



lcetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Luimnigh agus an Chláir

*Limerick and Clare
Education and Training Board*

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING SERVICE

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

April 2015

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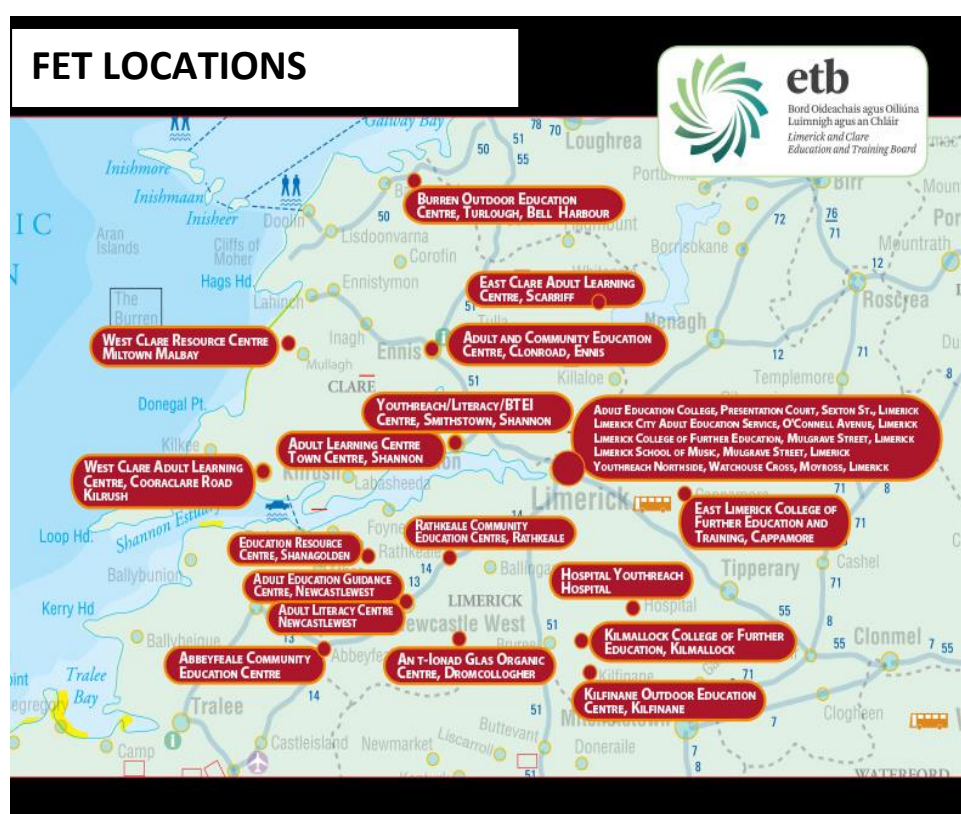
1. Full Time LCETB FET Provision

2. Part Time LCETB FET Provision

3. Other LCETB FET Provision

INTRODUCTION

This is the first Annual Report of the new LCETB Further Education and Training Service, since the amalgamation of Co. Clare, Co. Limerick and City of Limerick VECs in July 2013 to form the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. In July 2014, the LCETB welcomed the SOLAS Training Centres in Raheen and Shannon to become part of the new FET Service, strengthening the training element of its provision. This started an exciting phase for the LCETB FET Service, with a wider geographical reach as well as a wider range of programmes and support services for the people of Limerick and Clare. Indeed in **2014, 28415 beneficiaries participated in LCETB FET programmes in over 300 locations across the Region. The LCETB FET Service employed x staff in 2014.**



In response to this development, a key priority in 2014 was to kick start a strategic planning process to highlight our common values and objectives, and to chart the path for all FET programmes and Support Services in the next 5 years. Our vision is for the future is that:

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

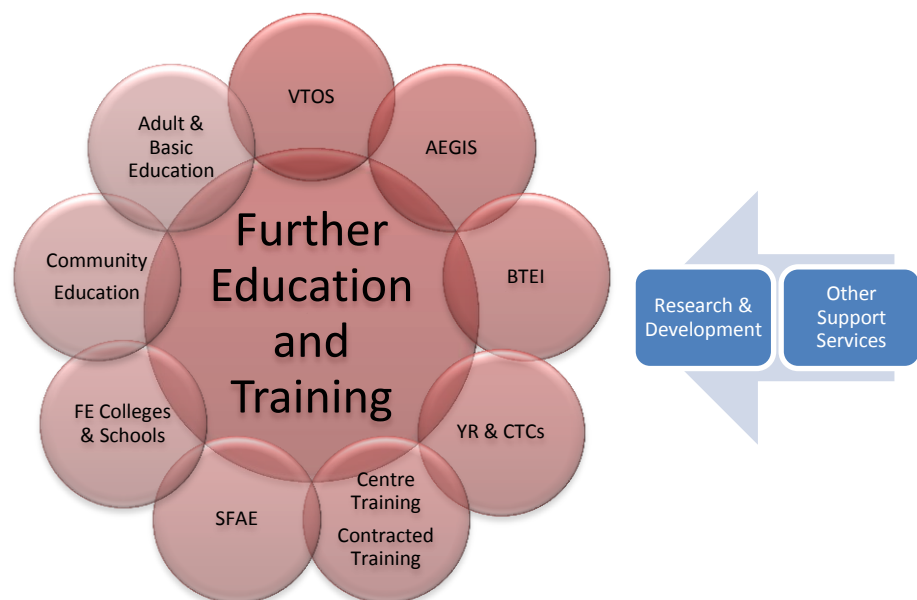
Our Core Purpose is:

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

The LCETB Further Education and Training Service Strategic Framework 2015-2020 was finalised in 2015, and identifies 4 key Strategic Priority areas:

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

These areas reflect the key strategies that will be put in place to address emerging challenges and maximise opportunities outlined in this 2014 Annual Report. Indeed, this first LCETB FET Service Annual Report provides an overview of the progress and developments across the Service in 2014. It has been jointly produced by respective programmes and services Coordinators and put together under 3 main sections: 1) Full Time FET Provision, 2) Part Time FET Provision and 3) Other FET provision.



Some of the common challenges faced by programmes included addressing barriers to participation for adult and young learners. These can span from isolation in rural areas, childcare issues, to the changing profile of FET learners. Indeed in 2014, an increasing number of learners presented with literacy and numeracy difficulties, mental health and self-esteem issues, often linked to long term unemployment, etc. These factors affect the recruitment, planning, delivery and expectations of realistic outcomes for our programmes, particularly in light of the national focus on the activation agenda. Despite these challenges, our professional and committed staff work tirelessly to maintain the balance between pursuing economic outcomes and supporting learners to remain engaged in education, by promoting the value of personal, social and civic outcomes of learning. Indeed, celebrating learners achievements was a priority for many programmes, as a way to highlight the road travelled for many people returning to education. Similarly,

particular efforts were put in developing new links with local employers through innovative initiatives, work placements, and new partnerships at regional levels.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank the LCETB FET Staff for their sustained commitment and professionalism in these times of change, and I'm looking forward to continue to develop our Service to address the needs and aspirations of our learners, local communities and employers.

PART 1 –

FULL TIME PROVISION

PLC Provision

Self-contained one/two year whole-time learning programmes for adults who have completed upper second level education and want to return to full-time education, to enhance their opportunities to employment or progression to other studies.

In 2014, LCETB FET Service **PLC provision served 3085 beneficiaries** in several locations in Limerick and Clare:








-  Limerick College of Further Education (LCFE)
-  Colaiste Chiarain
-  Hazelwood College
-  Colaiste Iosaef
-  Killmallock College of FE
-  Ennis Community College
-  Ennistymon Vocational School
-  Kildysart Community College
-  East Limerick College of FE

During 2014, 899 PLC learners achieved full awards, while 402 learners achieved part awards.

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

A full-time learning programme targeted to adults over 21 years old, and in receipt of a social welfare payment. This one or two year programme aims to provide learners with education and training opportunities to gain qualifications, progress to further education or training or to employment.

In 2014, LCETB FET Service offered **VTOS programmes in 7 centres in Limerick and Clare:**









-  Limerick City
-  An tIonad Glas, the Organic College - Dromcollogher
-  Ennis
-  Kilmallock
-  Kilrush
-  Scarriff
-  Shanagolden

In 2014, **1002 beneficiaries participated in a VTOS programme, with 276 learners completing full awards and 229 completing part awards that year.** In terms of recorded progression, 206 learners progressed on to further education and training, 45 progressed to higher education and 38 were recorded to progress to employment in 2014.

YOUTHREACH

Youthreach is a full-time programme for unemployed young early school leavers aged 15-20. It provides a programme of education, training and work experience (certified QQI Levels 3 - 5, Junior and Leaving Certificate, and uncertified courses) in a broad range of subjects to develop the skills needed for further learning and to prepare young people to progress to further education/training or to employment.

In 2014, LCETB FET Service offered **Youthreach programmes in 11 centres in Limerick and Clare:**

-  Limerick City (O'Connell Avenue, Glentworth Street, Northside, Coisceim)
-  East Clare
-  Ennis
-  Hospital
-  Kilrush
-  Milton Malbay
-  Shanagolden
-  South Clare

In 2014, **620 beneficiaries participated in a Youthreach programme, with 139 learners completing full awards and 113 completing part awards that year.** In terms of recorded progression, 121 learners progressed on to further education and training, 18 progressed to higher education and 29 were recorded to progress to employment in 2014.

LIMERICK COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Vision Statement: To be recognized as an outstanding College of Further Education and Training in Ireland and abroad.

LCFE will be a leader nationally and internationally in the Further Education and Training sector. The College is not only interested in best practice but in next practice. LCFE wishes to invent a new future for itself in the new further education and training landscape which is emerging.

Mission Statement: To add value to our learners, our staff and to the communities we operate in by providing a first class education and training experience. We do this by providing accredited, quality assured, skill-based vocational programmes on a full and part-time basis to our learners to enable them to grow, develop and progress to work or to further and higher education.



Overview: LCFE is a long-established, state-funded and administered further education and training college. LCFE offers further education courses (PLC) in a variety of disciplines and caters for up to 1,200 full-time and 2,500 part-time learners.

- **Enrolment** Day Learners: 1,150; Evening Learners: 2,400
- **Staff:** Day: 4 Senior Management, 65 teachers, 4 Administration, 7 Support Staff; Evening: 80 tutors
- **Programmes:** Accredited to offer over 100 programmes in Levels 5 and 6
- **Accreditation:** 934 Fulltime; 1,695 part-time

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

The College launched its Strategic Plan 2014-2018 in May 2014. The plan is the result of extensive internal and external consultation, sets out the strategic pillars, goals and KPIs that will direct the work of the College of this period of time. The Strategic Plan was launched at a time of significant change in the Further Education and Training sector which will provide both challenges and opportunities to LCFE over the next few years.

The intention of the plan is to help LCFE to grow and innovate, strengthening its course offerings, creating further enduring partnerships, enhancing its infrastructure and, most importantly, continuing to improve its teaching and learning.

New Courses offered in September 2014 included:

- DJ Techniques
- Advanced Multimedia
- Creative Sewing and Dressmaking
- Sports Injury Management



KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- QQI Quality Assurance Improvement
- New Programme Development
- Enhance Teaching and Learning pedagogy
- Continuous Professional Development: In accordance with Teaching Council guidelines, the College continued to place a high emphasis on the professionalism of both teaching and senior management staff.
- Work Experience – engaging with Employers
- Career Guidance and Progression – new links established
- Enhanced Enrolment and Admissions Procedures
- Equality and Diversity – Intercultural Day
- Won awards in Fashion, Photography, Media & Sports
- Promotion & Prospectus; Use of Social Media
- Establishing relationship with new FET Division

Physical Infrastructure in 2014

We continue to improve the physical infrastructure of the College. A major investment is required in order to refurbish the existing building and also to expand it in order to accommodate learner numbers.

- A report on the physical condition of the roof was carried out by an architectural firm
- Doors were replaced throughout the College
- The Art facilities in the hall were renovated/improved
- The Childcare and Art prefab was renovated at a cost of €80,000.

New Centre

LCFE expanded its provision to the Cappamore College in September 2013. This centre can cater for up to 120 learners. It enrolled 84 learners in 2014.

ICT Developments

- A dedicated junior technician is now in place to look after the level 1 maintenance and support for the college environment. This includes 427 desktop devices 39 projectors and 39 printers.
- A Jobs Bridge intern has joined us to work on projects including auditing of IT equipment, assisting with maintenance and support tasks and the deployment of new computers and the LCFE IT knowledge base.
- An environment has been developed to centralise the IT operations at the college. It includes spaces for repair, storage of consumables and parts as well as desktops and planning area.
- A new group Equipment, Services, Maintenance & Support team was set up to advance LCFE IT services and supports.
- A new differential backup was set up to provide automated backup of student and teaching server data. This backup is sent to an LCFE server hosted in Marshal House.
- All LCFE Mailboxes have been migrated to the LCETB domain. All staff users now log on to the LCETB mail system.
- 2 new servers were purchased for the PC maintenance lab to deliver the Network Administration module by night. These include a virtualised server environment.
- The Staff support area of the VLE has been enhanced with an extensive range of support materials on college ICT systems including

- The new OWA 2013 LCETB email system.
- The VSware attendance system.
- An upgrade of the Pocketbook e-library
- Staff have attended training to prepare for the migration from the old CLVEC Staffshare system to the new LCETB Staffshare.
- The VSware attendance system has been introduced at LCFE. Bespoke elements for management reporting have been developed.
- The photo ID system database has been moved from standalone machines to a centralised database stored on college servers that are automatically backed up.
- 9 new Apple iMacs were introduced to the college. 6 for open access use by students outside of the MacLab classroom. 3 for use by teachers.
- A windows software build was deployed to a partition placed on all Mac devices at LCFE.
- Dual monitors were set up for all senior management computers.

Adult Education Evening Programmes

- The College provides over 100 courses at night from Hobby and Leisure to Arts & Crafts, Business & Professional, Childcare, Computers, Languages and Media Studies. These programmes continue to be very important to the College bringing in receipts of in the region of €400,000 to LCETB.

Organisational Changes

- Mindful of the new structures such as LCETB, QQI, Intreo, Management aims to progress issues in a positive direction concerning staff and learners.
- Strategic Decision making by the management team continued to bring learners centre stage in our decision making and this continues to play an important role in our focus for the future.
- We continue to further develop and enhance communications with LCETB, FET Division and its other centres with implementation of LCFE ICT Action Plan 2011 – 2015 and LCFE Strategic Plan 2014-2018.



KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- Equality and Diversity continue to be high on the agenda as we move forward.
- Teachers are actively encouraged to share their knowledge complimenting the existing modern 'learning organisation' and providing vision and aspirations for future developments.
- We continued to improve the administration and management systems in the College to increase efficiency despite moratorium on administrative/support personnel posts.
- We continue to provide excellent pastoral care to our learners despite the reduction in the Career Guidance allocation by the DES. The ex-quota guidance allocation needs to be restored.
- The middle management structures of the College are seriously affected due to the moratorium on Assistant Principals posts. New structures are required for FE along the lines of the Mclver Report (2003).

LIMERICK CITY VOCATIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES SCHEME (VTOS) – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

VTOS offers the following general Learning Courses:

- **Leaving Certificate:** Ten subjects including Physics & Biology
- **Junior Certificate:** Six subjects including ICT and Career Planning
- **General Learning:** Full Award, QQI Level 4.
- **Art, Craft and Design:** Full Award, QQI Level 5.
- **Office Administration:** Full Award, QQI Level 5.
- **ESOL:** Junior Certificate & full QQI Award (Employability Skills) Level 3

Key Profile 2014

Total number of students: 208

- Male: 95
- Female: 113
- Aged 21-34: 104 students
- Aged 35-54: 99 students
- Aged 55-64: 5 students
- *Irish Nationals: 87 students*
- *Other Nationals: 121 students*

Staff:

- Co-ordinator
- Assistant Co-ordinator
- Guidance Counsellor
- 20 teachers



KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Publicity and recruitment

A number of VTOS recruitment initiatives took place in 2014 to maintain VTOS student numbers. In March, 2014, VTOS provided a 'feeder' Access course to facilitate new students onto the Scheme. This activity was very successful and offered participants a foundation in a range of subjects as well as integrated core skills development.



There were a number of reports in the local press that provided good publicity for VTOS, including photographs of: Examination Results Day and the Art, Craft and Design Open Day. Advertisements were placed periodically in the local newspapers. However, feedback from learners indicates that word-of-mouth is the best medium for attracting new applicants onto the Scheme. A further highlight of 2014 was the production of a Yearbook which showcases the 2014 year in photographs and testimonials. Each student received a copy of the Yearbook as a memento of their time in VTOS.



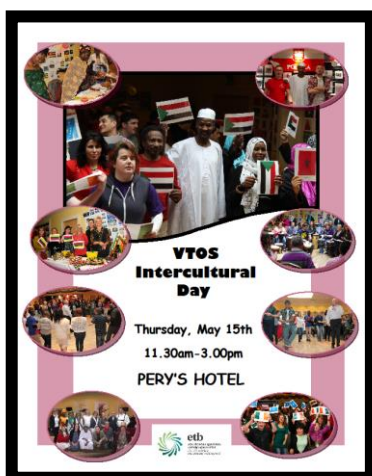
Self-Managed Learning

Limerick VTOS encourages students to take active responsibility for the management of their own learning. We promote a holistic approach to learning, focusing on both *skills* as well as *personal* development. In 2014, the increase in 'self-managed learning' activity is largely reflected in the use of Moodle in a range of subject areas. A dedicated group of VTOS teachers now use Moodle for: collecting course content; curriculum development; sharing assignments and learning resources; attendance monitoring etc.



Promoting Inter-culturalism

Students from over thirty different nations participate on Limerick City VTOS. This broad spectrum of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds greatly enriches our teaching and learning and encourages an appreciation of the diversity of cultures that characterizes Irish society today. The shared learning opportunities foster a commitment to equality with its longer term benefits for social cohesion and citizenship.



Staff Development

VTOS Staff participated in weekly staff meetings under the Croke Park Agreement. These meetings facilitated the sharing of information as well as programme planning and evaluation. All staff contributed to the LCETB FET Strategic Planning process. ICT teachers attended a number of conferences on educational tools and resources and also took part in sessions with the Limerick Moodle Users group. Two teachers completed Masters Degrees in 1) Guidance Counselling and 2) Digital Media Development for Education. A number of teachers participated in various subject-specific DES In-Service days.



Customer Focus

The choice of learning options in VTOS is determined by the range of needs and interests of students. While QQI courses provide good choice and flexibility, the second-chance opportunity provided by the traditional Junior and Leaving Certificate continues to make them popular. The 'course leader' system, whereby a designated member of staff has responsibility for a particular course, has proven to be very successful in ensuring that individual students receive adequate mentoring and support. Staff responsiveness is evident in their readiness to teach new subjects and their engagement in a team-based approach to the sharing of expertise, materials and resources.

Other ways in which VTOS maintained its customer focus included:

- Career Preparation/Planning available to all students
- Revised Induction programme
- Programme evaluations
- Ongoing individual student reviews
- The achievement of full QQI Awards
- Full-time Career Guidance
- Attendance support

Employability Development

Most VTOS students are given the opportunity to complete either the QQI Career Preparation, Career Planning or Work Experience modules. In the 2013-2014 Academic Year, all of the students in General Learning Level 4, Office Administration as well as Art, Craft and Design courses carried out a QQI Work Experience module (Levels 4 and 5). The following is an outline of their work placement locations:

Credit Unions	Various Nursing Homes
Limerick Youth Service	Graphic Design Companies
Limerick Resource Centre	Manufacturing Companies
Limerick School of Art & Design	Care Services
Claughaun GAA Club	Limerick Adult Education College
Limerick City Art Gallery	Limerick City Council
Restaurant (Crescent S.C.)	Limerick Milk Market (ACD stall)
Jean Ryan Art Studio	Innovative Web Solutions Company
Afro-Caribbean Food Company	Headways Limerick Centre
Red Ribbon Project	St. Mary's Obair Centre
Saoirse	Butcher's Shop

Savoy Hotel	Indira Initiative Limerick
Falcon Travel	Northern Trust Bank
Hunt Museum	Limerick Regional Hospital
Molex Ireland	Boots Pharmacy
The Locke Bar	Kilfinane Animal Welfare
St. Camillus Hospital	Adapt House



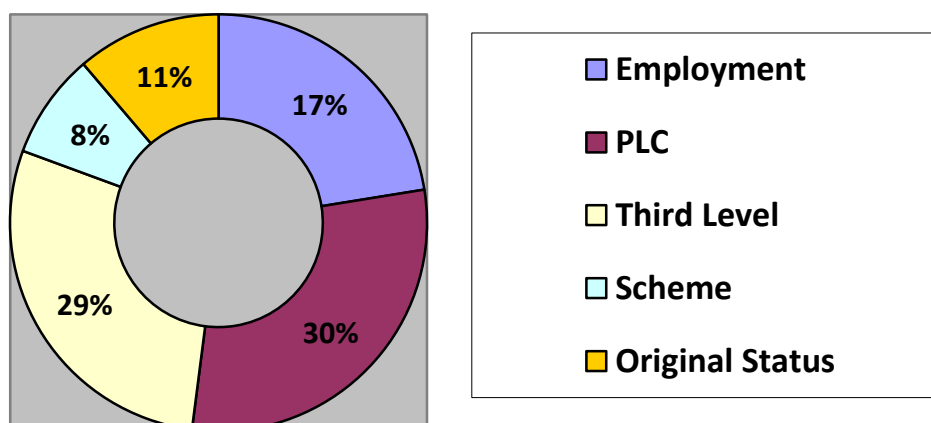
Accreditation and Progression

VTOS students achieved the following certification in 2014:

- **68** QQI Full Awards (L3-L5)
- **161** QQI Minor Awards (L3-L5)
- **61** Junior Certificate Awards (2-5 subjects)
- **58** Leaving Certificate Awards (2-5 subjects)
- **9** ECDL Awards



98 students finished the programme in June 2014, having successfully completed their course (the remainder continued to their second year). The following graph highlights the impressive progression statistics of those 98 students:



Guidance and Supports

VTOS learners, many of whom experience significant personal issues which can negatively impact on their progress, have been enabled to sustain their engagement with the programme through a number of supports including: Guidance counselling, attendance support, as well as integrated literacy/language development. The use of Moodle has been actively encouraged across the Scheme as a useful tool to support learners in their studies. The VTOS Facebook site, which currently has approximately 550 members, is an accessible and dynamic means of keeping learners in touch with on-going VTOS activities, as well as promoting friendships and enhancing social interaction.



Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are an important aspect of Limerick VTOS provision and help to foster good integration and a strong sense of community amongst participants. Such activities have a very positive influence on the student's level of engagement with the learning programme. In 2014, VTOS students participated in:

- Work Experience Placements
- Geography, Biology, History, Art and English (Literature) Field Trips
- Biology Laboratory work

They also participated in:

- VTOS Christmas concert
- Madrid Culture Weekend (self-financed)
- Intercultural Food Day
- VTOS Art Exhibition
- VTOS Awards Ceremony



Partnerships

Limerick City VTOS continued to maintain its links with a range of external organisations including: NALA, AONTAS, LES, LCFE, LCEN, FÁS, LIT, DSP, FOCUS, AHEAD, Employers etc. Networking with LCETB colleagues continues to work effectively and the Co-ordinator is a member of the LCAES Management Team. The Co-ordinator is currently Vice- Chairperson of the executive committee of the National Association of VTOS Co-ordinators (NAVC). VTOS also continued its working partnership with the University of Limerick and Mary Immaculate College of Education. Three co-operative students were placed on VTOS in 2014 from the University of Limerick, as well as three FET Graduate Diploma students from Mary Immaculate College, who provided valuable teaching and learning assistance.

Limerick City VTOS (LCETB) was successful in its application for an ERASMUS+ EU Adult Education Programme with a Project entitled EDGE (Enhancing the Delivery of Guidance and Employability). EDGE comprises a partnership between Ireland (Co-ordinator), Wales, Austria, Greece and Portugal. The Project is geared towards unemployed adults who are participating on our training Schemes. Limerick City VTOS (LCETB) is also a partner on the ERASMUS+ QUAKE (francophone) Project, which is co-ordinated by Mary Immaculate College. Other partners include France, Spain and Belgium. QUAKE aims to develop the capacity of VET teachers in the implementation of ECVET (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training). The QUAKE Project will engage and work with VET providers in the design, use and development of ECVET in their programme provision at a regional, national and European level.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

The main challenges that VTOS faced in 2014 were to:

- Keep abreast of labour-market/activation policy
- Address the increasing need for employability provision
- Ensure each student had a clear Individual Progression Plan
- Review the curriculum to ensure subject relevance
- Improve promotional and publicity materials
- Continue with the digitization of paper-based records
- Preserve the VTOS identity as an accessible, full-time, second-chance education Scheme

Further Education And Training Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus

The Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme has been based at the Adult Education College in Sexton Street since 1992, with two courses (Art, Craft & Design and Office Administration) taking place at the LCAES Building, O'Connell Avenue. These central locations ensured easy access for students, particularly those living in the City. It has now been decided that VTOS will be moving from its current locations to the new Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus (formerly St. Enda's School). This location, while it will present challenges in terms of access for our students, will provide excellent modern facilities for our courses and offer a new beginning for VTOS.



VTOS DROMCOLLOGHER ANNUAL REPORT 2014

KEY PROFILE

An tIonad Glas, the Organic College in Dromcollogher is a core VTOS Centre with 20 places in 2014. The programme runs over 2 years with an option for a 3rd year in special cases. The VTOS programme runs right through the year, with learners continuing through the summer.

Courses offered:

QQI Level 5 Certificate in Horticulture

QQI Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Horticulture

There were 5 staff members on the programme up to Sept. 2014.

In January 2014 there were 21 learners on the programme, with a changeover in September 2014 when learners who had been on VTOS for 2-3 years finished and new learners started, total VTOS number 20.

	Jan 2014 Male	Jan 2014 Female	Sept. 2014 Male	Sept. 2014 Female	Total VTOS
VTOS 1	5	3	5	2	
VTOS 2	8	2	5	3	
VTOS 3	2	1	4	1	
Totals :	15	6	14	6	20

Age profile of learners on Jan 2014

The age profile of learners is weighted towards the older learner as can be seen from the following table.

	Under 25 Jan 2014	25-30 Jan 2014	30-40 Jan 2014	40-50 Jan 2014	Over 50 Jan 2014
Male	0	1	3	10	1
Females	1	0	3	1	1
Total	1	1	6	11	2

Age Profile of learners in December 2014

	Under 25 Dec 2014	30-40 Dec 2014	40 – 50 Dec 2014	Over 50 Dec 2014
Male	0	6	5	3
Females	0	2	1	3
Total	0	8	6	6

Progression of VTOS Learners

- 7 VTOS learners finished their studies in September 2014.
- 1 became self-employed;
- 2 went into employment;
- 2 went on to higher education;
- 2 went back on the live register;

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Events/Outings etc. 2014

There were many events at the College in 2014 including Trips, Guest Speakers/Workshops, Open Days etc. Throughout the year VTOS Learners ran Market Stalls and An Siopa Glas stocked with the fruits of their labours in the Gardens & Kitchen. Over the Summer VTOS Learners represented the College at several events such as Charleville Show, Tullylease Banding Ceremony etc.



VTOS Learners present a 'Container Planting' Exhibit at the Charleville Agricultural Show.

Many learner tours were organised, including learner Tours to Stonehall Organic Farm Newmarket-on-Fergus, to Irish Seedsavers in Clare, to Nano Nagle Centre Cork (Organic Farm);



*Guest Speakers also spoke on Nutrition;
Native Irish honey Bees (Beekeeping Module)*



There was a Learner Awards Ceremony with Guest Presenter Duncan Stewart from “Eco-Eye” TV program.

Many learners Workshops were organised including on Willow Weaving; Lime Plastering (Permaculture Module), Fruit Grafting; ‘Horticultural Therapy’, ‘Soil Nutrition’ by John Hogan, Agronomist;



Many learner trips were also organised and included an end of Term Learner Trip took place to West Clare & Aran Islands – including Seaweed Identification & Wild Food Foraging Workshop; a Trip to nearby “Springfield Organic Walled Garden” which is run by former VTOS learner Caoimhin Brosnan; trip to “Agnes Organic Farm” in West Cork, run by former VTOS Learner Brenda Walsh and Organic Farm Walk in Skibereen; Learner trip to Andy Burke Beekeeper to extract Honey from College Hives; trip to “Green Earth Organics” Farm in Galway; Learner Trip to Cloughjordan Eco-Village to see Sustainable Horticulture Practices;



Learners on ‘Native Tree ID’ Walk in Broadford Arboretum with Ted Cook, Tree Conservationist and former VTOS Learner;

Learners on ‘Mushroom Foraging’ Trip in Ballinruane Woods with Jonathan Spazzi, Mycologist;



VTOS Learners’ achievements were celebrated throughout the year:



*Presentation of Federation of Irish Beekeepers Assoc. Certificates to Beekeeping students.
Great success from 1st year of new Module*

VTOS learners have prize winning entries in both the Newcastlewest Flower Show and the Limerick Agricultural Show;



Learners host "Xmas Fest" – Christmas Craft & Food Fair showcasing all the Organic Products grown and produced by Learners at the College;



KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

An tIonad Glas is based in an old building, which requires constant maintenance and attention.

In the last few years, a field directly behind the College was leased to facilitate more Field Scale Production and Machinery use. The annual rental cost of €500 is paid from our VTOS non-pay budget. Machinery to work this ground is expensive and we are currently trying to upgrade our tractor.

ICT is also a challenge. We have 14 computers in the Student IT Room. We have a Network system with Internet and Wifi connectivity across the College buildings. However, the system needs constant upgrading to keep it working to modern standards and student requirements.

VTOS ENNIS – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction

Ennis VTOS is an 80 place daytime general education and work related training programme for unemployed adults and offers a range of programmes and national certification. Learners are aged between 21 and 64, are unemployed for at least six months prior to commencing the programme, or on a relevant payment. Priority is given to those with a lower level of education. Participation on VTOS is free to eligible participants and all resources are supplied.

PROFILE OF LEARNERS

The profile of learners as of December 2014 is as follows:

	Male	Female	Total
Status			
Jobseekers Allowance	19	29	48
Disability	2	4	6
One Parent Family	0	6	6
Credits	0	2	2
Dependent Spouse		3	3
Jobseekers Benefit	4	14	18
Total	25	58	83
Analysis of Learners			
Irish National:	21	41	62
EU National (excluding Irish nationals):	4	9	13
Person with refugee status in Ireland:	0	1	1
Spouse of EU National (excluding Irish national):	0	1	1
Person with leave to remain as parent of a child born in Ireland:	0	6	6
Total:	25	58	83
Length of time on Jobseekers			
6 - 11 Months:	5	25	30
12 - 23 Months:	5	9	14
24 - 35 Months:	3	4	7
3 Years and Over:	10	5	15
Total:	23	43	66
Age profile of Learners	Male	Female	Total
21-24	1	6	7
25-34	6	21	27
35-44	6	10	16
45-54	8	17	25
55-64	4	4	8
Total:	25	58	83

Programmes and Certification

In the 2013/2014 academic year Major Awards at QQI/FETAC Level 5 were offered in Community Care; Graphic Design; Art Craft and Design; Business Administration, at Level 4, Awards were offered in Employability Skills and General Learning. Ennis VTOS aims to meet the needs of the learners and new subject areas are offered based on identified needs.

Certification	Male	Female	Total	Major Award	L5
FETAC Level 3 minor award:	5	5	10	Art Craft & Design	1
FETAC Level 4 major award:		2	2	Graphic Design	2
FETAC Level 4 minor award:	17	30	47	Business Admin	9
FETAC Level 5 major award:	6	15	21	Community Care	9
FETAC Level 5 minor award:	26	42	68		L4
FETAC Level 6 minor award:		4	4	Employment Skills	2
Leaving Certificate (1subject):	1		1		
Total:	55	98	153		
Students Receiving Certification	27	47	74		

Progression

Overall progression from the Ennis VTOS programme was very positive as can be seen from the chart below. This year saw an increase in the number of learners progressing to work, part and full time employment and to Community Employment. Clare Adult Guidance Service plays a pivotal role in the progression of learners to higher level courses. Visits to and from higher level institutes and building progression into the VTOS programme are some of the factors which support our learners on their progression routes. Learners also receive language and literacy supports when needed. Nine learners left the programme early in 2014. Reasons for leaving included employment, financial barriers, a higher level course, illness, family commitments and childcare issues and unable to commit to a full time education course.

Progression for those finishing on a one year course	Male	Female	Total
<i>Employment:</i>	3	0	3
<i>Fás Training course:</i>	0	0	0
<i>Higher Level Education:</i>	2	1	3
Total:	5	1	6

Progression for those finishing on a two year course	Male	Female	Total
<i>CE Scheme / Rural Social Scheme:</i>	0	2	2
<i>Employment:</i>	3	6	9
<i>Fás Training course:</i>	0	1	1
<i>Higher Level Education:</i>	7	4	11
<i>Live Register / Original Status:</i>	1	6	7
<i>Other:</i>	1	1	2
<i>PLC:</i>	0	2	2
Total:	12	22	34

KEY 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

- Ennis VTOS continues to work with local employers and develop linkages with higher education institutes and colleges.
- Number of Students who progressed to employment and further education
- Participation in the Mid-West Regional Drug and Alcohol Awareness Week
- Field trips – colleges, craft fair, outdoor education, catering exhibition
- Greater participation in Health Related Fitness Programme
- Registering for Irish Heart Foundation Active at Work Scheme
- VTOS Clare Staff Team Building Day in East Clare



KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- Finding suitable work experience placements and building progression into the programmes
- Department of Social Protection regulations, anomalies, payments and eligibility
- Transfer of potential learners from FÁS full time programmes to VTOS – lots of barriers in terms of timing, payments etc.
- Childcare payments in terms of costs, reductions in subvention etc.
- Cost of participation is a barrier to some learners i.e. travel costs, subsistence etc. Reduction in bonus payment has led to difficulties around recruitment and retention.

VTOS KILRUSH – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE

There were 54 adult learners attending VTOS in Kilrush; 21 males and 33 females. Five learners left the programme during the course of 2014, with two learners entering employment, and the remainder due to changes in their personal circumstances. 39 learners are in receipt of a Jobseekers payment, 5 on a disability payment, 7 learners receive a lone parent payment, one signing for credits and two are dependants of an eligible spouse. The curriculum incorporates the choice of FETAC level 5 Major Awards in Childcare, Community Care, eBusiness and Business Administration. In addition VTOS is offering several minor FETAC Awards at levels 4 including Communications, Maths, Information Technology, Computer Applications, Work Experience and Drawing. September 2013 saw the introduction of a major level 5 FETAC award in General Studies specializing in Food Production and Beekeeping, six learners have enrolled on this course.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Group tours were organized this year including trips to the Crawford Gallery in Cork, the National Gallery, Midleton Farmers' Market, the Coach House garden centre, Lissadell Gardens, Banner Beekeepers' apiary and the apiary of Frank Considine in Cree.

Several staff meetings were held during 2014 specifically to review the curriculum, it was decided to maintain learner supports by implementing the following changes:

- Continue with timetabling 'Study Groups' for Monday and the introduction of extra tuition hours to the childcare programme on Tuesday afternoons.
- The provision of support classes in Creative Writing for Level 5 Web Authoring.
- Retaining increased tuition hours for Bookkeeping, Web Authoring.
- To split the Community Care learners into two groups with classes divided between Monday and Fridays. This group of learners was originally a very large group and the smaller class size greatly benefitted the learners.
- An increase in tuition and supported study hours for the Level 5 Communications.

To facilitate these changes it was necessary to rationalize the number of courses offered in the timetable and to make better use of both classroom and IT resources available.

Nineteen learners completed the programme in May'14; with 10 progressing to employment, 2 to Higher education, 1 to Further Education, 2 to CE schemes and 4 returning to their original status.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

Recruiting learners to VTOS programmes remains a key challenge. VTOS endeavours to tailor all our programmes to the learners' needs and the challenges they face in securing employment. West Clare VTOS maintains close links with local employers, closely monitors job vacancies and liaises with learners in respect of their progression. Michael Donnellan, from the Adult Guidance Service, organised visits from employers and facilitated learner trips to both FE & HE open days. He assisted learners with CV and interview preparation and provided an invaluable information service. VTOS continues to work closely with the Adult Literacy Service to address the learners educational needs.

VTOS SCARRIFF 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

VTOS Scarriff is a 20 place daytime general education and work related training programme for unemployed adults. In order to be eligible a potential learner must be unemployed for at least six months and in receipt of a social welfare payment. Participation on VTOS is free to eligible participants and all resources are supplied. VTOS Scarriff offers QQI Level 5 in Art, Craft & Design and Business Studies. Support is received from an Adult Guidance counsellor, who visits the centre on a Monday.

PROFILE OF LEARNERS

The profile of learners as of December 2014 is outlined below. Female learners outnumber male learners as can be seen from the table below:

Male	Female	Total
6	13	19

Age profile of learners as of December 2014 is as follows:

Age	Male	Female	Total
21-24	3	0	3
25-34	2	4	6
35-44	0	4	4
45-54	1	5	6
55-64	0	0	0
65+	0	0	0
Total	6	13	19

Programmes and Certification

In the 2013/2014 academic year, Major Awards at QQI/FETAC Level 5 were offered in Business Studies and Art, Craft and Design. On Monday 23rd February the VTOS annual awards ceremony was held, and there was a great turn out of learners and their families on the night, when they were presented with their certificates.

Progression

Progression for learners included employment, higher education and CE Schemes in the local area.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- Number of Students who progressed to employment and further education
- VTOS Clare Staff Team Building Day in East Clare
- Annual awards ceremony night
- Display of students end of year work from Art, Craft & Design module



Sample of our learners work

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- Finding suitable work experience placements and building progression into the programmes
- Cost of participation is a barrier to some learners i.e. travel costs, subsistence etc. Reduction in bonus payment has led to difficulties around recruitment and retention
- Transport can be an issue from rural areas to attend course

VTOS SHANAGOLDEN 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE

VTOS Shanagolden is a 20 place centre which caters for learners over the age of 21. In order to be eligible a potential learner must be signing on for at least 6 months and in receipt of a social welfare payment. The QQI Information Processing Award is offered at level 5.

There are 5 staff members on the programme: VTOS Coordinator, IT Coordinator Part time, Part time Business Teacher, Art Teacher Part time, Communications Tutor Part time.

Supports are received from an Adult Guidance Counsellor, who visits the centre on a Thursday for 2 hours and completes one-to-one sessions or classes. If the need arises, literacy support is also available. If a learner requires counselling, there is the facility that a learner can make an appointment with a councillor on the grounds.

During January 2014 there were 19 learners on the programme, the profile changed in September as those who had been in VTOS for 2 years left in June and new learners were taken on in September 2014. Female learners outnumber male learners as can be seen from the table below:

	January 2014	December 2014
Male	3	2
Females	16	17
Total	19	19

Age profile of learners on Jan 2014

The age profile of learners is weighted towards the older learner as can be seen from the following table. However a noticeable trend recently is that the number in the under 25s age group is increasing. This is evident from the tables below:

	Total Jan 2014	Under 25 Jan 2014	Age 25-30 Jan 2014	30 – 40 Jan 2014	Over 50 Jan 2015
Male	3	1	0	0	2
Females	16	0	2	7	7
Total	19	1	2	7	9

Age Profile of learners in December 2014

	Under 25 Dec 2014	Age 25-30 Dec 2014	30 – 40 Dec 2014	Over 50 Dec 2014
Male	1	0	0	1
Females	3	0	6	8
Total	4	0	6	8

Progression of learners

63% of learners progressed to employment in the following areas; DSF (Government), Vodafone, Machine Hire business, Car Sales and community employment schemes.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Awards Ceremony

On September 25th, the VTOS annual awards ceremony was held. Eight VTOS students graduated with a QQI Level 5 Major Award in Office Administration, while another eleven VTOS students received Level 5 Component Certificates in IT, Business, Drawing and Occupational First Aid. Eimear Brophy and Gerard Griffin were guest speakers on the night.



Annual Art Exhibition

The Annual Art Exhibition was held in June 2014 at the library in Newcastlewest. The title of the exhibition was called "Determination", signifying how determined the VTOS learners were in continuing with their QQI level 5 painting and drawing modules.

Gortboy Training Centre/Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival

As part of the Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival in March 2014, VTOS Shanagolden opened its doors to the public, who were invited in to "Come and Draw" for a morning. A group of learners from the HSE Training centre came and everybody had a very enjoyable morning. Following on from this event, VTOS Shanagolden were subsequently invited to a pottery session in May 2014 at their centre. VTOS learners had a very enjoyable day mixing with the trainees and they completed pottery vases and mugs and had a tour of the centre along with breakfast.



Outings

During the year, learners visited the local Flying Boat museum in Foynes, attended Curraghchase for painting/drawing classes and attended UL, and were introduced to the Access Programme and had a tour of the university.



A visit to the Art Gallery in Limerick City

KEY 2014 CHALLENGES

- Storm Damage: In February, a severe storm knocked some trees and damaged some prefabs in the centre. Other trees around the centre also had to be made safe, which incurred unforeseen expenses.
- Maintenance of old buildings and limited budgets: VTOS Shanagolden shares expenses with Youthreach. The heating and maintenance costs of the centre are very high and thus a lot of the budget is spend on these costs.

YOUTHREACH LIMERICK CITY – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

O'CONNELL AVENUE CENTRE

Youthreach Staff Team: 19 personnel are employed at the Youthreach O' Connell Avenue (YOC) Education Centre. Staff members and job titles are listed below.

Staff profile

Job Description	Subject area
Co-ordinator	English & Geography
Resource Person	English, Gaeilge & SPHE
Resource Person	Learning Support & English
Resource Person	Maths & Numeracy
Resource Person	English, French & Music
SENI Facilitator	Maths, Numeracy, & PE
Resource Person	English, Vocational Preparation
Resource Person	SPHE, PIPS, Science & Chemistry, Communications
Teacher	Metalwork & Engineering
Teacher	Woodwork & Construction
Teacher	Home Economics, Hotel & Catering
Teacher	P.E, Leisure and Recreation, Social Education, Geography
Teacher	CSPE, Social Education & Social Science
Teacher	Self-Employment, History & Geography
Teacher	Maths, Computers, Communications & Learning Support
Teacher	Art
Administrator	
Youth Counsellor	
Caretaker	

Details of staff development and training days held.

Staff training and development is usually organised through the provision of in-service days provided by the Department of Education and Science, internal training via Youthreach and LCETB staff and the identification of suitable external providers. Between January 2014 and December 2014 a significant number of training days were provided for all staff on Junior Cycle English Framework, Project Maths Workshop, Assist Training, Junior Cert Leaders Workshop, Limerick Citywide Children & Youth Forum, Euro Schools Health Promotion Training, PRISM Training, LCA Co-Ordinator Training, LCA Maths Training, LCA

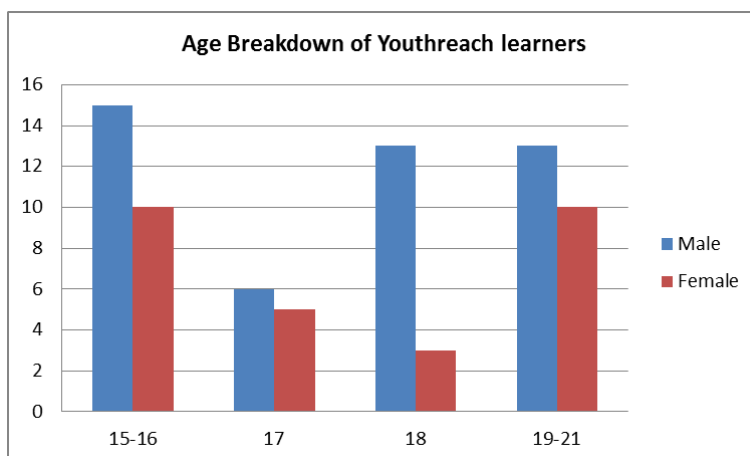
Voc Prep Training, LCA English & Communication, LCA Practical Achievement Task, LCA General Education Task, President's Award Training.

In 2014, a total of six staff members undertook or completed post graduate studies. Congratulations to Kate Flynn who recently completed a Masters by research in the area of physical activity opportunities in Limericks regeneration areas. The thesis entitled *"Keep Away from Gangsters and Keep Away From Drugs, Play Sports" – Understanding Adolescent Life in Limerick Regenerations Areas and Potential Impacts on Sports and Physical Activity Interventions*. Kate incorporated learners from this centre into her focus groups. Shane McElroy is currently studying for a postgraduate course in educational management in Mary Immaculate College. Nicole Sheehy has undertaken a postgraduate course in Supervision at the University of Limerick. Deirdre Curley is in her first year of a two year Diploma in French with NUI, Galway. Gerry Cusack completed the H.dip in Mathematics from the University of Limerick. Shane Cullinane has registered for a PhD by research with the Educational Disadvantage Centre in St Patricks College at DCU.

Two whole staff team building sessions took place in 2014, the first was organised by Limerick City Adult Education staff based around the theme of Learning and Culture. This gave staff the opportunity to mix with staff from other Further Education programmes in informal learning sessions whilst experiencing cultural events. The second was a team building day for YOC staff held in Adare in September of 2014.

Youthreach learners

75 learners are registered on the YOC programme. Of these 75 learners (in December 2014), 47 are male and 28 are female. Learners in our centre currently range in age from 15 to 21. The average age of the male learner population is 15/16 years old and the average age of the female learner population is also 15/16 years old.



Average learner attendance figures

Of note is that the average attendance figure has improved for the last calendar year. The table below illustrates the average attendance figures of the male and female learners and those learners that attended the summer programme (male and female inclusive).

Learner group	Average attendance
Total learner group	75% (up from 73% 2013)
Female	74% (up from 69% 2013)
Male	75% (up from 74% 2013)
Summer programme	83% (up from 70% 2013)

Since January 2014 a total of 38 new learners were registered in the centre 23 of which are male and 15 of which are female.

Youthreach Accreditation Rates (Jan. 2014 to December 2014)

	Male	Female	Total
No. of learners achieving Certification	28	16	44

No. of certified awards in 2014

	Male	Female	Total
Junior Cert.	6	2	8
Leaving Cert.	4	5	9
Leaving Cert. App.	7	4	11
FETAC Level 3: 1-2 components	23	10	33
FETAC Level 4 :1 component	9	8	17
Total	49	39	78

The excellent accreditation results continue to be outstanding achievements for all learners and staff involved in the centre. Of particular note this year were the excellent results achieved at senior cycle with four learners receiving distinctions in the Leaving Certificate Applied and a total of 15 A's and 25 B's being achieved by learners within the Leaving Certificate Established class.

2014 Curriculum /Provision

ACADEMIC CURRRICULUM			
Junior Certificate	Leaving Certificate	Leaving Certificate Applied	FETAC Courses Levels 2 - 4
English	English	Enterprise	Numeracy/Maths
Maths	Maths	Hotel/Catering	Communications
History	History	Social Education	Computers/ICT
Woodwork	Geography	Vocational Preparation/ Guidance	Woodturning
Metalwork	Engineering	Leisure/ Recreation	Health Related Fitness
Art	Construction Studies	Home Economics	Engineering and Workshop practises
Home Economics	Art	Irish	Guidance
CSPE - Civic, Social & Political Education	Home Economics	English Communications	Internet Applications
	Biology	Math's	Food & Nutrition
		ICT	Interpersonal skills
		Engineering	Preparation for work
		Graphics	Self Employment
		Art	Nutrition and Healthy options

Learner Progression from Youthreach

21 learners completed the Youthreach programme last year at senior level. 10 Completed Leaving Cert, while 11 completed LCA. Out of the Leaving Cert learners, 2 progressed to 3rd level, being accepted onto the Mechanical Engineering course and Hotel Front Office Skills in LIT respectively. One learner has deferred the commencement of his Mechanical Engineering studies, obtaining employment in retail for one year. 2 others secured courses in Further Education, while 2 obtained employment in the retail area. 1 girl had a baby, while 2 others are accessing Social Welfare. From the LCA class, 3 are in Further Education, 1 is doing an apprenticeship in painting, 2 are in employment and 4 are accessing Social Welfare. However, 2 of these are due to begin courses with SOLAS in January 2015.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

There were numerous positives involving new projects, programme developments and partnerships that occurred within YOC during 2014. The following are the key highlights and developments that took place this year.

The Counselling Service

Staff support and supervision has been highlighted on a broader scale throughout Youthreach in Limerick City and County this year. Nicole (Centre counsellor) has completed a one year Post Graduate Diploma in Supervision and Reflective Practice, and has piloted a Supervision Initiative in two of the Youthreach Centres. Following from the Supervision Initiative a Staff Support Policy has been drafted by Nicole and the Regional Youthreach Manager (Martin Cournane).

Of significant importance is that a funding application to Limerick Regeneration was successful, which secured an increase in hours for the counselling service to the Northside and LYS Youthreach centres.

Nicole continued to chair the weekly care group meetings (involving Centre Co-ordinator, Attendance Officer, SENI facilitator, SPHE Co-ordinator, Guidance Counsellor), which are essential for supporting learners and co-ordinating staff efforts. The centre counsellor has been involved in drafting an anti-bullying policy with the help of all Youthreach staff and has been central in delivering an anti-bullying campaign.

Focusing on supporting learners through difficulties and crisis, regular contact, partnership and team working took place with local homeless centre, Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Slainte, Alcohol and Substance abuse units, HSE and local primary care teams. This year, several group work activities were carried out, including Relationships and Sexual Health, Cyber Bullying, and Mind Out.

Several young learners who, for a number of reasons, were not involved in the programme for a short period of time were re-engaged. This work was about intervening and supporting learners through serious difficulties which resulted in them being unable to attend the centre i.e. behavioural issues, physical & mental health issues, substance abuse issues, family difficulties. The focus of this work is ensuring that these high risk learners gain the skills and coping strategies necessary for a successful return to the programme. Because of these interventions, many of the learners in question have successfully returned to the programme.

Links with parents and guardians is an extensive part of the Centre Counsellor's work. A workshop on "Communication with My Teen2 ran in November. It is hoped that this will give parents and guardians skills to support them and their teen. Further events are planned for 2015.

The Literacy & Numeracy programme

The aim of the Literacy and Numeracy programme in the centre is to integrate literacy and numeracy throughout the curriculum. The centre follows a literacy & numeracy plan, which sets out its goals and aims for the period 2014 – 2016. As part of the centre's Literacy and Learning Support Programme for 2014, the Literacy Co-ordinator and Learning Support teacher worked with a caseload of over 40 learners in the centre who required extra help in literacy or require learning support to complete their project work.

Literacy Assessment is a key component for effective centre and classroom planning, which ensures we are responding to learner literacy needs. Therefore WRAT 4 literacy assessments are completed for all new learners and the retesting of literacy levels for existing learners to give us a full picture of the literacy levels of all the learners in YOC. An additional online reading test (New Group Reading Test) is also being used to improve our view of learner requirements in the areas of literacy and comprehension.

A new literacy teaching initiative has been designed by the Centre co-ordinator and Learning Support Co-ordinator based on research on other successful literacy interventions. These literacy classes focus on specific literacy topics aimed at helping the learners fill in the gaps in their education in the area of literacy. Four groups (5th Year, QQI, QQ1 3 and LCA1) with a high concentration of literacy needs are being targeted for a timetabled literacy class every week. These 28 learners have been divided into 5 groups based on their reading ability, with appropriate work set to develop their literacy requirement. A total of seven teachers are involved in this initiative and their supportive approach is evidence of the whole centre approach to literacy being adopted within this centre.

For the first time, timetabled reading clubs have been set out within the timetable of two groups. QQI 2 & 3 have been timetabled for four additional reading club classes per week where they get the opportunity to hone their reading skills and practice comprehension techniques. This new approach for the centre is still in a development phase and will be further developed and refined throughout 2015.

Our literacy programme received a generous grant from NALA during the year, which allowed us to bring a group of learners who avail of our literacy and learning support service to an event to celebrate literacy. The group thoroughly enjoyed their outing in June 2014 to see No Fit.

The centre has further developed its Numeracy Plan, a draft of which was presented to staff in February of 2014. Literacy and Numeracy are inextricably linked, and both are a massive challenge to the majority of our learners - this plan will hopefully bring Numeracy to the fore over the next two years.

Extra - Curricular Developments

The centre and its staff strive to provide learners with new and exciting opportunities to participate and explore in different hobbies and pastimes, often in collaborative partnerships with local and regional agencies.

Music

This year, YOC teamed up with Music Generation Limerick City, providing music tuition for learners. By November, 10 learners had participated with a further 2 learners beginning in December 2014. Weekly tuition is given in bass and rhythm guitar, percussion and voice in the Music Generation Express Bus. Music is still provided in the centre as teacher Deirdre Curley takes regular learners for music withdrawals.

Fishing

Another key initiative, which the learners really enjoyed, was the centre fishing club, in partnership with the ESB and the Inland Fisheries Board. Timetabled weekly fishing club sessions were both in class (educational related to river ecology) or out in the field via regular fishing trips. Learners were also rewarded with fishing licenses and rods by the Inland Fisheries Board.

Physical Education and Physical Activity Programme

Throughout 2014, physical activity was widely promoted. It is now central to the standard curriculum and plays a major part in the extra-curricular activities provided. These activities are key to the promotion of healthy lifestyles for teenagers and all activities have been developed by the Physical Education teacher, along with the special education needs co-ordinator and other staff members. They include: Swimming/Aquarobics, Golf Programme, Walking/Running.

Also this year, a YOC 5-side team continued to participate in the city wide weekly league hosted by the Community Substance Misuse Team. A new initiative, supported by the Limerick City Sports Partnership, was learners' participation in a golf programme in Rathbane Golf Club. Alongside these activities, the physical education and sport programme offered specific female only exercise activities, including the introduction of swimming pool sessions for female learners.

For the fifth consecutive year, YOC participated in the Great Limerick Run. Nine learners, one past student and three staff lined out on the day to take part in the six mile run/walk around Limerick City amongst thousands of others. Weekly running sessions have been available for all learners who are interested in training for local running events, and the number of interested learners is growing. We are currently working to increase the number of female participants in walking and jogging groups leading up to these events, as to date the males seem to attend more training sessions.

In November of 2014 weekly Hip Hop and dance classes have begun in partnership with a Limerick City Wide Dance initiative supported by the Limerick City of Culture and the University of Limerick.

SPHE Programme

The SPHE programme continued to develop in quality and provision throughout 2014. Its success has been very much based on the numerous partnerships the centre has developed with external providers along with the support of in class teachers to release learners. The table below details the list of events and partnerships that were organised by the SPHE Coordinator along with the SPHE teacher and other staff members, to promote a holistic and rounded approach to learner development.

Activity	Number of participants	Partner organisation	Duration of activity
Healthy Lifestyles week Rheki –holistic treatments and positive thinking workshop.	14 girls	The Holistic Centre of Excellence (Ana Gibson Steele)	Half a day
Comedy Theatre at the Belltable – Making Lemonade	5 th years and LCA1(23)	The Belltable	2 hours
Love in relationships workshop	6 th years and LCA 2 (18)	HSE (Mary Mc Millian)	6 week workshop, once a week.
Anti-bullying week Cyberbullying talk	QQ12, 3, LCA1 and 5 th years	Community Garda John Cotter and Niamh Briggs	40 minutes session.

Activity	Number of participants	Partner organisation	Duration of activity
Drama	LCA1, 5 TH years and JC	Fiona Quinn	6 hours in total
Slogan writing competition	Whole centre	All staff	40 mins
Marshmallow challenge	Whole centre team activity	All learners and staff	2/3 x40 mins
Production of a short movie "You've got a friend"	5 th years	Deirdre	2/3 x 40 mins
Drug Education Workshop	5 th years and QQI 3	Limerick City Community Development Project	Once a week for 4 weeks
Spring Centre Walk	Whole centre	All staff and learners	Half a day
Film making workshop	2 learners from Junior cert	Xhale (Irish Cancer Society)	Full day in Cork
Filming and production of a film for the competition.	All Junior certs	Margaret and Deirdre	3x 40 min
Virtual Baby and parenting workshop	11 girls	Margaret, Deirdre and Nicole	Half a day
Talk on prevention of skin cancer	Whole centre	Marie Keating Foundation	3 x 40 mins sessions
Yoga and relaxation	8 girls and 1 boy	In house staff	Once a week for 6 we
Autumn Centre Walk	Whole centre	All staff and learners	Half a day
Talk about nutrition and healthy eating.	5 th years and LCA1	HSE Dietician Christine Gurnett and 2 student dieticians	2 x 40 min
Cooking up a Storm	All male learners were involved	Male staff	5 x 40 min
Zumba	9 girls	Gillian Furlong	1x 40 min
Pottery workshop	16 learners (mixed group)	Limerick Craft Hub	2 hours
Holistic treatments -Rheki	12 girls	The Holistic Centre of Excellence	Half a day
Talk	LCA 1	GROW (Mary Purcell)	1 hour
Music Workshop	Whole centre	Music Generation	Half a day
Paint it Pink (fundraiser)	Whole centre	The Irish Cancer Society	Throughout the day
Comhairle na Nog AGM	2 learners	Margaret	Half a day
The Lifesavers Project	15 learners	National Campaign on Road Safety	2 hours
Rheki –Holistic treatments	Senior boys - 12	Anna Steele Centre of Excellence	Half a day
Anti-racism Drama	Senior learners -36 involved in drama	Friars Gate Theatre	A day long activity
Special awareness raising workshops (bullying, mental health and eating disorders)	6 girls	In the factory in Galvone.	Half a day

Premises

A number of very beneficial improvements have been made to the premises in YOC in 2014. A complete refurbishment of the buildings heating system was completed in January of 2014, making it more energy efficient. A major relocation of offices and classrooms occurred during the summer of 2014, which resulted in Youthreach having much better office space and being located closer to each other. New classroom spaces were also created with much improved spaces for counselling, learning support, an improved computer room, an additional computer room and additional storage space. The beginning of a refurbishment of the art room has begun with the room being painted; further improvements are planned for the coming year.

After a lengthy process, funding for the installation of a ventilation system for the woodwork room was sanctioned from the Department of Education. Finances have also been secured for a new fire alarm and security system for the MTI building.

Special Education Needs Initiative

The Special Educational Needs Initiative is now in its ninth year in the centre. Mentoring is an integral part of the success of the centre, with staff continuing to go 'the extra mile' in ensuring that learners are content in the centre and aiming to fulfil their potential.

Our case supervision for staff is now at its most successful, with the small group approach leaving staff much more relaxed and comfortable. We have managed to engage the majority of the young people we deal with, and ensure progress towards their potential.

The centres usage of the SEN funding along with the work of centre staff was complimented and illustrated as an example of best practise by Mary Gordon (National Educational Psychological Services Senior Psychologist). Centre co ordinator Shane Cullinane provided an overview of early school leaving and Youthreach as a response, emphasising the approach of YOC at the NEPS 2014 annual conference.

Summer Programme

The 2014 summer programme incorporated many different disciplines. As last year was so successful, it was decided to again divide the learners into interest –based groups, as opposed to the traditional route of class groups. This focused on the learners experiencing and developing both new and existing interests.

There were a variety of activities available for learners to choose from, including historical trips, outdoor activities, yoga classes, music workshops, BBQ's, mental health workshops, literacy workshops and various physical activity programmes. Key to the success of this year's summer programme was the number of events that were organised with local organisations and providers. A small selection of learners (7) from the senior cycle completed and received certification for SAFEPASS.

Centre Environment

A welcoming and supportive environment is essential to ensuring early school leavers successfully return to education. A number of actions were taken throughout 2014 to ensure that learners felt welcome within the centre. Two whole centre physical activities were organised in February and September of 2014 to allow staff and learners the opportunity to just "go for a walk". These outings in Cratloe were enjoyed by both staff and learners and allowed everyone the opportunity to talk outside of the centre and its classrooms. Three afternoon teas, catered for by Kathy and her Home Economics classes, were held in the canteen, again these events allowed learners to just sit and chat with each other and with staff.

The positive feeling parents have towards the centre was clearly evident at our annual graduation ceremony in May, where a graduation ceremony was organised for the leaving and leaving cert applied classes. Appreciation for the work being done by staff was also mentioned by numerous parents at our annual parent teacher meeting. For the first time the centre is also running parenting workshops (by Nicole Sheehy centre counsellor) on various topics related to teenage development. This support has been warmly received by parents.

In September of 2014 a very enjoyable staff development day took place in Adare village. The day gave staff the opportunity to spend time with each other, partake in activities and provide time build relationships.

ICT & Supports System

2014 has seen a number of improvements in relation to our ICT services, administration procedures and Management Information Systems. Ten new computers were added to the programme along with 10 recently upgraded computers. Several staff now have new computers, a new learner computer area has been developed and most classrooms have upgraded computers. It is planned that ten more new computers will be added to the programme in January of 2015. Student Report Cards are now being completed electronically and this new system is being utilised by all staff. Due to the development of LCETB, all staff are took part in a domain change during December of 2014, with new email addresses and domain uses being organised.

Curriculum Development

September 2014 saw the introduction of science into the curriculum for the first time, Leaving Certificate Biology is now being taught to 5th year learners with St. Clements secondary school facilitating us to use their biology lab. The president's award was added to the timetable of the QQI 3 group through the bronze award. Significant revision has taken place with the QQI 2 & QQI 3 programmes. In a response to learner and teaching requirements, for the first time two QQI 3 groups will operate in the centre. The second QQI 3 group will replace the QQI 2 group which was previously in place. In November of 2014 all staff completed a Literacy Audit, the details from which will support the development of teaching strategies amongst staff and also identify various methodology requirements.

Euricon SMART PROJECT

In June of 2014, the centre was successful in its application to be a partner on an EU funded second chance school project. "SMART" is a two-year Erasmus + Programme, running from September 2014 to July 2016. The project involves 7 partners from Denmark, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium, Italy and Netherland, representing University, Second chance schools and civil society organisations. The partners will work hand in hand on the creation of a quality measurement system for the second chance education.

The SMART project aims to develop a quality framework, for use by providers of second chance education that will enable providers to evidence their success factors, enhancing the quality and relevance of learning offers in education, training & youth work.

Organisational updates

The development of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board continued throughout 2014 with two welcome developments. The first being the appointment of a Regional Co ordinator of Youthreach within the Limerick and Clare area, which will provide numerous opportunities for further collaboration between Youthreach centres within the region. The second welcome development was the placement of

Youthreach alongside the secondary school sector within the LCETB organisation. As both Youthreach and schools work with the same age group, both dealing with similar issues, this decision is welcome and will hopefully benefit Youthreach in terms of being able to improve its organisational and structural capacity through improved collaboration and partnerships with the schools sector.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

A) Barriers to participation and learning

Literacy levels

A key challenge continues to be the low literacy levels of learners with almost all learners showing a significant gap between their chronological and reading age (Using WRAT 4 (Wide Ranging Achievement Test) a total of 84% of our learners scored below their expected reading, spelling and comprehension ages. Of this 84%, a further 36% have a reading age below ten years (an increase of 4% on last year). This low literacy level combined with associated gaps in knowledge and poor attendance means that ensuring accreditation for learners can be difficult for staff. Numerous new initiatives have been developed in 2014 to enhance our approach to literacy but it continues to be our main teaching challenge.

Numeracy Levels

Another aspect of this is the difficulty learners have in tackling the maths curriculum. There is evidence of cognitive delay with some learners, and with others a virtual block with many believing they 'just cannot do Maths' (Numeracy assessments would show that 58% of the cohort are Below Average for a test which is for 11 year olds (considering our learners are 15 years and older). Poor numeracy levels, spatial awareness and difficulties with maths literacy are affecting the progression of student both within maths and practical based subjects.

Personal and Social Development

The personal and social development of learners continues to be key challenge for learners and for the centre as a whole, affecting attendance and participation for many learners. The level of problems facing learners is evidenced when we consider that between the period Sept 2012 to August 2013, 71 young people attended the counselling service (of this total 28 were girls and 42 were boys). The following is a list of the various presenting issues that occur for learners; learner conflict/relationship issues, personal relationship difficulties, homelessness, drug/alcohol or addiction issues, behaviour/anger issues, self-esteem issues, pregnancy/parenthood related issues serious personal illness, suicide ideation/self-harm, anxiety/depression, eating disorders, identity and abuse related issues.

Learner Physical and Mental Health

Poor physical health levels amongst the learner groups continue to be a major barrier to participation. With the centre average attendance rate at 75% for 2014, quite a number of learners continue to miss a large number of days. This then has a knock on effect for their own learning and places considerable pressure on teaching staff. Poor physical health is one of the predominant aspects of the early school leaver profile and whilst the centre implements numerous initiatives regarding health promotion, poor attendance due to poor physical health still remains one of the biggest barriers to learning, participation and progression.

Also, although 17 learners (out of 83) came to the centre with a Psychological assessment, many of these reports were dated. This does not include a further seven learners who had diagnoses for Bi-polar (3), OCD (3) and Tourette's syndrome (1). There are a significant number of learners (12) being treated by their GP or local mental health service diagnosed with depression or anxiety issues. The challenge for the centre is that we do not receive any direct support from the National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS) in terms of assessment or support of learners. Considering the profile of our cohort this is a serious challenge, in many cases we are working with learners in a knowledge void without the appropriate guidance.

Pre Junior Certificate learners

A noticeable trend over the past few years is the reduction in numbers of pre junior certificate early school leavers (due to improved effectiveness of school interventions). The majority of our pre-junior certificate and certificate learners present behavioural, emotional and in most cases specific learning difficulties, which require many specialist interventions (i.e. literacy, numeracy, reasonable accommodation for examinations, behavioural support, and flexible timetables). Many of these learners struggle even in small classes with seven to eight learners and require intensive one to one support. In terms of resources, staff training, planning and support for these learners and in particular helping these learners are an increasing challenge for centre staff.

B) Restructuring and Staffing issues

New Junior Cycle Framework

The adoption of the new junior Cycle framework has been difficult in 2014 and will be a serious challenge in 2015. Whilst the centre has lost days due to strike action and staff have been unable to attend Junior Cert training due to union directives, a bigger challenge still remains for the provision of the Junior Cert cycle. Unless leadership and clarity comes from the Department of Education on the provision of the own Junior Cert cycle in out of school settings it is unlikely that such centres will be able to provide the new syllabus. This will mean that this centre would have to significantly restructure its course provision for those learners who are still leaving school without a Junior Certificate.

LCETB Support Structure

The restructuring of the management support structure, as a result of the development of LCETB, has been a challenge for this centre throughout 2014. Previously the Limerick City Adult Education Service provided direct support to the programme in the following areas; IT, Teaching, learning and Assessment, Buildings Management, Research and Evaluation, Administration support, purchasing and stock control. With the removal of these supports a significant amount of extra work occurs for the co-ordinator and resource team. Whilst new systems are in place within the overall LCETB structure, these have not accounted fully for the removal of supports within what was previously the Adult Education Service. A key challenge therefore will be to ensure that centres are supported in dealing with the additional workload. It is also paramount that management and administration systems do not become overly bureaucratic and time consuming. That any new procedures accounts for the fact that that staff need to spend as much time as possible dealing with learners and supporting them in their progression. Addressing the significant increase in the administration workload whilst trying to maintain or improve learner supports and provision will be a challenge for centre management and staff going forward.

Guidance Counselling

A key challenge this year has been the delay in replacing the guidance counsellor. Whilst work has been ongoing to find a suitable replacement, the lack of a guidance counsellor has meant that this provision has been sorely missed. The result has been that key work in relation to progression, work experience, guidance counselling and mentoring has been taken on by the co-ordinator and resource staff. This gap has proved quite a challenge this year.

Staff morale, contracts and in particular the classification of the Resource person

Throughout 2014, an extremely contentious and stressful issue for staff has been the attempted classification of resource persons as non-teaching staff by the Department of Education and Skills. The non-recognition of the teaching component of the resource role has resulted in resource staff in YOC feeling undervalued, prejudiced and discriminated against. The result was that in 2014 all resource staff in YOC applied for transfers to other educational settings where they felt that they would be properly recognised as teachers. This has clearly affected the Centre, and should staff want to be redeployed or obtain other employment, it could result in the centre losing very experienced staff, with serious consequences for its learners. Correct resolution of this matter should take place as it would not only improve staff morale but it would have very positive knock on effects on how Youthreach is viewed and would help in the removal of the second class tag from second chance education.

Conclusion

2014 was a very positive year for YOC. Whilst numerous challenges existed and learners must overcome multiple barriers to participation, the centre continued with its approach of always aiming to bring 'best practise' to address issues and challenges. Our key achievements for 2014 have been based on hard work, expertise and most important the willingness of centre staff to go the extra mile. The work within the centre continues to result in both hard and soft outcomes for learners with academic and personal outcomes being achieved by almost all learners, though examination of the challenges ahead for 2015 highlights the possible precariousness of the work that has been done to date. Key factors related to the administration and level of red tape becoming common place in educational practise has been highlighted, along with the increased needs of pre junior certificate learners. All of these challenges exist against a backdrop of organisational change along with the existence of clear staffing issues that are impinging on staff morale and satisfaction. Therefore it is hoped that these key issues which relate to the medium and long term health of the programme will be addressed in 2015.

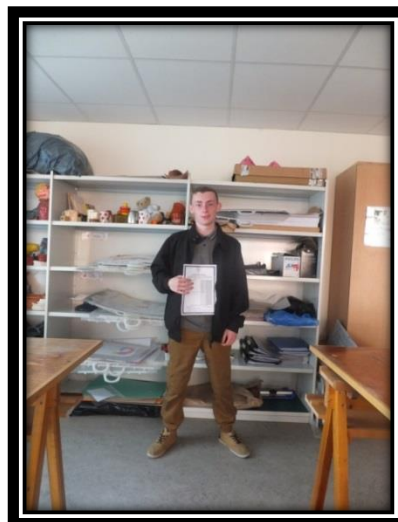
LIMERICK CITY NORTHSIDE CENTRE - ANNUAL REPORT 2014
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SERVICE PROFILE

Northside Youthreach is a 25 place centre based at Watch House Cross in Moyross in Limerick City. The centre offers early school leavers between the age of 15 and 20 the opportunity to complete QQI Level 3 Full Certificate in General Learning, the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied. Learners are primarily from the Northside of Limerick City. As part of our programmes we also offer a wide ranging Work Experience programme, counselling supports and outdoor activities.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

The following photos highlight some of the key activities and achievements from 2014.



Students with their Junior Cert Results



QQI Awards Day February, 2014.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

The key challenge is to continue to offer a wide ranging high quality programme that meets the needs of – according to statistics, the most disadvantaged early school leavers in the country. This programme must attempt to meet the academic, social and personal needs of all learners. This is a continuous challenge on tight resources and being based in a community that has huge social challenges.

Progression in 2014

- 10 Northside Youtreach learners progressed on to the senior cycle as follows:
 - 6 of these learners progressed to the Leaving Certificate Applied programme within Northside Youtreach.
 - 2 learners progressed to Youtreach O' Connell Avenue to take places on the Leaving Cert Applied programme there.
 - 1 learner progressed to take a place in 5th year in Youtreach O' Connell Avenue.
 - 1 learner progressed to take a place on a bakery course with Limerick Youth Service.

Attendance in 2014

The average attendance for Northside Youthreach learners for the 2014 calendar year was 70%.

Accreditation in 2014

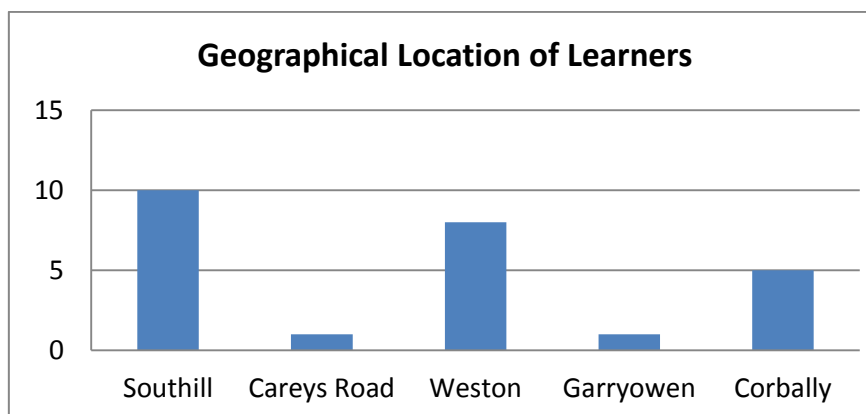
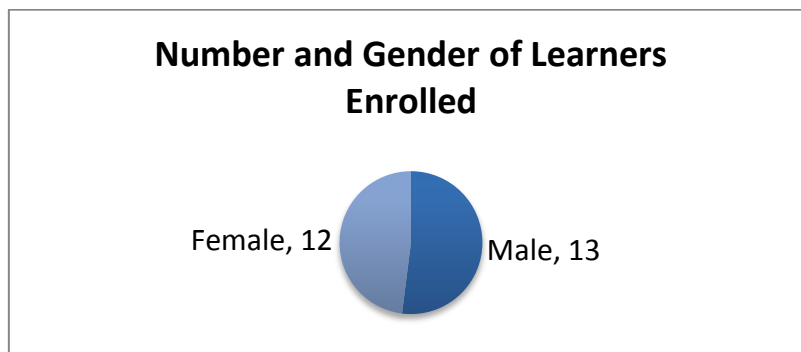
Learners received accreditation in 2014 as follows:

- Junior Certificate – 5 learners completed 7 subjects each
- QQI Level 3 – 33 minor awards completed

LIMERICK GLENTWORTH STREET CENTRE, 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE

Youthreach Education Centre (YEC) Glentworth Street is a 25 place centre. As of December 31st 2014 there were 25 learners enrolled in the centre. The following graphs illustrate the profile of learners currently enrolled on the programme.



The centre offers eight Junior Certificate subjects to two groups of learners at Higher, Ordinary and Foundation levels. These are as follows:

- English
- Maths
- History
- CSPE
- Technical Graphics
- Technology
- Art
- Music

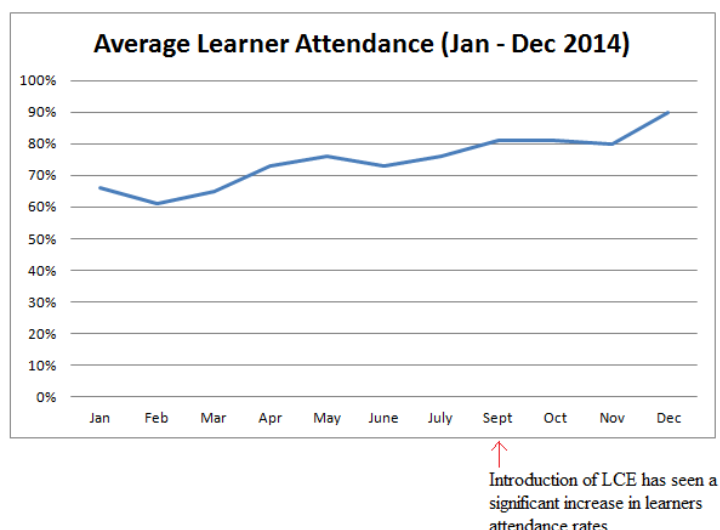
The centre is delighted with the introduction of a two year Leaving Certificate Pilot Programme in the following subjects:

- English
- Maths
- History
- Business Studies
- Home Economics
- Art
- Construction Studies

In addition to the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Established (LCE) examinations, the centre also offers QQI Certification in Computer Literacy Levels 2 & 3, QQI Listening & Speaking Level 2, QQI Non-Verbal Communication Level 2, QQI Level 4 Painting, QQI Level 3 Electronics, QQI Reading Level 2 and QQI Writing Level 2, Career Guidance and SPHE.

The centre has a Coordinator, 3 full time Resource persons, one half time Resource person shared with North side Youthreach. The centre avails of a Career Guidance Counsellor one day a week who works in North side Youthreach on the other four days. The centre also has a counselling psychotherapist one day per week.

The average attendance rate this year has improved to between 80%-90%. This is directly linked to the introduction of the LCE Programme mentioned above. This is outlined in the graph below.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

The introduction of the Leaving Cert Established (LCE) Programme to the curriculum has been a very positive addition. This programme has been established on a two year pilot basis. Twelve learners are studying 7 LCE subjects (outlined above). This group are due to sit their Leaving Certificate in June 2016. The addition of this programme has been challenging, yet highly motivating for both staff and learners. The introduction of this programme offers learners a clear educational progression route.

The approval for the YEC Glentworth St. to move to the former St Enda's School building during the Summer 2015 has been a fantastic development, which was received extremely positively by learners, parents and the staff. The building will offer the learners and staff, the facilities and resources that they need to offer the best educational opportunities.

2014 saw the continued sharing of staff expertise and best practice across the 3 city wide centres. The Career Guidance teacher developed a Career Guidance Policy for the centre, and the learners are due to go

on Work Experience in January 2015, as a result of the links established with a number of employers in the city. The Guidance teacher has also further enhanced our links with Limerick College of Further Education (LCFE) and has opened up further educational opportunities for 2 Youthreach Learners by accessing places on the Anatomy and Physiology QQI Level 5 Evening Programme.



LCFE & Central College Limerick College Open Days

Two Resource staff, Caroline Carr and Angela Sheehy in Glentworth St. graduated from Mary Immaculate College with a Masters in Education and a Masters in SEN. Noel Kearney from North side Youthreach graduated from UL with and MA in Career Guidance.

Ten learners sat Junior Certificate and all achieved excellent results, 9 have progressed to LCE in the YEC Glentworth St and LCA programme in Limerick Youth Service.



Junior Certificate Results Celebratory Breakfast

The Centre has continued to enhance its links with Limerick School of Music and 2 learners are studying Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Music there this academic year. Furthermore, the centre continues to visit local attractions such as The Hunt Museum, The Granary, North side Library, Loch Gur and the centre fully embraced and got involved in the City of Culture.



Three learners worked towards their Gaisce Bronze medals and this culminated in a 23k hike and an overnight in a log cabin in the Ballyhoura Mountains which was enjoyed by the 3 learners and Youthreach staff.



Gaisce Excursion - Bronze Medal



Summer Programme - Sports Day & Japanese gardens



The Leaving Certificate Business Studies class ran an enterprise mini company for the Limerick Youth Service Christmas Fair 2014. The aim of this activity was to encourage students to brainstorm business ideas. As it was on the run up to Christmas learner's decided that the product would be Christmas themed hot chocolate cones which were sold at the annual Christmas Fair in Limerick Youth Service. The management structure of the company was decided by the learners themselves by a democratic vote. Learners found out about working as part of a team and the need to work hard to achieve success. They gained an understanding of different business terms such as delegation, profit margin, raw materials and the importance of marketing strategies. The learners worked to their teams strengths and chose tasks that suited each individual. Overall the mini company was a great success and a fantastic learning experience, which was enjoyed by all. Well done to all involved!



Leaving Certificate Enterprise Task

KEY 2014 CHALLENGES

A key challenge addressed by the centre was the need for new premises that provided the necessary classroom space and other resources. Travelling to North side Youthreach each week to deliver Technology and Construction Studies had been very challenging and time consuming but this has now been addressed by the forthcoming move to St Enda's facilities. It will however be a difficult move as there has been a fantastic relationship with Youthreach in Limerick Youth Service over the past number of years and it will be hard to say goodbye to everyone there.

Another key challenge that has been addressed by the centre was developing a programme that focused on the Literacy and Numeracy needs of all the learners attending the centre. 2014 saw the introduction of a key skills programme led up by the SEN Coordinator. The focus with this group is addressing literacy and numeracy needs and establishing an innovative social skills programme delivered by the Centre Psychotherapist.

COISCEIM EDUCATION CENTRE - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE IN 2014

Coiscéim emerged from a perceived gap in provision (cf. Limerick Regeneration Agencies Vision Document, Jan. 2008 & Master Plan, Oct. 2008) for those struggling in mainstream education in the Junior Cycle years (12-15 age group). Coisceim began as a cooperation with other institutions partnership arrangement between City of Limerick VEC (now LCETB), Limerick Regeneration Agencies (LRA), Limerick Enterprise Development Board (LEDP), National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS), School Trustees, University of Limerick's Access Campus and a number of Secondary Schools in Limerick City and environs. The Centre is modeled on St. John's Education Centre, Glasnevin, Dublin. The Coiscéim Centre is located at the LEDP, Roxboro, Limerick.

Coiscéim is a temporary education provision which works closely with mainstream secondary schools in Limerick city and environs. It aims to prevent early school leaving in the Junior Cycle years. The Centre provides a supportive environment and high intensity services to a small number of students (4-6), considered at risk of discontinuing their education in mainstream schools. The programme is 8 weeks in duration, therefore there are no certified programmes. At the Centre the programme generally follows the Junior Certificate Syllabi in subject areas such as English (Literacy Development Skills), Maths, History, Geography, ICT, CSPE, SPHE, RE, Art, PE. Counselling and group work are also part of the programme, along with Woodwork, Bakery and Cooking.



TRENDS & KEY STATISTICS

Referring Secondary Schools:

- St. Enda's, St. Nessian's, Presentation Secondary, Salesians Secondary Fernbank, CBS Sexton Street, St. Munchin's College, St. Clements, Scoil Carmel, Ard Scoil Mhuire, Crescent College Comprehensive & Colaiste Chiaráin Croom.

Student participation rates summary:

- 43 students took part in the Coiscéim programme in the period Oct. 2011 – June 2014.
- 38 completed the programme and 7 did not = 88.37% completion rate.
- Gender ratio: 25 male (58.1%) / 18 female (41.9%).
- There have been varying degrees of success recorded:
 - Most students completed the Coisceim programme and found it to be a positive experience (cf. *Internal Centre Evaluations* [ICE] 2012, 2013 & 2014).
 - Most re-integrated successfully back in to their respective secondary school.
 - A number have completed or are about to complete the Junior Cycle examination.
 - A number of resources and care plans were put in place for students on their return to school (cf. *ICE* 2014). However some student's needs were such that they required levels of support beyond what the schools could provide.
 - Others returned to school, but have since enrolled in alternative / 2nd Chance Education.
 - Of those who completed the programme and remain in school, some continue to experience coping difficulties in mainstream education.

Early school leaving is a complex problem involving a range of factors and variables that result in a young person either dropping out of school or being forced out of the education system (Boldt, 1994). The consequences of educational failure and early school have become more serious over time; as those without qualifications are likely to be limited to unskilled manual occupations or unemployment. This can lead to personal and cultural losses, social exclusion and a perpetuation of the cycle of disadvantage (Boldt & Devine, 1998; Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills, 2010; Nolan and Callan, 1994). The Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills (2010: 23) highlights the need for preventative interventions to help combat the problem of early school leaving. Accordingly, preventative programmes like Coiscéim can make a difference, hence the justification for investment in the same.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

In July 2013 a year plan was devised outlining the Centre's activities for the calendar year: 26th August 2013 – 11th July 2014), and identified 2 cohorts for 2014.

– Cohort One

Week 1 – 7: Mon. 9th Dec. 2013 – Fri 7th Feb. 2014

Week 8 (Re-integration): Mon. 7th Feb. – Fri 14th Feb. 2014

Week 9 (Meet former students): Mon. 24th Feb. – Fri. 28th Feb. 2014

– Cohort Two

Week 1 – 7: Mon. 10th March – Fri 16th May. 2014

Week 8 (Re-integration): Tue. 6th May – Fri 9th May. 2014

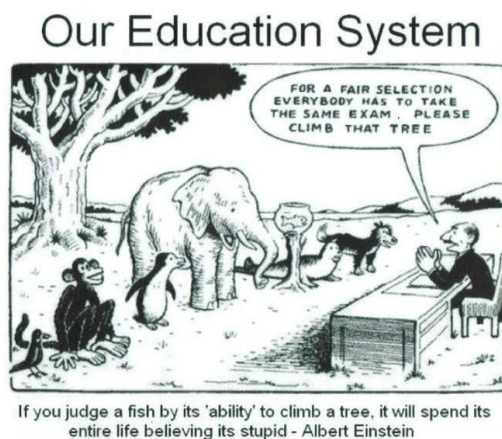
Week 9 (Meet former students): Mon. 12th May – Fri. 16th May 2014

- Internal Centre Evaluation (ICE): 2nd & 3rd June 2014.
- Writing up of the Internal Centre Evaluation [ICE] report: June 5th - June 20th 2014.
- Preparation in advance of the new academic year and attending to the actions outlined in ICE 2014: 23rd June – 11th July 2014.
- Working closely with welfare and educational support services so as to realise better educational outcomes for students, while facilitating their on-going participation and engagement in education.

- Over the year LCETB provided staff supervision. This helped to develop common approaches to practice while offering support to staff.

Building on the work of the previous two years, 2013/2014 saw a number of key achievements, notably:

- High student attendance and participation rates.
- The up-skilling of staff.
- Fostering good relations with schools, parents, strategic partners and support agencies.
- Enhancing the profile of the programme.
- An extended programme and a more enriched and holistic curriculum.
- The Centre was particularly pleased with the level of engagement and interaction had with parents over the year.



KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

The success of Coiscéim this year was due in no small way to the commitment of the staff involved. However, due to HR & IR restructuring within LCETB a number of the staff were let go. This has had the effect of undermining the continuity and momentum gained over the last three years. It has also resulted in a loss of expertise and common approach to practice. The key challenge which now presents for the Coiscéim Centre for the coming academic year is that of re-building; so that it can continue to be effective in meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable students in the education system.

EAST CLARE YOUTHREACH – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission Statement

East Clare Youthreach aims to provide a safe and supportive environment which empowers the individual to grow both personally and academically.

The programme gives the participant the opportunity to experience a range of subjects, both academic and practical as well as build on team skills and involvement on many aspects of the programme.

Subjects for 2014 were as follows for the year 1 group:

Maths, Communications, Swimming classes Career information, Art and Design, Horticulture, Literacy and book club, politics, Yoga, I.T. Personal and Interpersonal Skills, Health Related Fitness, Music and ongoing individual learning plans, mentoring and initial assessment (WRAT

Year 2 QQI Level 4 (2 year programme)

In July 2014 6 participants (5 males, 1 female) completed the Level 4 programme and their 2 year Youthreach Programme. 3 achieved a full certificate and the remainder achieved a range of modules.

Progression

- The female learner has taken up a level 5 pre nursing course in Galway.
- 1 male has taken up a music production level 5 course in Galway.
- 1 male has taken up a 1 year level 5 programme to become a personal fitness trainer.
- 1 male is attending a level 5 hospitality skills course in Scariff
- 1 male has moved to Roscrea Youth Centre to continue his training
- 1 male is currently not pursuing further education but has secured part-time work locally.
- 7 learners completed year one of the Level 4 programme and entered year 2 (5 male and 2 female)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

One of the key aspects of the programme is work experience. There is an expectation that in year 2 learners will be looking for relevant placements, which will give them an insight into the type of work or college course they may pursue when they leave the programme. We have been working with a number of employers in the area to create supportive and interesting work experience placements, and this has been very successful with a number of employers offering additional Summer and seasonal work.

As part of our weekly timetable, a group of learners went to the local Co-op café and garden and participated in a range of voluntary activities including horticulture, planting and weeding, helping out in the Café and sorting stock in the second hand shop. Learners met with the public and gained skills from the staff and other volunteers.

We got involved with the tidy towns committee in Tuamgraney and helped clear litter locally and plant up baskets with flowers. The exterior of our building was planted up and painted for the competition.

As part of the programme a number of events and activities took place throughout the year. These included:

- Ice skating in Limerick
- Surfing in Lahinch
- Swimming classes
- Weekly classes in Scarriff Gym and Leisure Centre
- Yoga and Relaxation Classes
- Walking tours
- Road Safety Course in conjunction with the road safety authority
- Fishing as part of a Men's Group
- Outdoor survival course
- Horse riding
- Stand up educational comedy show
- Trip to Ailwee caves
- Metalwork classes in Mountshannon
- Multicultural events in Ennis
- County Soccer competitions
- Community garden and coffee shop involvement locally.
- Christmas Dinner in the centre!



Max Lucas with the catch of the day!

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

East Clare has the lowest percentage of jobs on offer with only 4.2% of the countywide allocation. This has been consistent over the last number of years. It has affected the community and the morale locally. Many of our learners are very disadvantaged and really benefit from the tea, coffee and food provided at the centre daily. There is a huge problem with alcohol and drug abuse with the learners and we tackle these issues on a daily basis.

Our biggest challenge was to expand the expectation of the learners, their future, the possibilities for further study or employment and how to get there.



Learning is supposed to hurt! Otherwise you're not learning!! The weekly aerobics class!

ENNIS YOUTHREACH – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

There are twenty five places in the Ennis centre, Clonroad Business Park adjacent to the Adult & Community Education Centre. Our proximity to the main building allows us to avail of facilities such as a kitchen, canteen and computer room. We also use the Skills Unit in Gort road and have access to the hairdressing salon, woodwork room, metalwork room and classroom.

Our current learners are made up of nine males and sixteen females. Eight of our learners are sixteen years of age, nine are seventeen, seven are eighteen and we have one nineteen year old. Thirteen learners joined us in September, the other twelve have either progressed onto further education or are continuing their studies with us.

We run QQI Level 3 Certificate in Employability Skills and QQI Level 4 Certificate In General Studies. The Level 3 programme is run over one year and usually feeds into the Level 4 programme which is run over two years. In addition to the two full programmes on offer we have introduced Level 2 Literacy and Numeracy modules, as a direct response to the needs of four new learners who needed to improve their basic skills. These students join the level three programme for practical and non -certified elements and it is envisaged that they will progress to level three when they complete level 2 modules.

The Gaisce Awards have become a very important part of our overall programme. All twenty five learners are participating, those that completed their Bronze Award last year are now working towards their Silver Award and the rest are working towards their Bronze Award. This element of our programme gives our learners the opportunity to give back to their communities through the community involvement section. This interaction with local groups, agencies and voluntary bodies has proven invaluable in not only allowing the learners develop as valuable members of society but also is having a very positive affect on their commitment to the programme. The work placement element of the work experience module has benefited the most as the relationships built and links made have led to securing appropriate work placements.

In addition to the certified element and the Gaisce Awards there are other non-certified options on offer, Physical Education, Arts and Crafts and Student Exchanges to name but a few.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS 2014

- Two learners took part in a two week sailing course, spending two weeks on a tall ship in the Irish Sea.
- Introduction of breakfast club.
- Centre won the Munster Soccer Tournament and Runner-up in the National Youthreach Shield Competition.
- Learners spent an overnight in Kilfinnane Outdoor Education Centre as part of their Gaisce Awards.
- Learners took part in two day activity cycle and walk on the Greenway in Co. Mayo.
- Upgrade of centre which included new flooring, painting, signage and overhaul of the smoking shelter.
- Nine learners received the Bronze Gaisce Award.



KEY CHALLENGES 2014

- Anger management issues.
- Gender balance is uneven as the majority of new learners are female.
- Intimidation from outside elements causing problems with attendance.
- Drug and alcohol dependency and the associated issues.
- Number of referrals from probation service on the increase.
- Increase of the number of learners in care and support needed by staff.
- Impact of increase in members from ethnic minorities needing course tailoring to their specific needs.
- Loss of administration assistant due to ill health and replacement has not been put in place.



YOUTHREACH HOSPITAL – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



Youthreach Hospital is a 35 place centre based in the former Vocational School in Hospital Co. Limerick. The centre has a large catchment area with students coming from Croom, Kilfinane, Kilmallock, Banogue, Ballylanders, Galbally, Emly, Killeely, Caherconlish and other towns around the east of the county.

Mission Statement

“Hospital Youthreach commits to providing quality personal development and educational programmes delivered in an innovative and supportive environment. We respond to individual needs, enabling students to gain qualifications and skills necessary to achieve their goals.”

Staff

Staffing arrangements for Youthreach Hospital comprise Centre Coordinator, 4 Resource persons, SENI Coordinator, 9 Part time teachers, Counsellor, Advocate, Administrator, Caretaker, Cleaner and Bus Driver.



Positive student teacher relationships

PROGRAMMES PROVIDED

Youthreach Hospital is structured around Four distinct phases:

- 1) **Engagement phase:** Initial six week induction following which students are formally offered a place on the programme if appropriate.
- 2) **Foundation Phase:** which seeks to support and enable the student to overcome learning difficulties, develop self-confidence and gain a range of competencies essential for further learning. This is achieved in part through the completion of the following courses:
 - QQI Level 3 offered as required, currently not required.
 - Junior Certificate

- Other programmes-SPHE, Leisure & Recreation, Work Experience
- Junior Certificate Subjects: English, Mathematics, Materials Technology Wood, Metalwork, Home Economics, Art, C.S.P.E., History
- Work Experience is carried during the month of July. Students obtain work in a field they are interested in pursuing when they finish in Youthreach and are supervised and supported by full-time staff.

3) **Progression Phase** which provides for more specific development through a range of educational, training and work experience options:

1. Leaving Cert Applied
2. Work Experience
3. Other programmes-SPHE, Leisure & Recreation, Gaisce, Skills Development
4. Leaving Cert Applied Subjects: English & Communications, Work Experience Vocational preparation and Guidance, Mathematical Applications, Information Technology, Hotel Catering and Tourism, Graphics and Construction Studies, Childcare, Engineering, Hair and Beauty, Visual Art, Social Education, Gaeilge, Spanish, Leisure and Recreation

4) Transition Phase

Transition is generally a one year programme, aiming to offer students who have not obtained a college or job placement, a link with such organisations. This is facilitated through involvement in the following modules: Guidance, Teamwork, Personal Effectiveness, S.P.H.E., Skills Development, Work Experience, Evening Courses.

Hospital Youthreach is part of the Special Education Needs Initiative for Youthreach Pilot Project. Additional funding is available to provide support services to meet the special education needs of students. Youthreach Hospital uses the MAGIC model of Support (Mentoring, Advocacy, Guidance, Information, Counselling).

Learning Support is offered to students on a needs basis. All students complete initial assessment using WRAT4. The Integrated Learning Support Programme involves: initial assessment; Diagnostic Assessment; Individual Learning Plans and 1-1 or small group programmes

Other Activities

Leargas/Grundtvig 2 Programme, Health Promoting Youthreach Initiative, Quality Framework, Centre Development Planning, Internal Centre Evaluations, Summer Programme, Safe Pass, Skills Development

PROFILE OF LEARNERS

Hospital Youthreach is a 35 place centre. 19 Learners are male and 16 learners are female. 22 new learners enrolled in September. Learners range in age from 15 to 20 years. 14 Learners completed primary education and 21 learners completed Junior Certificate prior to entry. Most learners transfer directly from school. Presenting issues for learners include diagnosed learning difficulty, emotional and behavioural difficulties, poor experience of education, basic literacy and numeracy difficulties and other issues. Learners may be in care or exiting the care system. Learners are also courageous, resilient, and willing to work to a high standard. They have goals and ambition and a vision for the future. Our role is to assist them in realising that future.

PROGRESSION

12 Students completed Leaving Certificate Applied in August 2014. Assisted by staff of Youthreach Hospital and in particular, Advocate Mirette Hanley five students progressed to QQI Level Five programmes in LCFE. One student progressed to employment and one student transferred to the National Learning Network. Three students progressed to the Transition programme within the centre.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Youthreach Hospital engaged in a number of new initiatives and continued to work on existing programmes in 2014. Some of the main highlights are as follows:

- **Equality Training and Equality Action Plan**

Youthreach Hospital participated in Equality Training and as part of the process, an Equality Action Plan for the centre was developed. This is one of the Criteria for the Youthreach Quality Framework and QQI Quality Assurance.

- **Exams and Task Examinations**

Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Examinations took place. Two candidates sat Junior Certificate in eight subjects. 12 students completed Leaving Certificate Applied including task examinations. Students and teachers worked collaboratively and the results were of a very high standard.

- **Youthreach Conference**

The coordinator attended the annual Youthreach Conference in February. At the conference key issues for Youthreach in the broader SOLAS landscape were identified.

- **Staff Training**

Staff availed of a number of training opportunities in 2014. David Mc Phillips from the Community Addiction Service facilitated training in motivational interviewing. Staff also participated in a self-care workshop and each member of staff developed a personal self-care plan.



Students and Staff with staff of Celtic Broadband who sponsored the upgrade of our Broadband.

- **Skills Development**

The skills development programme continued throughout 2014. Some of the short programmes offered included First Aid, First Responder, Health and Safety in the workplace, Martial Arts, Barbering, Food and Beverage Service Skills. Students completed Skills Development Portfolios which proved very useful for PLC interviews.



Poetry Writing Workshop

- **Summer Programme**

In 2014 the summer programme consisted of three weeks of activities and three weeks work experience. Activities included Canoeing, Horse Riding, Road Safety, Drama, Hill Walking, Trip to Ballybunion and a trip to Dublin.



Youthreach Hospital participated in the Droichead Process for the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers. Key staff participated in training facilitated by the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT). The involvement of Youthreach in the process highlights the clear role played by Youthreach as an educational response to early school leaving. The process highlights the importance of quality teaching and learning and provides opportunities for colleagues to have professional conversations in relation to teaching and learning.

- **Graduation and Students Moving On**



The Graduation Ceremony is always a highlight of the Year. 12 students graduated from Leaving Certificate Applied and Three from the Transition programme. The Graduation was attended by National Coordinator of Youthreach, Gerry Griffin and Youthreach Regional Coordinator Martin Cournane. Parents, Staff and other professional in attendance were very proud of our Graduates.

- **Awareness Raising Days**

A number of Awareness raising Days took place throughout the year. This links in with Health Promotion and students tasks. Days include Women's Cancer, "Movember" and Shave or Dye. Awareness around Animal Welfare and Mental Health was also covered

Breast Cancer Awareness Day



- **Ice Skating and Christmas Diner**



A highlight for the students and staff every year is Ice skating followed by Christmas diner. On the 19th of December students and staff went Ice skating in Limerick City. This was followed by a three course Christmas lunch in the centre. Students and Staff did Secret Santa and Presents are exchanged after the lunch. It is a lovely way to end the year.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

Increase vulnerability in students

The student cohort of 2014 was particularly vulnerable, presenting with emotional and behavioural difficulties compounded with other factors including homelessness and at risk behaviours. Increased interagency working and use of the Special Education Needs budget helped us to meet some of the student's specific needs. It must also be pointed out that despite many challenges this group of young people have a very positive outlook on life with a very strong future vision. They are resilient and hardworking and will achieve their educational goals in Youthreach.

Recruitment

In September 2014, we had to recruit 22 new students. In a 35 place centre this is a significant challenge. The group dynamics had a significant impact on the centre and the first six week of the academic year was quite difficult. Not all young people who enrolled in the programme settled in and some left. This placed additional strain on the programme as a whole. The learners were impacted by the changing numbers in classes. The teachers faced the challenge of catching new students up on work due to rolling recruitment. The distribution of students in each class was also an issue. Generally we would have no more than five students in the Junior Cert group as this is the group that requires the most support. This year we have nine students in the Junior Cert group between 2nd year and 3rd year.

Budgets and Buildings

The costs associated with running the programme have significantly increased. This is against the background of budget allocation reductions. Significant costs incurred in lighting and heating the building, which account for one third of the non-pay budget. This makes investing in new information technology infrastructure quite challenging. Youthreach Hospital has been chosen to participate in the new pilot energy project. It is hoped that some of the energy spend will be reduced.

Transport



As a rural centre with a large catchment area, transport is a key part of what we do. If the students can't get to the centre we can't teach them. In 2014, our centre bus was off the road for a period of time. The bus service was provided by a private operator at a significant cost to the centre. The centre bus is now operational. Whilst still a large cost for the centre it is more manageable than the hire of a private company.

In conclusion 2014 was a busy year. Students performed well in state examinations and it was a successful year in terms of progression. The recruitment and retention of learners in the centre was and continues to be challenging. I would like to acknowledge the support of the staff parents, Regional Coordinators and the wider LCETB staff in the continued development of the Youthreach programme in Hospital.

KILRUSH YOUTHREACH – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE

Kilrush Youthreach caters for early school leavers between the ages of 16-20 years old. In 2014, a total of 21 young people accessed the programme, 8 male and 13 female. The Kilrush Youthreach staff consists of one Centre Co-ordinator, SENI Co-ordinator and five Teaching Staff. The programme provides certification at QQI Levels 3 and 4. The young learners presenting without a Junior Certificate or who have a low level of Literacy and Numeracy do a Foundation programme for 6 months to a year, with the possibility of achieving a full QQI Level 3 Certificate in General Education. From there, they can progress on to achieving a full QQI Level 4 Certificate in General Learning. Kilrush Youthreach Programme also offers a number of non-formal certification subject options including: Catering/Cookery to develop teamwork and healthy eating. Mental Health, Interview Preparation, Health Related Fitness Activities, Team Building for Staff/Learners and Enterprises. Kilrush Youthreach has continual initiative of the DEAR Programme (*Drop Everything and Read*) for Staff and Learners during the year.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- **Monday 15th-Friday 23rd May 2014-** FETAC Level 4 Painting Art Exhibition



- **Friday 23rd May 2014-** Finishing FETAC, Internal Verification. 56 portfolios in for Level 4 General Learning.
- **June & July 2014-** Start of Summer Programme:
 - o Cooking outdoors - lighting fires, cooking on stoves, camp fire foods. Summer BBQ on the decking.
 - o Safe food/ food safety authority - Basic Food Hygiene course completed by 5 learners.
 - o Trip to Bunratty Castle.
 - o Glass Jewelry Programme with Glass Tutor Declan Hally.
 - o Coastal Fishing for boys & Hair & Beauty for the girls.
 - o Boat trip Dolphin Watching in Kilrush Marina.
 - o Boat trip to Scatterry Island.
 - o In House Cinema.
- **16th October 2014-** Through FETAC L4 Food & Cookery module, a Coffee Morning raising money for Clare Hospice for Clare Hospice.

- **22nd October 2014-** 8 weeks of training to walk 5km getting ready for Cliff walk from Liscannor to Cliffs of Moher Centre on the 22nd October 2014.

- **27th November 2014-** Through FETAC L4 Communications module, a visit to Glor to see a Play- 'Magpies on the Pylon'

- **11th December 2014-** All Staff & Learners to donate a Christmas Hamper to Clare Haven House for Christmas.

- **11th December 2014-** Enterprise Christmas Coffee Morning to raise money for the Samaritans & to go to Limerick, ICE Skating.



- **15th December 2014-** All Staff & Learners did their annual Christmas Carol singing at Old Folks Home Regina House.



- **18th December 2014-** Christmas Dinner in the Centre for all Learners & Staff. Also Youthreach learners participated in Spanish Cooking –i.e. Tapas with Anna Marquis/ integrating with VTOS learners. Raised money for Red Cross

CERTIFICATION & PROGRESSION OF LEARNERS

- **Certification Outcomes:** 5 Learners received QQI/FETAC Level 4 Major Awards in General Learning; 1 Learner received QQI/FETAC Level 4 Minor Awards in General Learning
- **Progression of Learners:**
 - 2 Learners got into Galway Community College PLC: **QQI/FETAC Level 5 Motor Technology 5M2145**

- 1 Learner got into Limerick College for Further Education: **QQI/FETAC Level 5 Hairdressing 5M3351**
- 1 Learner got into Limerick College for Further Education: **QQI/FETAC Level 6 Beauty Therapy 6M3479**
- 1 Learner got onto (CLDC) Clare Local Development Company (Kilrush)- **QQI/FETAC Level 4 Tourism & Customer Care**

LEARNER SUPPORT-TRENDS-INNOVATIVE PROJECTS-PARTNERSHIPS IN 2014

- **23rd-24th January 2014**-Team Building overnight in Killary Adventure Centre, all staff and learners attended.



- **Tuesday 4th February 2014**- Learners visit Opening Day at Limerick Senior College & Limerick Central College.
- **10th February 2014**-SPHE Programme: Guest Speaker Calum Glavin from Saoirse Treatment Centre.
- **4th March 2014**-Learners visit Opening Day at Galway Community College and GTI.
- **7th April 2014**- SPHE Programme: Guest Speaker Samaritans.
- **28th April**-Road Safety Awareness Workshop- Learners attended the workshop at the Kilrush Marina.
- **28th April 2014**- Job Advocacy Trish Ryan - Six dates booked between September to December 2014.
- **19th May 2014**- Smoking Cessation workshop by HSE Officer Mary McMahon.
- **3rd November 2014**-SPHE Programme: Guest speaker Trish Flynn from Clare Youth Service.
- **17th November 2014**-SPHE Programme: Workshop on Mental Health Speaker to the Learners.
- **A Yearly SENI Mentoring Programme**: SENI mentoring programme continues to offer one to one support to all Learners on the programme. This is done through the development and implementation of Individual Action Plans for each learner and assessments of needs through WRAT 4 and the SENI Wheel Profiling System.

STAFF SUPPORT & TRAINING

- **3rd to 4th April 2014**- ICE with Annmarie Beattie
- **9th April 2014**- Declan Farmer IV Training for QQI.
- **6th June 2014**- Clare LCETB Staff day.
- **15th September 2014**- Ann Lynch - Training for Gender Orientation Sexuality Sexual Health (GOSSH)
- **23rd October 2014**- Gender Orientation Sexuality Sexual Health (GOSSH) outreach Worker Patrick McElligott giving a work shop to all Staff.
- **4th December 2014**- Through the SENI programme John Hartley to do Group Supervision for all Staff.

- **IAP meetings-** Monthly **Individual Action Plan (IAP)** meetings allow all staff to engage in the IAP process for all learners. The care team approach is used in formatting this discussion, this has resulted in effective and positive communication and in building a strong moral and staff team.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- **Social Media-** Facebook issues and cyber bullying in general is a fast growing concern affecting learners in the Centre. Restorative Practice approach has been needed to deal with these issues. This has been successful in rebuilding relationships and highlighting the dangers around social media.
- **Poor attendance-** a minority of learners have to be constantly challenged to reflect their poor attendance. Overall, the Kilrush Youthreach Programme is in good operation. We had 2 Learners with issues on poor attendance, due to one learner having ill health. Another learner living 10miles away and cannot get a lift into Kilrush Youthreach, was effectively terminated for non-attendance.
- **Bus Transport-** securing funding for the purchasing a Bus through funding in the near future which would open new avenues around using facilities in West Clare more effectively and also identifying new learners in West Clare having access to the Kilrush Youthreach Programme.

MILTOWN MALBAY YOUTHREACH - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE

Certified Programmes:

In 2014, FETAC Level 4 General Learning and Level 4 Enhanced Employment Skills were the main certified programmes available to students. Our second year students were working towards achieving a full certificate at Level 4 in General Learning in May 2015. Other certified programmes available to all students were: Gaisce Safe Food, Health and Safety Authority 'Choose Safety' Certificate and QQI Level3 literacy programme entitled 'Write-On'.

Uncertified Programmes:

- Guidance/Advocacy work

Patricia Ryan met with the learners twice a month on a one to one and small group basis.

- Social and Personal Development

SPHE and Life Skills are ongoing timetabled programmes, which continued throughout the year.

- Literacy Support

Small group literacy sessions took place weekly. These classes were timetabled with the Resource Tutor.

- Mentoring

All learners received weekly timetabled mentoring throughout the year as part of the SENI. During these mentoring sessions learners worked with their mentor to develop an IAP, which reflects ongoing work across all programmes.

Other areas covered as part of the overall programme include: Life Skills, Team Building and personal development through drama, team meetings and outdoor activities, Literacy and Information Communications Technology (ICT), educational trips, Active Citizenship programmes, music, Young Social Innovators project, and an 'Eatright.eu' on-line health food programme. Counselling was offered to learners when requested. All staff integrated literacy and numeracy throughout their subject areas. The centre continued to promote mental and physical well-being among staff and students and in 2014 we also adopted a new approach to exercise where random 'drop everything and walk' sessions occurred when the weather permitted.

One member of staff commenced a Specialist Cert in Health Promotion in October 2014 which will culminate in the development of a Health Promotion Strategy. The centre will then work towards the achievement gold award for Health Promotion

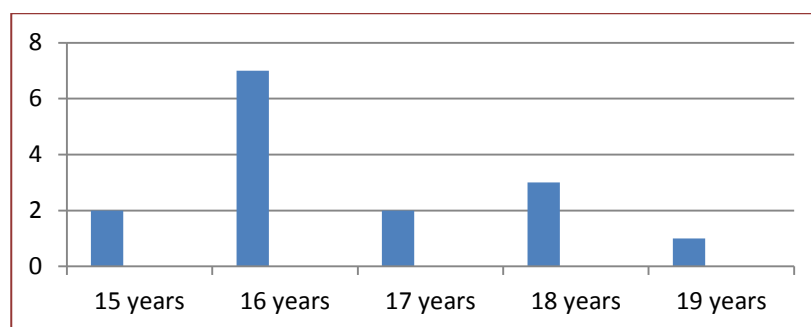
Student Profile In 2014

From January 2014 to December 2014 there were 15 students who attended the programme over that time period

Age range of students on the Programme on start date

Number of Learners:Male&Female





PROGRESSION

- 2 students completed their FETAC Level 4 Certificate in General Learning in May 2014.
- One of these students has successfully progressed into a Level 5 Portfolio Preparation programme in GTI, Galway. The other student is on a Youthreach supported Linked work placement at Londis supermarket, Miltown Malbay.
- 2 students left the programme due to continued absences and for personal reasons.
- In December 2014, 12 students were on the programme and attending full time.

STAFF TEAM 2014

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| • Programme Coordinator | • Resource Teacher | • Communications, Entrepreneurial Skills, YSI |
| • Maths and Music Teacher | • Communications Teacher | • Resource teacher |
| • Health and Safety Rep. | • Management Information Systems Coordinator | • Design , Art, PIPD and Community Involvement Teacher , Gaisce Co-ordinator |
| • Resource teacher | • SENI facilitator | • Resource Teacher |
| • FETAC Co-ordinator | • Mentor | • Work Experience ,Culinary operations, Cooking Teacher, Safe food |
| • Mentor | • SPHE coordinator | |
| • Information technology & digital media Teacher | • Induction Co-ordinator | |
| • Craft Teacher | • Policy updates | |
| • Life Skills Teacher | • Advocate & Guidance | |
| • Literacy Co-ordinator | | |

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

February: 1st centre visit from new Youthreach Regional Coordinator; Storm, Staff training (IV and Assistive Technology) Active Citizenship awareness session, Community Guard visit, Burren Trip, Midterm, Co-ordinator Conference.

March: Mary Kearse Dallas visit to meet with staff, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Health Promotion Day, Y.S.I. Speak Out, soccer in Limerick.

April: Meeting invitation from Vocational school re: recruitment, FETAC in-house exams,

May: FETAC Certification SAFE FOOD exam, Ladies Soccer, Samaritans visit, Learner evaluation, Eilish O' Neill NYCI presentation, Hattie finished.



June/July: ICE, FETAC results approvals board meeting, staff day, Mary Gordon meeting, summer programme, go-karting, Friendship week, Parent meeting, Hair and Beauty day for students, Cork overnight – play in Opera House, Gaisce 4 day adventure, student Gaisce overnight, Sports day and awards.

September: Sand bucket theatre company- teambuilding for students, Mind out Training for staff

October: FET Strategy Planning meeting, Specialist Certificate Training commenced, LIT open Day, Students participated in Comhairle NaN-og seminar, Staff training (GOSHH, Investigating Bullying Behaviour) Halloween holidays.



November: RSA visit, visit to local schools re: recruitment, Staff training (Improving Literacy through SSE)

December: Visit to music class and performance from parent, Slainte Drug and Alcohol Presentation, Awards Ceremony, Craft sale/Raffle, Staff team building, Ice skating, Christmas Dinner, Holidays.



EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES/KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

The collaboration of the 10 Youthreach centres is an opportunity for us to share ideas and best practice and feel less isolated as part of a larger cluster.

I also welcome the new educational focus in the management of our centres in the LCETB. There is a significant difference in the teaching methodologies/approaches/programmes which are appropriate for use with our young people/students and those which are appropriate for 'adult learners. I feel this new dimension will enable us to develop our programmes specifically with the sole intention of meeting the 'Youthreach' student needs.

The Youthreach programme was often described by the former National Youthreach Coordinator Dr. Dermot Stokes as an 'intervention' – supporting those at risk, providing second chance education, enabling them to overcome obstacles and past negative experiences that prevent them from being effective citizens in their own communities. Our programme has been successful in 2014 as a positive intervention for our students and did well in supporting young people through the many obstacles they faced in achieving their social, personal and educational goals.

Our greatest challenge in 2014 was to maintain this focus, as the vulnerability and personal issues young people presented with increased in intensity and need. This is in contrast with increased demand for a quantitative outcomes-based focus promoted at national level.

YOUTHREACH SHANAGOLDEN - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE IN 2014

Subjects & Staff

Subject	Status
Visual Art, Personal Effectiveness, EAL	Co-ordinator & teacher. Full time
Communications, Customer Service, Vocational Guidance, Practical Achievement.	Resource tutor.Full time
Personal Reflection, French, Social Education, Work Experience,	Resource tutor.Full time
Personal Reflection, French, Social Education, Work Experience,	Resource tutor. Part time
Woodwork, Mathematical Applications, Graphic & Construction Studies, Woodcraft	Full time teacher
ICT, Introduction to ICT, English & Communications	Full time tutor
Hairdressing Science, Hairdressing Theory & Practice,	Part time tutor
Leisure & Recreation, Hotel, Catering & Tourism, Health Related Fitness, Life skills, Sexual Health & Relationships	Part time tutor
Safety & Health at work, Vocational Education, Learning Support	Part time tutor

Visiting Support Staff

Counselling	4 hours weekly
Advocate	5hrs 35mins weekly
Sexual Health & Relationships HSE	2 hrs weekly

PROGRAMMES OFFERED

- *Leaving Certificate Applied (L.C.A)*
- *HAIRDRESSING*, QQI level 5 , Major Award
- *Outreach Further Training And Progression (O.F.T.A.P.)* uncertified

Additional Activities

- Work Experience
- EAL (Equine Assisted Learning)
- Artist in Residence
- Peer Mediation
- Restorative Justice
- Mental Health Awareness
- Healthy Eating Programme
- Indoor Soccer
- Yoga
- Walking
- Quality Framework
- Summer Programme
- Centre embellishment and Art work development
- Nature watch bird feeding programme
- First Aid



Support services

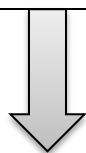
- Counsellor
- Advocate
- Student Support Team
- Open Door policy to Co-ordinator
- Circle time problem solving
- Peer Mediation
- Restorative Justice Practice
- Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)



LEARNER PROFILE

Students	Male	Age	Female	Age
30	13	10 male students - 16 to 18yrs 3 male students - 20 to 21yrs	17	3 female students 16 to 18 yrs 12 female students 19 to 21yrs

Mid-year start	Left	Completed/Certified	Counselling
2	2	June 2014 11	30



Progressed to
Emigration for work
Emigration with family

Timeline 2014 :

- Jan 2014:
LCA Task examiners in centre ; New Regional Co-ordinator visits centre ; Enable Ireland project begins
- Feb 2014:
NAYC Conference ; Storm damage to centre ; LCA Task Exams ; Cois Sionna Credit Union visit centre
Mid-term break ; Staff meeting
- March 2014:
Soccer Tournament; Review of Programme Plans; Consultation with teachers and learners Rule 8; ICE;
OFTAP Applications; Staff meeting; Subject Evaluations all student
- April 2014:
Hairdressing Exams practical & written; Safety&Health at work Exam written all FETAC level5; Personal
Reflection completed LCA1 &2; LCA 2 ten days work experience; staff meeting
- May 2014:
FETAC results entered ; internal verification completed; External Authentication concluded; Trip out
Musical in Askeaton; Trip out Karting; Visiting speaker to centre Mary Dowling Listowel Community
College workshop on progression routes; Staff Meeting; LCA credits entered; COLVEC Results approval
panel meet and approve centre results; Results submitted online
- June 2014:
LCA State Exams; Summer Programme=Animal Magic, Songcraft, Happy in Shanagolden the video,
Karting, Ballybunion ; Graduation; Interviews new students; start of Summer work experience
- July 2014:
Work Experience programme in session for the month
- August 2014:
LCA Results; Re-Induction for existing students; Induction for new students; staff meeting

- September 2014 :
One day per week work experience programme begins for all students; Trip out Visit of Giant Granny with Grand Deluxe Theatre company in Limerick City of Culture; Sexual Health & Relationships programme resumes HSE; Counselling & Advocacy services resume in centre; Trip out Careers Fair
- October 2014:
Celebrated Mental Health Awareness Day; applied for Amber Flag, staff meeting ; Co-ord training LCETB Strategic planning; Cyber bullying staff presentation & Workshop presentation of ISPC 'shield my school' document; months trial reviews
- November 2014:
LCA 2 taken to Post Office to apply for age cards; Advertising campaign designed and effected, students spoke with journalists and press photographer visited the centre, resulting in newspaper articles and photos in papers; students travelled to meet and speak with groups in Newcastlewest, Glin and Foynes and to VTOS in the centre explaining what was on offer and extending an open invitation to all, colourful brochures were professionally printed and distributed in adjoining towns/villages of all places visited; Trip out 'Life Savers Project'; Visiting technician to centre; Nationally acclaimed musician David Skinner conducted a workshop with the LCA 2's as part of their Practical Achievement Task; Oral Presentations FETAC 5 yr 1 examined; LCA 2 student met with Crime journalist Paul Williams as part of his Contemporary issues task; Students worked in 'Shoebox Christmas Appeal' packing depot, helping pack up shoeboxes and palettes for transportation to children in need from developing countries; Visiting speaker Eileen Cunningham RSA presentation on Road Safety; Drug & Alcohol awareness week presentations on Cannabis- effects,treatment,programme and Film 'Silent Key' negative effects of alcohol misuse; visiting speaker Geraldine O'Sullivan 'Heart to Hand' charity presentation on Volunteering, staff meeting; visitor to centre Regional co-ordinator; visitor to centre from Enable Ireland discuss with students planned project;
- December 2014:
Two staff attended 'Integration Through the Arts' seminar in the Lime Tree Theatre in Mary Immaculate College Limerick; Trip out LCA Hunt Museum & Limerick City Library covering three LCA modules; subject evaluations completed; Christmas party and dinner in centre; Centre water re- tested for suitability to drink;



KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- Positive trends: Students more interested in progression ; positive attitude to open discussion on Mental Health issues ;
- Innovative projects: Equine Assisted Learning programme ; Artist in residence integrated project with Enable Ireland Quinns cross ; Design of new Murals for centre courtyard ; Application for Amber Flag ; Positive Mental Health Awareness day ;

New partnerships : County Senior citizens groups ; Foróige ; Primary Healthcare team ;



KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

Assessing students' needs within the centre and discerning those we can support ; coping with new systems, processes and increase in volume in administration.

SOUTH CLARE YOUTHREACH – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

PROFILE OF PROGRAMME

South Clare Youthreach, established in Shannon in 1992, is a 2 year + Education and Training Programme for young people, aged 16 – 18+, who have left school early. It offers learners a second chance to:

- Continue their education;
- Develop skills and self confidence
- Gain Certification that allows them to progress on to further education and training and employment

As well as providing the above, learners are also supported through Mentoring, Counselling and Career Guidance. South Clare Youthreach is a 13 place Centre.

Certified and Non-Certified Courses

In the year 2014 South Clare Youthreach provided the following Certified Courses:

- **FETAC Level 3**
- **FETAC Level 4 in General Learning**
- **FETAC Level 3 Modules:** Culinary Operations
- **FETAC Level 4 Modules:**
 - Communications;
 - Mathematics
 - I.C.T.,
 - Personal & Interpersonal Skills
 - Graphic Design
 - Work Experience
 - Plant Identification, Care & Maintenance

Certified Courses by Outside Providers:

- Manual Handling
- Safe Food by EHOA

Non Certified Subjects provided:

- Health & Fitness / Sport
- Current Affairs
- S.P.H.E.
- Fundraising Raffle
- Arts & Crafts
- Career Planning
- Literacy & Numeracy
- General Knowledge
- Video Making
- Songcraft

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- 1 Learner achieved FETAC Level 4 in General Learning, while 5 others achieved Module Awards at Level 4 in some subjects.
- 6 Learners completed Year 1 of the programme and have progressed on to Year 2.
- Fundraising Raffle- All Learners engaged in Enterprise and produced a variety of Christmas Craft Goods for a Raffle and Craft Sale at Skycourt, Shannon - Christmas Wreaths, Fresh and Dried flower

Arrangements, Candles, Crocheted Table mats, Christmas tree, tree ornaments, child activities booklets, etc. The proceeds from the sale and raffle, €400 were donated to The Irish Cancer Society.

- Visit to open days at L.I.T., Limerick College of Further Education, Central College, Limerick
- Work Experience
- Sport activities - Pitch & Putt, , Paintball in Creggaunowen, sports weekly in Shannon Leisure Centre, Ice Skating, Karting, Wall Climbing
- Meals out
- 1 learner had entry for Irish Council for Civil Liberties on Human Rights
- 2 Learners attended the Enterprise Course given by Clare Co. Council
- 3 Learners attended Comhairle na nOg workshop

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

One of the key challenges for South Clare Youthreach in 2014 was the poor and inconsistent attendance of some Learners in their second and final year of the programme. 4 out of a class of 6 learners in Year 2 of the programme were terminated before completion of course because of their lack of attendance. Their attendance ranged from 40 – 52% and their ability to complete any work was seriously affected by this. We tried mentoring, parent meetings, counselling and awards for good attendance. One common factor was that these learners reached 18 years of age and seemed to qualify for unemployment assistance, which was the easy option for them. One was pregnant and one was engaged to get married. Staff found it difficult to keep remaining 2 learners motivated to continue working while others stayed at home.

PART 2 – PART-TIME FET PROGRAMMES

Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)

BTEI is a programme for adults who have left full-time education, and particularly targeted at those with less than upper second level education. All courses offer access to certification at QQI Levels 1-6 through the National Framework of Qualifications, and are offered in partnership with a number of agencies throughout the region on a flexible part-time basis. The aim is to give people an opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities.

In 2014, LCETB FET Service offered BTEI programmes in Limerick City, County and in Co.Clare.

Overall, 3063 beneficiaries participated in a BTEI programme. While 96 learners achieved a full award on that particular year, 1027 learners achieved part awards in 2014. In terms of recorded progression, 275 learners progressed on to further education and training, 5 progressed to higher education and 104 were recorded to progress to employment.

Community Education

Community Education is a programme for adults who wish to return to education, providing personal supports and tuition, both accredited and non-accredited and leading to positive personal, social and economic outcomes. It is a flexible, community-based service, run in partnership with Community Groups outside the formal education sector, which aims to enhance learning, foster empowerment and contribute to civic society.¹ The wide range of courses and programmes vary in duration, level and delivery mode, and is specially designed to meet the needs of learners who are distant from education and the labour market.

In 2014, LCETB FET Service offered Community Education programmes in Limerick City, County and in Co.Clare. Overall, 7321 beneficiaries participated in a community Education programme in 2014.

¹ EU Definition: "Community based adult learning: learning taking place in local communities, delivered by educational providers in collaboration with them" European Commission, 2011, European Adult Learning Glossary

Literacy Services/ITABE

Literacy programmes offer a confidential, free service to all adults, who have reading and writing difficulties. Programmes are tailor-made to suit learner needs and are delivered in group and one-to-one settings, by both paid tutors and volunteers. Courses are offered across four programme strands – ESOL, Family Learning, Workplace and Mainstream Literacy.

In 2014, 5622 beneficiaries participated in literacy courses offered by LCETB FET Service in Limerick City, County and in Co.Clare. While 165 learners achieved a full award on that particular year, 851 learners achieved part awards in 2014.

EAST LIMERICK PART-TIME PROGRAMMES – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE OF PART-TIME PROGRAMMES IN EAST LIMERICK IN 2014

The 2014 profile of East Limerick should in essence be divided into 2 parts to reflect the period up to June 2014 where the PT programmes were managed separately by different programme managers and from June onwards when the PT programme management were merged.

Up to June 2014, the service managed from Kilmallock included the Adult Literacy programmes (including Skills For Work) for the entire county and 3 BTEI programmes.

From June onwards all BTEI, Adult Literacy and Community Education programmes were managed from Kilmallock for East Limerick.

The staffing profile in 2014 was as follows – 1 Adult Literacy Co-ordinator, 1 Resource Worker (FT on phased return from illness) , 1 Resource Worker (PT retired in June 2014), 3 STTC redeployed staff, 2 CID Tutors, circa 12 PT tutors. From Jan to June 2014 Community Education was managed by the CEF until the end of February and by the AEO until June. Similarly BTEI was managed by a variety of personnel until June 2014. A part time community education worker was employed in May 2014, based in Kilmallock, but subsequently took up another role in October 2014.

Key learner numbers for 2014 are as follows; (Please note these figures are for all of Co. Limerick)

- Adult Literacy incl ITABE, SFW, ESOL – 1401
- BTEI -731
- Community Education -533

The overall trends were down on previous years primarily due to the budgetary situation, which resulted in on average, a 60% reduction in provision for the second half of the year.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Despite the very challenging issues faced by the service, 2014 was also very positive from a number of perspectives;

- **Structures** –a huge amount of work was undertaken to reform existing structures, to reflect the budgetary, geographic and programme realities. Consequently, there is now a streamlined management structure with clear budget management lines and planning procedures, which should greatly aid the service into the future. A great deal of thanks is due to the new AEO in this regards who has delivered a clear vision for the service and has spent a huge amount of time with the service and staff in sorting these issues.
- **Staffing** – while staffing challenges occurred and remain, 2014 saw a huge amount of work done in relation to CID's for staff and informing all staff of the situation. Consequently all eligible staff were in a position by the end of the year to be informed of their entitlements for 2015 onwards. In 2014, there was no administrative support for the PT programmes in Co. Limerick. This was somewhat rectified by the recruitment of interns in September 2014 and while not an ideal solution, this has greatly aided the delivery of programmes.

- **SFW-** Skills for Work continued to develop as a programme, and 2014 saw the expansion of the programme to new geographic and thematic areas within the county.
- **EGF** – A decision was taken in late 2013 to respond to the closure of the Andersen factory in Rathkeale by facilitating two full time programmes for ex Andersen clients. These programmes focused on Healthcare (Croom) and Business (NCW). Both courses were extended until December to allow learners gain further accreditation. While these programmes proved very challenging in terms of logistics, funding and staffing, they were hugely successful in learners achieving accreditation and employment.
- **Local partnership companies-** 2014 saw a realignment of the relationships with local partnership companies, which has resulted in a much enhanced relationship around programme planning , joint initiatives etc.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

2014 proved to be a very challenging year for a number of reasons outlined below;

- **Budgets** – As mentioned previously, the second half of 2014 saw a reduction in activity by a minimum of 60% due to legacy budgetary issues. The majority of the cuts in activity fell in the community education area and BTEI, which will prove challenging to make up into 2015 and onwards. The budgetary restraints also resulted in reduced hours for a number of staff. However, it must be noted that it did allow for structures and procedures to be put in place which, although the situation will remain challenging, will ensure that the overspending does not occur again and that proper long term planning takes place.
- **Staffing** – as outlined above, the budget issues led to staffing issues, including the non-replacement of a resource worker who retired. While administrative support has been put in place through an intern, the service – which now runs 3 PT programme structures, still remains without a paid admin person. There were also challenges relating to the redeployment of ex STTC staff – one staff member was fully redeployed after programmes had started and one was partially redeployed. The PT Community Education resource worker left the role in October 2014 which again placed additional pressures on the service.

LIMERICK CITY BTEI & UPSKILL – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

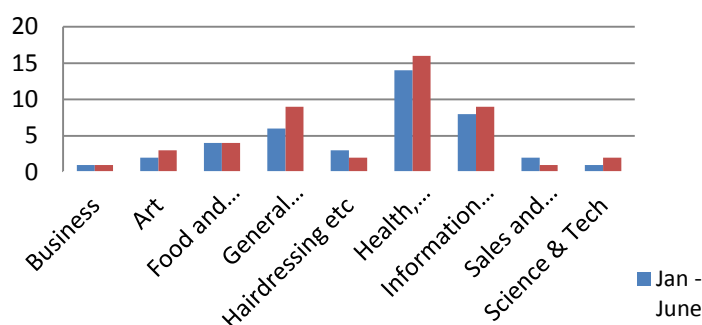
KEY PROFILE OF THE PROGRAMME

- **Total Number of Learners:**
 - 1041 BTEI (63% Female:37% Male)
 - 122 Self Financing Upskill (SkillETB & FAI)
- **Total No Courses:** 251
- **No of Staff:** 41 Part time Tutors; 3 Resource Tutors (1 shared); 1 Resource Guidance (shared); 3 AEGI Guidance (shared); 1 Admin Support (shared); 1 Programme Co-ordinator
- **Less than Leaving Cert Total** – BTEI: 529 (51%)
- **Unemployed** BTEI 364 (35%); LTU 273 (27%)
- **Achieved Certification** 301 (29%)

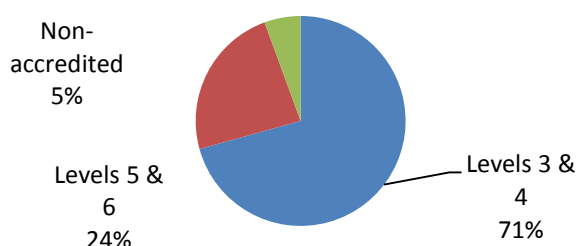
KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

A diverse range of flexible part-time options continued to be available in BTEI and Upskill in Limerick City in 2014 and these choices were set out in a very accessible and user friendly way in promotional materials produced in June 2014. Fig 1 shows the trends in course choices during the year. Demand for Healthcare, Childcare, ICTs and General Learning were strongest, with the largest numbers of people accessing courses in our main centre in O'Connell Avenue. Despite strong demand, particularly in the Health and Family area at Level 5, Fig. 3 also shows that 71% of provision during the year was retained at QQI Levels 3 and 4. Maintaining the focus of provision at these levels is very important for the general objectives and overall sustainability of BTEI.

**Fig 1: Career Cluster Trends & Course Choices
BTEI Limerick City 2014**



**Fig 3: Awards by Level BTEI
Limerick City 2014**



BTEI Limerick City is always trying to support people to complete QQI Major Awards at Levels 3, 4 and 5. Often however, despite working hard and achieving a number of Minor Awards, learners opt out of one or two modules that would enable them to achieve the overall Award. In 2014, the **numbers achieving Major Awards increased**, with a total of 18 people qualifying in General Learning (2); Employability (1); Office Skills (2); ICT (5); Healthcare (7) and Childcare (1).



BTEI/Upskill Limerick City was selected nationally as the Education Provider in Limerick City for the **TESCO Positive 2 Work Programme** (SkillETB). A six week course ran with 17 participants and the focus was on up-skilling participants for work in a retail setting. Participants worked intensively to complete modules in Retail Sales, Customer Service, Workplace Safety and Work Experience. While jobs in the retail setting were not forthcoming on completion and this was a disappointment, outcomes for individuals were positive and recent follow up calls with all showed that, one year later, 11 people are actively engaged in further training, 2 are in jobs and only 4 are still involved in case work with the Department of Social Protection.

Big demand continues for Healthcare Training. As well as being an area where people are able to get work as a result of training and qualifications achieved, these programmes are also used as up-skilling opportunities for people who are 'in employment' who have had little access to training in the past e.g. out of 13 people doing Palliative Care Level 5 in one class in 2014, 1 got work at the end of the training, however, 12 were in jobs 'on entry' to the programme (Care Workers, Home Helps etc). They availed of the opportunity to achieve the qualifications provided to strengthen their chances of retaining this employment.

A total of 41 tutors taught in a part-time capacity on the BTEI & Upskill Limerick City Programme in 2014. These tutors span a wide range of subject areas and have varying numbers of contracted hours (from 2 – 16 hours per week). In 2014, **CID entitlement was extended** to 14 of these staff who work in BTEI (and other part-time programmes). Clearly, this group of tutors are valued and well utilised in the programme and enhancement of their status and security, is not only a statutory obligation for our organisation, but also extremely welcome and needed for the staffs' own security and wellbeing. However, this development could also be a challenge for the BTEI programme in future, when more and more of the total staff complement acquire this security of tenure, and the programme is likely to become more curtailed as a result. Certainly, staff can be upskilled to meet new needs and this will be a priority for the future, but this will take time and resources and the agility and flexibility of the programme in the meantime is likely to be affected.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

Despite promotional efforts, uptake in **Science and Engineering** options in Limerick City BTEI continued to be negligible in 2014. Some analysis on why this uptake is poor, suggests that any qualification at Levels 3 or 4 in this area are very distant from possible employment prospects in future and 3rd level qualifications will always be required. The limited uptake in these areas is generally from people who (1) like practical, hands on learning (Wood or Metal Craft) or (2) have a very specific 'career path' choice in mind e.g. Anatomy and Physiology for access to Nursing or EMT/Paramedic work. Overall, the low numbers of people making applications for these courses invariably means that, because resources are scarce, these options cannot generally be justified. This is disappointing, as all evidence suggests that this field of learning is central to many jobs in the future. On a slightly more positive note, Maths at Levels 3 and 4 and Leaving Cert were run in several locations, with viable class enrolments in Limerick City in 2014.

CO. CLARE BACK TO EDUCATION INITIATIVE (BTEI) – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) in Co. Clare continued to deliver, flexible, certified part-time programmes to 750 students in 2014. Courses were held at the Further and Adult Education Centres as well as in outreach locations in Ennis, Ennistymon, Killaloe, Kilrush, Scariff and Shannon.

The BTEI in Clare continued to offer innovative and quality programmes which meet the needs of the learners and the local employers. In response to concerns from the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF), a local consultation was facilitated with the Hotel Federation, and highlighted difficulties for employers to recruit suitably qualified people to cater for the early morning services. As a result, a Breakfast Chef course was developed. This course was designed to meet the needs of local hotels and guesthouses.

The course consisted of Culinary Operations (which was timetabled for 6:00am --- when Breakfast Chefs start work), Nutrition and Healthy Options, HACCP, Manual Handling and Career Preparation. Work Experience was provided by the hotels. Recruitment and interviews were carried out in partnership with the Federation. The course was delivered over 16 weeks and also involved visits and presentations from Fáilte Ireland along with demonstrations from award winning Chefs. A visit to the LIT was also arranged. On completion of the course, all learners found either full or part-time employment. Subsequent to this course, a Deli-Chef course is being delivered in 2015, which aims at securing employment for people at Deli counters in Supermarkets and Coffee Shops.

A Motor Technology Course was completed at Level 5. This programme delivered in Shannon had a number of Long Term Unemployed participants. It resulted in 4 people being offered places in LIT. Participants on the course were also introduced to the Solas Training Centre in Shannon and availed of a tour of the Shannon Aerospace Aircraft Maintenance Facility.

Our Healthcare and Childcare programmes continue to thrive. Links have been established with a number of Employers in this sector, who give presentations and encourage BTEI students to apply for work. A majority of our Healthcare students find employment. A number of Childcare students are participating on a Level 6 Childcare programme.

In June 2014, over 40 adult students from Ennis and Shannon successfully sat Leaving Certificate exams in Maths, English and History. Excellent results were achieved by all students. In September, there was a decrease in the numbers enrolling for the 2015 examinations and demand for English and Ordinary Level Maths decreased resulting in English being offered only in Ennis while there was insufficient numbers to provide the Ordinary Level Maths. However, Foundation Level Maths is being offered in Ennis, Shannon and Kilrush.

Article in Clare Champion 06 June 2014



Adult learning centre pops their prize off to Pieta House



THE Pop-Up Garden Community Challenge at the Clare Garden Festival was won by a group from the Shannon Adult Learning Centre, who won the first prize of €500.

The group are part of the Back to Education Initiative, which gives individuals the opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities and offers certified learning throughout the county.

Those participating in the competition were asked to create a garden based on their interpretation of the theme, 'Protecting the Environment in My Garden'. The resulting displays were shown at Clare Garden Festival. Judges included gardening and environmental experts, such as Blarney head gardener, Adam Whitbourn; organic mentor, Klaus Laitenberger; Clare County Council environment officer, Joan Tierney; and Cambridge

Garden owner, Carl Wright. The judges examined the entries on criteria including relevance to the brief, originality, sustainability, use of recyclables and the quality and use of locally-sourced materials.

The winning group decided to donate their cash prize to Pieta House, which provides a free, therapeutic approach to people who are in suicidal distress and those who engage in self-harm.

Founded eight years ago, Pieta House now has a staff of 170. Last year, nearly 4,000 people contacted the service, looking for help. The numbers getting in touch are always growing. Around 90% of its income comes from fundraising events.

■ The winning group, from the Shannon Adult Learning Centre, donating their prize of €500 to Pieta House.

In April, the Horticulture group in Shannon won first prize at the Clare Garden Festival for their pop-up garden, while the group from Ennis came second and Kilrush third. The prize money from this was donated to PIETA House on the suggestion of the students.

There are a number of progression options for BTEI students and in 2014, graduates progressed to Third Level, PLC courses and into employment.

Over 800 certificates were issued to 289 BTEI students in 2014.

The BTEI is staffed by a Co-Ordinator, 2 Resource Workers, a Guidance Officer and 2 Administrators. There are in the region of 30 active part-time tutors. Course Provision is offered following consultation and as part of Integrated Service Planning with the other part time programmes in the county. Support for BTEI learners is also offered from other sections of the Adult & Community Education Service, mainly CABES, the Guidance Service and the Community Education Service.

BTEI representatives contribute to many sub-groups with the LCETB FET Service, including CPD, ICT and QA. The BTEI also maintain strong links with Statutory and Voluntary Organisations such as Intreo, the Co. Childcare Committee, the HSE, Employability Clare, etc. The BTEI is also an active member of the Clare Lifelong Learning Network.

The following is a summary profile of BTEI students in Co. Clare in 2014.

Table 2A: Total Number of Participants per Age Band			
Age Band	Male	Female	Total
16-17:	0	0	0
18-20:	20	14	34
21-24:	27	34	61
25-34:	44	103	147
35-44:	53	130	183
45-54:	54	132	186
55-64:	32	63	95
Over 65:	11	33	44
Total Participants	241	509	750

Table 2B: Total Number of Participants who are Unemployed per Age Band			
Age Band	Male	Female	Total
16-17:	0	0	0
18-20:	16	7	23
21-24:	17	14	31

25-34:	30	41	71
35-44:	30	47	77
45-54:	30	37	67
55-64:	16	11	27
Over 65:	1	3	4
Total Participants	140	160	300

Table 4A: Total Number of Participants per Economic / Employment Status			
Status	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Unemployed (Job Seekers Benefit/Allowance):	140	160	300
Employed Fulltime:	23	23	46
Employed Part-time:	20	126	146
Not in the Labour Market:	58	200	258
Total Participants	241	509	750

Table 4C: Duration of Unemployment on Entry			
Duration	Unemployed		
	(Table 4A: Status 1)		
	Male	Female	Total
Less than 6 months:	21	22	43
6 - 12 months:	38	40	78
13 - 24 months:	25	26	51
25 - 36 months:	18	20	38
More than 3 years:	38	52	90
Total	140	160	300

2014 Profile

- 1586 learners
- 46 Part-Time Tutors
- 43 Venues
- 1 Community Education Facilitator
- 1 Resource Worker
- 1 Shared Administration Support Worker

Key Developments in 2014

- Variety of innovative projects
- Strengthening of Mid-West Community Education Forum
- Development of e-learning course for Capturing the Wider Benefits of Learning
- Launch of LCEN Strategic Plan

Introduction

The Community Education programme supports communities to provide part-time non-certified learning options for adults over 16 and out of full-time education in Limerick City. It complements other part/fulltime learning provision within Limerick City LCETB. Community education is characterised by its approach to learning provision which ‘enables civil society to play a key role in education with local groups taking responsibility for, and playing a role in organising courses, deciding on programme content and delivering tuition.’ The collective ethos of community education is also a noticeable feature of the programme. The highlights for 2014 outlined in this report show examples of both programme attributes.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

1. Innovative projects

• **Limerick – A Well-knit City**

Parnell Street Park in Limerick City Centre was yarn-bombed to mark Community Education day during the Aontas Adult Learner Festival in February. The Limerick Leader described it as ‘a woolly wonderland of kaleidoscopic displays’. The exhibition entitled, ‘Limerick – A Well-Knit City’ transformed this public space into a colourful exhibition of craft. Ninety-two learners from fifteen groups across the city were supported by eight tutors to work together on the project. Through this project, learners displayed their skill, creativity and their ability to imagine different uses for public spaces.



• **Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary School - Road Safety Award**

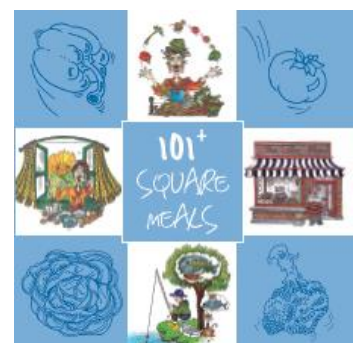
Adult community education is an integral part of the Home School Community Liaison Programme in Our Lady Queen of Peace Primary School in Janesboro. In 2014, participants in the Community Men’s Programme (carpentry) and the Mams & Gals (artwork) worked together with tutor Brian Mitchell to create life size dolls to deter double parking outside the school which were safety concerns for parents and

children. This was part of a road safety initiative which was awarded a 'Leading Light in Road Safety Award' by the Road Safety Authority in recognition of efforts of people to improve road safety in their communities.



- **101+ Square Meals**

101+ Square Meals is a well-known cookbook, which focuses on nutrition and cooking on a budget. It was originally published in 1998 by MABS Limerick with contributions from the HSE, Limerick City VEC and Paul Partnership. Last year Safefood EU reviewed the cookbook in line with nutritional guidelines and contemporary diets. As one of the original partners, LCAES Community Education Programme was invited to be part of the review process. Five tutors facilitated five groups as part of budget cookery/food and nutrition courses to test new or modified recipes. They provided written feedback to Safefood taking into consideration appearance, taste, texture and smell of the revised recipes. In addition the Southill Men's Shed groups provided general feedback on the cookbook for example querying the cost effectiveness of cooking for one with availability of convenience foods, and suggested that the focus of meals for one should be on speed or meals that would last for x number of days. The updated version was launched in the Southill Area Centre in early 2015 and can be downloaded at [http://www.safefood.eu/Healthy-Eating/Recipes/101-Square-Meals-\(PDF\).aspx](http://www.safefood.eu/Healthy-Eating/Recipes/101-Square-Meals-(PDF).aspx)



- **Urban Horse Project**

Bedford Row Family Project provides support to families affected by imprisonment and allows this experience to shape the direction of the project. This was the starting point for an art project with men in Bedford Row which lead to their involvement in the Urban Horse project. This citywide project drew on the horse culture in Limerick and consisted of 15 life-size horse sculptures developed by artist Angela Connolly. Following the agreed theme of 'Individuality and



Identity' and facilitated by Tutor Paul Quane the men in Bedford Row hand-painted a horse which was launched along with the fourteen others in the People's Park as part of Culture Night in September at Limerick City Gallery of Art.

The men used their own experience of prison life to interpret the theme. They used imagery, verse, and quotations to express loneliness and despair as well as determination to move on with their lives.

- **Mid-West Community Education Forum**

The Mid West Community Education Forum is the working title for a representative number of community groups and LCETB staff which came together in 2013 with support from the Advocacy Initiative. The purpose of the Forum has been to promote information sharing relevant to community education across the LCETB region and to promote a collective approach to engaging with significant legislative and policy changes in the Further Education and Training sector. In Jan 2014 the Forum organised a workshop attended by groups from across the region on Lobbying and Relationship Building in order to ensure that the voice of community education was heard on local decision-making bodies such as the LCETB and that it was understood and supported by local election candidates. There was agreement on a common message about community education across LCETB region which was stated in an issue card produced for the local elections.

Local Elections May 23rd 2014

Facts about Community Education

- 3,833 Learners participated In Community Education programmes across Clare and Limerick in 2013.
- Classes were held in 144 community venues.
- Community education leads to improved health, well-being, employability and community involvement.
- Programme for government (2011) prioritised lifelong learning, community education and vocational training for jobseekers.

Your Power, Your Vote—Use It!

This is what we want politicians to work on:

1. Make sure local community groups are funded so they can continue to provide community education at low or no cost.
2. Promote and support community education within your work in local government and nationally.
3. Work with local community groups to highlight the good work of community education which leads to better lives for local people and more involvement in their communities.

Local community education issue

Two World Café events on the theme of adult and community education were held in Limerick and Clare before the local elections to facilitate attendance in the two electoral areas. The Limerick event held in Moyross was very well attended by community groups from across the new electoral area, less so by election candidates with only 5 out of over 70 declared candidates in attendance

In June, the Forum nominated two candidates for the Learner Representative position on the LCETB. This process was managed at national level with member organisations such as Aontas, NALA, and INOU etc. given the power to nominate candidates to this position. While the Forum nominees were not selected, the Forum members felt that it was important to engage in the process and are fully supportive of the Learner Representative who was elected to the LCETB.

At the close of 2014 the Mid-West Community Education Forum turned its attention to the draft LCETB FET Strategy and organised a community consultation workshop with groups from across the LCETB region. This consultation is scheduled for Jan 2015.

- **Corners of our Minds**

The creative writing group in Our Lady Queen of Peace community was invited by Clare Adult Basic Education Service (CABES) to participate in a collaborative project involving groups in Clare, Limerick and Kerry. The result was a compilation of poems, memoirs and short stories entitled 'Corners of our Minds' which was launched at the Listowel Writers Week in May. Working with other writers was a learning experience for the Queen of Peace group and the day in Listowel opened new possibilities for their creativity.

- **Limerick Men's Sheds Network**

The primary focus of Limerick Men's Sheds Network in 2014 was networking and governance. Networking trips were organised to learn from other models of shed development, as Limerick sheds are now beginning to look at managing their own buildings and becoming more independent in their ownership structures. The Community Education Resource Worker facilitated 4 sessions with St. Mary's Parish Men's Shed to examine its governance structures and facilitate it to put more formal structures in place.

Limerick Men's Sheds Network Trip to Kerry



2. Capturing the Wider Benefits of Learning

The outcomes of adult and community education, which relate to personal health and wellbeing, family and community involvement, are increasingly recognised in FET policy as vital to the provision of a quality and learner centred service. The challenge has been to record or measure such outcomes. Capturing the Wider Benefits of Learning (CWBL) is a locally devised tool/methodology through which learners assess the subject related (skills) outcomes and the wider benefits of community education. A number of practice workshops on CWBL have been provided each year to ETBs since it was developed in 2010. In March 2014, a workshop was provided to over 100 tutors, Resource Workers and Managers in Kerry Education Service and in November a presentation was made to Adult Education Officers Association at their AGM in Kildare. The tool was also referenced in an article entitled 'Creating A Shared Notion on the Wider Benefits of Learning' in the Autumn edition of ETBI magazine which is available at <http://www.etbi.ie/category/publications/etbi-news/>. The CWBL tool continues to be used on selected community education courses across Limerick city.

Another exciting if time consuming CWBL initiative last year was the development of an Elearning CWBL course. Tara Robinson LCETB Curriculum Development Officer who developed the original tool, adapted the content and sourced suitable software for an online course which is accessible at <http://www.limerickcityaes.ie/cwbl/> . This resource will be made freely available to groups anywhere in Ireland.

In a related development, the 2014 edition of the Aontas Adult Learner Journal contains a summary of the research which was carried out in 2011/2012 The Social Value of Community-Based Adult Education in Limerick City. This article is available at

http://www.aontas.com/download/pdf/the_adult_learner_journal_2014.pdf

3. Limerick Community Education Network

Limerick Community Education Network began a strategic planning process in 2014, which culminated in the launch of a strategy document in January 2015. The Strategy sets out four aims (below) and eighteen objectives to achieve over the next three years.

- Provide a representative forum which will ensure a co-ordinated approach and quality provision of Adult Community Education in Limerick City
- Raise awareness of the value of Adult Community Education and ensure greater access within local communities



KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

1. The current reporting requirements under SOLAS are not linked to the Operational Guidelines for Community Education. The programme is assigned one set of objectives in the Guidelines and asked to report on others, which result in the quarterly SOLAS reports appearing incomplete. SOLAS has acknowledged this inconsistency, and more relevant reporting data are expected to be introduced.

In the belief that what we measure affects what we do, the programme has maintained a focus on the important wider benefits of learning in community education through use of the CWBL tool. Until now the evidence gathered through this exercise has remained at local programme level. ETBI has now commissioned a consultation process to examine effective methodologies in non-accredited provision for capturing the wider benefits of learning in ETB adult education provision, with specific reference to community education and adult literacy.

2. As a programme which is entirely community-based and planned with local groups, community education is very responsive to changing community needs and aspirations. Another side of this position is exposure to changes within local community development which impact on provision of community education. The most significant change in recent years has been in the area of local government reform, specifically proposals in the Department of the Environment document '*Putting People First: Action Programme for Effective Local Government (Oct 2012)*, which are now being

implemented. This proposed major changes within local community development including an expanded role for local government, a focus on citizen engagement and ‘co-production’ of services. The consequences of this are already apparent, and include a reduction in the number of staff in community organisations, whose brief includes community education and a re-focusing of community development work in line with economic over social development.

3. Limerick City Adult Learner Forum in its current form met for the last time in June 2014. It was established in 2005 as part of the European Year of Active Citizenship through Education involving at various times a group of between 5 and 13 learners from community based part-time adult education. Its achievements include the development of the Learner Charter and providing a model for ‘Hearing the Adult Learner Voice: A Toolkit for creating a Local Adult Learner Forum”, which was developed by Aontas in 2011. Last November the Community Education Resource Worker was asked to present at the Aontas General Meeting regarding a local learner voice structure and lessons learnt from our work with the learner forum in Limerick. The new SOLAS legislated learner fora should provide a new direction for this work.

Conclusion

In 2014, over 1500 learners participated in LCETB supported community education in 43 venues and facilitated by 45 part-time tutors in Limerick City. This quantitative information is important for planning, management and accountability as a publicly funded programme. So too is the qualitative information about the outcomes of community education, such as personal wellbeing, community cohesion and social inclusion. The development of reporting systems which encompass both types of information will support the growth of community education within the transforming further education sector.

CO.CLARE COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICE – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

2014 has been a very active year for the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Community Education Service (Clare). The aim of the service continues to be: enhancing learning, fostering empowerment and contributing to civic society while maintaining an ethos appropriate to adult education. With the continued absence of development workers on the ground, local volunteers/community links proved to be very worthwhile as they played a key role in education with local groups taking responsibility for, and playing a role in organising courses, deciding on course content and delivering tuition.

Facilitating Learning in the Community: Grant aid was approved for 70 groups across the county. A wide variety of learning opportunities were requested from arts and crafts to woodturning, metal craft, fun science, personal development, horticulture, cooking, local history and heritage, creative writing, boat



building, car mechanics and the construction of a well pump. It was also agreed that a portion of funding would be reserved for on-going partnership activity/community development. 939 learners were active during 2014 (10.5% increase on 2013), with 141 attending more than one programme bringing our total delivery to 1080 learners. The 939 learners were made up of 303 male and 636 female, over half our learners engaged with the service for the first time in 2014 and 232 were registered as long term unemployed.

Progression: LCETB Clare Community Education Service does not provide leisure/hobby courses. While most modules have themes, i.e art and craft, all modules delivered integrate social and personal development, team building, communication skills, active citizenship and community participation/development. Progression, either to further learning, qualifications, more active community involvement or becoming a self- sustaining community group is also supported by the community education programme. With the continued support of CABES, BTEI and the Adult Guidance Service approx. 150 learners have progressed onto certified learning. As learners may use the community education service as a step back into learning after years of absence or a negative experience of formal education, it is acknowledged that this space is invaluable, and that the process may need to be very gentle and at the learners own pace.

1. Projects:

Many successful projects and events have taken place in local communities throughout the county; here is a sample of some of the great work:

- **Clare Adult Education Service Community Music Project** was nominated for an Aontas STAR Award. The Community Music Project (in partnership with CABES) provides free introductory music lessons to adults in Co. Clare , as well as allowing them to share the enjoyment and fulfilment that social participation in music can bring.
- **Clare I.T. for Poets** was delivered in Ennis, Poets and artists from around the county learned how they could use IT to support each other and further develop and promote their work.
- **Kilrush Men's Shed** held an open night on the 18th of March, where men's groups from around the county were invited to come and see first-hand projects completed by them to date with the support of the community education service. Projects displayed included a wind turbine and a Nutshell Pram Sailing Boat. The men also built a well pump which they are hoping to donate to the local community.

This group have progressed to QQI Level 3 Woodwork where they are making furniture, which will be put into the *Light Keepers Cottage* on Scatterry Island.

- **Ennistymon Men's Community Group** set up in partnership with St. Vincent de Paul worked on a stained glass project. Some of these men have returned after a long absence from learning/community participation.
- **Raheen Day Hospital Creative Writing Group** produced a booklet '*A Collection of Memories*'. This is a collection of ordinary personal anecdotes which are a joy to read and a treasure to have.
- **Killaloe/Ballina Community Group** designed and built props including a thatched tower, which were used for a reenactment during the Brian Ború Millennium Commemoration Weekend. O'gonelloe Active Retired group also held an exhibition of their artwork at this same festival, this group have now progressed to QQI L2.
- **Community Laptops** are in Boston National School, where 2 Intro to IT classes have commenced, one has progressed to QQI Level 3. This initiative is invaluable to this rural and isolated community, as it facilitates participants, who would not normally have the opportunity to upskill themselves in the use of IT for everyday living.
- **The West Clare Craft Makers Horticulture / Basket Making Programme.** This programme promotes active social inclusion for all through the process of lifelong learning. This programme of skills acquisition has opened the door of opportunity to members of the Miltown Malbay community to become part of a positive inclusive initiative. The initiative further developed when the group progressed to QQI L3, they were also runners up in the Pop up Garden competition held in Ennis on the 27th of April.
- **Sixmilebridge Men's Shed** group expanded to include the men from Kilmurry and Kilkishen. The group worked in partnership with the Kilkishen Community Development Association to produce bird/bat boxes, tree identification tags and benches for what is commonly known in the locality as "The Bog Walk"
- **Active Age** - Lots of activity including arts and crafts, personal development, local history and creative writing took place with our active agers throughout the county, many older people experience specific and acute barriers to participating in adult learning so it is vital that we continue to provide learning opportunities locally especially in rural communities.



This is just a sample of activity, which has taken place, many thanks to our wonderful tutors who are so energetic, creative and innovative; this helps to facilitate groups in deciding their own programme content and to take responsibility for their own learning.

2. Events:

Limerick and Clare Community Network Forum (representative group of learners, community organisations and community education facilitators across the mid-west region) : Two successful mid-west workshops were held in Jan and March focusing on information sharing about new structures in adult/community education and relationship building and lobbying to ensure that the voice of community education continues to be heard by Solas, the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and in the recently held local elections. Key activities identified at these sessions in the run up to the local elections included:

- (a) the production and distribution of Issue Cards which contained facts about community education in Limerick and Clare.
- (b) Hosting of a World Café

World Café: A World Café discussion about Adult Community Education took place on the 30th of April in the Auburn Lodge Hotel, Ennis. The World Café provided an opportunity for community education participants to meet with candidates running for local election across the Clare electoral area to hear the positive impact of community education on them, their families and their local communities. Over 50 people, including community participants/groups/organisations, met with 12 candidates at the event to relay their positive messages. The World Café was very successful and the voice of community education was definitely heard on the day.



Ennis Men's Shed Conference: Community education hosted a stand and made a presentation at the Ennis Men's Shed Conference held in the West County Hotel on Saturday the 26th of April. The presentation provided examples of good practice in relation to men shed activities throughout the county. Information was disseminated around educational opportunities available to men and men's groups through the community education service and the wider LCETB FET Service. Ennis Men's Shed group have just finished a woodwork course in the Sills Unit and are scheduled to do metalwork in 2015.

Listowel Writers Week: Creative writer groups with the support of the community education service and CABES from Kerry, Limerick and Clare collaborated to create a publication '*Corners of our Mind*', which was published and launched at the 2014 Listowel Writers Festival. This is a first for Listowel Writers Week.

3. Partnership:

Partnership activities within the Community Education Service continue to operate at a number of levels to:

- Support established groups through provision of tuition hours and curriculum development /support new groups to set up and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Support countywide networks, by facilitation of network meeting and dissemination of information through www.clarelearningnetwork.org.
- Access funding in partnership with network members for design and deliver new programmes.
- Community Education is also represented on local management/steering committees, ICT, Continuous Professional Development, Clonroad Centre Management and Kilrush Centre Management.

Clare CES co-ordinated the local Adult Learner Festival. Articles were published in local newspapers, local radio broadcast interviews and sessions to celebrate adult learning were hosted across the county.

As ever, it is important to record vital data about the impact of community education courses, which will help the LCETB Community Education Service with reporting and planning and hopefully capture the wealth of anecdotal feedback from learners about the positive impact of participation in community education. This will be a special focus for 2015.

LIMERICK CITY - ADULT LITERACY (BASIC EDUCATION SOLUTION – BES) – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Learners

- Total number of learners = 1,093
- Males: 499, Females: 594
- Unemployed: 931 (407 long –term unemployed, 56 unemployed less than a year, 468 not in the labour force)
- 122 ITABE learners
- 275 ESOL Learners
- 33 Venues
- 278 learners received QQI accreditation, covering 654 components (this includes 5 community Quality Assured venues)
- 35 learners awarded a Major Award at Level 2
- Increase in Numeracy accreditation

Staff

- 3 Adult Literacy Organisers
- 22 part-time tutors
- 6 Literacy Resource Workers
- 1 Part-time Administrator
- 45 volunteers



KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

1. Independent Learning

In 2014, there was a renewed effort to **promote self-directed learning** across the literacy service. The Self-Access Learning Resource Worker worked with tutors to encourage our learners to engage in independent learning activities. This resulted in increased numbers of learners using our Self-Access Centre – 403 learners or 15% of the overall usage, an increase of 5% over 2013. While the increase is small, early indications for 2015 suggest that this upward trend will continue.

2. Effective communication with referral partners

In order to streamline the **referral process**, BES has created a defined process whereby referral partners complete an online referral form. This has resulted in a streamlined mechanism for processing referrals.

3. ALOA Best Practice Guidelines

In March 2014, the Adult Literacy Organisers' Association produced a guidelines document entitled '**Initial Assessment in the Literacy Service**'. This was the result of extensive consultation with ALOs in every region in Ireland. The document outlines best practice in the administration of initial assessment within a literacy

service. Lorraine Markham is one of ALOA reps for the Western region and had an opportunity to contribute to the document.

4. DEIS Partnership

Staff across the ETB worked together for the second year on the **DEIS Family Literacy programme** for 2013-2014. The Community Education Programme also worked with BES to roll out a full programme for family learning initiatives across the city. One particular initiative involved a tutor working with parents and children from a south side primary school to produce a cookery book which was the culmination of recipes completed within the Family Baking class. Cookery books were given to all parents involved and were also sold at a learner craft fair in order to fundraise for the school.

5. Staff Development Event

The Co-ordinator of the Literacy Service worked closely with colleagues in LCAES to organise a very successful **staff development event** in the city in April. The theme for the day '**Creativity and Culture in Teaching and Learning**' was in keeping with the fact that Limerick held the title of City of Culture 2014. Staff had an opportunity to attend workshops such as dance, playing an instrument, art and photography. It also featured an open-top bus tour of the city and a trip to a photographic exhibition.



6. Little Voices

Little Voices is an innovative multiagency initiative for children aged 0-4 and their parents to encourage enhanced oral language development. BES works with **parents to upskill them around language development** as well as supporting those who may have literacy difficulties. One tutor co- delivered, with a Speech Language Therapist, an 8 week programme to parents on the North side of the city. Work has continued on the development of the programme with further courses planned for 2015.

7. TV Documentary

2014 saw CLASP (Community Leadership, Arts and Sports Programme) open its doors to production company Gyre & Gimble Productions as it undertook **filming for a three-part documentary aired on Setanta Sports Ireland** in November. The crew followed the participants as they engaged in training and classroom activities culminating in a number of key learning events including a photography exhibition, fund-raising quiz and tag-rugby event in London. LCETB tutors worked closely with the participants in the planning and execution of these events. Participants in CLASP achieved a Level 3 General Learning Award and the filming process enriched participants' learning experience and achievements.



8. Drama Groups

Two drama groups within the literacy service worked on writing scripts and they put on excellent performances in well-known theatres in Limerick city. St Saviour's group planned, publicised, wrote and performed 'Heaven's Above' to a packed audience in April 2014 in the Belltable Theatre. The group also achieved QQI accreditation at level 3 in Drama. The second drama group was based in the north side, St Munchin's Drama group performed 'Flight 321 to Amsterdam' in Dolan's Warehouse in May. Again audience feedback was very positive and this was the first time that this group had ever performed publically. They too achieved QQI accreditation.



9. St Patrick's Day Parade

BES works closely with **Focus Ireland** and other homeless agencies to engage their clients in adult learning. In 2014, one of the groups worked on designing and creating a banner for **St Patrick's Day**. They joined forces with the aforementioned Drama group to carry the banner through the streets of Limerick. A fun day was had by all.



10. BES/Upskill Celebration of Learning

In December, the Literacy Service and BTEI hosted a '**Celebration of Learning**' for learners on both programmes. The informal event, held at The Absolute Hotel, was attended by learners who had achieved accreditation in 2014 and newer learners on both



programmes. The event gave learners and staff the opportunity to get together whilst also giving participants the opportunity to celebrate their achievements, both accredited and non-accredited.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

Learner Engagement

Learner engagement and attendance has always been a challenge for BES, and in particular in recent times when many learners are referred through Intreo. In autumn 2014, the practice of sending letters to reluctant learners has improved somewhat the problem, even if many still are not ready to avail of literacy provision. In 2014, we introduced a new attendance policy to try to improve attendance rates. The process will be formally reviewed with all stakeholders in order to evaluate its effectiveness.

Supporting Participants to Move beyond the Literacy Service

While engaging learners is a challenge, so is supporting some long-term students to progress and move forward with the Literacy Service. Some students become very reliant on the literacy service, though they have reached their potential. A pilot project began in 2014 to work with identified participants where the Self-Access Learning Resource Worker facilitated a 'study group' to help them to become more independent and confident in their learning, with a particular emphasis on the use of technology, including audio books, ebooks, online learning resources and iPads. The proof of the pudding will be seen when this cohort of learners come to the end of their 'structured' provision with the service though initial feedback suggests that the format has been effective. Learners have indicated they feel comfortable using the Self-Access Centre and they wish to continue using technology to learn independently with minimal support.



Retaining volunteers

Every year considerable staff time and resources are given towards volunteer tutor training and the support of volunteer staff throughout the year, who mostly work in 1:1 settings. Volunteers work with adults who frequently have learning difficulties and other challenges in their lives, hence the tutors need much support. In recent years, some volunteers left the service after a year or so, for various personal reasons. This created difficulties for the service, as much staff time goes into supporting volunteers in developing their skills. An evaluation of voluntary provision within the service, including volunteer consultation, will be completed in 2015. It is hoped that this work will highlight some change in approaches, which are needed to help address the issue.

CO.CLARE CABES – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE

Clare Adult Basic Education Service (CABES) is the LCETB adult literacy and basic education service for County Clare. Our goal is to provide opportunities for adult learners to improve their learning confidence and skills as needed for fuller educational, social, cultural and economic participation in Irish society. Clare Adult Basic Education Service is recognised as one of the most experienced and innovative schemes in the country. Much of the success of the service is owed to its strategy of building learning partnerships within the Adult Education Service, in local communities, and in collaboration with state agencies.

In 2014, CABES continued to partner with Community Education and BTEI in providing local responses to specific local requirements, for instance:

- Joint Area Planning including progression planning
- Joint information sessions, employer engagement and recruitment initiatives
- Joint award celebrations
- New course/programme development to meet local needs
- Implementation of a new learning needs and resources assessment framework

CABES is based in five locations around the county:

- North Clare - Ennistymon, Corofin, Lisdoonvarna, Liscannor
- South Clare - Shannon, Sixmilebridge, Knockalisheen
- East Clare - Scariff, Killaloe
- West Clare - Kilrush, Kilkee, Miltown Malbay
- Ennis

In each sector, courses are offered across four programme strands – ESOL, Family Learning, Workplace and Mainstream Literacy. CABES aims to respond to all requests for adult basic education provision within the county. At the same time, the service prioritises specific target groups for special measures and intensive literacy provision in addition to the general services offered. These groups have higher levels of literacy (or language) problems compared to the general population, yet their participation in adult education is significantly low.

CABES is also significantly involved in training. CABES provides initial and ongoing training for all volunteers. In 2014, CABES staff participated in over 50 CPD training events, including completion of a QQI L6 Differentiated Learning Module, which was designed and delivered by CABES. CABES staff members are also available to provide support to other service providers trying to integrate literacy activities into existing courses or to make their service provision more 'literacy friendly'. In addition, members of staff regularly contribute to local, national and EU training events – see examples cited in each section.

In 2014, classes were provided in more than 40 venues around the county for 1745 learners (34% Male and 66% female) participating in classes. This represents a 10% increase from 2013. In total, learners took up 4,839 places on courses delivered by the service. Of these, 162 learners chose to take part in 1-1 tuition, a 35% increase from 2013. 41% of learners in 2014 were new learners. Half of CABES learners in 2014 were unemployed, with 21% of that unemployed for less than 1 year. 5% of our learners were referred from the

DSP. 66 % of all learners had not gone beyond Junior Certificate including 22% of learners with primary or no formal education. See Fig 1 for an overview:

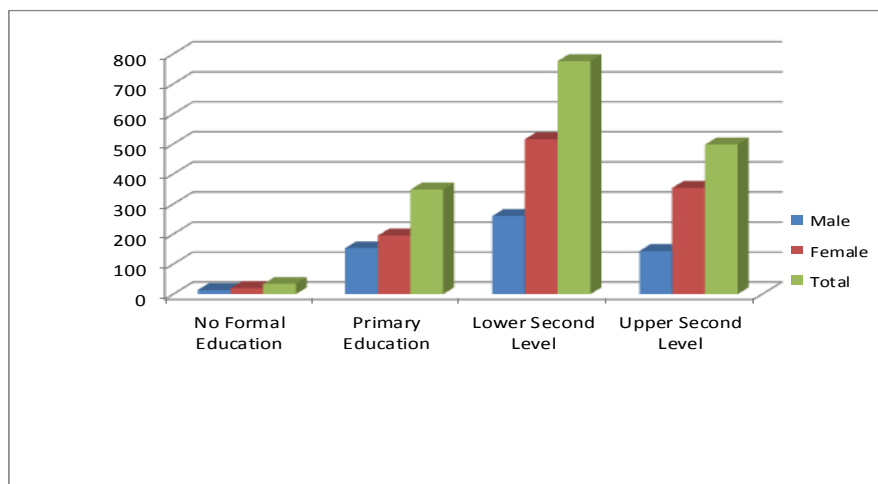


Figure 1

54% of learners attending in 2014 were at Literacy Level 2, 22% were at level 1 and 24% at level 3. In 2014, over 1,000 learners participated in QQI courses with 578 achieving certificates at Levels 1-4, a 30% increase from 2013. 27 learners achieved Major QQI Awards. Other learners will submit portfolios for the May 2015 assessment. See Fig 2 for an overview of accreditation options achieved by learners and Table 1 for their component choices.

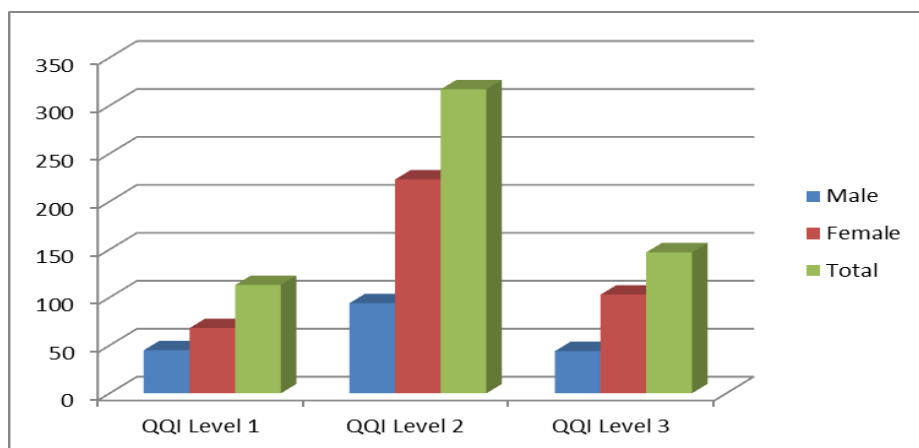


Figure 2

FETAC/QQI Level	Component	Number Awarded
1	Quantity and number	113
	Shape & space	
	Using technology	
	Computer skills	
	Reading	
	Writing	
	Craft	

2	Design Using technology Computer skills Setting Learning Goals Personal decisions making Quantity & number Quantitative problem solving Reading Writing Listening & speaking Life Science: Horticulture Life Science: Lifecycles, pattern & relationship	317
3	Culinary Operations Nutrition & healthy Options Word Processing Internet Skills Spreadsheets Communications Four Stroke Engine Maintenance Electrical Skills Stock Control Retail Industry Knowledge Craft: Glass Plant propagation Plant identification, care and maintenance Intercultural Awareness ESOL Career Preparation Personal Effectiveness Community participation	147

Table 1

Over 30% of learners progressed within the literacy service e.g. from Level 1 to 2, while more than 30% progressed to BTEI, VTOS, employment and other education options.

Mainstream literacy

Both one-to-one and group literacy provision continued to increase in demand in 2013 with 829 learners engaging in 1-1 literacy tuition or joining group classes; many joined the basic education service as a first step to returning to learning. FETAC Modules in Computers, Maths, Woodwork, Cooking, Food and Nutrition and Horticulture proved most popular in Ennis last year. There were opportunities for learners to engage with these subjects from level 1 to 3 and for those new to the service we provided a number of taster courses. These taster courses allow learners to get a feel for the subject area as well as learning to learn. Almost all learners progress to a FETAC module or a full ITABE course. One such example was a taster course was offered in Horticulture late 2013 which progressed to a full ITABE for Horticulture and Woodwork in 2014.

There was a marked increase in the number of men accessing CABES with many 'men only classes'. These small group classes focus on planning for writing and learning to learn. There was also a notable increase in the demand for numeracy help both for one to one tuition and group classes. Maths classes were run at both level 1 and level 2 QQI accreditation.

Continued demand for Social change modules such as Preparing for your Driver Theory and Healthy Eating Modules also proved popular.

We ran a very successful training for new voluntary tutors in Adult Basic Education. As well as this we also conducted in-service training for existing tutors to up skill in the specific areas of teaching numeracy, ESOL and using computers with a literacy learner.

ITABE

In 2014 a total of 109 learners completed one or more ITABE projects, an increase of 10% from 2013. All learners who completed ITABE projects achieved positive learning outcomes on the ITABE assessment scale. They achieved either level increases or significant stage increases in their focus subjects.

Learners had the option of working towards accreditation at FETAC Levels 1, 2, or 3. Learners could aim for a component, a module or a full award. All the modules offered at FETAC Levels 1 and 2 contain either a literacy or numeracy component. 86% of learners participating in ITABE selected to work towards accreditation. Of these learners, 30 have achieved between 1-3 certificates, others will go forward for assessment in May 2015. Learners own reflections included:

- This course showed me that I want to learn more and get more qualifications.
- I feel more confident working with a group and feel more included.
- I feel I can talk to people more.
- I am working towards my certificate to go onto my next level.
- I have great relationships at home.
- By doing this course I have become more confident, and my health has improved.
- My communication skills have increased.
- I am more aware of grammar
- The teachers are good, patient and really want us to succeed.

- I really enjoy working as a group and look forward to coming every week.
- I have improved my written work.

In terms of qualitative assessment, learners were asked to complete a soft skills evaluation checklist to help them identify and reflect on their learning achievements. 56% of learners reported that their most significant learning outcomes were: Increased confidence, New knowledge areas; Feeling more included; Interest in other courses. Other outcomes included:

- More effective communication
- Improved learning skills
- Changes in attitude
- New skills gained
- Increased tolerance and understanding
- Working towards certification

The learners own self-reflection generally has concurred with tutor observation. There has also been consistency between the years 2010 through 2014, which highlights the significance of qualitative outcomes for the ITABE learning experience. For many learners, multiple projects are the key. Since ITABE projects have commenced tutors have observed that, for some, it takes the first 14 weeks for learners to embrace learning to learn. Also, for ITABE to be successful it is necessary to cater for the individualistic needs of learners within the group setting (e.g. building self-esteem and confidence, developing positive thinking, learning skills and organisational skills). For weaker learners, learning any new skills requires continuous reinforcement at a pace that matches learner ability, with new learning introduced at appropriate intervals. It is important that learners do not experience 'cognitive overload' which frustrates the learner and may result in his/her abandoning learning. It is very significant that some learners may require 3 ITABES to reach a 'critical threshold' but once they do the pace of their progression increases.

Workplace Basic Education

Numbers of Students: Male: 77 Female: 106 Total: 183 (Counting learners once)

As a result of the continuing turbulent economic climate, 2014 was a very active year for the CABES Workplace Basic Education (WBE) Service, despite funding cuts to the Return to Learning programme. The typical profile of learners widened: learners in the workplace were now accessing the service as they were becoming vulnerable in their jobs and therefore needed to upskill to maintain employment and enhance their options. The suite of modules delivered expanded and the methods of delivery were adapted in response to the growing and changing demands from both learners and the work environment, e.g. more employer input in course design, including work on projects set by employers, actual skills demonstrations on-site and learners visited the CATEx exhibition in Dublin in November. Learners worked towards the following QQI level 3 accreditation options: Retail industry knowledge, Stock Control, Spreadsheets, Digital Media, Personal Effectiveness, Maths, Culinary Operations, Word-processing and Internet Skills. Looking at each programme then:

Return to Learning (RtL), the final WBE programme for Co Council Employees came to a close in 2014. Classes were customised to help provide an opportunity for learners to become familiar with the specific new IT demands of work, e.g. waterworks, online timesheets. All successfully achieved QQI accreditation and have committed to continue with upskilling via SFW or BTEI courses.

Self-funded classes, 1 self-funded class took place in 2014 for a group of healthcare workers who wished to upskill in order to cope with changing workplace demands. The course was designed specifically for the group following a needs analysis at their workplace. The group will continue into 2015 and all expect to gain QQI accreditation.

Skills for Work (SFW), the programme for employees in the private sector: There was an increase in provision of this programme in 2014 with 21 SFW groups participating across Ennis, Scariff, Ennistymon, Liscannor, Lisdoonvarna, Kilrush, Killaloe and Shannon. Learners continued to engage from the following sectors: Healthcare, Retail, Catering, Manufacturing, Logistics, Agriculture and Services.

Working in partnership, we continued to consolidate existing partnerships and forge some new ones with more employers and employer bodies in 2014 e.g.

- **Intro to STEM partnership with ACIST Skillnet and local employers** – to develop an introduction to Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) course in partnership with local manufacturing employers. The pilot is scheduled for Ennis in 2015.
- **The Department of Agriculture** who continue to enhance and add to the dummy version of the department online herd movement system so that farmers can avail of the department online reporting systems. 2014 saw our 'SFW for farming' tutor deliver CPD to tutors from other ETBs across the summer on the suite of courses developed for this sector, e.g. Farm IT, Farm H&S.
- **Local retail owners/managers.** We continued to develop this partnership to devise progression options and expand the suite of retail and hospitality courses provided. Additionally, employers are designing workplace projects for learners to work on, offering a real insight into the world of retail. The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs² states that there is little accredited low/entry level education or training programmes for the retail and catering sector and this is echoed by local employers. These developments work towards addressing this.
- **Coding week** – all workplace learners engaged in activities during the international Week of Code (www.code.org). As a result, there is demand for basic coding and maths as well as tutor CPD which will be addressed in 2015.
- A new partnership has been made with a large employer in Clare (who wishes to remain anonymous) to develop a 'Preparation for Promotion' course. This course was designed for employees who have worked with the employer for a long time, exhibit several competences required for promotion but lack key basic skills and the confidence necessary to consider promotion. This pilot is about to be rolled out in sister organisations elsewhere in 2015.
- **Lancaster University partnership** – 2 workplace groups participated in a Computer Supported Collaborative Learning project, which used Facebook as a learning platform. Results were very successful.

Family learning (CFLP)

Numbers of Students: Male: 73 Female: 362 Total: 435 (Counting learners once)

90% at or below upper second level with 76% unemployed. Classes were held in 23 different venues across the county. 52 courses were delivered in 2014. This included 26 different course types. 16 courses had parent and children learning together. 21% worked on QQI accreditation.

² <http://www.forfas.ie/publication/search.jsp?src=EGFSN>

The following courses were offered to learners: QQI Level 1 Listening and Speaking.; QQI Level 2 Computer Skills, Internet Skills, Setting Learning Goals, Design, Visual Art; QQI Level 3 Design

Family Learning Highlights 2014

- Provided LCETB wide half day in-service training on Family Learning for tutors across County Clare, Limerick City and County Limerick on 3rd February.
- Celebrating 20 Years of Family Learning in Co. Clare. 'Capturing the Evidence in Family Learning' **National Family Learning Forum** organised on 28th May in Ennis. Keynote speakers included Dr. Esther Prins, Co-Director Goodling Institute for Research in Family Literacy, Penn. State University, and Dr. Susan Weir, Research Fellow, Education Research Centre, St. Patricks College, Drumcondra, Dublin.
- Dr. Esther Prins, conducted **Family Learning research** while in Ireland working with Clare Family learning Project 'Digital Stories' group in Ennis.
- Clare Family Learning Project **hosted two international groups** in March/April 2014: 26 Norwegians on a 2 day Study Visit, and 2 Swedish teachers on a 7 day study visit.
- Set up a new Family Learning programme **working with local Museum** and using the Museum as a class venue.
- Working in **two new primary schools** this year to reach a new cohort of students in Sixmilebridge and Newmarket on Fergus National Schools.
- Provided **two days international training on Family Learning** in Linkoping, Sweden for 26 teachers in September

Despite these highlights, some challenges remain:

- **Childcare Issues:** Engaging parents with children who are too young to go to crèche. My Baby and Me programme allows parents and their babies attend class together.
- **Uncertainty of DEIS funding** in autumn led to confusion, as Home School Community Liaison Coordinators in DEIS schools with CFLP had prepared for classes to start in autumn across the LCETB. Received permission to use advance of budget 2015 to address issue.

English Language Programme

Numbers of Students: Male: 141 Female: 246 Total: 387 Counting learners once.

Breakdown by Economic Status	Male	Female	All Learners
Unemployed (greater than 1Yr):	66	130	196
Unemployed (less than 1Yr):	23	45	68
Employed:	41	55	96
Not in Labour Market:	11	16	27
Total:	141	246	387

- **The following programmes were offered to ESOL learners.**
 - FETAC Level 1 Reading, Writing Listening and Speaking.
 - FETAC Level 2 Reading, Writing Listening and Speaking, and ESOL, Maths
 - FETAC Level 3 ESOL, Communications, Personal Effectiveness, Inter-cultural studies, Culinary Operations, Event Participation, Maths and Internet Skills.

Some highlights around these programmes in 2014:

- Workshops given at ESOL conference in Ballyhaunis
- Voter Education workshop presented for Clare Immigrant Support Centre
- Phonics workshop for ESOL tutors
- Workshop presented at Intercultural Conference at Cois na hAbhna.
- Participated in hurling workshop with BTEI Sports programme
- Field Trip to Cragaunowen

New innovative programmes/ projects

- There were a large number of programmes delivered as part of the Intercultural Programme.
- CABES worked in partnership with BTEI to provide ESOL classes at Level 3 and 4.
- In 2014 CABES provided English Language classes at FETAC levels 1, 2 and 3. There were classes in Ennis, Shannon, Killaloe, Ennistymon, Kilrush, and at the Knockalisheen Accommodation Centre, in Meelick. There were also uncertified and learner support classes.
- CABES provided language support for VTOS and BTEI programmes.
- English language testing for migrant learners applying for Level 3, 4 and Level 5 programmes.
- Learners attended themed language classes in ICT, cookery, horticulture, sewing, family learning, metal work and digital media.
- Learners contributed to the CABES learner book 'Simply Said'.
- New course - Everyday Science /QQI Level 3 Electrical Skills

This new course comprised of a mix of practical and theoretical experiments aimed at learners who are interested in the area of science and its everyday use. The group successfully completed QQI level 3: Electrical skills which included a project where a bike was built from recycled materials that would convert human energy into electrical energy. Progression for this group included Leaving Cert Maths, Geography, VTOS full time programme Ennis and 2 learners are now in LIT, on an engineering course.

- Creative Writing Group Collaborate for Listowel Writers Week

This group which was formed 5 years ago have travelled a long way. This year they achieved great success in a collaborative project with 3 other writing groups from Limerick City, Hospital, Co Limerick and Listowel Co Kerry mentored by their tutors and published author Roisin Meaney. The group worked together to produce a book of stories entitled 'Corners of our minds' which was launched at the prestigious Listowel Writers Week May 2014.



- Horticultural Class 2014 – Winners of Clare Pop-up Garden Challenge : The class participated in the 2014 Pop up Garden Community Challenge hosted by Clare Garden festival and supported by Co Clare County Council. The class took the theme ‘Protecting the Environment in my Garden’ and looked at ways to create a garden that demonstrates the organic gardening techniques and tasks that they practice in their allotment in Shannon. The design is based on locally sourced recycled products. Their hard work was recognised and they won First prize in the countywide competition and magnanimously donated their €500 winnings to the Pieta House.
- Fun Science for Families at Killaloe/Scariff Libraries: As part of Adult Learning week CABES Family Learning Fun Science proved hugely popular with parents and children in both Killaloe and Scariff libraries.
- Home helps progress from introductory course to QQI level 5: Home helps who participated in An Introduction to Healthcare through FETAC QQI Personal Effectiveness progressed on to Level 4 and will complete their full L5 Healthcare in summer 2015.
- Introduction of Assignment Writing / Project Support : This new course was found to benefit learners of all levels submitting for FETAC QQI awards in North Clare.
- North Clare ITABE cookery group put their learning into action. The group catered for the FETAC QQI annual awards night, providing sweet and savoury food for over 100 guests.
- The North Clare Knitathon : The knitathon during October mid-term proved to be one of the most popular literacy and numeracy events of the year.
- West Clare ITABE partnerships: One of the West Clare ITABE classes visited Midleton Farmers Market with a VTOS group doing Bee-Keeping and food production. The trip was on a Saturday and included a comparison of the English Market in Cork with the range of food in the Midleton Farmers Market. Learners looked at artisan food production, food safety and presentation as well as a comparison of prices. Another collaboration of this ITABE was with the Kilrush Youthreach. The ITABE group planned, organised, cooked and hosted the opening of the FETAC Art Exhibition by Youthreach. This was a great success as over 30 people attended the opening.
- New course – 2 Stroke engine repair: A group of men from CE schemes in West Clare did a short introductory course to 2 stroke engine repair and some continued on to the FETAC Level 4-stroke engine maintenance course after Christmas. A group of these men also did a FETAC level 2 basic computers and technology class.
- NALA Learning Ambassador: One of our learners in West Clare from an ITABE group in 2012/13 – Catherine Byrne, is the NALA learning ambassador for literacy. She went to Dublin for training to promote adult literacy in West Clare. She took part in awareness-raising on the radio and in the local media.
- Traveller Health & Beauty course: In conjunction with Primary Health Clare, Clare Traveller health project, Family Learning and CABES ran a successful health and beauty programme for Traveller ladies from the Ennistymon area. This continued with Community Education offering more hours and 2 tutors and progressing into a longer programme of learning which culminated in a lovely Christmas meal in Lahinch at the end of the year.
- SVP for men: In partnership with the St Vincent de Paul, CABES and Community Education ran a very successful Stained Glass course for men in the North Clare area.
- Coding week-across the county: Over 40 students took part in ‘hour of code’ workshops during the month of December. These students were taking part in various courses. The majority of students remarked on how much they enjoyed the experience and several signed up for more in 2015. Students

who would previously had problems with following steps and completing tasks excelled during the hour of code as coding develops logic and problem-solving skills. Others became aware of the day to day uses of code at home and in the work place. As a tutor it provided a new platform in which, students with no previous knowledge of code were able to code their own computer game. The workshops saw learners from across the age spectrum with the youngest at 7 and the oldest in the 70's.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- There was a greater demand for classes, particularly among lower level learners across the county. Learners at level 1 and 2 need to be in smaller classes, which further stretches resources.
- Demand for catering classes increased in parallel with associated job vacancies; however this demand could not be met in many of our locations due to inadequate catering facilities.
- Tutor specialism demands are increasing as basic skills requirements are broadening and tutors retired/left the service, in particular for maths, science, health and fitness and STEM. CID commitments contributed to this issue also.
- Rural decline, i.e. infrequent public transport along with learner's financial constraints have resulted in poor attendance in some rural areas, and highlighted some growing issues such as transport, childcare, etc.
- The changing education and training landscape saw the introduction of new providers of education, which made planning and recruitment more complicated. This resulted in growing confusion for learners, and increased demand for guidance.
- Engaging with the travelling community, especially men, still proves to be a difficult task – particularly following the removal of the allowance for engaging with education. Greater engagement from the female members of the travelling community highlights the great value they place in family learning programmes, as enhancing both their own and their children's lives.
- One of the key challenges within the service was trying to marry the demand for accreditation and progression against the request for gentle introductory learning to learn and non-accredited courses. General perception is that little value is placed on the 'soft skills' gained from themed classes or taster classes on offer within the service. There are additional challenges in trying to capture such information in uniform way.
- The LCETB amalgamation resulted in a substantial increase in administrative work regarding the processing of invoices and payments to tutors. This has had the effect of reducing time spent on the equally and fundamentally important role of providing administrative support to teaching and learning. Additionally reporting requirements and structures have increased, e.g. accreditation, quality assurance etc.



Launch of 'Corners of my Mind; learners writings collaboration Clare, Limerick and Kerry at Writers Week Listowel, May 2014



*Successful 'Hour of Code' learners from Shannon
– Dec 2014*

West Clare ITABE class – cooking for Art Exhibition - May 2014



West Clare training event on handling an Emergency – June 2014.

West Clare awards event Feb 2014



PART 3 - TRAINING CENTRES

LCETB FET Training services provide training across four broad categories: In-Centre training, Contracted training, Community-Centred training, and Apprenticeship training. The two main centres are located in Shannon, and in Raheen - Limerick City.

In 2014, 3569 beneficiaries participated in a programme in LCETB Training centres. 449 of them achieved a full award, while 2599 learners achieved part awards in that year. In terms of recorded progression, 542 learners progressed to employment, while 46 of them progressed to other further education and training programmes.

LIMERICK TRAINING CENTRE, RAHEEN - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT



Apprenticeships:

2014 saw a further restoration in demand for various Phase 2 apprenticeship programmes delivered by the Limerick Training Centre with 122 apprentices trained in-centre across the various trades Electrical, C&J, Wood Manufacturing and Finishing, MAMF (Fitting), and Motor Mechanic. This represents an 88% increase on 2013 numbers and with a further 41% increase projected for 2015.

- Direct expenditure in this area is €1,085,543 which is made up primarily of apprentice training allowances (70%).
- Training activity for this programme is 13,937 training days (87,106 hrs).
- Electrical Apprenticeship Phase 2 capacity has been increased by 75% by utilising additional workshop space and by increasing workshop capacities in order to respond to the high level of apprenticeship registrations. The new Wood Manufacturing & Finishing Phase 2 apprenticeship was introduced during 2014. Demand for MAMF (Fitting) Phase 2 held firm. Carpentry & Joinery demand increased slightly but remains well below peak levels. Demand also remains very weak for other construction trades but a significant uplift is projected from 2016 onwards and all ETBs need to be positioned to respond.



Specific Skills Training:

2014 saw a need for significant staff training to facilitate the introduction of a range of new courses in response to changing demand and to introduce new common award courses to maintain provision in established areas.

- A range of classroom and workshop based training courses were delivered during 2014 with the introduction of a range of new courses: IT Maintenance (Industry Certification), ICT Skills (QQI Major L4), Business Management (QQI Major L6), Technical Employability Skills (QQI L3), Social Media for Business (Industry Certification), ECDL, etc. and the update of some common award courses: Hairdressing (QQI Major L4), Milling and Turning (QQI L4), Machine Tool Operations (QQI L5), etc.
- Direct expenditure in this area is €2,449,611 which is made up primarily of learner training allowances (71%).
- Training activity for this programme is 46,632 training days (291,449 hrs).



- Learner throughput at 492 is down 12% on 2013 and results from a recalibration of overall training delivery mix toward apprenticeship programmes. A similar level of provision is planned for 2015.
- During 2014, a range of training courses delivered in a satellite centre, LEDP, were consolidated back into the Limerick Training Centre.



Part-time (Evening) Training:

2014 saw a return to delivery over 4 evenings per week and the renewal and extension of courses on offer.

- A range of new courses were introduced during 2014 to complement and renew training provision in response to changing client demand: Legal Practice & Procedures, Good Manufacturing Practice, Supervisory Management, Team Leadership, Training Needs Identification & Design, Training Delivery & Evaluation, Customer Service, Milling, etc.
- Direct expenditure in this area is €387,909 which is made up primarily of instructor training fees.
- Training activity for this programme is 13,018 training days (39,054 hrs).
- Learner throughput at 869 is up 70% on 2013 and results from a return to training delivery across 4 evenings per week. A similar level of provision is planned for 2015.

Staffing:

44 fulltime staff members (24 instructors) support a range of in-centre training delivery and also provide a range of Recruitment, Administration, Procurement, Quality Assurance, Facility, and IT supports, including to external training and apprenticeship services.

- The permanent staff cohort is complemented as required with a contracted evening course staffing cohort of approximately 30 members across the 4 evenings per week.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- The Limerick Training Centre along with the Shannon Training Centre became part of the newly established Limerick and Clare ETB on the 01 July 2014. This brings an exciting new phase for the training centres with greater local geographic reach and with a broad suite of interventions and support services spanning the spectrum of QQI Levels 1 to 6.
- Learner certification success rate of 93% achieved across all programmes during 2014.
- Learner, Kenneth Ivers, was awarded a City & Guilds Medal for Excellence in recognition of outstanding performance in Computer Aided Engineering CNC Programming. Instructor, Gearoid Ryan.
- The upturn in some apprenticeship courses bode well for the future of apprenticeship courses along with the recent review of 5 apprenticeship courses.

- Further investment was made in CNC capital equipment to enhance the delivery of CNC Milling & Turning training in response to local/regional demand.
- The Limerick Training Centre responded to INTREO feedback and inputs that more practical courses be provided at entry level to assist with engaging particular client cohorts.
- A new centralised Learner Support Unit was introduced with staff embracing throughout.
- Increased direct promotion of courses and adoption of new approaches to recruit clients to training centre courses.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- Maintaining business continuity and service provision during a period of unprecedented change and transformation in the organisation.
- Ensuring that staff members were supported in their roles throughout this period of change and especially so given the economic circumstances prevailing.
- Getting to know our new colleagues and building working relationships.
- Commencing the process of harnessing and integrating with the broad range of training and service provision offered by the Limerick and Clare ETB so that interventions are provided in a cohesive and progressive manner leading to improved outcomes for all.
- Establishing a website presence to maintain access to external training services and to promote programmes on offer. Introducing and working with interim procedures (TQAS, etc.) during the transition period. Agreement on a future corporate brand identity for further education and training remains somewhat elusive.
- Managing the unprecedented high-level of staff development and supports that aligned during 2014 gave rise to the need for improved forward planning in this area.
- The withdrawal from the LEDP satellite facility used for Limerick Regeneration programmes. These programmes are now available as mainstream programmes and clients continue to engage post relocation.
- Client referral numbers remained low in 2014 and were compounded somewhat by a government decision to remove double payments to particular client cohorts such as the OPF.
- Addressing gaps in local curriculum support mechanisms and locally devised assessments.

SHANNON TRAINING CENTRE, 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Apprenticeships:

2014 saw a further restoration in demand for various Phase 2 apprenticeship programmes delivered by the Shannon Training Centre with 172 apprentices trained in-centre across the various trades Aircraft Maintenance Technician, Refrigeration, Electrical (reinstated), Plumbing (increased demand), etc. This represents a 33% increase on 2013 numbers and with a further 29% increase projected for 2015.

- Direct expenditure in this area is €1,480,660 which is made up primarily of apprentice training allowances (~70%).
- Training activity for this programme is 20,882 training days (130,512 hrs).
- Aircraft demand has increased 15% with a further 64% increase projected for 2015. Refrigeration is up 55%. Plumbing has increased by 55% in 2013 and will see a further increase of 24% in 2015.
- Demand also remains very weak for other construction trades but a significant uplift is projected from 2016 onwards and all ETBs need to be positioned to respond.

Specific Skills Training:

2014 saw a need for additional staff training to facilitate the introduction of some new courses in response to changing demand and to introduce new common award courses to maintain provision in established areas.

- A range of classroom and workshop based training courses were delivered during 2014 with the introduction of a new courses, Textile Floor Covering Installer, and introduction of common awards on the Domestic Appliance Servicing course. A replacement to the MS Office Specialist is also being pursued.
- Direct expenditure in this area is €585,417 which is made up primarily of learner training allowances (~70%).
- Training activity for this programme is 11,792 training days (73,700 hrs).
- Learner throughput at 155 is down 8% on 2013 and results from a recalibration of overall training delivery mix toward apprenticeship programmes. A further 8% reduction in the level of provision is planned for 2015

Part-time (Evening) Training:

2014 retained delivery over 4 evenings per week and the renewal and extension of courses on offer.

- A range of new courses were introduced during 2014 to complement and renew training provision in response to changing client demand: these included the OFTEC (oil burners) course and a specific Engineering skills course for E.I. employees
- Direct expenditure in this area is €328,164 which is made up primarily of instructor training fees.
- Training activity for this programme is 9,126 training days (27,378 hrs).
- Learner throughput at 788 is up 31% on 2013 and results from growth in training delivery across 4 evenings per week. A similar level of provision is planned for 2015.

Staffing:

25 fulltime staff members (13 instructors) support a range of in-centre training delivery and also provide a range of Recruitment, Administration, Procurement, Quality Assurance, Facility, and IT supports, including to external training and apprenticeship services.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- The Shannon Training Centre along with the Limerick Training Centre became part of the newly established Limerick and Clare ETB on the 01 July 2014. This brings an exciting new phase for the training centres with greater local geographic reach and with a broad suite of interventions and support services spanning the spectrum of QQI Levels 1 to 6.
- Learner certification success rate of 85% achieved across all programmes during 2014.
- The upturn in some apprenticeship courses bode well for the future of apprenticeship courses along with the recent review of 5 apprenticeship courses.
- Agreement was reached with DIT for the Shannon Training Centre to deliver a number of B1/B2 EASA courses on their behalf in 2015.
- The Shannon Training Centre responded to INTREO feedback and inputs that more practical courses be provided at entry level to assist with engaging particular client cohorts. A Textile Floor Covering Installer course was introduced.
- Increased direct promotion of courses and adoption of new approaches to recruit clients to training centre courses.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- Maintaining business continuity and service provision during a period of unprecedented change and transformation in the organisation.
- Ensuring that staff members were supported in their roles throughout this period of change and especially so given the economic circumstances prevailing.
- Getting to know our new colleagues and building working relationships.
- Commencing the process of harnessing and integrating with the broad range of training and service provision offered by the Limerick and Clare ETB so that interventions are provided in a cohesive and progressive manner leading to improved outcomes for all.
- Establishing a website presence to maintain access to external training services and to promote programmes on offer. Introducing and working with interim procedures (TQAS, etc.) during the transition period.
- Client referral numbers remained low in 2014 and were compounded somewhat by a government decision to remove double payments to particular client cohorts such as the OPF.
- The introduction of two new courses under the common awards system, and the upskilling of instructors etc. required to carry out same.
- Addressing gaps in local curriculum support mechanisms and locally devised assessments.

PART 4 – OTHER LCETB FET PROVISION

Adult Educational Information Guidance Service (AEIGS)

This is a free, local and confidential service offering adult education information, one-to-one and group guidance meetings and workshops to support adults to make informed educational, career and life choices. It supports those who are not in full-time education and who are considering second-chance learning opportunities and those participating in community-based education programmes to inform their progression. In 2014, there were three AEIGs located in Limerick City, County and in Co.Clare.

Cooperation with Other Institutions

Cooperation with other institutions refers to teaching services provided by LCETB to a range of education, training and social service organisations. Following an application process, a range of organisations and projects are allocated teaching hours by the Department of Education and Skills. One of these programmes is delivered in the Education Centre, Limerick City Prison. It includes the provision of a range of courses, both accredited and non-accredited, which run during specified hours in both day-time and evening. Prisoners attend classes on a voluntary basis.

In 2014, 4133 beneficiaries participated in programmes funded under the cooperation with institutions strand. Of those, 359 learners completed part awards, while 47 completed full awards that year. In terms of recorded progression, 35 progressed to further education and training, 6 progressed to higher education and 16 progressed to employment.

LIMERICK CITY ADULT EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION SERVICE (CAEGIS) – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction

The Adult Education Information and Guidance Service (AEIGS) was established in 2002 to build on existing provision in the city and to provide adult guidance counselling activities and services for community-based adult education learners and potential learners. **The mission of the Service is to support adults who access Limerick City Adult Education Service (LCAES) funded Programmes and Services to be inspired, motivated and equipped to take action to realise their full potential in life.**

The Core Elements and Objectives of our service are:

- **Educational and Career Guidance:** To support clients to develop their knowledge, skills and capacity to effectively manage their educational and career development.
- **Information:** To provide access to relevant and accurate information on education, training and career opportunities, and to support clients to develop their capacity to source and research this information themselves.
- **Awareness-raising about the AEIGS and the Role of Information and Guidance in Education:** To continue to raise awareness and understanding among all our stakeholders about the remit of the AEIGS and the role and value of Information and Guidance in education.
- **Partnership Work:** To engage with relevant internal and external partners to develop a mutual understanding of the needs of adult learners, and to develop appropriate responses.
- **AEIGS Planning, Coordination & Management:** To continue to develop and evolve as an effective, accountable and professional service.

Our priority is to work in collaboration with LCAES Programme Managers, Staff and Community-based adult education providers to integrate information and guidance into part-time LCAES funded programmes in appropriate ways so that current learners have meaningful opportunities and time to have their educational and career development needs met. In addition, we work at the pre-entry level with adults from Limerick City who have low or no qualifications and who are at or considering education or training at levels 1-5.

2014 PROFILE

- 1 Coordinator/ Adult Guidance Counsellor, Kings Island and St. John's/Garryowen.
- 1 South-city Adult Guidance Counsellor
- **The positions of North-city Adult Guidance Counsellor and Information Officer were not filled due to the embargo on recruitment.** Through the support of a half-time Resource Worker from the BTEI Programme, we tried to provide cover for these two full-time roles in 2.5 days per week.

SERVICE USERS (JAN-DEC 2014)

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
One-to-one Guidance	228	195
Groups met for group I & G	68	78
<i>(Numbers in groups)</i>	597	614
General Public Queries	649	685
Overall Total	<u>1,474</u>	<u>1,494</u>

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

- **The KLEAR Guide to Planning and Managing Your Life and Work** was developed in conjunction with Guidance Resource Staff from the Upskill (BTEI) and BES (Adult Basic Education) Programmes.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXsuEeoJ4M>

The KLEAR Guide is a career planning model which outlines the steps which should ideally be taken to ensure effective, person-centred career planning and management. The rationale for developing and using the KLEAR Guide was to have-

- ▶ A shared way of understanding and presenting what Information & Guidance (I&G) is about.
- ▶ A way of bringing Information and Guidance into the classroom.
- ▶ A model/guide for adult learners to effectively look at education and career development through a process. As such it serves as a framework for one to one and group-work.
- ▶ Greater and clearer understanding for colleagues and other stakeholders within LCAES and in Communities of the process of educational and career development, I&G's role and as a framework for exploring their role in this.
- ▶ A tool for facilitating access, retention and progression in programmes.



We began the 2014-15 academic year by doing presentations on the KLEAR Guide with Programme Managers, Staff and Community Coordinators. It has been the touchstone for our work and we have rolled it out in different ways with each of the programmes. We continue to develop resources for learners which support them to understand and use the steps in the process, in an integrated way.

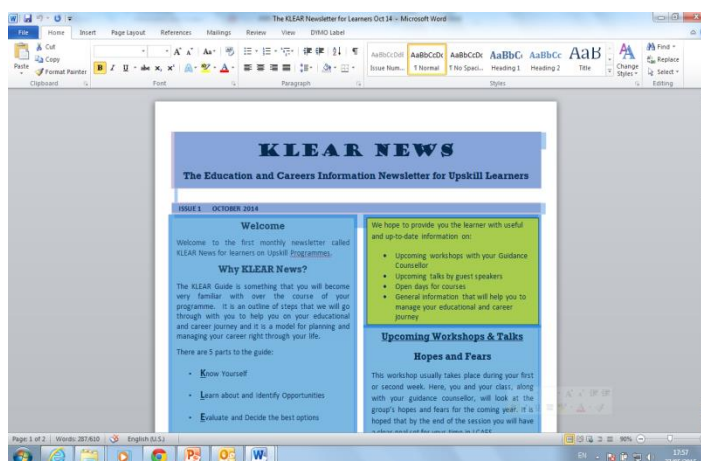
- **KLEAR NEWS – The Education and Careers Information Newsletter for BTEI Learners across the city** was launched in autumn 2014 and is published each month. Electronic copies are mailed to learners at the beginning of each month and the purpose of the Newsletter is to provide learners with useful and up-to-date information on:

-Workshops with Information and Guidance Staff.

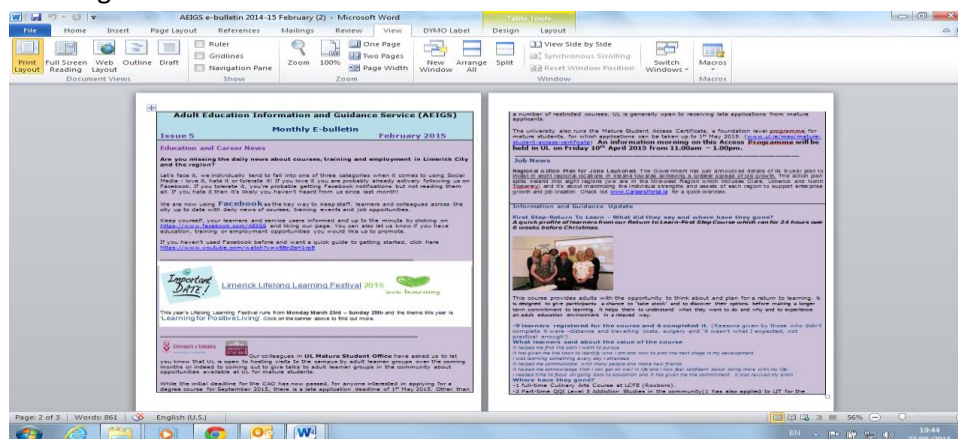
-Upcoming talks by guest speakers from the fields of education, employment etc.

-Open days for courses and other external events relevant to their education and career development

-General information and resources that will help them to manage their educational and career journey



- **Monthly E-bulletin for staff and external partners.** As a result of feedback gathered from staff and external recipients at the end of the 2013-14 academic year, we changed the format of our indirect communication from a weekly e-shot to a monthly bulletin which now includes news under a number of headings each month. The format also makes it more user-friendly for printing off and putting it on noticeboards in centers across the city where non-LCAES staff can have access to it and keep up to date with news coming from the service.



KEY TRENDS IN 2014

The analysis of data from the Adult Guidance MIS yielded the following key findings;

- **Increasing numbers accessing information in shopping centres:** In 2014, 51% of those who accessed the service for information on education options made contact through our monthly information stands in shopping centres in the city. This was up from 37% the previous year.
- **Increasing numbers choosing to stay on in adult education:** 70% of our clients stated that they were planning to progress within adult education.
- **Decrease in those seeing employment as a next step:** Those who saw employment as a next step decreased by 5% from 13% (2013) to 8% in 2014. We believe this reflects people's understanding of the need to upskill to enhance their chances of employment in a very competitive market.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

Embargo on Recruitment-The service was severely impacted by the embargo as we were unable to replace two full-time staff during the year, in a service of four. With support from BTEI, we were able to provide cover for 2.5 days a week to keep essential services going but the gap left by two full-time positions not being filled put huge pressure on the service in trying to maintain key information and guidance supports for learners and the public and in trying to respond to the challenges and demands of change in the external and internal environments.

CLARE ADULT EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND INFORMATION SERVICE (CAEGIS) – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE IN 2014

The Clare Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service (CAEGIS) has been in operation since 2000. It is funded for 3.6 staff: a Guidance Counsellor/Co-ordinator, two Guidance Counsellors, an Information Officer (job sharing).

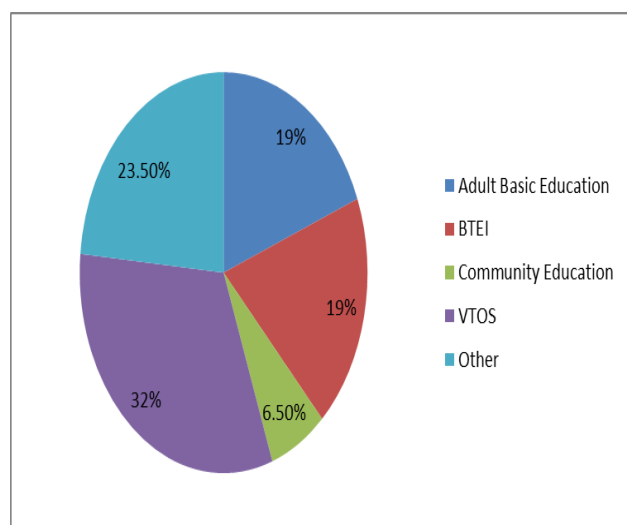
CAEGIS provides:

- An Information Service to all adults in County Clare interested in participating in education and training.
- A Guidance Service to all adults interested in or participating on BTEI, Community Education, Adult Basic Education and VTOS programmes in County Clare. Guidance is available to over 3,000 adult education students in 19 locations and 34 centres across the county. Guidance is provided day or evening in response to when the course is being provided.
- Information and Guidance is available in 5 centres across the county with an Information library in each centre tailored to the local needs and demands: Ennis, Shannon, Kilrush, Scariff and Ennistymon.

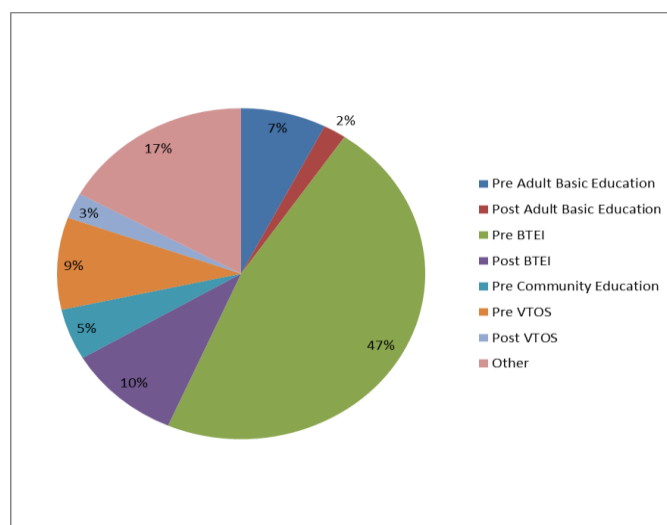
In 2014 the CAEGIS team provided a service to clients in 14 locations across the county broken down as follows:

Type of clients	Male	Female	Total
One to One clients	308	348	656
Group Clients (145 groups)	646	1170	1816
Total	1090	1585	2472

Allocation of CAEGIS Staff Time in 2014



Breakdown of Time for Other Category 2014

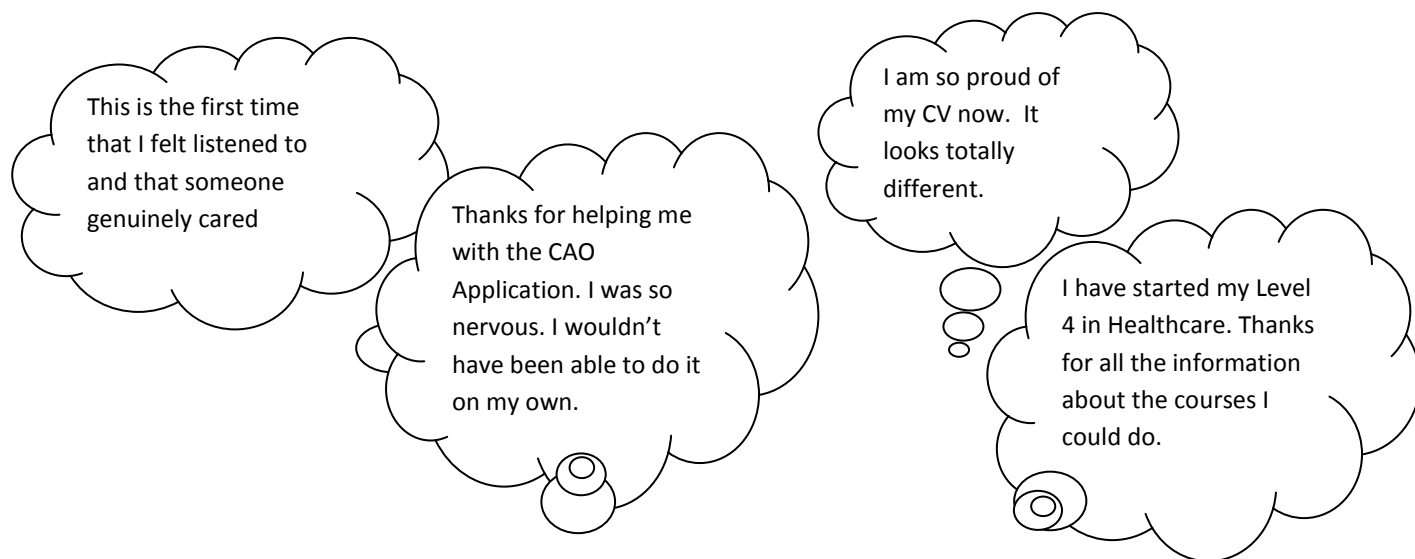


Source: NCGE MIS Database

As we can see, the majority of CAEGIS staff time (83%) is spent working with potential or existing students of the LCETB Adult Education Programmes. Of the time given to 'Others', 68.5% of that time is on pre-entry to LCETB Adult Education Programmes and 14.5% to Post exit work with past students. Only 17% of our time is on referral to programmes or agencies external to the LCETB Adult Education Programmes. Incidentally, referrals from the DSP to CAEGIS have increased by 38% on last year.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

The Person Centred Approach: From the comments and feedback received from individuals this year what was most valued was the time and attention given to the person by staff. This allowed them to hear where the person was at, and follow a process that explores the options that best suit the individuals and his/her situation, enabling them to do things for themselves. Examples of comments received were:



Cross Programme Trips to the Higher Education and Further Education Providers: These trips are a great opportunity to bring together students from across the Adult Education Programmes. For many who participate, it may be their first time ever to be in an Institute of Technology or University. Visiting the Institutions and talking to lecturers and mature students have been the catalyst for many students to apply for a third level or further education course. They wouldn't have applied without having been introduced to the Institutions.

VTOS Ennis Employment Focus Week: The Guidance Counsellor/Co-ordinator collaborated with Ennis VTOS to organise a week-long series of talks and presentations from Employers, CE Sponsors and past students in employment. Students also got the opportunity to have mock interviews with employers and get individual feedback on their performance. The feedback from the students was hugely positive and as a result some of them entered in to employment and one in to an Internship that she wouldn't have considered doing before hearing of the Internship experience of a past student.

Presentations from 6 past VTOS students who are now studying varying courses in LIT: This was a real highlight in December to see past students who were almost too shy to talk now standing up in the VTOS classes, telling students about the courses they are doing in LIT. The pictures tell the story.



Collaboration with BTEI: A highlight this year was the collaborative work we completed with BTEI. We had a meeting in September, which resulted in us:

- Getting access to information that we need on BTEI courses on offer
- A CPD workshop on 'Preparing a job ready CV' delivered by Guidance Counsellors to BTEI Work Experience, Communication and Career Preparation tutors.
- Development of a pilot test database to track the destinations of BTEI students on completion of their courses and to employers who have taken on work experience students.

Infographics: The Information Officer started to post up weekly Info graphics on our Jobs Notice Board on themes related to educational guidance and information. There has been a great response from both students and tutors. Tutors have asked to be put on a mailing list to receive the weekly info graphics.

Guide to Further Education and Training Opportunities in Co. Clare, 8th edition: Therese Griffin, Information Officer project managed the 8th edition of the Guide in July. The guide is becoming more in demand each year with organisations and individuals requesting additional copies. 8,000 copies were produced and circulated including 245 course entries from LCETB Further Education Programmes and 34 External providers.

Midwest Jobs Shop: Two CAEGIS staff represented LCETB at a stand at the Midwest Job shop in October. Both thought it was a very worthwhile event, as there were a large number of employers who had vacant positions, as well as career advice seminars, panel discussions and CV and Interview workshops.

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

The Demand for Information and Guidance in County Clare: The key challenge is how can we make Guidance and Information available to over 3,000 students on Adult Education Programmes in 34 locations across the county given the available CAEGIS staff and resources. This is made more challenging by the fact that only 160 students are on full time programmes. The remainder are on part-time programmes which are being delivered day time and evening ranging from courses that are 8 weeks up to 2 years in duration. With the emphasis on progression and the increase in the number of certified courses on offer, there Programme Co-ordinators are asking for more guidance sessions with a larger number of students. This

year also there has been an increase in the number of referrals from the DSP(Department of Social Protection)

The change in client profile: We have noticed that the profile of both people presenting for information and students is changing. Many more clients are presenting with a myriad of life issues, including poverty, mental health issues, unemployment and its impact on self-esteem and life skills, addiction and recovery, learning difficulties, physical disability, health issues, transport and dependency in all types of formats. From an information and guidance perspective, more time is required to meet with the person and allow them tell their story, and identify the factors that will impact on their choice of course and from a guidance perspective how are they going to manage these issues in order to participate and complete their chosen course. Programmes have to be mindful of offering courses that take the learner's situation (starting point) in to account and look more and more at the additional support needed to accommodate these learners and the subsequent impact of this on delivery.

Transition to LCETB: The transition to the LCETB has brought changes in management and in processes, system and procedures. Time has had to be dedicated to installing, training and becoming familiar with these new systems such as the Travel Expenses and Purchase to Pay and to establishing new relationships with our new line Manager and the other AEGI staff in Limerick city and county and the relevant support staff in the five pillars, in particular Finance.

CO.LIMERICK ADULT GUIDANCE SERVICE - 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

KEY PROFILE IN 2014

We provide:

- Information on Education & Training for Adults
- Information on Funding & Grants for Adult Students

We can help to:

- Identify Your Unique Strengths, Experience and Potential
- Prepare Your C.V. and Prepare for Interview
- Develop Study Skills
- We can help to make a New Start in Education

We work with:

- individuals at pre-entry level and on BTEI/Community Education courses and VTOS students
- We provide group guidance and information for BTEI Groups, VTOS groups, Community Education groups and Community Groups (on request e.g. West Limerick Resource groups)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

Group guidance programme are devised for VTOS groups but can be adapted for use with individuals or groups.

Client Feedback

1. Practical information and tips

2. Ability to give answers in environment where information is becoming more difficult to obtain due to changes in services with some services having redeployed staff in new roles. The learning here is to acknowledge frustration but not become side-tracked by it and continue to offer service in as far as we can. Some changes are beyond our control.

- Availability of clear information (learner-friendly information) from the Training Centres is refreshing and gives us confidence in our work where information on courses is otherwise uncertain.
- Future opportunities for sharing resources within the expanded ETB service
- IO involvement in creation of LCETB Course Booklet
- Comprehensive work done with group of people made redundant: delivered core material requested by the group. Group was very fearful about the topic but soon got involved in the group work that we facilitated. Outcome was learners were more confident on topic and with together with self-directed practice are well prepared for job seeking process.
- Hosted Regional meeting for our colleagues across Munster. In this supportive environment, we had the opportunity to share resources and best practice as well as challenges each service is facing in this period of transition

KEY CHALLENGES IN 2014

- Re-location of our Information Officer while supporting development of new Cecil St service. This had a negative impact on our rural service, and specifically affected our presence in rural areas. When GC was

on outreach work, no one was here for 3 days per week to take drop in queries. We offer a drop in service.

- Uncertainty about local part-time courses: people followed up on the information available but some became frustrated and turned away from education. Prohibitive travel costs to the City for example did not help the problem. We are an integrated service and our activity around delivery on part-time courses decreased with the uncertainty about the course provision.
- The impact of increasing travel costs is deterring a growing number of rural learners from travelling to courses. This trend is having an impact on our service, being a rural service. We aim to travel to outreach centres as much as possible in order to remain accessible to learners. The facility to offer an outreach service is vital.
- Transition within this very large organisation has meant that it is more difficult to get information for learners. Communication within this expanded organisation is more challenging
- As there are 1.6 staff members here now, while we value being involved in the FET Strategic Planning Process and are very happy about our involvement, attendance at several meetings took us away from our daily work. We appreciate that this period of transition will settle. We also see that the Planning process is an important part of our work yet does not generate statistics.

LIMERICK PRISON EDUCATION CENTRE – 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

Prison Education is a programme delivered in the Education Centre, Limerick City Prison, which includes the provision of a range of courses, both accredited and non-accredited, which run during specified hours in both day-time and evening. Prisoners attend classes on a voluntary basis.

2014 PROFILE

- Learner throughput: 250-350
- Average attendance: 130

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN 2014

- Red Cross Programme graduation.
- Library provision
- International Women's Week
- Suicide Awareness course

During 2014, the centre continued to provide a high quality, professional service focusing on the needs and interests of our students. The Head Teacher continued to perform the duties of both Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher, as no appointment of a deputy was made.

Segregation remained the major challenge to our provision. In response to this, in 2012 a major positive development was the development of a satellite school area in E Class, the women's wing. This now comprises two general purpose rooms, one large enough to accommodate six to eight students, and a second more suitable for one to four; a small gymnasium and a purpose-designed hairdressing classroom/salon. The hairdressing class again proved very popular with accreditation being provided through QQI. The other two satellite areas D1 and D4 continued to be used in order to provide a timetable, albeit limited, for segregated prisoners, focusing mainly on basic education, reading, writing and computer literacy.

The Wednesday multi-disciplinary meetings, which were broadened to include Special Observation and Health & Safety slots in 2012, continued to be invaluable fora in integrating the work of the various services and focusing on prisoner welfare. These now include representation from PALLS and Bedford Row Family Support Centre, which provides services for prisoners' families and ex-prisoners.

The recent initiatives, Integrated Sentence Management, Incentivised Regimes, the Community Returns and Community Support schemes played a major role in the overall prison ethos. Education played a significant part in all of these.

Some progress was made in reopening the library in 2014. Education and prison management came together to provide an interim solution, pending national intervention (funding ran out for a librarian in early 2012). A prisoner was entrusted with basic library duties under the guidance of education and the school officer, and this prepared the ground for a more comprehensive service in 2014. This entailed a prisoner and a teacher taking on the task of restocking, cataloguing and generally refurbishing the library, and a number of prisoners and a prison officer receiving training in running a library service. The service is now made available to all prisoners at appointed times. While the service is still far from perfect, a worthy start has been made.

The Irish Red Cross/ETB initiative, Community Health and First Aid in Action, first introduced in 2013, is an international programme run in eighty countries. Ireland is the first country to introduce it in prisons. This programme trains participants to become Red Cross Inmate Volunteers and has been very successful in several Irish prisons. The programme is delivered by teachers, medical personnel and Red Cross staff, and co-operation by security personnel is crucial to its success. To this end, training was attended by members of the teaching staff and the programme begun in January 2014. This was a great success, with 24 students graduating in June. The graduation ceremony was attended by the Inspector of Prisons, the Director-General among many other representatives from the Irish Prison Service and the Red Cross. A major precedent was set by the attendance of up to six family members for each of the graduates. Graduates and family were allowed to mingle freely for over an hour after the ceremony.

Accreditation/Non-accreditation

The centre provides a broad curriculum, including a wide range of academic and non-academic subjects. Accreditation is provided in the centre by QQI, DES and the Open University. The Food Safety Authority also provides accreditation for that aspect of Home Economics and The Irish Red Cross provides accreditation for the Community Health and First Aid in Action programme.

Some subject areas are not geared towards accreditation and some students, themselves, are not interested in accreditation. While accreditation is strongly encouraged, the personal development of our students remains at the core of our provision.

Accredited programmes delivered in 2014 included:

- Leaving Certificate: English, Mathematics, Business and Accounting.
- Junior Certificate: English, Mathematics, History and C.S.P.E.
- Red Cross: Community Health and First Aid in Action.
- QQI: Health Related Fitness, Psychology, Hairdressing, Spreadsheets, Word Processing, Desktop Publishing.
- Open University: Social Science.

Non-accredited programmes delivered in 2014 included:

Basic English, numeracy and computer literacy; woodwork; arts and craft (including drawing, painting, textiles, ceramics and calligraphy); physical education; home economics; health education (including: caring for children, drug awareness and anger management); pre-release; music and music technology; yoga; tai chi; yarn skills.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2014

• Self-Managed Learning

*A female prisoner successfully completed the first year of an Open University course in Social Science and began her second year studies.

*Staff engaged in CPD courses including Project Maths and the new Junior Cert course.

*The Anger Management Course and Addiction Studies were again integrated into the Pre-Release and Lifers' programmes;

*Learners continued to take the initiative with regard to their own learning: initiating musical CD projects, shared book-reading, card-making, art and craft projects etc.

*Red Cross programme participants initiated or participated in a wide range of activities, including: Men's Health seasonal calendar; Red Cross calendar with positive mental health quotes; Health and Fitness Week; Culture of Non-Violence Workshop; overdose-prevention course; soccer tournament in aid of Pieta House; drug awareness sessions.

- **Wider Participation**

*A special programme was organised for female prisoners to mark International Women's Week in March. This included: a workshop by celebrated poet, Rita Ann Higgins; a concert by Limerick Music Generation; a table quiz; a karaoke session; a football match between officers and prisoners.

* A HEARSAY session was facilitated in the school. This involved a number of texts being read aloud provoking reaction/discussion.

*The satellite school areas in E, D1 and D4 continued to be utilised. These areas proved invaluable when officer shortages occasionally caused classes in the main school to be cancelled. On these occasions, teachers would have the option of relocating to the satellite areas and providing extra classes there.

*Education continued to play an active role in Integrated Sentence Management (ISM), contributing to the multi-disciplinary approach, referring prisoners to the other services and acting on referrals from those services, e.g. work/training, probation, Merchant's Quay, psychology etc.

*Education continued to participate in the Incentivised Regimes programme, as attendance in education is one of the factors influencing a prisoner's prospective progression. Education also contributed to identifying suitable candidates for the Community Returns Scheme.

*The weekly liaison/multi-disciplinary meeting continued to include formal slot to discuss prisoners under special observation and health & safety issues arising. This was expanded to include representation from PALLS and Bedford Row Family Centre which provides services for ex-prisoners and prisoners' families.

*Woodwork students produced woodcraft items for charity e.g. benches for charities and local schools.

*The Toe by Toe Reading Programme enhanced student participation by facilitating evening mentor-to-mentee tuition on the wings.

*A number of prisoners and an officer received training in running a library. The library was re-furnished and re-stocked, and a limited service was rolled out during 2014. The library is located in the school area and education works closely with the service.

*Yoga has been an integral part of the school curriculum for over twenty years. It was appropriate, therefore, for the Prison Phoenix Trust (an international group that promotes the benefits of yoga in prison) to come to the centre to interview the yoga teacher and photograph the yoga class in session for their newsletter.

- **Customer Focus**

*The weekly liaison/multi-disciplinary group continued to meet weekly. This forum is invaluable as prisoners may have medical/emotional/psychological concerns that could inform their behaviour, attendance, participation level etc.

*The centre continued to respond to the views and needs of the learners through the relevance of the curriculum and initiatives covered above, e.g. Toe by Toe, Book-reading CD project, Addiction Studies, Anger Management, participation in ISM, Community Returns, Incentivised Regimes etc.

*The P.E. teachers liaised again with the F.A.I. in delivering the F.A.I. Senior Soccer Coaching Course.

*The Driver Theory Test was introduced and proved very popular, especially with prisoners nearing release.

*a group of prisoners participated in the SIMDRIVE programme. This involves a simulated driving experience and is geared towards encouraging safe driving.

*The national prison art exhibition, titled “Fallen Bird” was launched in October in the Hunt Museum by Brent Pope. Much of the work organising the exhibition was done by the Craft teacher in this centre. The exhibition generated very positive media coverage and was moved to Dublin City Hall later in the year.

- **Partnership**

*Staff attended a Suicide Awareness course. This is crucial for staff in a prison context.

*The entire teaching staff attended a Security Awareness course in November. This was very important for new staff and a timely reminder for more experienced staff of the safety concerns specific to the prison context.

*Staff attended a WASP course (Women Awareness Staff Programme) focusing on issues specific to women in prisons.

*Two teachers attended a conference in Poland organised by the International Grundvig Partners in Crime Prevention Initiative.

* Teaching staff facilitated the Red Cross/ETB initiative, Community Health and First Aid in Action programme. 24 students graduated in June. This programme has been run by the International Red Cross in communities in eighty countries worldwide. Ireland is the first country to introduce it in prisons.

*A prisoner who had begun a post-graduate course with UCC prior to being imprisoned was facilitated to continue her studies inside. This entailed the Head Teacher liaising with her course tutor, downloading course materials and organising telephone and face-to-face tutorials.

*Two prisoners facilitated to begin courses with Limerick College of Further Education successfully passed their examinations and progressed on to their second and third years, respectively.

*The Incentivised Regimes Programme continued to exert its positive influence. This is a scheme whereby prisoners are incentivised, through good behaviour and engagement in constructive activities like work and education, to have their conditions enhanced, e.g. by an extra phone call.

*A number of teachers attended the I.P.E.A. (Irish Prison Education Association) mini-conference and the Liam Minihan annual lecture both held in Dublin.

CONCLUSION

The centre continued to deliver a professional educational service despite many obstacles, notably the intense segregation that pertains in Limerick Prison. While the establishment of satellite school areas on the wings has ensured that all prisoners have access to some educational provision, the timetable must be divided up to cater for the major groups. This means that it is impossible for a keen student to attend school on a daily basis. He may attend only when his particular wing is being catered for. This general rule will prevail while feuding and its consequence, segregation, exist.

The overall curriculum remained learner-centred, broad and flexible, offering a variety of accredited and non-accredited learning experiences. At the core of our provision is the personal development of the learner, that he or she is helped to use his/her prison time constructively, and is helped to prepare for his/her return to their community.