to the Covid-19 emergency at the start of the year and incorporated in Version 1.0 of the Contingency Planning of Assessments.*

*As outlined in the updated version of the Guidelines and Procedures for Covid-19 Contingency Planning of Assessments (version 1.1) "Contingency in Assessment is focussed solely on providing alternatives to the Examination assessment technique. Two options are defined, one of conducting the assessment online, the other to replace the examination with an assignment".*

**8. I teach on a Childcare programme. I have heard that the Early Learning and Care programmes are going to be deactivated. When will the new awards be available and can I input in any way as a subject matter expert?**

*Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board are leading the development of the new Early Learning and Care (ELC) programmes at L5 and L6. The timelines for this process have been pushed out due to Covid-19. They are organising an online session with each ETB where they will have the opportunity to introduce the childcare teachers of that ETB to the development process and the work to date and also introduce the first draft of the proposed learning outcomes and curriculum structure. The practitioners would have the opportunity to ask questions, and share their initial thoughts, and this would be followed up by an online survey in which they could give more detailed feedback. The QA Support Service will circulate the date of this virtual meeting when confirmed.*

**9. Learners have asked me about having their prior learning recognised as they have seen on the learning and skills website that we have an RPL procedure. What should I tell them?**

*Currently Recognition of Prior Learning is only being offered within the ETB as part of discrete projects and isn't widely available for all learners as yet. The QA Support Service are working with key staff around further expanding RPL offerings and this academic year will see progress in this area. Contact [qa@lceetb.ie](mailto:qa@lceetb.ie) if you need help answering learners' questions.*

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<sup>42</sup> [https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20\\_09\\_10\\_Covid-19\\_Contingency-Planning-for-Assessment-Version-1.1.pdf](https://learningandskills.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/20_09_10_Covid-19_Contingency-Planning-for-Assessment-Version-1.1.pdf)



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