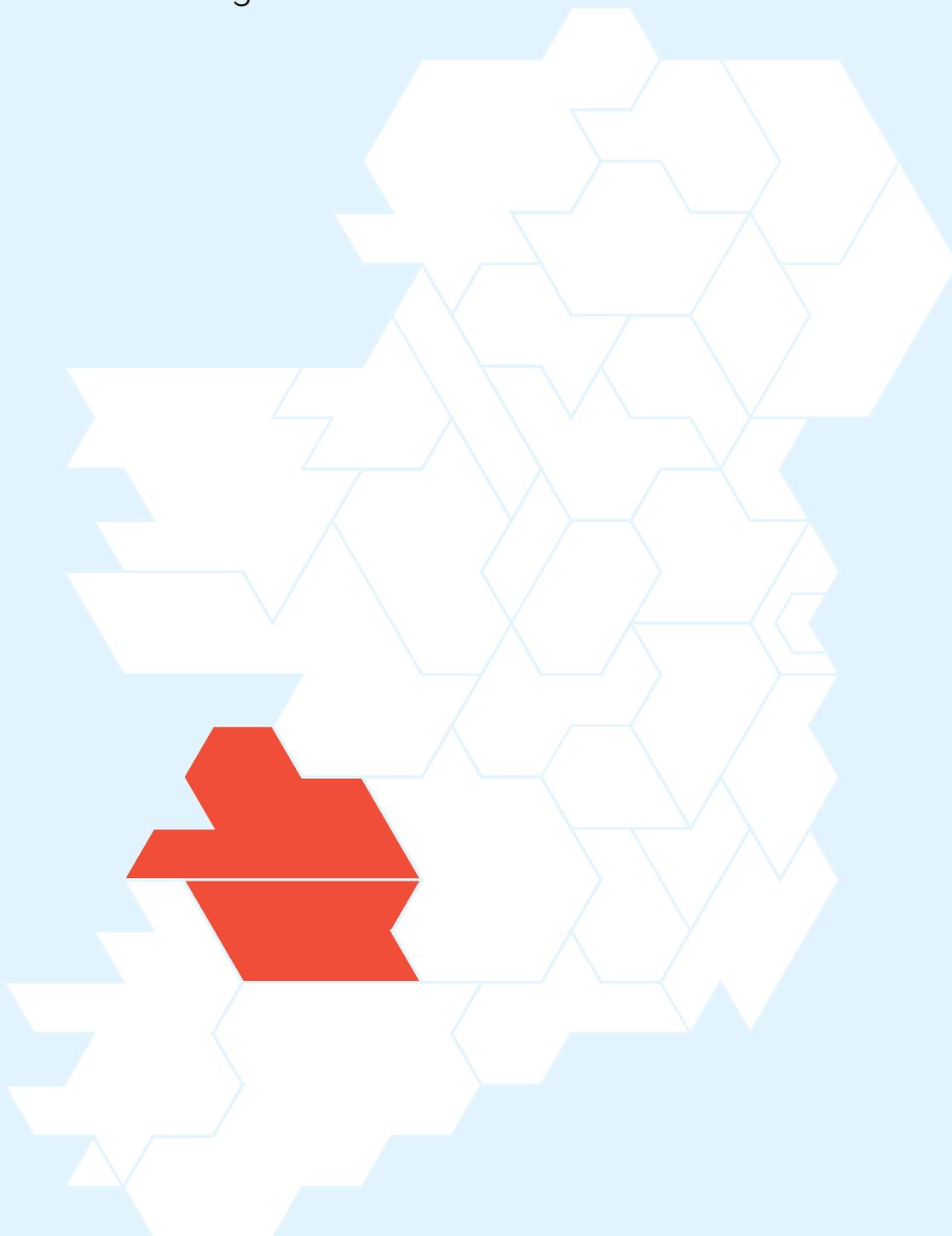


# Strategic Performance Agreement 2018 – 2020

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Limerick and Clare  
Education and Training Board



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna  
**LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR**  
LIMERICK & CLARE  
Education & Training Board

**SOLAS**  
learning works



Ireland's European Structural and  
Investment Funds Programmes  
2014-2020  
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# 1. Introduction



# Introduction

This agreement between SOLAS and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board sets out the context, strategic priorities and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's contribution to achievement of key national Further Education and Training (FET) sector targets over the period 2018-2020.

It also articulates Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's commitment to supporting the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant to FET provision and identifies the key risks and challenges which must be mitigated and addressed in order to ensure successful delivery of this agreement.

The agreement is the product of extensive dialogue and engagement between SOLAS and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, with independent input and validation from a panel of experts with an understanding of both Irish and international good practice in Further Education and Training systems.

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## 2. Profile of the ETB Region



## Section 2

# Profile of the ETB Region

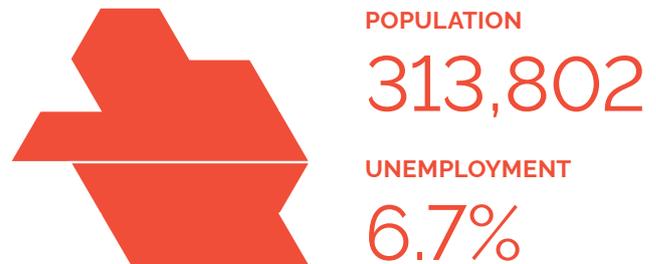
The total population of the Limerick and Clare region is 313,802 (Census 2016). County Limerick's total population is 195,175, of which 94,192 people live in Limerick City and suburban areas while County Clare has a population of 118,627. Limerick is the third most populous urban area in the state, and the fourth most populous City on the island of Ireland.

Changing population patterns have mostly affected the Limerick metropolitan area, with a significant population increase in parts of the City Centre. In contrast, the largest population decline was observed in regeneration areas. In terms of **age profile**, the national trend of younger urban centres and ageing rural areas is mirrored in Limerick and Clare (+26% over 65 in County Clare). The age dependency ratio, which shows the ratio of people aged under 14 and over 65 to people of working age (aged 15-64) has also increased in line with national figures.

In terms of **employment and unemployment**, the Mid-West unemployment rate stood at 6.7% in QNHS Q2 2017, compared to 6.1% at national level. Unemployment rates remain higher among younger people with 21.8% of 20-24 year olds unemployed in 2016 for the Limerick area, compared to 11.3% of 45-54 year olds.

The Limerick and Clare region has 21 of the 79 Electoral Divisions (EDs) (27%) in the country classified as unemployment blackspots (see Table 1). Limerick City is the worst affected area nationally with a total of 17 unemployment blackspots, 8 of which are in the top 10 most affected blackspots nationally. These statistics reflect the challenges faced by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in terms of its target groups.

### Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Area 2016



(Source: 2016 Census)

In addition, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, with both urban and rural areas, is very aware that underemployment is prevalent in rural locations of the Limerick and Clare region. Rural disadvantage can be associated with limited employment opportunities, lack of transport and other services, high dependency levels and isolation. This presents a real challenge in terms of upskilling and for occupation-specific skill development in the region.

Table 1 **Unemployment Blackspots, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Area (CSO Census 2016)**

County	Unemployment Blackspots	Average Unemployment %	County Unemployment Rate % (@ April 2016)
<b>Limerick (incl. City)</b>	<b>18</b>	35.7	14.4
<b>Clare</b>	<b>3</b>	29.2	12.4

## 2.1 Learner Profile

The percentage of persons aged 15+ with 3rd level education was 38.5% in Limerick City and County and 40.9% in County Clare, compared to 42% at national level. The percentage of persons 15+ with no formal or primary only education was 14.3% in Limerick City and County and 12.1% in County Clare. Analysis, however, of data at electoral division level in regeneration areas and neighbouring communities, shows that the proportion of the population who left school with just a primary education is considerably higher than the national average. In Limerick City alone, 18 EDs have a higher rate than 20%, and 9 EDs have an early school leaving rate in excess of 30%.

Indeed, the CSO Census 2016 has recorded higher rates of unemployment, lower rates of educational attainment, higher rates of unskilled/low skilled workers, higher lone parent rates, higher age dependency rates, and decreasing populations in those areas (see Table 2). This paradox for the Mid-West as the fastest growing region in the country, and yet one with almost one-third of the country's unemployment blackspots must be addressed and calls for partnership and targeted interventions.

## 2.2 Enterprise Base

The Limerick and Clare region constitutes one of the finest environments for the creation of jobs. In the last two years, the Mid-West region benefited from 17 FDI announcements outperforming the rest of the country. The main employment sector in Limerick and Clare remains the services sector, followed by commerce and trade and manufacturing industries. In 2016, small and medium enterprises represented 92% of active enterprises in the Mid-West, accounting for 36% of persons in employment in the business economy.

The Regional Skills Forum has identified the current strengths and future growth prospects in the regional economy in bio-technology, medical technology, ICT, aerospace, tourism, agri-business and logistics. The Forum has also identified skills clusters in Hospitality, Engineering, Film and ICT. These employer led skills clusters identify current and future skills needs with the support of education and training providers.

Table 2 **Deprivation Score at Electoral Division Level**

ED	Kilkee	Ennis 2 Urban	Kilrush	Rathkeale	Ballynanty	Galvone B	John A
<b>2016 Relative Deprivation Index</b>	- 13.0	- 17.8	- 17.9	- 21.7	- 27.0	- 32.8	- 35.7

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# 3. ETB FET Provision



# Section 3

## ETB FET Provision

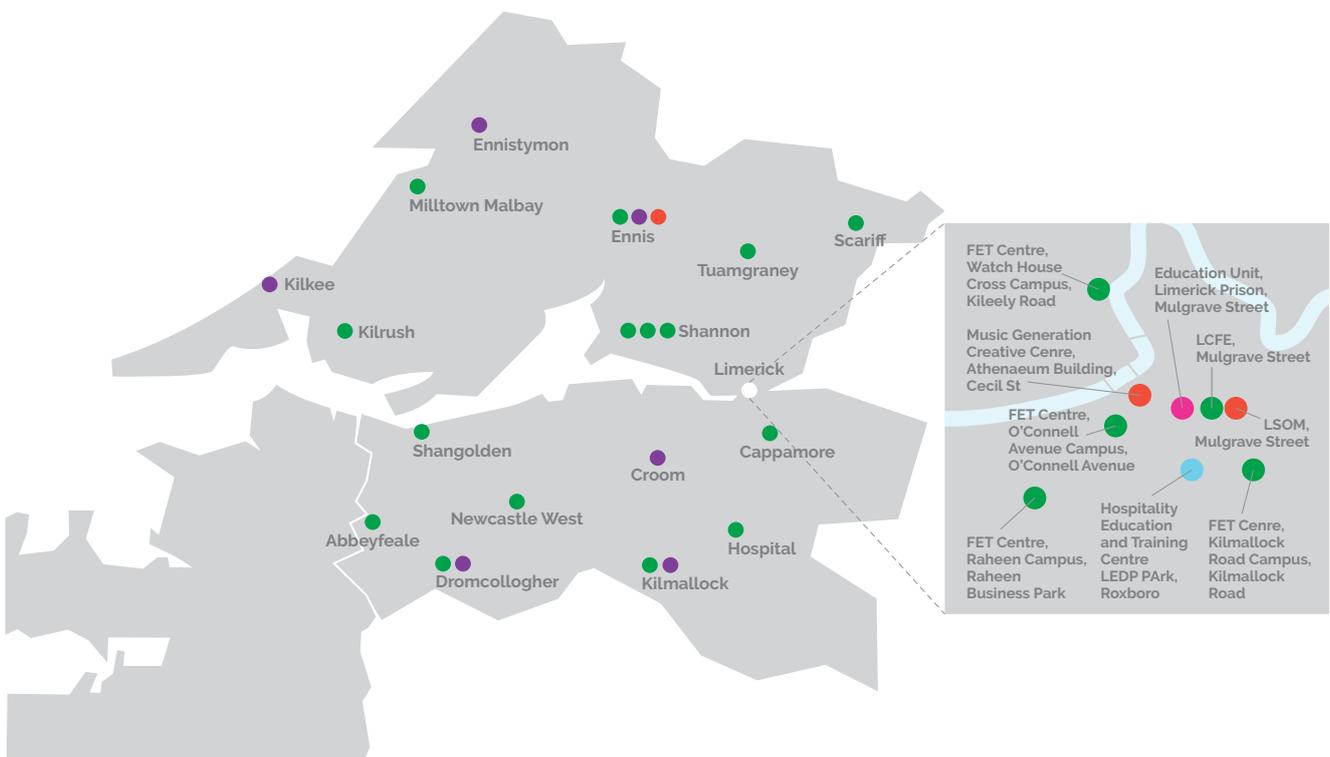
### 3.1 Staffing and Infrastructure

There are 669 FET staff employed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, of which 449 are learning practitioners (teachers, tutors, resource workers or instructors). Provision Coordinators oversee activities across different FET programmes, while functions and officer responsibilities have been built up around key areas of FET development (learning and technology; professional development; research, planning and evaluation; quality assurance; and information, recruitment and guidance).

There are 26 FET Centres within the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division with 33 QQI registered centres (see Map 1). It should be noted that there are multiple FET Centres in Limerick City and that the FET Division works in approximately 300 community based locations. All FET Centres are in need of significant capital investment to ensure modern fit-for-purpose teaching and learning environments.



Map 1 FET Centre Locations



- Further Education and Training Centre
- Mixed Provision Centre
- Hospitality Education and Training Centre
- Music Education
- Education Unit, Limerick Prison

### 3.2 FET Provision



Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board provides a range of FET Provision (Full-time; Part-time and Evening) and a range of support services, as set out in Table 4, with a total of 29,208 beneficiaries. This includes 2,700 self-financing learners and 4,134 availing of information, recruitment and guidance support, with SOLAS funded beneficiaries amounting to 22,374<sup>1</sup>.

Table 4 **Total 2017 Beneficiaries**

Full-Time Provision		Part-Time Provision	
Apprenticeship	1,258	Literacy Groups	2,846
Traineeship	289	ESOL	892
Bridging and Foundation Training	29	ITABE	241
Community Training Centre	239	BTEI	2,719
LTI	313	Skills for Work	470
PLC	2,702	Community Education	4,160
Specific Skills Training	998	Evening Training	1,419
VTOS	898	Co-Operation Hours	1,967
Youthreach	591	Refugee Resettlement Programme	95
Specialist Training Providers	225	Self-Financing*	2,700
Justice Workshops	23		
<b>Support Services</b>			
Information, Recruitment and Guidance			4,134

\*Not counted as part of SOLAS Funded Provision.

1 Beneficiary numbers include those already enrolled at 1st January 2017

There were 2,645 course instances in 2017 across 30 Skills Clusters. Table 5 sets out provision across these skills clusters. This highlights the strong focus on transversal skills development within the general learning and core personal categories. However it also highlights strengths in provision in areas like business, health, engineering, the built environment and ICT.

Table 5 **2017 Provision by Skills Cluster**

	Total Actual Beneficiaries	% of Total Beneficiaries
<b>Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture</b>	144	0.64%
<b>Animal Science</b>	89	0.40%
<b>Art, Craft and Media</b>		
<b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b>	380	1.70%
<b>Built Environment</b>	740	3.31%
<b>Business, Admin &amp; Management</b>		
<b>Business, Administration</b>	1,152	5.15%
<b>Core ICT</b>	538	2.40%
<b>Core Personal</b>	6,453	28.84%
<b>Engineering</b>	29	0.13%
<b>Engineering (Electrical)</b>	113	0.51%
<b>Engineering (IT)</b>		
<b>Engineering (Mechanical)</b>	465	2.08%
<b>Engineering (Transport)</b>	298	1.33%
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>	46	0.21%
<b>Financial Services</b>	101	0.45%
<b>Food and Beverage</b>	244	1.09%
<b>General Learning</b>	6,646	29.70%
<b>Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies</b>	383	1.71%
<b>Health, Family other Social Services</b>	2,001	8.94%
<b>Information Technology</b>	227	1.01%
<b>Management</b>	1	0.00%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	370	1.65%
<b>Media Graphics Communications</b>	286	1.28%
<b>Natural Resources</b>		
<b>Research and Education-Training</b>	29	0.13%
<b>Sales &amp; Marketing</b>	131	0.59%
<b>Sampling Skills</b>		0.00%
<b>Science and Technology</b>	39	0.17%
<b>Security, Guarding &amp; Emergency Services</b>	208	0.93%
<b>Skills Sampling, General Learning &amp; Core Personal</b>	318	1.42%
<b>Sport and Leisure</b>	346	1.55%
<b>Tourism</b>	78	0.35%
<b>Tourism and Sport</b>		
<b>Transport, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b>	389	1.74%
<b>Web Development &amp; Design</b>	130	0.58%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,374</b>	

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# 4. ETB Strategic Priorities



# Section 4

## ETB Strategic Priorities

### 4.1 ETB FET Strategic Priorities

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Strategy Statement, 2017-2021, expresses a clear ambition for the authority to play a leading role in transforming the lives of learners, communities and the social and economic prosperity of the region. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has set out to achieve this by responding to learner, enterprise and community needs through the provision of high quality education and training. The Strategy Statement 2017-2021 sets out four priority goals to be achieved over the five year lifespan of the strategy:

1. High Quality Provision
2. Staff and Organisational Development
3. Good Governance
4. Partnership

#### 4.1.1 Learner Supports

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has significant experience and a track record in supporting learners on their learning journey, particularly with a focus on personal development and enhancing core skills. The 2018-2020 Strategic Plan sets out structures for the provision of learner supports in the areas of literacy, numeracy, core IT skills and learning to learn. As part of the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Framework developed in 2017, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is working to enhance its ability to provide supports for learners across all levels of provision. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is collaborating with other ETBs in setting up these structures to ensure a degree of consistency in the supports provided across the country.

#### 4.1.2 Information and Guidance

The FET Division has reviewed its Information and Guidance Service and re-launched it as the Information, Recruitment and Guidance (IRG) Support Service. This has also involved the amalgamation of the Information and Guidance services in Limerick City and County and the development of new Information Hubs in various FET Centres.

The IRG Support Service aims to ensure that information and guidance is an integral part of all planning and delivery of FET provision. The new website, branding and marketing collateral enable the IRG team to engage with all stakeholders in the recruitment of learners and

the promotion of guidance. The IRG Support Service continues to build on best practice and communities of practice to promote pathways and progression routes across all FET provision and provide impartial advice to any individual on appropriate learning and career pathways.

Networks with key partners in DEASP, SICAP Partnerships, Higher Education providers and the Regional Skills Forum enable referral protocols and collaborative initiatives. There is also a need to map out available supports for learners and employers including information, recruitment services, guidance, career planning, site visits, employability skills, etc. to ensure that clear and consistent learning pathways are in place for the learner and potential learner.

#### 4.1.3 Provision Renewal and Realignment

As part of the 3-year planning process, a systematic review of all course provision took place. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board plans a significant change to both the type and delivery of its FET provision with more on-the-job training becoming an integral part of such provision. This is about ensuring the relevance of FET provision curricula, and developing a continuum of pathways to up-skilling the workforce, from flexible, unaccredited initial engagement, to accredited part-time and full-time opportunities. As part of this process, the following are to be considered:

##### **Course Content**

- To ensure that FET Up-skilling Pathways are relevant, it is necessary to review curricula by occupational sector, both for relevancy against the award specification and employer needs in the sector. Feedback, from learners leaving courses and from employers in the various sectors, has flagged that content is out-of-date in some areas.
- There is a need to:
  - review unaccredited work-based learning options as flexible initial engagement with employers. One could provide short accredited and tailored industry-led responses, while ensuring they can be developed into mainstream FET provision.
  - enhance FET entrepreneurship provision and supports. This will involve the building of relationships to learn from knowledgeable local partners (LEOs, Skillsnet, local development companies, etc.)

- offer entrepreneurship supports for learners (e.g. "hot desk"/incubation facilities, linkages to mentoring partners, etc.)

### Course Delivery Modes

There is a need to review modes of delivery to explore opportunities for blended learning, distance learning, etc. These may include:

- *Flexible Delivery*: with the improving economy resulting in lower unemployment rates, the FET Division will work to target those in employment who are most vulnerable. Specifically:
  - the Enterprise Engagement Support Service will work with employers to increase the provision of specific tailored responses for those in employment;
  - increase the delivery of Skills for Work / Evening provision and at times suited to those in employment;
  - increase the extent of 'in-demand' skills within Skills for Work / Evening provision.
- *Blended Learning*: continuing to expand our blended learning provision will be a key focus of our response to the changing needs of learners and employers. Specifically, we will increase the use of blended learning by:
  - developing the capacity of staff to use technology for teaching and learning through a series of targeted staff professional development inputs;
  - focusing on continuing to increase our use of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Moodle site by increasing the use of Moodle for Staff Professional Development, the collaborative development and sharing of high quality online content and the establishment of peer supports for staff;
  - developing new blended and flexible learning solutions to meet requirement for in-demand skill areas as part of Skills for Work, Traineeships and ESOL provision.
- *Open Access Learning*: study periods are to be built into course timetables and learners will be able to access resources in various *Open Access Learning* facilities outside of normal class contact times.

### Employability Skills and Career Planning

One of the FET Division's unique strengths is its expertise in the development of learners' soft skills, which are critical to economic competitiveness and to the ability of individuals to access and progress in employment. This is about providing personalised supports to both learners distant from the labour market, and those in employment, to maximise their potential and make informed choices to gain, retain or progress in employment, and achieve their career goals.

In keeping with the afore-mentioned changes in FET provision from the traditional set courses to more industry-led provision, there will emerge a need to

source and recruit, suitably talented personnel with the skill sets to deliver this provision. In addition to this, current learning practitioners will be required to up-skill in several specific areas related to their current qualifications. For example, plumbing instructors may require up-skilling to deliver gas installation as evening provision.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is currently involved in the development of the OEM Apprenticeship as a collaborating provider. This new apprenticeship is an example of where industry requires a programme that spans across a wide range of skill areas - metal fabrication, MAMF, motor mechanics, automation, electrical and robotics, to name but a few. This will require a wide range of potential learning practitioners to work together collaboratively to deliver a cohesive and effective programme to meet the needs of industry. As mentioned above, instructors will need to re-skill and up-skill not only in the core skills area but also in their approaches to teaching and learning.

#### 4.1.4 Progression

The Information, Recruitment and Guidance (IRG) service explores options for learners to progress to work, apprenticeships and Higher Education. The service ensures that all learners have access to impartial guidance, to relevant and accurate labour market information and to all relevant progression paths to Higher Education. This is enabled through new information hubs, central online portal for careers information and resources. The IRG Support Service promotes continued professional development by staff to enable up-to-date knowledge on all relevant information on new FET and HE opportunities. Access and availability of appropriate learner support including guidance and psychological services and supports for learners with disability is essential to enable progression. As part of the IRG approach, a Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board tracking system will be implemented to demonstrate progression routes to CAO and apprenticeships/traineeships.

#### 4.1.5 Active Inclusion

Research undertaken by SOLAS in relation to 'Barriers to Further Education and Training with Particular Reference to Long-Term Unemployed Persons and Other Vulnerable Individuals' found that there are deep-seated socio-cultural barriers among these cohorts which prevent members of these groups from attending, remaining within, and/or utilising the FET they have completed to its maximum benefit.

The establishment of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Active Inclusion Support Service aims to provide specific supports to address the challenges encountered by learners from vulnerable groups seeking to engage with FET. These groups

include the under 25s, the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities and members of migrant communities. As well as improving access to FET provision, another significant role of the Active Inclusion Support Service will be to develop policies and procedures to increase attendance and retention rates within FET provision. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is also committed to the deployment of the best practice toolkit for initial assessment of literacy and numeracy at Levels 1-3 and progression of implementation of recommendations of the review of ESOL provision which was published in March 2018.

In tandem, the upcoming Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Professional Development Framework will provide opportunities for FET staff to ensure that they are meeting the needs of learners using appropriate and up-to-date skills and methodologies including consistently good teaching and learning, strong assessment practice and detailed feedback and effective tutorial provision and on-going support for learners.

#### **4.1.6 Enterprise Engagement**

The role of the Enterprise Engagement Support Service (EESS) is to provide a centralised point of contact for Enterprise to broker the range of FET provision and support services to employers. The EESS connects with employers across the entirety of FET provision, FET centres, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, full-time and part-time provision. Specifically, the EESS will:

- develop EE Communication and Marketing tools to effectively communicate the joint benefits of a two-way collaboration between enterprise and the FET Division. This will highlight the range of FET provision and support services, as well as the opportunities for employers to engage with and influence FET provision, while better promoting the need for quality and sustainable learning outcomes for learners. Key priorities include the development of:
  - sector-specific **marketing products** to promote Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET provision and support services. Highlight 'what's in it' for employers, FET practitioners and learners and use language appropriate to the audience;
  - a communication toolkit/template/roadmap to explain to employers the key phases of the development process for sustainable and scalable programmes (timeline, investigation phase, curriculum design, etc.);
  - the FET website and social media provides easy navigation for employers, including the range of support services available to them (learning solutions development, career planning, RPL, free advertising for recruitment of candidates, etc.);
  - linkages with enterprise networks and sectoral groups to enhance visibility of FET EE activities

and communicate key messages. Address industry, community and other relevant events and conferences, etc.

- highlight and develop, as appropriate, the range of supports available to full-time and part-time provision to upscale their EE activities at local level. This will include the dissemination of regional led labour market intelligence, continuous professional development, on-going training in TEL;
- monitor / analyse sectoral market needs in Limerick and Clare via Occupational Profiling and Training Needs Analysis;
- explore new areas of provision with high employment turnover, and unexploited growth areas in conjunction with the Active Inclusion Support Service;
- communicate effectively with FET provision and support services to build awareness and commitment to FET Enterprise Engagement activities.

#### **4.1.7 Professional Development**

As part of the national skills profile that underpinned the publication of the SOLAS Professional Development Strategy, the FET Division has significant data on the training needs of current staff. This is complemented by internal skills audits and training needs analyses. The FET Division also has a number of key Action Plans and Frameworks that drive organisation wide professional development initiatives in the areas of Quality Assurance; Technology Enhanced Learning; Integrated Language, Literacy and Numeracy; Information, Recruitment and Guidance and Enterprise Engagement. The Professional Development Officer, in collaboration with key staff is actively involved in developing training initiatives and innovative projects to match identified needs.

The FET Division and the Professional Development Officer continue to work closely with ETBI and SOLAS on developing national PD strategies in response to the SOLAS Professional Development Strategy. The FET Division also participated in the SOLAS DNA-TEL Pilot Project and invested significant resources in compiling the skills profile of FET staff that underpinned the development of the SOLAS PD Strategy. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board plans to publish its Professional Development Action Plans in December 2018. A draft process has been agreed by the FET PD Working Group and planning commenced in June 2018.

#### **4.1.8 Technology Enhanced Learning**

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board launched its FET Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan, 2017-2020, in February 2017. The plan is informed by a number of key EU, National and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board strategies.

The FET TEL Action Plan sets out to ensure that FET provision and support services are enabled and supported to effectively use existing, new and emerging technologies to deliver the highest quality learning opportunities to all learners. The Plan details 26 Actions under 4 Themes namely:

1. Staff and Learners' Digital Capacity
2. TEL Infrastructure
3. Internal Resource Sharing and Collaboration
4. External Partnerships

The implementation of the Action Plan is led by the TEL Implementation Team with two Sub-Groups who are overseeing projects in areas such as Staff Professional Development, sharing and promoting TEL best practice and designing Pilot Projects in areas as diverse as augmented virtual and mixed reality, assistive technologies, drone technologies etc.

#### 4.1.9 Regional Intelligence

In order to inform decision-making and strategic prioritisation within the FET Division, regional intelligence is gathered through a range of various sources:

**Desk Research:** the Planning and Evaluation Officer monitors the release of key national and regional documents, and summarizes relevant findings in an internal publication 'FET Policy Updates', which is then communicated to all FET Managers. Examples of sources include:

- the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) provides annual publications such as National Skills Bulletins, Monitoring Ireland Skills Supply Reports, Regional Labour Market Bulletins, Vacancy Overviews, etc., which are all informing analysis of regional labour market trends;
- industry specific reports;
- national and regional strategy documents relevant to the FET Sector;
- national CSO Census data by region and local areas;
- 2016 Pobal HP Deprivation Index (Haase and Pratschke, 2016) data for small areas.

**Networks and Partnerships:** these include representation and participation on:

- local employer networks, such as IBEC, etc.;
- Mid-West Regional Skills Forum;
- industry clusters such as Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for Hospitality, Limerick for Film, etc.;
- STEM Alliance;
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board-DEASP Action Group;
- local community networks - local development agencies; local community development

companies (LCDCs); Limerick Digital Roadmap; Limerick Community Education Network; Clare Lifelong Learning Network etc.;

- Learning Limerick - a network of education and training providers on Learning Cities;
- informal networks between FET Centres and local employers (particularly SMEs).

The FET Division is fully committed to strengthening the national FET data infrastructure, and will continue to maintain a comprehensive learner dataset in PLSS in support of evidence based data analysis, and reporting requirements. The **quality of data** input into PLSS is critical, and the FET Division has an Operations Manager as part of its Senior Management Team to support all communications and coordination of data input from the FET Division. There has been, and will continue to be Professional Development for FET Managers and other data inputters to ensure consistent quality standards around data provided.

#### 4.1.10 Skills for Work and Lifelong Learning

Skills for Work (SFW) provision is an integral part of the delivery of FET provision to promote the Life-Long Learning journey of learners. Currently the SFW is delivered across the region in conjunction with the regional skills for work coordinator, Literacy provision and the Employer Engagement Support Service. As the country approaches full employment, the need for up-skilling in employment becomes more critical. According to the EMCO EDUC Review 2018, in Ireland "The percentage of employed adult population aged 25-64, participating in education and training is below the EU average".

The FET Division will utilise its Skills for Work provision to market, promote and coordinate the delivery of training to employers and their employees. SFW will promote an ethos of lifelong learning in the workplace thereby contributing towards the creation of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce capable of dealing with frequent and on-going changes in work practices.

The SFW function will work within the Enterprise Engagement Support Service and will use the strategic intelligence gathered from national, regional and local engagement as well as intelligence gathered on the ground to target employment sectors, individual employers and employees for up-skilling. The SFW function will work closely with the Senior Training Advisers, local Management and Coordinators to provide a unified approach to employee up-skilling.

The FET Division proposes to expand the role of the SFW Coordinator to promote all provision suited to part-time engagement and, therefore, suited to those in employment, including evening course and BTEI provision. This provision may be tailored specifically to industry needs or may be part of current offering.

Further impetus will be provided by the launch of 'Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth', a 2018-2021 FET policy framework for skills development of people in employment, and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will work with SOLAS to support its effective implementation over this period.

The FET Division is also open to working with new initiatives to upskill those in employment. Such a project is the Mid-West Regional Skills 'EXPLORE' initiative supporting digital skills of employees in the manufacturing industry. The main purpose of this initiative is to assist persons who have been in employment for some time but have not engaged in life-long learning. The initiative focuses on:

- improving digital skills of employees in manufacturing industries;
- exploring opportunities for skills enhancement;
- exploring improved health and wellbeing in the workplace.

#### **4.1.11 Traineeships**

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is currently offering a range of traineeships, including Healthcare, Beautician and Equestrian. These, as well as other courses, are reviewed for relevance for the sector on a regular basis. This process will see the phasing out of certain traineeships and alternating the provision of others to suit demand. Specific focus will be given over the coming years to sectors that are established and growing in the region.

Aircraft Maintenance is a growing sector globally, with an estimated demand for 600,000 aviation maintenance technicians over the next 10 years<sup>2</sup>. Shannon has long been a hub for aircraft maintenance in the region and the FET Division has a close working relationship with various maintenance companies in both the provision of existing aircraft maintenance traineeships and in the development of additional support traineeships. The following gives an indication of the close relationship with this sector:

- Aircraft Maintenance Technician: this traineeship has been running successfully since 1989, with many of its past learners going on to take up senior management posts in various maintenance companies;
- Aircraft Structures Technician: this course was developed in response to meet specific needs in the sector with a 5 month turnaround time from initial meeting to course commencement earlier this year;
- Aircraft Spray Painting: this course was piloted as a specific skills course and rolled out as a traineeship. It is an example of a course where all the training and assessment is work-based.

- Cabin Interiors Workshop Technician: this course is developed and will commence later this year.

The national Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) has predicted substantial growth in the hospitality sector over the coming years. The FET Division has responded to this by rolling out the career traineeship on Professional Food and Beverage. This traineeship is now in its fourth year of provision and is enjoying success both by the employers in the sector that support it and by the learners that are gaining employment from it. The success of this traineeship, with the sector, has generated the interest for the following additional traineeships:

- Patisserie and Confectionery Traineeship: the need for this traineeship evolved from the close working relationships established with the sector from working on the Food and Beverage Traineeship. This traineeship is now running with the offer of employment to all participants on successful completion;
- Supervisory Management Traineeship: this course is in development and is planned for commencement later this year.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will, over the coming years, build on the existing experience to develop new traineeships in the following areas:

- Engineering: while 'Engineering' can be a catch-all phrase, specific topics within engineering have been identified for traineeship development, these include:
  - CNC, Sheet Metal and Machine Tool Operating: Engineering and in particular precision engineering is a growth area in the Limerick region. It is felt that this area lends itself to the traineeship model due to the intensive and diverse experience required;
  - Industrial Automation: the region and Limerick, in particular, host many large production companies that require personnel competent in industrial automation techniques and maintenance skills. This also is an area ideally suited to the traineeship model as only companies in the sector can provide the relevant on-the-job-training due to the specificity of the equipment;
- Administration: in particular to meet the needs of small to medium sized companies.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will continue to consider the conversion of other suitable SST courses to traineeships e.g. Hairdressing which could potentially be a pathway to the new Hairdressing Apprenticeship.

Key factors in the success of the traineeship model, which the FET Division can testify to at regional level include:

- **Relevant qualifications:** all traineeships carry national and internationally recognised qualifications which give the learner a passport for social and economic mobility;

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/transport-and-tourism/training-institute-plans-to-train-2-000-aircraft-maintenance-engineers-1.3376874>

- **Industry Buy-in:** the sector must collaborate in the whole of the traineeship from design to recruitment and on-the-job training. The advantage of building this close relationship is the smooth running of the traineeship and the willingness to start new ones;
- **On-the-job training:** this commitment is of mutual benefit as it allows the host to train the learner on industry specific requirements and gives the learner an opportunity to learn the sector from the inside out.

Over the next three years, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will continue to both anticipate and respond to sector led requirements, using the traineeship model to deliver both applicable and learner centred training.

#### 4.1.12 Apprenticeships

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is currently delivering a wide range of apprenticeship Phase 2 programmes in its two training campuses. These including Carpentry and Joinery, Electrical and Instrumentation, Electrical, Brick and Stone Laying, Toolmaking, Mechanical Automation Maintenance Fitter (MAMF), Wood Manufacturing and Finishing and Motor in the Raheen Campus, with Aircraft Mechanic, Toolmaking, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Metal Fabrication, Plumbing and Electrical in the Shannon Campus, and Commis Chef in the Hospitality Education and Training Centre, Roxboro, Limerick City.

With Ireland forging ahead in the development of new apprenticeship programmes, the FET Division has been collaborating with colleagues in Cavan Monaghan ETB in developing a new green field apprenticeship in Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) which is now with QQI and awaiting validation. It is hoped this validation will be successful over the coming weeks with the apprenticeship rolling out in September.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is the co-ordinating provider for the development of an apprenticeship in Professional Hairdressing, Level 6. This apprenticeship is unique in the sense that all 15 ETBs are collaborating with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in the development process and when successful, this apprenticeship has the potential to change the female participation rate in apprenticeships.

Looking ahead Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is closely monitoring the rollout of new apprenticeship programmes which it may be able to deliver particularly in the Mid-West Regional growth sectors i.e., Tourism and Hospitality, Engineering, Finance, ICT, Construction etc.

## 4.2 Risks and Challenges

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has identified the following risks and challenges that may impact its ability to achieve the FET Strategic Priorities as outlined above:

### Labour Market

- as the numbers on the Live Register and available for referral to courses reduces, those remaining tend to be 'further from the labour market' and require a much higher level of supports and interventions;
- to ensure that FET provision to long-term unemployed or hardest to reach is relevant, engaging and supported effectively to address the complexity of needs within this cohort. In order to support learners effectively, the FET Division will need to up-skill staff and/or resource provision effectively;
- the lack of flexibility with programme eligibility criteria as unemployment falls, especially from an auditing point of view;
- the movement from Social Welfare per the live register and into employment is not financially viable for many;
- employment opportunities within certain industries are not seen as attractive to potential learners due to terms and conditions of employment etc. This will impact our ability to recruit for courses in these areas;

### Apprenticeship Provision

- the shortage of suitable candidates entering apprenticeships in some key apprenticeship areas, such as engineering apprenticeships. In many of these areas, Higher Education courses often prove more attractive. The FET Division is working closely with employers, particularly Limerick for Engineering, schools and guidance counsellors in the region to promote apprenticeship as a viable alternative opportunity;
- difficult to get buy-in from some industry sectors into the 2016+ apprenticeship model where industry pays the apprentice for the duration of their training. Some apprenticeship areas, such as Commis Chef, Hairdressing, Welding (not yet approved), etc. are very sensitive to impacts on pay;
- difficult to get employers in some industry sectors to provide appropriate on-the-job apprenticeship training. The issue here is working with industries new to the apprenticeship model, new to providing structured workplace based learning and new to engaging with a standards based model of accreditation;
- the new apprenticeship model places significant demands in terms of its management, administration, validation, monitoring and evaluation; e.g. as the Co-ordinating Provider on the new Hairdressing Professional Apprenticeship, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will not only be heavily involved in the development of the apprenticeship itself but will

also support the programme once implemented through its National Programme Board and National Assessment Board. There has been significant support for this programme with all 16 ETBs committed as collaborating providers. This will require significant resources to be put in place to provide this on-going support;

- development of clear progression pathways for apprentices to HE and advanced apprenticeship options;

### Post-Leaving Certificate Provision

- the restrictive nature of the 'CAP' on PLC places. The 'CAP' should be removed and where there is demand for places, then Colleges should be allowed to fill them;
- as yet, there is uncertainty on how pre-apprenticeships will operate within PLC provision;

### Other Provision

- courses may not meet the projections outlined due to increased competition such as the IoT sector, Government initiatives such as Springboard, SICAP, Local Development Companies etc.;

### Staffing

- increasing difficulty in the recruitment, retention and deployment of suitably qualified staff to develop and deliver courses, particularly in the development of new traineeships and apprenticeships;
- can only recruit to specific staff grades. This does not take into account the need for the development of support services e.g. Quality Assurance; Professional Development etc.
- the moratorium on administration posts is still effectively in place. This places considerable strain on FET Centres in trying to meet the extra administrative challenges presented by FARR, PLSS, 3-Year Strategic Cycle etc.;
- the need to have Teaching Council registration for all teachers in the FET Sector is limiting the scope and depth of provision in PLC Colleges. PLC course flexibility is reduced as Colleges cannot hire industry experts to deliver up-to-date expertise as they are not Teaching Council registered;

### Infrastructure

- significant infrastructure investment is required to bring FET Centres up to standards expected of modern teaching and learning environments;
- some FET Centres are now operating at close to maximum capacity. This will require the building of extensions and new premises;

### Learner Supports

- other supports such as - librarian, ICT Technician, Employer Engagement Officer, Academic Registrar, Counselling/Psychological services etc. are needed for effective PLC provision. The implementation of the recommendations of the SOLAS PLC Review by the Programme Improvement Advisory Committee is vital to the success of the Strategic Planning Performance Agreements in the sector;

### Quality Assurance

- significant resources required to develop a single QA framework across the FET Division;
- the length of time and the voluminous paperwork required for programme validation. This reduces the flexibility and responsiveness to stakeholder needs;

### Management Information Systems

- SOLAS needs to ensure the functionalities of PLSS match existing Management Information Systems. For instance, the system should have the capability to report on ED areas, so that FET data can be analysed in terms of responses to unemployment blackspot areas, incorporate or integrate with a certification database, etc.

## 4.3 Delivering on FET Relevant Policies and Strategies

The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 led to the establishment of 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) as well as the introduction of a code of practice for the governance of ETBs. The ETB is required to plan, provide, co-ordinate and review the provision of education and training, including education and training for the purpose of employment and services in its functional area. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is committed to responding with the appropriate FET Strategic Frameworks and Action Plans in order to implement government policy initiatives by:

Focus	Policies/Strategies
<b>National</b>	<p>At national level, under-represented groups such as long-term unemployed people, people with disabilities, low skilled and older workers are being targeted through a range of current government policy initiatives, strategies and action plans. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025;</li> <li>– Action Plan for Education 2016-2019;</li> <li>– Pathways to Work;</li> <li>– Action Plan for Jobs;</li> <li>– FET Strategy 2014-2019;</li> <li>– Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020; Action Plan for Rural Development 2017;</li> <li>– Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth in Ireland</li> <li>– Migrant integration Strategy 2017 – 2020;</li> <li>– National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020;</li> <li>– National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy (2017-2020);</li> <li>– Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2024.</li> </ul>
<b>Regional / Local</b>	<p>At a regional and local level, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is required to deliver on objectives laid out in key local policies and plans including: Limerick Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– County Clare Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2021;</li> <li>– Limerick Age Friendly Strategy 2015 -2020;</li> <li>– Clare Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan 2018 – 2022;</li> <li>– Review of the Limerick Regeneration Framework Implementation Plan 2016</li> </ul>
<b>Internal</b>	<p>Internally, the work of the FET Division is guided by strategic direction laid out in both the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Strategy Statement, 2017-2021 and the FET Strategic Framework 2015-2020. In addition, at an operational level, the FET Division is working on specific priorities laid out in a number of internal frameworks and plans including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan;</li> <li>– FET Information and Guidance Framework;</li> <li>– Integrating Language, Literacy and Numeracy Framework;</li> <li>– Enterprise Engagement Framework;</li> <li>– Executive Self-Evaluation for enhanced Quality Assurance Procedures and Processes;</li> <li>– FET Professional Development Framework (pending).</li> </ul> <p>All of these frameworks and plans are deigned to be consistent with national action plans and strategies.</p>

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# 5. Profile of the ETB Region



# Section 5

## ETB Contribution to National FET Strategy and Targets

### 5.1 Skills for the Economy

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division:

- in line with the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum (MWRSF), the National Skills Strategy and the Action Plan for Jobs has set up an Enterprise Engagement Support Service. This service is the centralised point of contact for engaging with employers, employees, sectoral industry organisations and social enterprises in communities with the aim of promoting and fostering mutually beneficial partnerships;
- will take account of the regional intelligence on skills needs for those in and out of employment provided by the SLMRU;
- is implementing a TEL strategy ideally suited to enabling those in employment to engage in on-line and blended learning;
- has an Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service which has adopted a partnership approach with the LEOs in relation to skills needs, e.g. joint survey conducted on employer needs in Limerick and Clare;
- will develop the nature of FET provision to enable those in employment to up-skill and partake in part-time, day, evening and weekend courses. This offers the flexibility to retain their employment while up-skilling as well as widening their career options in relation to other opportunities.

### 5.2 Active Inclusion

The work of the Active Inclusion Support Service over the next three years will concentrate on three broad areas:

- **Specific Purpose Pilot Projects:** these will be substantially different to the core programmes on offer either in terms of curriculum, project structure, occupational skill area and are targeted at those '*closest to the labour market*' identified by local partners and the DEASP. These projects will be planned and evaluated using a project management approach and will be focussed on outcomes and impact.
- **Long-Range Supports:** targeted at those '*furthest away from the labour market*'. Work in this area involves partnership with the DEASP and the Local Authorities in Limerick and Clare in addition to community groups, schools, projects and programmes. This area of work will concentrate on transition points (in the USA they have a series of projects called *Cradle to Career* – some of the learning from which might have use). Specific transition points might include supporting single parents, working with parents from early years to primary and primary to post-primary (HSCL, TUSLA, School, Youth Service), transitions from prison to community (Bedford Row project), Community Employment to Employment and transition from one-to-one literacy provision to group provision. Evaluation of these supports will be focused on longer term impact and outcomes.
- **Policies and Procedures:** development and implementation of a range of policies and procedures which are designed to promote equality and active inclusion. This work will be framed around Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET *Public Sector Duty*. Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 places a positive duty on public sector bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work. Actions will be based on the '*Guide to Government Social Inclusion Strategies relevant to the FET Sector*'.

The complex and individual nature of an individual's learning journey and the myriad of experiences that underpin the learning process requires a multi-faceted response from the FET Division and internally the work of the Active Inclusion Support Service will be underpinned by:

- The FET Division's **Framework for the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)**, which outlines a range of interventions and supports designed to:
  - increase access to education, training and skill development opportunities by introducing language, literacy and numeracy supports across all FET provision;
  - 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.
- The FET Division's **Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan** and enhanced **FET Quality Assurance Procedures and Processes** are supporting the development and delivery of enhanced teaching and learning processes and delivery modes.
- The upcoming FET Division's **Professional Development Framework** will provide opportunities for volunteers, staff and educators to ensure that they are meeting the needs of learners by developing and maintaining appropriate and up-to-date skills and methodologies. This includes supporting the development of consistently good teaching and learning, strong assessment practice, detailed feedback and effective and on-going support for learners.
- The work being done under the FET Division's **Enterprise Engagement Framework** focuses on the currency of our curriculum and creates potential links with employers while a planned **Programme of Capital and Infrastructure Investment** across our FET Centres is designed to improve the on course experience for our learners and ensure our facilities are welcoming and fit-for-purpose.

### 5.3 Quality Provision

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is committed to quality assurance of all its provision and support services. The FET Division established a **Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS)** in 2015 with responsibility for the development, implementation, evaluation and review of an effective Quality Assurance system across all its Further Education and Training Centres.

The QASS developed and submitted to QQI in October 2017 the Executive Self-Evaluation Report (ESER) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The 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. The QIP covers the period October 2017 – December 2018 and will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the FET Steering Group with progress updates against the planned outcomes and activities being provided by the QA Officer. One key objective is to establish a single QA System to meet the requirements of QQI and ensure excellence across all FET provision.

### 5.4 Outcomes-based Planning and Funding

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's outcomes-based planning is co-ordinated by the FET Steering Group. This includes:

- leadership support via professional development provided to managers in 2017 centred on the continued rollout and integration of FARR and PLSS and in the areas of legislative compliance e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management and General Data Protection Regulations as well as sessions on using pivot tables for Data Analysis and Reporting;
- planning and operational delivery systems (FARR and PLSS) have been rolled out and continue to be fully supported. These systems and processes are now an integral part of the provision planning and delivery and they are well embedded in operations. Some legacy systems / functionality is retained and a clearer MIS roadmap will be introduced in this regard:
  - training and development sessions around PLSS, FETCH and new enrolment procedures were attended by some 214 staff;
  - the new learner database was piloted by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board;
  - the availability of PLSS and FARR reports have facilitated organisation integration and provision planning, and will be key to the development and delivery of the new Strategic Framework Agreement between the FET Division and SOLAS in 2018.
- a key effort initiated is to ensure that all provision managers/co-ordinators are briefed on strategic planning requirements and that they are fully included and actively participate in the entire planning and delivery processes so that individual and collective ownership of outcomes is established at local/regional level;
- a focus is maintained throughout on monitoring and reviewing progress to ensure that corrective measures/actions are taken in a timely manner to achieve agreed targets;
- a continual improvement process is engaged with informally with regard to improving retention rates and conversion rates which is identified as key to achieving many of the target areas, especially given the known decline in unemployed applicants;
- learners, community and enterprise engagement is to the fore to ensure that hardest to reach and priority groups are targeted for engagement and progression into activation over a realistic timeframe.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board recognises the importance of data as a driver of knowledge in the context of the planning process and the need to ensure the quality of data input around PLSS. We also recognise the opportunity presented by the generation of further evidence of progression and employment outcomes as a result of the linking of PLSS to other national databases via SOLAS and the CSO to facilitate more effective planning.

## 5.5 Standing of FET

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board continues to invest in the marketing and branding of FET to highlight this provision as a real alternative to the traditional pathways into third level. This is being achieved through a combination of internal and external communication tools.

INTERNAL	SignageLive	<b>SignageLive:</b> software installed on TV screens in all FET Centres enabling display of a common message, yet enabling each individual FET Centre to display specific centre related information.
	Email	<b>Email:</b> all email addresses transferred to a single domain, @lcetb.ie. This replaced multiple email addresses and will make it easier for the public to send emails.
EXTERNAL	Website	<b>Website</b> - a new FET website has been developed, www.learningandskills.ie with a clear communication message to learners, communities and enterprise.
	Branding, Promotion, Collateral	<b>Branding, Promotion, Collateral</b> - a common approach in terms of signage, stationery and the use of uniform collateral.
	Information Hub	<b>Information Hub</b> - development of Information Hubs at various FET Centres.
	FET Forum	<b>FET Forum</b> - established based on the Communities of Practice model to promote the quality of FET provision and the achievements of learners, staff and FET Centres.
	Awards	<b>Awards</b> - the FET Division achieved the Public Service Award in July 2016 in recognition of its services to Education and Training. The Hospitality Education and Training Centre was awarded the European Framework Quality Management Award (EFQM).

In addition Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will work with SOLAS to maximise the value and impact of a national campaign to promote further education and training in 2018 and 2019.

## 5.6 ETB Contribution to National FET Targets

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board commits to making the specific contribution to each of the six core national FET targets over the period 2018-2020 set out below. A summary showing how the contribution to each target is driven by activity within different skills clusters is provided as Appendix A. The definition underpinning each target is detailed in Appendix B.

Target	National Sectoral Target	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Contribution
1. More learners securing employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market	10% over 3 years	30% over 3 years, equating to 1,301 learners securing employment in 2020
2. More learners progressing to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose	10% over 3 years	46% over 3 years, equating to 1,978 learners progressing to other courses in 2020
3. Increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills development	10% over 3 years	28% over 3 years, equating to 1,048 completers certified in 2020
4. Increase in adults seeking FET level provision engaging in lifelong learning interventions	10% over 3 years	11% over 3 years, equating to 13,310 learners starting LLL relevant programmes in 2020
5. Increase in learners securing relevant qualifications in sectors where employment growth/skills needs have been identified	10,000 learners per annum	Average annual increase of 1,625 per annum and a 73% increase in learners in 2020 compared with 2017
6. New trainee registrations in the period 2017 to 2019	13,900 over 3 years	712 over 3 years or an 86% increase

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# 6. Performance Agreement



## Section 6

# Performance Agreement

In entering this agreement, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board commits to pursuing the priorities and actions set out in the previous sections and making the stipulated contribution to each of the six core FET targets over the period 2018 to 2020, subject to the risks and challenges identified and set out in Section 4.3 of the agreement. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board also commits to adherence to legislative requirements, the Overarching Planning and Funding Requirements for FET and SOLAS funding Terms and Conditions.

SOLAS commits to supporting the delivery of these priorities, actions and targets wherever practical subject to and within its existing resource constraints and competing commitments. The realisation of the targets will be monitored on an ongoing basis via the PLSS and FARR systems, and it is proposed that a formal mid-term review will be undertaken in September 2019, including a further strategic dialogue session between the two parties at this point.

Signed:



**Paul O'Toole**

Chief Executive, SOLAS



**George O'Callaghan**

Chief Executive, Limerick and Clare  
Education and Training Board

Date: 05/10/2018

Date: 05/10/2018

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# Appendix A



# Appendix A Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Contribution to National FET Sector Targets by Skills Cluster

Further Education and Training Provision	Target 1		Target 2		Target 3	
	2018-2020		2018-2020		2018-2020	
	Sector Provision 10% More Learners will secure employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market.		Sector Provision 10% more learners will progress to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose.		Sector Provision 10% increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills Development.	
	Expected overall Increase in Completers Securing Employment		Expected overall increase in Completers Progressing to FET or HET		Expected overall increase in Completers certified	
Skill Clusters	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	18	95%	10	167%		
Animal Science	9	60%	0	0%		
Arts and Crafts	16	20%	0	0%		
Built Environment	27	75%	0	0%		
Business Administration	49	51%	29	44%		
Engineering	3	100%	0	0%		
Engineering (Electrical)	12	43%	0	0%		
Engineering (IT)	1	0%	0	0%		
Engineering (Mechanical)	30	41%	0	0%		
Engineering (Transport)	22	67%	0	0%		
Entrepreneurship	0	0%	0	0%		
Financial Services	15	500%	0	0%		
Food and Beverage	2	2%	18	200%		
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	16	32%	9	64%		
Health, Family other Social Services	54	25%	167	80%		
Information Technology	20	57%	10	91%		
Management	2	0%	0	0%		
Manufacturing	-15	-88%	0	0%		
Media, Graphics Communications	8	0%	-17	-81%		
Natural Resources	0	0%	0	0%		
Research and Education-Training	2	0%	0	0%		
Sales and Marketing	4	19%	14	0%		
Science and Technology	1	13%	0	0%		
Security, Guarding and Emergency Services	5	500%	13	0%		
Sport and Leisure	12	23%	11	85%		
Tourism	5	33%	0	0%		
Transport, Distribution and Logistics	-23	-26%	0	0%		
Web Development and Design	6	25%	0	0%		
Core ICT			66	112%	18	50%
Core Personal			56	9%	2473	27%
General Learning			237	71%	445	32%
Language			0	0%	0	0%
Skills Sampling,			0	0%	0	0%
Key Skills			0	0%	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>623</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>2936</b>	<b>28%</b>

[1] This target could be subject to upward revision following the benchmarking process.

Target 4		Target 5		Target 6	
2018-2020		2018-2020		2018-2020	
<b>Sector Provision 10% increase of adults, who are seeking FET level provision, engaging in lifelong learning interventions[1]</b>		<b>Sector Provision Increase in Relevant Qualifications across FET programmes. Increase of 10,000 learners per annum securing relevant qualifications in sectors where employment growth/skills needs have been identified.</b>		<b>Traineeship Programmes. Traineeship National Target of 19,000 (2016-2020) - 13,900 - (2018-2020) Commencements on Traineeship (Skill Clusters By Starters)  Labour Market Skills</b>	
<b>Expected overall contribution to the National Target for increase in Starters and ETB capacity %</b>		<b>Expected overall annual average contribution to National Target for Completers Certified and ETB Capacity %</b>		<b>Expected overall contribution to National Target and ETB capacity %</b>	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
33	77%			0	0%
0	0%			0	0%
1	2%			0	0%
-30	-15%	18	23%	22	0%
-41	-7%			46	41%
1	9%	9	88%	0	0%
36	257%	57	159%	0	0%
28	0%	16	0%	0	0%
59	18%	152	78%	138	0%
38	86%	38	162%	192	177%
2	4%	0	0%	0	0%
0	0%			0	0%
-41	-22%	105	111%	90	-11%
	-1%			132	76%
80	11%	931	105%	24	-61%
-13	-37%	75	144%	0	0%
28	0%			0	0%
12	55%	-6	-31%	0	0%
24	38%	66	84%	32	0%
0	0%			0	0%
-3	-10%			0	0%
25	37%	73	187%	0	0%
0	0%	-1	0%	0	0%
17	8%			0	0%
-6	-5%	31	25%	36	-14%
	-5%	16	66%	0	0%
-114	-33%			0	0%
-14	-23%	46	68%	0	0%
0	0%				
150	5%				
1078	22%				
0	0%				
0	0%				
0	0%				
<b>1348</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>1625</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>86%</b>

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# Appendix B



# Appendix B

## Explaining the Targets

In agreeing the SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017-19, the Department for Education and Skills specified a range of targets to be met by the further education and training sector over a three year period:

- **Target 1 – Employment Outcomes:** 10% more learners will secure employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market.
- **Target 2 – Progression:** 10% more learners will progress to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose.
- **Target 3 – Transversal Skills Development:** 10% increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills development.
- **Target 4 – Lifelong Learning:** 10% increase of adults, who are seeking FET level provision, engaging in lifelong learning interventions (this target could be subject to upward revision following the benchmarking process).
- **Target 5 – Relevant Qualifications:** From 2018, for three years, an average increase of 10,000 learners per annum securing relevant qualifications (e.g. special purpose awards) in sectors where employment growth / skills needs have been identified (e.g. Construction, ICT, Food and Beverages, Hospitality, Wholesale / Retail, Biopharma / Pharmachem, Health / Other Care, Digital Media, Sport and Fitness, Engineering, Enterprise Skills needs).
- **Target 6 – Apprenticeship and Traineeship Provision:** 30,500 new apprentice and trainee registrations in the period 2017 to 2019 which will represent an increase in registrations from circa 6,000 in 2016 to circa 12,400 in 2019.

Also in 2017, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (D-PER) conducted a spending review of further education and training. A key aspect of this review involved analysis of programmes delivered by the ETBs by categorizing each programme as one of the following:-

- Predominately Labour Market Focus FET Programmes
- Predominately Progression Focus FET Programmes
- Predominately Social Mobility (Individual Transversal skills) FET Programmes

The setting of these three year national sectoral targets and broad categorisation of targets provided a framework by which strategic performance agreements between SOLAS and ETBs could be developed, highlighting the planned contribution of each ETB to their realisation. However to ensure that this

contribution could be clearly understood and linked to development of activity across FET programmes, some definitions and parameters were placed around each target, and these are discussed for each in turn below.

### Target 1: Employment Outcomes

This target takes a broad strategic approach by considering FET provision in terms of the programmes that are primarily focused on leading to employment. The D-PER spending review identified programmes which had a predominantly labour market focus and to ensure consistency with this review, the measuring of employment outcomes under Target 1 was related only to programmes within this category:

<b>Full-Time</b>	Apprenticeship Training	Blended Training
	Local Training Initiatives	PLC
	Specific Skills Training	Traineeships Training
	VTOS	VSCCS PLC
<b>Part-time</b>	Evening Training	On-line Learning (eCollege)

The target itself is calculated by looking at the actual completers from these programmes in 2017 logged on PLSS or via FARR who were recording as achieving an employment outcome, and then asking each ETB to set out a plan for the numbers completing who it expects to achieve an employment outcome in 2018, 2019 and 2020, calculating the expected change from this 2017 baseline. Currently therefore the contribution is self-declared by the ETB, based on its understanding of a learner outcome and with the assumption that all employment outcomes have been logged comprehensively within the system. It is however acknowledged that work to integrate FARR and PLSS and to ensure comprehensive and quality learner data input into PLSS is still progressing, and it is likely that the baseline for each ETB in 2017 may be higher than initially estimated.

SOLAS and the ETBs intend to move to a more robust method of setting the baseline by using access to revenue and jobseekers databases held by the CSO to establish independently the employment outcomes of learners on these programmes in 2017. This should not change the ambition for number of completers securing employment outcomes in 2018, 2019 and 2020 but could revise the baseline which will mean

the overall ETB contribution to meeting the target (i.e. the percentage change in completers securing employment outcomes) over the three year period could be updated.

### **Target 2: Progression**

This target takes a broad strategic approach by considering FET Provision in terms of the programmes that are primarily focused on facilitating progression to other further education and training and higher education courses. The D-PER spending review identified programmes which had a predominantly progression focus and to ensure consistency with this review, the measuring of progression outcomes under Target 2 was related only to programmes within this category.

<b>Full-Time</b>	Justice Workshops	Youthreach
	Bridging and Foundation Training	Community Training Centres
	Specialist Training Programmes	
<b>Part-time</b>	BTEI Groups VSCCS BTEI	Skills for Work

The target itself is calculated by looking at the actual completers from these programmes in 2017 logged on PLSS or via FARR who were recorded as having progressed to other further and higher education courses, and then asking each ETB to set out a plan for the numbers completing who it expects to achieve such a progression outcome in 2018, 2019 and 2020, calculating the expected change from this 2017 baseline. As with Target 1, currently the contribution is self-declared by the ETB, based on its understanding of a learner outcome and with the assumption that all progression outcomes have been logged comprehensively within the system. It is however acknowledged that work to integrate FARR and PLSS and to ensure comprehensive and quality learner data input into PLSS is still progressing, and it is likely that the baseline for each ETB in 2017 may be higher than initially estimated.

As with target 1, the baseline may be revised once learner outcome data from access to CSO databases (which also includes higher education learner data) is available. This should not change the ambition for number of completers securing progression outcomes in 2018, 2019 and 2020 but could mean the overall ETB contribution to meeting the target (i.e. the percentage change in completers securing progression outcomes) over the three year period could be updated.

It is also acknowledged that PLC provision has an important role in facilitating progression, particularly to higher education, yet the categorisation approach to ensure consistency with the spending review within the targets, where a programme can only be either predominantly labour market focused **OR** predominantly progression focused, meant that it was only included in the former when setting proposed ETB contributions in the formal target template. However, each ETB has been asked to articulate the current level of progression from PLC provision, and state any ambition for change in the progression rate over the lifetime of the agreement. Given the focus on this area and wider national work of FET to HE transitions, it is expected that the current rate of progression to HE from PLC across all ETBS will be at least maintained between 2018 and 2020.

### **Target 3: Transversal Skills Development**

This target takes the same strategic approach as Targets 1 and 2 by considering FET Provision where the aim is primarily focused on programmes which build transversal skills. The D-PER spending review identified programmes which had a primary focus on transversal skills development and to ensure consistency with this review, the measuring increases in the rate of certification under Target 3 was related only to programmes within this category.

<b>Full-Time</b>	Irish Deaf Society provision	
<b>Part-time</b>	Adult Literacy	ESOL
	FET Co-operation Hours	ITABE
	Libraries Training	Refugee Resettlement
	Voluntary Literacy Tuition	NALA Write on (p/t on line)

The target itself is calculated by looking at the actual completers from these programmes in 2017 logged on PLSS or via FARR who were recorded as having achieved certification, and then asking each ETB to set out a plan for the numbers completing who it expects to achieve such a certification outcome in 2018, 2019 and 2020, calculating the expected change from this 2017 baseline. In contrast with Target 1 and 2, the data should for 2017 should be robust as it relates to certification rather than perceived outcomes.

#### **Target 4: Lifelong Learning**

The lifelong learning activity measured under Target 4 used the EU definition of lifelong learning which relates to people over 25 years. As comprehensive data for all FET learners aged over 25 is not available in 2017 (as the PLSS was rolled out during the year), the target focuses on activity (measured by numbers starting courses) within programmes that predominantly address the needs of learners over 25. This base can be reviewed at the end of 2018 when there is a full dataset available through PLSS, and where it should be possible to isolate the cohort of learners aged over 25 across all FET. In the meantime, the baseline and plans have been build up those starting or expected to start courses in the following programmes over the period 2018-2020.

Blended Training	Specific Skills Training
Traineeships Training	Traineeship Employed
VTOS	Evening Training
On-line Learning (eCollege) (p/t)	Bridging and Foundation Training
Specialist Training Programmes	BTEI Groups
Irish Deaf Society	NALA Write on (p/t on line)
Skills for Work	Adult Literacy
Voluntary Literacy	LTI
ITABE	Refugee Resettlement
Community Education	

Deriving the target in this way means that it does not fully compare to wider national lifelong learning targets, or to new targets for employee development and workforce upskilling, but it does nonetheless provide an insight and ambition to grow lifelong provision across FET in a way that can be robustly tracked over the course of the performance agreement.

It is also important to note that FARR and PLSS does not currently record the self-financed evening course provision which takes place in FET facilities, most commonly in PLC further education colleges. SOLAS has asked ETBs to estimate the extent of this cohort if possible within the agreements.

#### **Target 5: Relevant Qualifications**

This target attempts to increase the focus of FET provision on key skills areas with an ambition to grow qualifications in these areas by an average increase of 10,000 learners per annum. Relevant qualifications can include special purpose awards and are measured in the following skills clusters as part of this target.

Built Environment (Construction)	Engineering
Engineering (Electrical)	Engineering (IT)
Engineering (Mechanical)	Engineering (Transport)
Entrepreneurship/ Enterprise Skills	Food and Beverage - Hospitality
Health, Family other Social Services	Information Technology - ICT
Manufacturing	Media, Graphics Communications - Digital Media
Sales and Marketing - Wholesale/ Retail	Science and Technology - Biopharma/Pharmachem
Sport and Leisure - Sports and Fitness	Tourism - Hospitality
Web Development and Design	

The number of certificates awarded in 2017 sets the baseline for this target and ETBs are then asked to project the number of certificates within these skills clusters that they expect to award in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

#### **Target 6: Apprenticeships and Traineeships**

Drawn from the Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeships and Traineeships 2016-2020, this sets a national target of 30,500 new apprentice and trainee registrations in the period 2018 to 2020. Pre 2016 apprenticeships are coordinated centrally by SOLAS while new apprenticeships are in a development stage and more difficult to plan in terms of specific course roll-out. In the performance agreements therefore, we have asked ETBs to focus on three year plans for expanding traineeship provision, asking them to project numbers starting traineeships in 2018, 2019 and 2020. The Action Plan defines a target over the period 2018-2020 of 13,900 new registrations.

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