



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

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FET Division Annual Report 2019

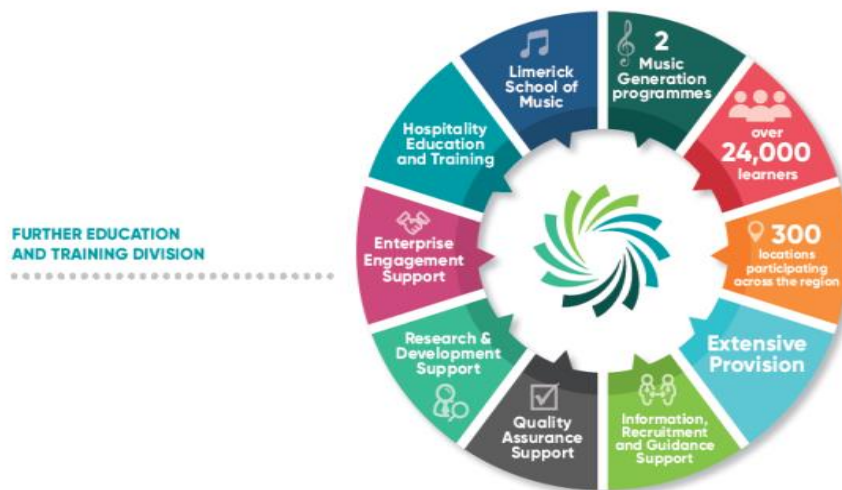




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Foreword



Welcome to the 2019 Annual Report for the Further Education and Training Division of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. This reports provides a summary of the diverse range of initiatives, programmes and services delivered by the authority in communities, workplaces and further education and training centres across Limerick and Clare during 2019. Further Education and Training plays a crucial role in the education and training landscape in Ireland and acts as an important enabler of government economic and social priorities in the Mid-West Region.

The economic and social priorities underpinning the work of the Further Education and Training Division are outlined in the SOLAS / Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board National Strategic Performance Agreement (2018-2020) and relate directly to the SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 - 2019. The **Strategic Performance Agreement** sets out the context, strategic priorities and the authority's contribution to the achievement of key national FET sector targets and articulates Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's commitment to supporting the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant to FET provision. It outlines the contribution Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will make to National Targets in the following priority areas:

- Skills for the Economy
- Active Inclusion
- Quality Provision
- Outcomes-based Planning and Funding
- Standing of FET
- National FET Targets



Internally, the work of the FET Division is underpinned by the priorities outlined in the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Statement of Strategy (2017 – 2021) and the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Service Strategic Framework (2015 – 2020).

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Strategy Statement 2017-2021 emphasises the role the authority plays in fulfilling the personal, social, economic and employability needs of the community served by the ETB. It defines four ambitious goals which Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is pursuing, namely:

- High Quality Learner and Learner Experiences
- Staff Support and Organisational Development
- Good Governance
- Partnership

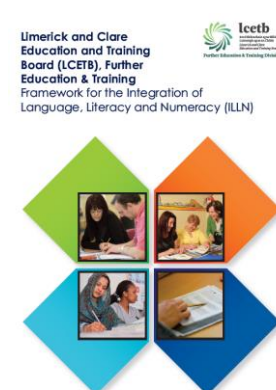
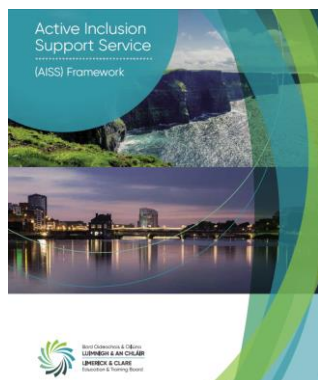
Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Strategic Framework 2015 – 2020 sets out four service-wide strategic priorities, which are in line with the SOLAS FET Strategy 2014-2019, namely

- Access and Progression
- Quality Teaching & Learning
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership.

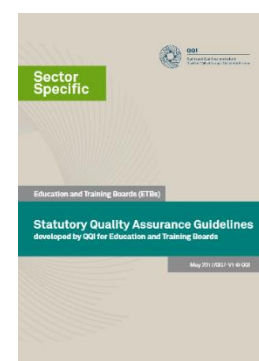


Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division has responded to National FET Priorities in the development of a range of **key local horizontal action plans and frameworks** in order to ensure the implementation locally of these national priorities. These include the following:

- FET Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan 2017 - 2020
- FET Information Recruitment and Guidance Framework 2016 - 2020
- FET Enterprise Engagement Framework 2017 -2020
- FET Active Inclusion Support Service Framework
- FET Professional Development Action Plan 2019 – 2021
- FET Framework for the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy



Quality Assurance in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Division is a multi-layered process, complying with the QQI Sector Specific Guidelines for the ETB Sector. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has formalised the establishment of the Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Governance structures, including the establishment of a Quality Council. The Quality Assurance Support Service has responsibility for managing the development, implementation, evaluation and review of an effective, integrated Quality Assurance system for all Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training provision.





Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division Overview **2019**

Within this context and working closely with a range of partners including SOLAS, the Department of Education & Skills (DES), the Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection (DEASP), Enterprise and Community Partners, the authority's FET Division delivered a suite of quality provision (both full-time and part-time) to over **25,310 beneficiaries** in 2019. It provided **2,617 course instances** in 2019 in 33 FET centres and around 300 locations across Limerick and Clare.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division Beneficiaries 2019		
Apprenticeship	2016+ Apprenticeship	65
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship Phases (2,4,6)	1,456
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship Phase 7	227
Full-time	Bridging and Foundation Training	17
Full-time	Community Training Centres	247
Full-time	Justice Workshop	27
Full-time	Local Training Initiatives	160
Full-time	PLC	2,419
Full-time	Specialist Training Providers	204
Full-time	Specific Skills Training	516
Full-time	Traineeship Employed	70
Full-time	Traineeship Training	428
Full-time	VTOS Core	853
Full-time	Youthreach	543
Part-time	Adult Literacy Groups	3,905
Part-time	BTEI Groups	2,159
Part-time	Community Education	4,962
Part-time	ESOL	1,362
Part-time	Evening Training	1,661
Part-time	FET Cooperation Hours	896
Part-time	ITABE	194
Part-time	Extra Co-Op Hours-Education Service	1,151
Part-time	Skills for Work	1,090
Part-time	Skills to Advance	595
Part-time	Voluntary Literacy Tuition	103
		25,310



Section 1 – Skills for the Economy

SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 – 2019 ¹	
Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective
Skills for the Economy The aim of this goal is that FET will address current and future needs of learners, jobseekers, employers and employees and will contribute to national economic development.	<u>Strategic Objective 1:</u> Install an appropriate advisory infrastructure to ensure that the relevant provision is informed directly by employers and reflects / responds to emerging labour market challenges. <u>Strategic Objective 2:</u> Provide further education and training programmes for a diverse range of individuals with a particular focus on long term unemployed people and unemployed young people. <u>Strategic Objective 3:</u> Implement the new apprenticeship system. <u>Strategic Objective 4:</u> Provide further education and training programmes for employees supported by a new FET employee development strategy. <u>Strategic Objective 5:</u> Provide further education and training programmes to assist people to start and sustain their own business.

2019 Irish Economic Overview

During 2019, the Irish economy continued to recover from the financial crisis and subsequent recession. At its highest in early 2012, the national unemployment rate was 16% and almost 50,000 Irish people emigrated that year. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was down to 5.7% at the end of 2018, and almost 2.28 million people were at work. Significant vulnerabilities are still evident in the domestic economy such as declining productivity levels in small-to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Infrastructural constraints, skills deficits and labour availability, as well as concentrations in some sectors and markets could, unless ameliorated, impede further progress. Internationally, Brexit, growing trade protectionism and the undermining of the rules-based international trading system continued to threaten our future economic welfare.

Against this backdrop, the Government of Ireland launched Future Jobs Ireland in 2019. This framework outlines a range of focused priority ambitions across five pillars, namely:

1. Embracing Innovation and Technological Change
2. Improving SME Productivity
3. Enhancing Skills and Developing and Attracting Talent
4. Increasing Participation in the Labour Force
5. Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy

SOLAS and the ETBs were defined as the lead/ key stakeholders in a range of ambitions and deliverables under Future Jobs Ireland 2019. These include:

- Implement “Skills to Advance” which will support employees who have lower skills levels to remain or to advance in their careers.
- Implement Upskilling Pathways in partnership with the DEASP.
- Implement the Explore Programme to help address the issue of Ireland’s low level of participation on lifelong learning, particularly targeting persons over 35 years of age.

¹ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>



- In partnership with industry, continue to expand apprenticeships and traineeship offerings to meet identified and emerging skill needs and to prepare people for new occupations.
- Implement actions in the Review of Pathways to Participation in Apprenticeship.

SMEs are the mainstay of the Irish economy and provide the majority of employment in the Mid-West region. The SOLAS strategy has particular emphasis on upskilling older low-skilled workers through Skills to Advance. This offers small businesses real opportunities to upskill individual workers. Current developments in Traineeships and Apprenticeships will contribute to providing skills sets that enable people to set up businesses and enterprises of their own e.g. Hairdressing, Real Estate, Logistics etc. By 2021, it is envisaged that over 40,000 workers will be engaging in state supported skills development initiatives representing 4,500 SMEs. This increased upskilling will enable entrepreneurs to set up a business, enable enterprise to thrive and enhance competitiveness on the European and global stage. The 2019 National Skills Bulletin (a report by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS on behalf of the National Skills Council) observed that the greatest increases in employment were for those in professional and skilled trades, with chefs and construction workers in big demand.

1. Strategic Engagement - the FET Enterprise Engagement Support Service (EESS)

During 2019, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division remained committed to enhancing and maximising its engagement with employers to ensure the relevance of its provision for the benefit of FET learners, and to enhance its capacity to meet the skills needs of the Mid-West region. A range of strategies have been developed to advance this work and meet the needs of the economy, communities and individuals. In February 2019, the Regional Enterprise Plan Mid-West to 2020, highlighting the strategic objectives and key actions involving Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. Responsibilities identified to drive enterprise growth included organisational inputs to assist economic and job creation in the film industry, develop regional 'Smart E-Hubs', assist local enterprises identify their skills' needs, pilot enterprise initiatives targeted at unemployment blackspots, expand the Mid-West STEM Alliance and develop a marine enterprise zone.

The FET Enterprise Engagement Support Service (EESS) is engaging with a broad range of stakeholders, employers and learners, improving engagement with them in an ongoing discourse about the strategic role of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division in skills development in the Mid-West. The **sectoral approach to skills development through skills clusters** (i.e. Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for Film, Limerick for Hospitality, STEM Alliance, etc.) is a unique and innovative approach, which facilitates the sharing of regional labour market intelligence, and allows industry needs to be matched to education providers. Regional intelligence is also gathered through Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board representation on the Chambers of Commerce, LEOs, IBEC, chairing the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum, IDA, DEASP, etc, enabling the FET Division to address specific training needs and design bespoke programmes where required.

During 2019, the Enterprise Engagement Support Service facilitated or participated in the following groups:

Group	Meetings held in 2019
Enterprise Engagement Framework Group	4 per year
↳ Enterprise Engagement Core Group	Weekly/bimonthly
↳ Sub group	6 per year
Mid-West Regional Skills Forum	4 per year
Sub Groups	
↳ Limerick for IT	4 per year
↳ Limerick for Film	4 per year
↳ Limerick for Engineering	12 per year
↳ Limerick for Retail	4 per year
↳ Limerick for Freight	5 to date



This collaborative approach has resulted in the development of key provision such as an ICT traineeship, Pathways to Engineering programme, etc.

- **Limerick for Engineering** brings together over 64 employers and education providers from the Mid-West region and provides a direct link to employers in developing a pipeline of apprentices, technicians and engineers to meet the specific demands of the engineering sector in the Mid-West. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, through the EESS, is an active member of the Limerick for Engineering Strategic Team, which plans for the development of a sectoral approach for skills development in the region.

Spotlight on Limerick for Engineering



The Limerick for Engineering Event took place in March 2019 in the Shannon Airport Departures Hall.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board apprentices, instructors and advisors hosted a variety of demonstrations at our stand including augmented reality welding. This free event was open to all and aimed to encourage school leavers and career changers to consider a rewarding, exciting career within the engineering sector. Brought to

life by the Limerick for Engineering consortium, of which Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is a member, the showcase featured interactive stands from almost 50 leading companies based in the Mid-West region, including Cook Medical, Johnson & Johnson, Roadbridge, Analog Devices and Ei Electronics.

Spotlight on Limerick for Film

The first ever prop training course in Ireland was delivered in April 2019, in association with Limerick College of Further Education, along with Screen Skills Ireland and Troy Studios, with thanks to Screen Guilds of Ireland.

The course titled 'Introduction to Props for Film and Television Production' had 12 participants from the Limerick region who took part in the course over 5 weeks, gaining a broad understanding of the practical and theory of

how a props department operates. They undertook field trips to Troy Studios Limerick and Ardmore Studios. In week 4 participants also undertook a practical evening dressing a set at Troy Studios.

This course initiative is a significant step in the development of future prop crew in the Limerick region for the film sector. Due to the high level of interest, a follow-up course may take place later this year.





- During 2019, the EESS also worked with the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum to design and deliver provision under the **Explore Programme**. The objective of the Explore programme was to assist older (35+) employees within the manufacturing sector to develop and enhance their digital competencies. Explore was designed by the Regional Skills Fora in partnership with the Skills Planning Enterprise Engagement unit in the Department of Education & Skills. During 2019, a total of 100 participants representing 39 manufacturing companies completed the programme. Nine training groups covering the counties of Clare, Limerick and Tipperary have been facilitated between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and Tipperary Education and Training Board.

- The SOLAS strategy has particular emphasis on upskilling older low-skilled workers through **Skills to Advance**. During 2019, the FET Division provided targeted education and training in line with the National Skills Strategy to meet the specific requirements of enterprise in the region. It also facilitated ongoing dialogue with employers, employees and skills fora (like the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum) to respond to identified skills and training needs in the region, and develop a suite of programmes under STA. Again, a sectoral approach was adopted to meet the skills shortages identified in the national skills bulletin. Courses have been delivered in areas such as Data Analysis & Business Skills, Supervisory Management, Information Technology, MS Excel Spreadsheet Skills, Mig & Tig Welding, Lean Six Sigma, Green Belt Warehousing, Inventory Control, Payroll Manual & Computerised, and many more opportunities. A video promoting the benefits of STA working with a particular sector (healthcare) was developed and promoted on the learningandskills.ie website.



- In November 2019, the EESS also attended the official briefing on the closure of Molex in the Mid-West. This event attended by Heather Humphreys, Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation; Pat Breen Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection provided an opportunity for the FET Division to present FET opportunities available for Molex workers, through Skills to Advance. A **Government Response Team** was set up to provide training opportunities for over 550 workers facing job losses in the mid-west region with redundancies scheduled in Molex and Avara Pharmaceuticals.

ESSS and guidance counsellors also organised information career planning sessions for both workforces and used Skills to Advance funding to provide specific skills training.





2. Delivering provision to meet skills needs for the Economy

- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's **Hospitality Education and Training Centre** provides learners with QQI and other accredited programmes for a variety of jobs in the hotel and catering industry. These programmes directly target people who are unemployed and enables them to retrain in a specific skills programme. To date, the programme has linked directly with the IHF, VFI, Fáilte Ireland, DEASP and a local consortium of hoteliers in the Mid-West region. 75% of graduates of the programme gain employment.

Spotlight on Diageo Employability Programme for Marginalised Groups



In July 2019, a special graduation ceremony of the Diageo Ireland's Learning for Life programme was held at the Guinness Storehouse. This programme aims to equip people with the skills and training necessary for employment in the hospitality sector. The 14 most recent graduates were a combination of learners from direct provision and the Limerick and Clare areas. This is the first time that Diageo Ireland has integrated learners from different communities into these blended programmes. The initiative was run in partnership with the Department of Justice and Equality, Doras Luimnigh and the Department of Employment and Social Protection. Liam Reid, Director of Corporate Relations, Diageo Ireland, said: 'I wish to extend my gratitude to Limerick Clare Education and Training Board, Positive to Work Skillnet, along with the industry partners for the hours and dedication they provide to our young graduates to ensure the Learning for Life programme continues to be a success.'

- As part of the Employability Skills programme, Core Skills Limerick City ran 19 programmes for employees in 2019. The focus was particularly on developing links with employers in the Hospitality & Catering industry. The employers that we worked with from this industry were: Carambola Kidz, Zest! and The Absolute Hotel. The courses undertaken were 'Introduction to Customer Service', 'Writing L2' and Workplace Language.
- A number of Accounting firms in Ennis have recruited directly from our Ennis Community College of Further Education Accounting Technicians programmes. Some current learners have taken up part-time employment in local Ennis firms while they continue to study. Employers have reported their satisfaction with the excellent calibre of personnel coming through the programme.
- The FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus, VTOS Provision delivered a twelve-week Contact Centre Operations Course and nine of the learners all procured full-time employment with the local Arise company. This initiative was recommended by Turas Nua, with whom close ties have now been developed.
- There continues to be strong employment opportunities throughout the county for Healthcare Personnel and progression opportunities are many for BTEI Healthcare participants. Introductory courses at level 4 lead to progression for the learners onto full awards at level 5. For people whose English is not their first language, a special course at level 4 has been designed which incorporates an English Language module. This will make it easier for participants to progress to level 5. A number of employers only require completion of certain modules and this has led to the provision of individual level 5 Healthcare components for employees.
- There has been an increase in demand for Level 6 provision and the BTEI responded by introducing a programme in the Shannon Town Centre Campus, while the programme, which commenced in Kilkee in 2018 continued. Childcare courses are predominantly delivered at evening time or on Saturdays as participants are usually in employment; however, a daytime course was introduced during 2019 to facilitate people who are available during the day.



3. Apprenticeship and Traineeship Development

SOLAS has set ambitious targets for 50,000 apprenticeship and traineeship new registrations up to 2020 nationally – to which each ETB must contribute. Apprenticeships typically consist of three off-the-job training phases and four on-the-job phases. To undertake an Apprenticeship programme individuals must first be registered by an employer. The FET Division provides 2016+ Apprenticeship; Apprenticeship Phase 7, and Apprenticeship Phases (2,4,6). The new apprenticeship model places significant demand on the FET Division in terms of the management, administration, validation, monitoring and evaluation of the new apprenticeship programmes. **In 2019, the FET Division provided traineeships and apprenticeships to 2,246 beneficiaries.**

ESSS have also collaborated with MWRSF and the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Schools Division to set up **industry briefings for Guidance Counsellors**. Information sessions took place with Ei, Stryker and General Motors to advise guidance counsellors on the pathways to work in the relevant industry sectors. Information on graduate entries and apprenticeship routes to workplaces are part of the information sessions in order to enable guidance counsellors to have all relevant information re. recruitment to industry in the Mid-West, and the range of options available including traineeships and apprenticeships.

The development and provision of new apprenticeships and traineeships is providing a clearer focus and increasing the profile of FET amongst potential learners, parents and schools guidance counsellors.

Spotlight on Mid-West Apprenticeship & Traineeship Careers Showcase 2019



In October 2019, as part of the European Vocational Skills Week, over 2000 people attended the Mid- West Apprenticeship & Traineeship Careers Showcase at the Great National Southcourt Hotel. It was hosted by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in partnership with the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum. This annual event is the only one of its kind in Ireland and highlighted the active collaboration of the FET Division with 19 schools in the Mid-West.

The event showcased the work and expertise of FET Centres, Raheen and Shannon campuses. Indeed, the FET Centre, Shannon Campus, is directly involved with Mid-West based companies in the aviation, electronic, precision engineering and toolmaking areas. Other exciting pathways in

Apprenticeship and Traineeship were highlighted in the areas of construction, electrical, engineering, hairdressing, beauty, hospitality and motor technology.

In 2019, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board announced **Pathways to Apprenticeship** - a new initiative offering a range of courses that you can take in advance of an apprenticeship. These courses offer essential skills designed to help you access and transition to a full apprenticeship. Similar in structure, pathways to apprenticeship courses are delivered in a blended combination of on-the-job employer-based training and on-the-job training in a Further Education and Training College. On successful completion of a Pathways to Apprenticeship course, learners are awarded a QQI Level 5 Major Award Certificate, which is recognised internationally.





A key milestone for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division in 2019, was the validation of its National Hairdressing Apprenticeship as a statutory apprenticeship under the Industrial Training Act 1967, the first nationally recognised standard for the hairdressing industry.

Spotlight on the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship

Limerick and Clare Education and Training board received approval from SOLAS to develop a National Hairdressing Apprenticeship in December 2017. By October 2019 the programme was validated by QQI and the Industrial Training (Hairdressing Industry) Order S.I. No. 512/2019 was made. This established the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship as a statutory apprenticeship under the Industrial Training Act 1967.



This was an exceptional exercise in collaboration and relationship building between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board - in particular the NHA Development Team in Raheen, the FET TEL and the QA Support Services, its collaborating ETB colleagues and hairdressing industry stakeholders. It has forged relationships between industry and education providers, by providing a platform for employers and educators to work together on a shared vision. The collaboration events facilitated openness and two-way communication, creative thinking, venting of concerns and tolerance of differing perspectives. The process shaped an

understanding of the industry needs, by providing insights into psychological and sociological realities, established skill sets, knowledge, experiences and customs inherent in the industry. It also nurtured open supportive relationships within the ETB community who successfully came together to develop a national standard for the hairdressing industry in Ireland.

The National Hairdressing Apprenticeship Programme is the first “post-2016” apprenticeship developed by the ETB sector to be recommended for approval without any specific validation conditions.

<http://hairdressingapprenticeship.ie/>

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) was integrated into the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship programme from the early stages of design. TEL principles were built into the programme validation document which was submitted to QQI and formally validated in September 2019, in the individual module descriptors and sections such as the teaching and learning strategy and the assessment strategy.

The FET TEL team worked closely with the NHA development team and encouraged all ideas/inputs that could use TEL to enhance the user experience. Some examples of how TEL was used include the following:

- Moodle hairapp.ie site developed with access for apprentices and teachers of the programme that includes an Office 365 account and an Outlook email address
- Moodle and instructional design for development of teaching and learning resources and assessments
- MS Teams (part of the Office 365 suite) for collaboration between NHA team members
- H5P for development of interactive video tutorials
- Online assessment of learners via Moodle hairapp.ie
- Intelliboard Moodle plug-in to allow data analysis of all instances of the programme nationally by designated users
- Potential teachers of the apprenticeship programme were given a one-day workshop in using and incorporating resources such as Kahoot! and Zeetings into their classrooms, along with training on Moodle basics.



Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board as co-ordinating provider of the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship, is also committed to utilising RPL as an instrument for determining standard access equivalences and for the award of credit or exemptions to apprentices with qualifications or prior experience in the Hairdressing field of knowledge.



Introducing the first registered apprentices on the newly validated National Hairdressing Apprenticeship at their induction briefing day in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Raheen Campus. This was a historic day for the industry after almost two years from the initial proposal to the first intake of apprentices. The apprenticeship is a minimum of three years in duration with a ratio of 80:20 on-the-job and off-the-job work-based and Further Education and Training centre-based training and education. On completion, graduates from the programme will be awarded a QQI Level 6 Major Award on

the National Framework of Qualifications. The roll-out of the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship means that for the first time in Ireland there is now a nationally recognised standard for the hairdressing industry.



Section 2 – Active Inclusion

SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 – 2019 ²	
Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective
Active Inclusion The aim of this goal is that FET provision will support the active inclusion of people of all abilities in society with special reference to literacy and numeracy.	<u>Strategic Objective 1:</u> Support Active Inclusion across FET <u>Strategic Objective 2:</u> Devise and implement a strategy to promote literacy and numeracy across FET.

Enabling every citizen, notably the most disadvantaged, to fully participate in society, including having a job – is a European and Irish Government priority. Active inclusion was a key goal of the Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy (2014-2019) see above, which states that “The FET sector will seek to increase levels of active inclusion through the provision of high quality, more accessible and flexible education and training programmes and supports suited to the identified needs of the individual”. In May 2019, the Joint Committee on Education and Skills published a report titled Education Inequality & Disadvantage and Barriers to Education, highlighting barriers to education faced by adult learners as they work to gain access to educational opportunities. Examples of these barriers which have a particular impact on adult learners include the financial cost of full-time study, childcare, geography, public transport and lack of institutional access.

The complex and individual nature of an individual’s learning journey and the myriad of experiences that underpin the learning process requires a multi-faceted response from the FET Division. **A range of horizontal FET initiatives and frameworks have supported the active inclusion of learners** from a diverse range of backgrounds over the past few years, including specific actions under the Technology Enhanced Learning Action Plan; the Information, Recruitment and Guidance Framework; Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy Framework and Active Inclusion Framework. These strategies aim to enhance the capacity of the FET Division to provide a range of supports to enable all our learners to have an equal opportunity for success within their programme.

In 2019, the **Active Inclusion Support Service** concentrated on three broad areas during 2019 which included specific purpose pilot projects, learner supports and development and implementation of a range of policies and procedures designed to promote equality and active inclusion. This work has been framed around Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board’s FET Public Sector Duty. Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 which places a positive duty on public sector bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality, and protect human rights, in their daily work.

1. Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Supporting the concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is key to inclusion because it increases access to equal learning opportunities within the mainstream teaching environment, including for learners with disabilities. UDL provides flexibility in the way information is provided, in the way learners respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the way learners are engaged. In addition, UDL reduces barriers for all learners, including those with disabilities, with literacy or numeracy difficulties, and with limited English proficiency. During 2019, Limerick

² <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>



and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division ran the National Teaching and Learning Forum's digital badging on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a joint initiative between key FET support services, i.e. TEL, PD and AISS. This course was put in place to support staff in redesigning the delivery of their learning using multiple means of engagement, representation and expression.

2. 2019 Pilot Projects

- **The Drive Project** (*Core Skills and Bedford Row, Limerick City*): This project was put in place to support members of the Traveller Community to get their Driver Theory test. Once this area of learning was achieved, a further plan was devised to support participants to progress onto driving lessons with the view of sitting the driving test and gain their full driver licence. Numerous travellers expressed an interest in getting further supports and sitting their Truck and Bus theory test. Classes were put in place to support the progression of these learners to gain their Truck and Bus full driver licence. Discussions have also begun with the Access Officer in LIT. The results of the initiative included 184 participants with 68 licences achieved and 36 full licences and a number of others at various stages of the process. This project won an **AONTAS Star Awards in 2020**.
- **Learning Support Pilot Project in the FET Centre, Raheen Campus**: The project aims to enhance supports available to learners attending the FET Centre, Raheen Campus. Incorporating principles of universal design for learning, learning supports are designed to address barriers to and promote engagement in teaching and learning. Learning Support relates either directly to the programme/component which the learner is undertaking or supplemental programmes such as English, Maths, ICT and/or study skills.
- **Learning Support Pilot Project in FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus**.
 - A full-time Active Inclusion Support Service Resource Worker was appointed in the Kilmallock Road Campus in 2019. This work involves outreach to the local communities to enhance recruitment as well as working closely with at-risk learners to support their retention in FET. The AISS also appointed an engineering teacher half-time to VTOS, to deliver QQI Engineering Skills L3 and L4. Good progress was made in 2019 in strengthening partnerships with Turas Nua and INTREO.
 - A number of information sessions were provided at their offices in Limerick city and a substantial number of unemployed learners were recruited to FET courses. VTOS provision, based at the FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus made substantial efforts to recruit new learners including liaison with local communities (AISS worker), as well as advertisements in the Limerick Post and Leader newspapers. Several social media platforms were also used very successfully for promotion and recruitment.
- **Network of Learning Hubs**: Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and the Active Inclusion Support Service (AISS) worked together to develop a network of Self-Access Learning Hubs across the larger FET campuses. This is a two-pronged approach involving the strengthening of front-of-house learning support staff in our larger campuses in conjunction with the development of self-access learning hubs. During 2019, TEL and AISS provided a suite of assistive and learning support technologies to support learners accessing all programmes within 6 named FET Campuses. In addition, staff in TEL and Learning Support were put in place in the FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus and the FET Centre, Raheen Campus, to roll out the initiative.
- **A QQI Level 4 Horticulture Award under BTEI** ran over an 18 months period with 12 learners from the Southside of Limerick City and beyond. Participants achieved certification in different modules such as Plant Propagation; Plant ID and Maintenance: Growing Fruit; Growing Vegetables; Safe Horticultural Practice as well as core modules like Personal Effectiveness and Work Experiences. The project was run in Tait House, situated in one of the 'unemployment black spots in Limerick City' and the initiative was in turn supported by staff in this Centre throughout. Tait House will continue to offer Horticulture training in future in its facility, which will now be used as a future venue for part time provision in the Horticulture area.



- **AISS “Pathways to Progression”** pilot initiative by Youthreach Mid-Clare and Core Skills Clare. This project worked with groups of young people on a Pre-Youthreach Programme over the summer months to develop their confidence and learning-to-learn skills. These young people have now progressed to our Youthreach Provision of this Pilot.

3. Learner Health and Wellbeing

- **Provision of Access to Psychological Supports:** The AISS has put a procedure in place for the provision of confidential, one-to-one, solution-focused, psychological counselling sessions on an hourly, daily or weekly basis, depending on the needs of the FET Centres. Following initial conversations (which may be through a relevant guidance counsellor/ provision manager/ appropriate resource worker) learners can self-refer through the relevant ETB contact person and avail of up to 6 sessions (with the possibility of 1 – 6 additional sessions, if required). While learners in distress can be responded to within office hours, if an emergency appointment is available, no out of hours is provided and learners are referred to the Samaritans and the crisis teams phone number. Access to counselling is one part of the range of resources and supports which should/could be made available to our learners including well-being programmes/study skills/induction/relaxation and stress management classes.
- **Supports for Learners with Disabilities:** In addition to the disability fund available to PLCs to support learners with disability, the AISS is piloting a model of supports for learners with disabilities through VTOS. Relevant staff have done the Needs Assessment Training with AHEAD and follow-up mentored sessions with the Disability Officer from LIT. Protocols have been put in place and additional training in UDL and Assistive technology have been provided to support staff.
- The FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus, VTOS Provision has a **part-time Attendance Support Officer** who monitors attendance on a weekly basis and who also provides support to learners who experience barriers to full participation. A **Care Team** has also been set up for the purpose of learner retention. This team comprises the VTOS Assistant Co-ordinator, the Guidance Counsellor, AISS worker and the Attendance Support Officer.
- A new initiative **“Pop-Up” Creative Workshop** was trialled successfully with a group of learners in Focus Ireland. The format is a one-off workshop which suits learners who are dealing with homelessness, mental health issues and other social issues. Learners attending a creative writing class with Focus Ireland, while genuinely interested in the course work, found regular attendance at the weekly classes too challenging. Those who missed a class felt that they were falling behind in the course work and eventually just stopped coming. With the once off “POP- UP” every workshop is a stand-alone. The workshops can be more interactive and also open to drop-in learners.

Spotlight on Mental Health



The Amber Flag was raised at our Further Education and Training Centre, Clonroad Campus, on Friday 13th of December 2019. The Amber Flag is a mental health initiative designed by Pieta House to promote positive mental health within educational settings and beyond. To achieve Amber Flag status, Clonroad Campus hosted several mental health awareness and fundraising events for Pieta House.



4. Learner Supports

- **Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service (IRGSS)**

The **Information, Recruitment and Guidance** teams in Limerick and Clare work with learners to develop progression pathways and address issues as they arise. New information hubs have been opened in Limerick and Ennis and a new website <http://learningandskills.ie/contact/> directs learners to a portal space for booking appointments while a free-phone number 1800 70 70 77 is available for general queries. New marketing and advertising campaigns have extended the reach of information to a variety of cohorts.



As part of Jobs Week 2019, the Mid-West Careers' Fair took place at the South Court Hotel in March 2019. FET Information, Recruitment and Guidance staff hosted a stand at the event alongside over 40 employers and training providers to promote FET opportunities, career pathways and upskilling to attendees.

Spotlight on FET Opportunities Fair O'Connell Avenue Campus



As part of the Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival 2019, staff and learners in the FET Centre, O'Connell Avenue Campus hosted a Further Education and Training Opportunities Fair.

This has become an annual event in the heart of the city and provided attendees with information and resources on full and part time opportunities available.

It was another successful and well-attended event in 2019.

Individual FET centres also organised many open days in 2019, highlighting the benefits of FET as a relevant learning pathway, and the range of opportunities available in Limerick and Clare.

Spotlight on West Limerick Lifelong Learning Expo 2019

Representatives from our Further Education and Training Centres in Newcastle West, Abbeyfeale, Dromcollogher and Shanagolden presented information on all our provision in West Limerick.

Attendees were offered interactive course activities like beauty, cookery and horticulture. The event was a fantastic opportunity to meet with all our community partners in West Limerick.

This event was part of the Limerick Lifelong Learning Festival in April 2019





Spotlight on the 2019 Open Day in our FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus in Limerick City



What a day at the Open Day in our Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus in Limerick City!

Lots of visitors enjoyed the various events taking place, including the participation in the creation of a portrait of our special guest, style queen and model agent Celia Holman Lee.

- **Supports around learners assessments**

- A focus of the **Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ILLN) implementation group** was to **identify assessment tools** and professional development for all FET staff. In 2019, a pilot exercise for the FET literacy provision (Core Skills) was supported by the FET Research and Evaluation Officer to evaluate the usability and feasibility of the roll out of the ETBI / SOLAS Initial and Ongoing Skills Assessment for Adult Literacy and Numeracy Learners – Guidelines (2018). The ILLN implementation group responded to recommendations from this pilot by staff attending national training and also running PD sessions with Elizabeth McSkeane the author of the national guidelines locally within the ETB. This will allow those in provision areas delivering levels 1-3, the opportunity to become skilled in the rollout of the guidelines.

In addition, an internal audit of all LLN initial assessments processes and procedures across the FET full-time and part-time provision in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board was carried out provide a baseline from which to plan for the introduction of LLN initial assessment into all FET provision, with the objective to enhance the consistency of initial assessment processes across the service.

- **New FET Quality Assurance Assessment Procedures and Processes** were introduced in 2019 along with nationally developed FET specific handbooks to support academic writing and referencing. New assessment procedures in relation to reasonable accommodation and compassionate consideration support inclusion.
- The Equal Status Act 2000 (Section 4) requires education and training establishments to provide reasonable accommodation to meet the needs of learners who have a disability (Government of Ireland, 2000). **Reasonable accommodation in assessment** will only be accommodated when a learner can demonstrate with appropriate evidence/documentation that, because of a specific need, s/he cannot compete on equal terms, under standard assessment conditions, with his/her peers. While many of our learners (particularly those coming through the post primary system who may have received Reasonable Accommodation as part of their assessment to date) have access to appropriate evidence, the HEA Fund for Learners with a Disability does not cover costs for “assessment or diagnosis of a disability”. Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training did not want to place an undue financial burden on others. In order to be as inclusive as possible and to ensure fair and consistent assessment of learners, the Further Education and Training team reviewed a number of options which could be administered within centres by appropriately supervised trained staff.



The Wide Range Achievement Test 5 was chosen from the list outlined by the DES in Circular Letter 0058/2019 (Revising Circular 0035/2017) as the age range is appropriate for Further Education and Training Learners (5–94) and WRAT 5 can be used as evidence within the Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examination (RACE). All of our Further Education and Training Centres have been offered WRAT 5 training through the Professional Development Support Service and WRAT 5 packs have been purchased and are available through the Active Inclusion Support Service.

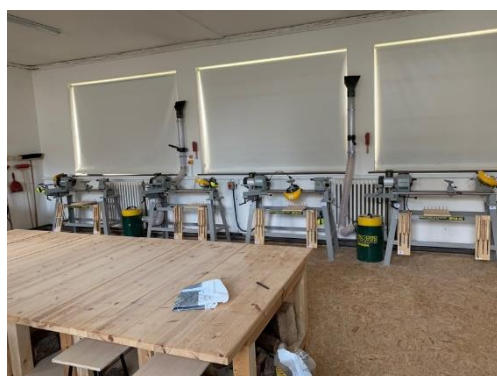
Spotlight on Innovative RPL Project with the Irish Defence Forces



Five members of the 12 Infantry Battalion, Sarsfield Barracks, Limerick, received QQI certificates at an award ceremony as part of a joint Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) project between Limerick Clare Education and Training Board and the Irish Defence Forces. Private Lorraine Brogan, Private Deirdre Crow, Corporal John Corry, Private Paul Hogan and Corporal Sean Gleeson from the Defence Forces were linked with mentors from our Core Skills and Back to Education Initiative provision in Limerick City.

Through workshops and one-to-one meetings, these individuals graduated with award certification in Communications, Word Processing, Safety and Health at Work and Work Experience at QQI Level 5.

- Ongoing work in relation to **Capital and Infrastructure Investment** across our FET Centres is designed to improve



the quality of our buildings and enhance the on course experience for our learners and staff and ensure our facilities are accessible, welcoming and fit-for-purpose. During 2019, LCETB FET has invested in upgrading facilities in order to expand the range and quality of provision in Ennis, Kilmallock, Abbeyfeale, Kilrush and Miltown Malbay.

Figure 1 - New Woodturning Room, Abbeyfeale

A significant milestone was the complete refurbishment and extension of the FET Centre, Clonroadmore Campus, Ennis, making it a state of the art FET campus.



- **Transportation** is an issue for many of our learners. While we work with the local accessible transport providers in each county whenever possible, the timing and location of programmes has required the FET Division to put solutions in place. During 2019, transport has been provided to various programmes either through the use of LCETB mini buses or those hired to support learner's attendance on specific programmes. For example, funding for transport was provided to facilitate learners from the FET Centre, Kilrush Campus, to attend more specialised courses in the FET Centre, Shannon Campus.



- BTEI Limerick City: Offering talks and organising events for part-time learners to **guide them on their lifelong learning journey**, is always ongoing in BTEI and below is a list of 4 specific events that ran in O'Connell Avenue in 2019.
 - a. Managing your Life as an Adult Learner (January)
 - b. Further Education and Training Fair (April)
 - c. Getting ready for employment and progressing your career (May)
 - d. Preparing for Third Level, Level 6 and Higher (November)

Generally, these are very well attended and received by all and evaluations show that these events support learners in making course choices, and getting focused in relation to employment opportunities.

- A Core Skills staff member attended the European Basic Skills Network in June 2019. This was a wonderful opportunity to gain a greater understanding of how our counterparts in Europe engage with Literacy Learner and initiatives that can be developed locally.
- **Celebration of Learners** - Many awards ceremonies took place in 2019 across all FET Centres. They were occasions where learner achievements in non-formal and formal learning were recognised and celebrated. Moyross Adult Education group held an awards ceremony in the refurbished Community Hub in June which was attended by approx. 100 learners and children. In November learners from across the city attended a ceremony in Southill Hub and were presented with their certificates by the Mayor. This was also the occasion when seven community groups who previously had their own QQI Quality Assurance were officially launched as Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board outreach centres.





Spotlight on a Learner's Journey

Derek Byrne's journey to third-level education started with a visit to a member of staff in St. Munchin's Community Centre in Kileely in Limerick City. This is one of a number of Community-based locations wherein which Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board part-time provision is delivered in the City. Derek sat down together and made a plan of how to meet my goal of becoming a Youth worker.

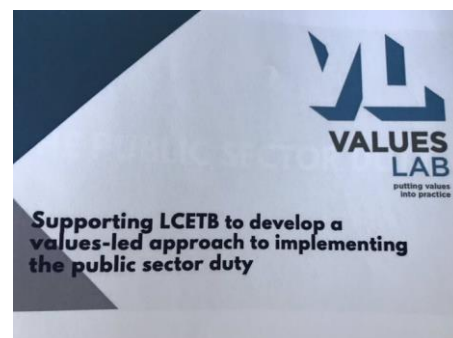


Derek says he was afraid that he had spent too long out of education as it had been sixteen years since he had sat in a classroom. However, once he got started he did really well, and he completed 3 minor awards (under the Back to Education Initiative) and with hard work and the support of his Tutor and the Centre staff got distinctions in all three. He then felt confident enough to apply for the level six Transition to Higher Education Access course in LIT. The access office was a great help in making the transition from a community-based course to Third level.

Since then, Derek has progressed again onto a level 8 award in Social Care in LIT. This is a brilliant example of how getting the right supports in education can enable a person to realise their dreams and potential, Derek's dream to work with and help people has become a reality!

5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- **Community education** classes were provided in 13 DEIS schools in Limerick City. The focus of these classes is Family Learning (parent and child or parent only) Subjects included cookery, keep-fit, Irish language, beauty and skincare and woodwork. In the extract below from the Tusla HSCL Autumn 2019 Newsletter, HSCL Co-ordinator in Le Cheile NS Eoghan O'Byrne describes a family learning course. *'Le Chéile NS recently completed a five-week workshop focused on woodwork with their Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Community Education tutor Brian Mitchell. The programme involved fourteen parents and children. The project utilised cross-curricular subject areas with a strong emphasis on numeracy. Children and parents were measuring, constructing and estimating during the design of their bird boxes. The project also linked in with the Biodiversity initiative currently running in the school. In addition to the bird boxes, we constructed window boxes, which will lead to the next phase of the project, planting and cultivating. There were some fantastically creative and artistic designs. There was great collaboration during the project and children and parents thoroughly enjoyed and benefitted from the experience. We cannot wait for phase two to begin.'*
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is undertaking a programme of work to support the organisation to implement the **public sector equality and human rights duty** (the Duty): section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014. The Duty places a legal obligation on public bodies to proactively promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect human rights for its service users and staff. During 2019, the FET Division through AISS commissioned Values Lab to support the organisation to develop a values-led approach to implementing the Duty. This involved the development of an Equality and Human Rights Values Statement: a tool to support the organisation to implement the Duty across all function areas. A draft Values Statement was developed in September 2019, following a process with senior personnel across the ETB's key function areas. The Statement establishes the equality and human rights values espoused by the ETB and identifies a statement of priority and approach for each value. Three focus groups were held in





- November 2019 and a draft Action Plan and Values statement was agreed with senior management within the ETB in December 2019. Further work on this project will continue in 2020.
- Ennis Community College of Further Education programme have been working closely with the local council to improve wheelchair accessibility between the campus and LIT where some classes are being held. The result had been improved pathways and level crossings from Bindon Street to Harmony Road for wheelchair users.
- During 2019, LCETB was successful in its application for AMIF funding. The *AMIF Realising Potential* project application is based on extensive consultation with our partner projects and our own experience of developing and delivering curriculum to migrants. It is designed to address needs emerging from structural gaps and resourcing issues which fall outside the remit of one particular agency or organisation. The Migrant Integration Strategy (Department of Justice and Equality, 2017) sets out the Government's commitment to the promotion of migrant integration as a "key part of Ireland's renewal and as an underpinning principle of Irish society" (DJE 2017, p. 2). The Strategy highlights that "migrants [should] have language skills sufficient to enable them to participate in economic life and in wider society" (Ibid, p.10). This project has two broad themes related to the acquisition of language skills and the participation in economic life:
 - The first theme is designed to address structural gaps which exist in relation to providing access to appropriate levels of ESOL at each stage in the learning journey (including CEFR accredited language certification).
 - The second theme is concerned with providing access to targeted educational guidance for adult migrants including providing assistance in recognition of prior learning and qualifications achieved in their country of origin.
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is supportive of national ESOL initiatives including participation in research to support the development of ESOL policy guidelines. LCETB works with asylum seekers in a range of Reception Centres and Emergency Accommodation – two of which were newly established in 2019.
 - Knockalisheen Reception Centre
 - Hanrattys Hotel Direct Provision Centre Limerick City
 - Mount Trenchard Reception Centre, Foynes
 - Ennis Direct Provision Centre (New Dec 2019)
 - King Thomond Reception Centre, Lisdoonvarna
 - Central Hotel Emergency Accommodation Centre, Miltown Malbay (New 2019)
 - Clare Lodge

It is important to note that County Clare has a higher than average proportion of Asylum Seekers and Refugees and has the 4th highest percentage of this group from the population across the 26 counties.

- EDNIP- Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Inclusion, LifeLong Learning was a local partnership (led by MIC working with 5 DEIS schools, supported by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and a variety of local stakeholders – The Project Management Committee). It was co-financed by the EU under the AMIF fund. The project promoted integration through a strategic school-based suite of interventions targeting, school staff, children and parents. The parent language initiatives and family learning initiated by EDNIP (finishing in experience where Majeda supported tutors and learners in the classroom and in the Learner Hub. This was an enriching experience for our Tutors and staff to gain a greater understanding of the Arabic and Muslim culture (Jul 2019) was supported and mainstreamed by Core Skills Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.
- For the first time in 2019, Core Skills were invited by Mary Immaculate College to engage in their MICEP - Mainstreaming Intercultural competence in Education (an Erasmus+ Project) where a Master's Learner from Hungary spent 6 weeks in Core Skills in O'Connell Avenue. This was a very beneficial and positive.
- ESOL Staff Days-Sharing of good practice. As part of the rollout of the Integrated Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ILLN) Framework the FET Division hosted 2 ESOL Professional Development Days in 2019, the purpose of which was to bring ESOL practitioners from part and full time programmes together and enable where staff to showcase in-house expertise, examples of good practice and innovation. An ESOL community of practice was established



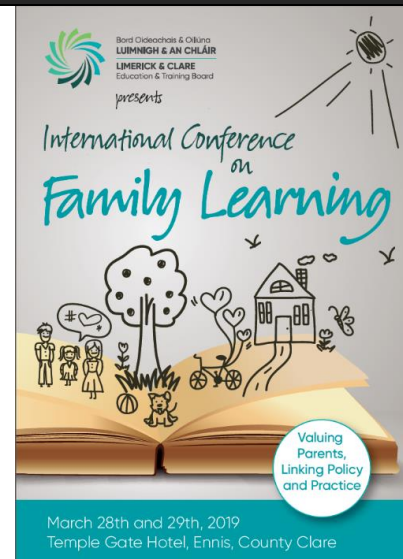
- which focussed on professional development and practice sharing. The main focus of the days was Teaching ESOL to Learners with Low Levels of Prior Education with inputs from attendees at a recent EU-Speak Conference. The PD days also gave an opportunity to hear updates on key local, regional and national ESOL related initiatives.

Spotlight on Family Learning

The Further Education and Training Division of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board hosted an **international Family Learning Conference** entitled Valuing Parents- Linking Policy and Practice on the 28th and 29th March 2019.

The conference brought a range of national and international experts together to look at Family Learning as a valuable element in further education provision and examine ways to engage with local and migrant families to improve the educational outcomes of children and parents.

The aim of the conference was to showcase models of good practice in Family Learning work in Ireland and in Europe and to highlight the role of Family Learning in tackling educational disadvantage. It is hoped that the conference will influence policy and consider strategies to rolling out a national model of Family Learning based on effective interagency working.





Section 3 – Quality Provision

SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 – 2019³

Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective
Quality Provision. The aim of this goal is that FET will provide high quality education and training programmes and will meet appropriate national and international quality standards.	<u>Strategic Objective 1:</u> Respond to the needs of learners. <u>Strategic Objective 1:</u> Ensure excellence in FET programme development. <u>Strategic Objective 3:</u> Upgrade the Guidance Service within FET and extend it to all who engage with FET, including employees. <u>Strategic Objective 4:</u> Develop standards for staff qualifications in the FET sector. <u>Strategic Objective 5:</u> Provide effective pathways for FET graduate to Levels 7 and 8 within the higher education sector.

The aim of the Quality Provision goal in the SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 – 2019 is “*that FET will provide high quality education and training programmes and will meet appropriate national and international quality standards*”. The strategic objectives outlined in the FET Strategy (extract above) concentrate on the development of a range of systems and strategies focussed on high quality outcomes which ensure that our learners can achieve their full potential over time over.

1. Quality Assurance

QQI define Quality Assurance (QA) as “*a term generally used to describe the processes that seek to ensure that the learning environment (including teaching and research) reaches an acceptable threshold of quality. QA is also used to describe the enhancement of education and training provision and the standards attained by learners*”⁴.

The Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Governance structures were formalised following the 2018 Executive Self-evaluation process with QQI. The framework structure for QA governance structures within ETBs is an output from a shared Quality Assurance Enhancement project, supported by ETBI. This framework was adapted for implementation in the context of local structures and requirements.

During 2019 Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board formalised the establishment of the Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Governance structures, including the establishment of a Quality Council.

- The role of the **Quality Council** is to oversee all quality assurance aspects related to the design, development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of the Further Education and Training provision offered by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. It protects, maintains and develops the standard of Education and Training programmes and related activities. In doing so, the Further Education and Training Quality Council is ensuring, as far as possible, that all learners receive an equivalent experience. **The first meeting of the Quality council took place in 25th February 2019.**
- The **Quality Council Sub-Group (Quality Assurance)** will replaced the former Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Implementation Group, and has responsibility for the development,

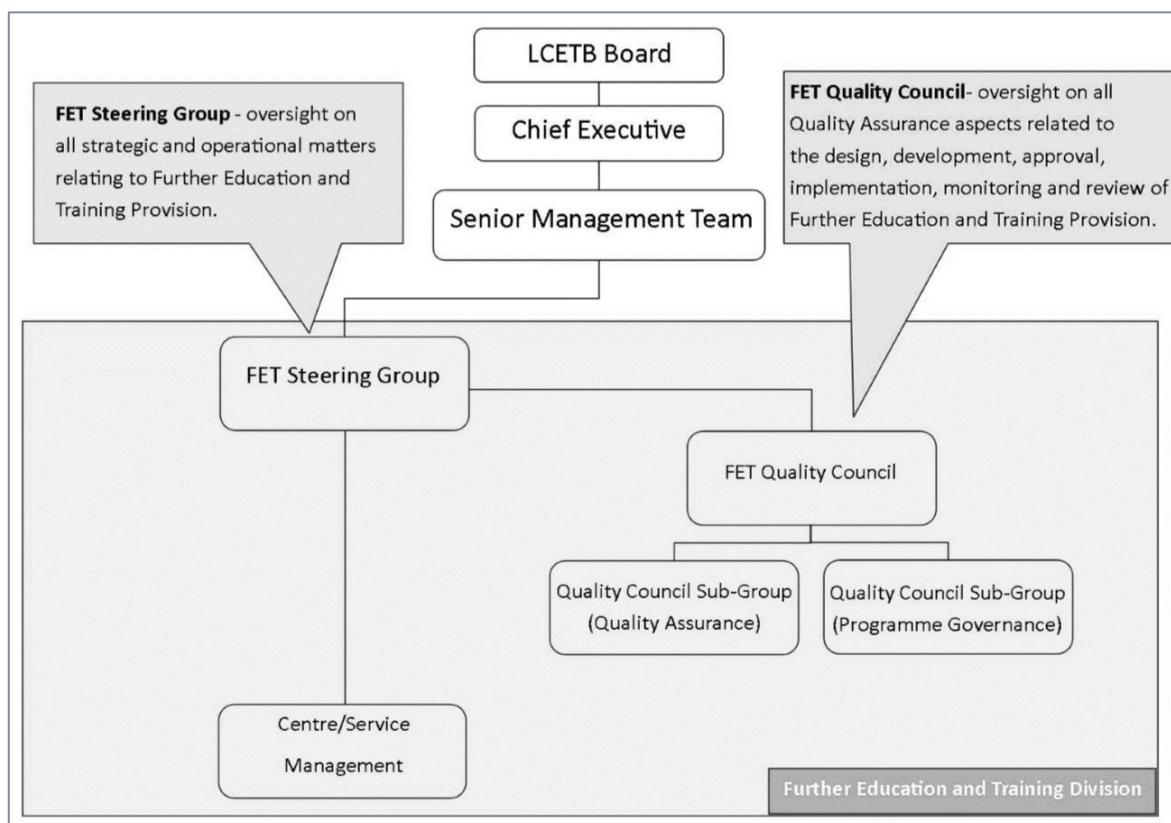
³ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>



oversight, planning, co-ordination, and improvement of quality assurance policies, procedures and processes. During 2019, the Quality Council Sub-Group (Quality Assurance) met three times

- The **Quality Council Sub-Group (Programme Governance)** replaces the former Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Programme Group, and has responsibility for the oversight, planning, co-ordination, development and quality of all of the programmes of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. During 2019 the Quality Council Sub-Group (Programme Governance) held 5 meetings.



In 2016, the FET Division established a **Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS)** to develop, implement and monitor an effective, integrated Quality Assurance system for all Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training provision". The QASS team now comprises 5 staff including a Quality Assurance Officer, and four Quality Assurance Support Officers, who provide regional QA support to FET centres, colleges and schools. The QASS also provides development and management support for FET cross-centre Quality Assurance processes. An annual Quality Improvement Plan is submitted for approval to QQI, with listed priorities for policy and procedure development. In the Training centres, day-to-day responsibility for assessments and monitoring lies with the Training Standards Office. There are 3 Training standard Officers in Raheen and Shannon campuses. The TSO, while operating under the FET QA Agreement, is in place to facilitate the appropriate running of apprenticeship, traineeship, SST and evening provision. Both former training centres operate the Transitional Quality Assurance System in respect of Craft Apprenticeship, which remains under direct remit of SOLAS. **In 2019, all other provision came under the updated FET QA System in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.**

The Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS) engaged in a range of external meetings and Networks during 2019. These included:

- ETBI Quality Network – attended 5 meetings
- RPL Practitioners Network – 2 conferences, presented case study on NHA RPL
- NAYC Conference – participated in panel discussion



- QA in Irish Prison Education Working Group
- NAYC QF Working Group
- Irish EU Reference Group of Agencies of the DES Conference
- Study Visit - External QA Expert participation in review of Netherlands QA System
- Chain 5 Conference – Community of Practice for EQF Level 5 – Presented on QA in Apprenticeship Development.

Other key QA developments in 2019 included:

- **Single Version Assessment Procedures Launch** - The FET QA Support Service hosted a series of seminars in August and September 2019, to inform and guide staff about the new single version Assessment Procedures.

The purpose of the seminars was to give staff an overview of the new Assessment Procedures, to outline how they would be implemented and to provide answers to some of the anticipated questions that may arise. 223 staff attended over the course of the three seminars, with a summary of the feedback – “very informative, good to have guidelines to follow”. Many found the scenario section of the seminar very helpful. “All the information presented was useful, but the suggestions in relation to the various scenarios were most useful”.



The eight new procedures were implemented across Further Education and Training Centres in Limerick and Clare from September 2019. These procedures will be adopted by Limerick College of Further Education FET Centres from September 2020. The FET QA Support Service and LCFE Centre Management are developing an implementation plan for the Limerick College of Further Education.

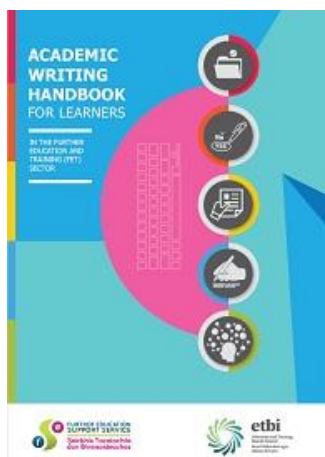
- **Single-version Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Division Results Approval Panel Procedures** - A new single-version Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Division Results Approval Panel Procedure was implemented for the December 2019 Certification period.

Following development of the procedure by a working group, recommendation by the Quality Council subgroup (Quality Assurance) and approval by the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Council, this new procedure replaces all the pre-existing legacy Results Approval Panel procedures.

The purpose of this procedure is to detail how Limerick and Clare ETB will ensure that appropriate decisions are taken with regard to the outcomes of the assessment, verification and authentication processes in programmes leading to QQI awards. The purpose of the Results Approval Panel is to ensure that results are fully quality assured and signed off by the Provider prior to submission to QQI.

- **New Resources**

Two new national FET specific resources were released during 2019. Both were developed for the FET sector by the Further Education Support Service (FESS) and a working group of ETBs including Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. Both resources have been distributed in hard copy to all FET centres and are also available online through the QASS.



The Academic Writing Handbook for Learners in the Further Education and Training (FET) Sector aims to assist learners in improving their writing skills.

The Referencing Handbook for the Further Education and Training (FET) Sector aims to assist learners in improving their understanding of referencing and their referencing skills.



Spotlight on Memorandum of Understanding with Limerick Community Education Network (LCEN)



At a learner certification event in Southill Hub on the 28th November 2019, Paul Patton, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Director of Further Education and Training, formally presented signed Memorandums of Understanding to representatives from each of the LCEN centres. (pictured left)

The individual centres that constitute the Limerick Community Education Network, namely Adapt Services, Moyross Adult

Education Group, Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services Group, Northside Family Resource Centre, Southill Family Resource Centre, St. Mary's Community Adult Education Group, and Limerick City CDP will, as part of this MOU agreement, now come under the Quality Assurance remit of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.

This relationship will assure access to validated programmes of education and training as part of a quality assured governance and assessment process, ensuring learner certification and providing continued support for the provision of quality teaching and learning. The change in status of the LCEN centres as individual providers to being centres of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will ensure that the centres will retain the facility to return learner results to QQI for certification following quality assured assessment processes. Through this partnership, the LCEN centres will be able to continue their invaluable work of providing education and training opportunities to the communities of Limerick City.

The relationship between Limerick and Clare Education Training Board, stretches back to City of Limerick VEC and the Adult Education Service LCAES. Since 2006, when CLVEC and LCEN had Quality Assurance approved by FETAC processes, there has been a very close relationship between the two organisations. There has always been a strong partnership approach, sharing information which has enabled a consistency of approach. Examples such as - Sharing of curriculum, quality assurance policies and procedures, templates, assessment resources, etc. has assured an ongoing consistency between the Quality Assurance of the two organisations.

The support and guidance of Quality and Qualifications Ireland has been critical to this initiative. Walter Balfe, QQI Head of Quality Assurance wrote in the confirmation letter that the 'QQI Programme and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC) acknowledges the cooperation demonstrated by the centres and the Education and Training Board, and commended all involved for their commitment to quality assured training for the learners served by the community centres'.



2. Professional Development

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division promotes a culture of continuous improvement and organisational learning to ensure our stakeholders have confidence in the quality and relevance of our provision. The FET Division places great value on the commitment, expertise and professionalism of all staff and seeks to foster a culture where staff are encouraged and supported to be proactive in their own development, and to feel positive in their roles.

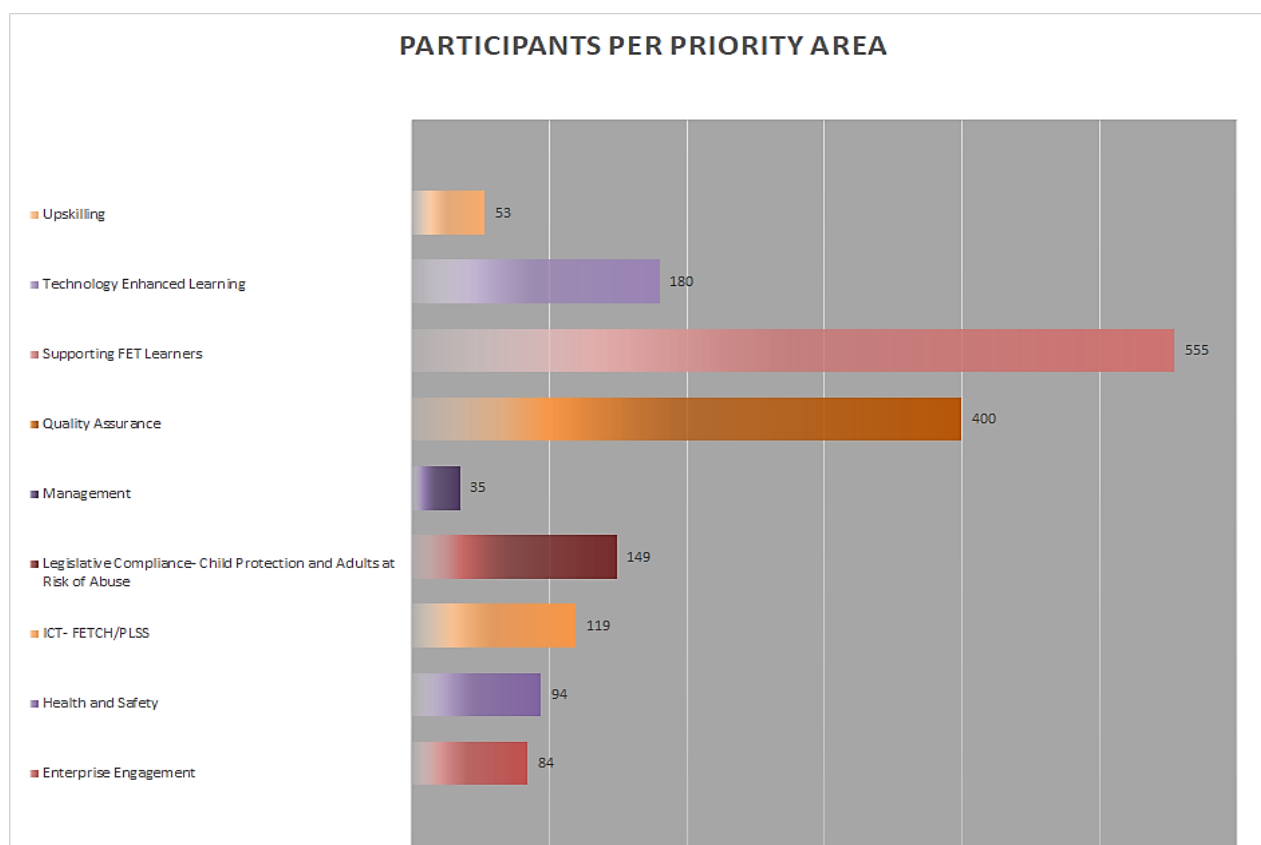


In 2019 a Professional Development Action Plan was rolled out by a cross FET group of 18 staff representative of part and full time provision and services. This 3-year plan guides our work in this area and has 4 priority areas:

1. Strong Commitment to Professional Development for all FET Staff
2. Professional Development for Teaching and Learning
3. Professional Development Structures and Systems
4. Transparent and Consistent Professional Development Policies and Procedures

Each year we offer our staff a wide ranging programme of professional development to help support them in the work that they do. This professional development is aligned to both national and local policy priorities. **In 2019 a total of 127 training events were organised centrally with an attendance of 1,669 staff.**

One of the FET Division key priorities in the PD Action Plan was to refocus our activities on the core business of teaching and learning something that we are managing to achieve.





We utilise the expertise of our own staff to deliver our PD as well as working with a range of external providers and trainers. Activities range in duration and depending on needs can vary from half and full day workshops to specialist diplomas and master's degrees.

The following are the professional development priority areas under which PD is organised along with sub categories.

Priority Area	Sub categories
Working with and Supporting FET Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pedagogy/Teaching and Learning• Learner supports and active inclusion• Integrating language literacy and numeracy
Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• QA Induction• Supporting academic performance- academic writing and referencing etc.• Supporting Assessment- marking, writing briefs etc.• Supporting QA Processes- IV and Rap etc.
Technology Enhanced Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pedagogy/Teaching and Learning• Supporting innovative use of new and existing technology in teaching and learning• Showcasing use of new technologies
Information and Communications Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using new and existing tools to support working processes• Planning and Tracking Systems (PLSS)
Management and Leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of New Systems- Planning, Tracking and Monitoring• Skills for Managing and Leading
Enterprise Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying Enterprise Needs• Working with Employers
Information, Recruitment and Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Career Planning
Legislative Compliance	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Child Protection2. GDPR3. Health and Safety
Vocational Upskilling and Reskilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vocational/Subject Specific Training/Retraining

The 2019 Calendar of PD events was impressive as was the level of take up by staff, reflecting that training is meeting identified needs. The alignment of activities with local and national priorities is a strong feature of the FET Division PD activity.

The FET Division is developing the structures and processes necessary to take a systematic and quality assured approach to identifying needs, planning, delivering, evaluating and tracking of professional development activities. The new processes and procedures are bedding in relatively well. In terms of centrally organised professional development, the level of take up and variety of activity is very impressive.



See below table for a synopsis of the Professional Development **stages and processes currently in place in the FET Division.**

Area	Process	Evidence
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated Professional Development Budget to centrally organised, strategically aligned PD. Erasmus Plus Funding for Staff Development Mobility Provision/Services use budget to fund local centre specific PD FET contribute to HR Professional Development Budget 	Dedicated Budget Codes
Professional Development Needs Identification and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Managers and Implementation Team Chairs who are responsible for a strategic areas such as TEL, Integrating Literacy, QA, ICT, Active Inclusion etc. identify PD needed for a 12 month period Tailored PD training needs analysis developed where gaps arise Erasmus Plus Staff Mobility Projects are focused on meeting PD needs of FET Frameworks/Actions Plans Provision/Services identify local PD needs based on variety of methods- one to one meetings, surveys etc. 	SOLAS Planning Templates Range of bespoke TNA's e.g. Health and Safety, Child Protection, ESOL Centre based Processes
Logistics of PD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PD Officer and admin team assists Chairs/Managers in the realisation of plans for PD e.g. Preparing training proposals Identification and liaison with internal/external trainers/providers Preparing PD registration forms and communicating with staff Disseminating training resources Room and refreshment booking systems Evaluation and post training debriefing Finance- Invoicing etc. Monitoring, tracking and recognition 	Training Proposals Eventbrite and Badge Creation Form Room and Refreshment Booking System Payment Systems
Communication with Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff receive quarterly email communications around upcoming professional development including booking and registration links All staff can access Professional Development Calendar on StaffConnect which contains information about centrally organised PD Monthly PD news to be shared on Signage Live FET staff newsletters share information about new initiatives and pilots, innovative practice and PD - e.g. QA Newsletter, TEL Times etc. 	Quarterly PD Update via email PD Calendar Signage Live AllFET@lcteb.ie Staff Newsletters
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff professional development evaluated post event to capture learning, identify further training needs and to ensure the quality of the training Other longer term evaluation methods are used to evaluate usefulness of training and measure transfer of learning Staff encouraged to participate in the evaluation of SOLAS national PD initiatives 	PD Evaluation templates- paper based and online ESOL Evaluation, Accredited Programmes
Monitoring and Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eventbrite's and sign in sheets to track attendance Eventbrite data to be used to provide a profile of PD attendance- staff role, provision/service type location etc. All data is used to produce end of year tracking report 	Eventbrite Sign In sheets Excel Tracking Sheet
Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All centrally organised professional development is badged using Moodle Open Badges A portion of professional development both run in-house or via other institutions is accredited. 	Moodle Open Badges Accreditation via WIT, NUIG, NCI



3. Technology Enhanced Learning

The TEL Support Service was formed in order to further develop the strategic use of Technology in teaching and Learning. The team has expanded and by the end of 2019, and now comprises 5 staff including a Learning Technology Development Officer, a Learning Technology Support Officer, a Blended Learning Support Officer and a Learning Hub Support Officer. The team works collaboratively with other key development and support functions (Active Inclusion, Professional Development, Planning Monitoring and Evaluation, Quality Assurance, Learner and Management Information Systems) to support the effective use of technology to enhance teaching and learning across the FET Division.

During 2019, the following professional development initiatives were developed and delivered by the TEL Support Service:

- Ongoing CPD to support adoption of TEL & LCETB Systems – Gamification in Learning, TEL Mentoring, TEL Tools for Teaching and Learning, Moodle beginners, Intermediate & Advanced, etc.
- UDL Teaching & Learning Forum Digital Badges working with PD Officer and Active Inclusion (in conjunction with AHEAD & UL Assistive Technology Office).
- Engagement in National TEL Programmes at level 6,7 & 8. Three members of TEL Support Service are engaged in the Level 8 Programme.
- TEL workshops (Community of Practice) for Hairdressing Learning Practitioners as part of NHA development.
- Promoting Criticality in the adoption and use of TEL (2 year CPD Programme with Mid-Clare Youthreach).
- Development of Initial Model for Comprehensive Office 365 CPD programme to reach all staff using cascade model.

Digital Badges

Since 2017 the FET Division has been issuing digital badges for all Staff professional development, which is organised at FET Division Level. Badges are awarded at Site Level in Moodle, have embedded data and are exportable to users Backpack (Badgr). By the end of 2019, over 80 individual Badges have been created with over 3,000 Badges awarded.

TEL Pilots

A number of pilot projects based on locally identified needs using new/innovative approaches in Teaching and Learning were rolled out in 2019.

- 20 projects include Augmented Reality (e.g. – Soldmatic Welding), Assistive/Support Technologies (Reading Pens, reading horizons, BKSBB etc.), Mobile assessment recording (Go-Pros in Equestrian studies), Drone use in Photography programme etc.
- Project Cycle – Need identified locally- Application-Approval- Project rollout- Reflection & Evaluation Process – Feedback across FET Division

Learning Hub Network

In 2011, the TEL action planning teams identified the development of a TEL hub as a priority to support the adoption and use of new and emerging learning technologies across the region. Simultaneously the enhancement of learner supports was identified as a key priority at organizational level to support learner engagement and retention and lead to improved outcomes. A new model was developed integrating Learner Support through the Active Inclusion Support Service with access to cutting edge technologies and TEL resources through the TEL support Service.



This Initiative involves developing a network of state-of-the-art Hubs in Main FET Campuses where

- a) Learners can access supports and resources to support their learning including access to and support in the use of assistive technologies, online learning, literacy and numeracy resources, and programme-specific resources relevant to their learning programme, Apprenticeship or Traineeship.
- b) Staff can access resources and supports for teaching and learning including access to software, hardware, online resources, recording resources and a wide range of tools to support teaching, learning and assessment.

National Hairdressing Apprenticeship

The National Hairdressing Apprenticeship is the first apprenticeship programme nationally to integrate blended learning across all 22 modules of the three year programme. In this multi-stakeholder project the TEL Support Unit work with the NHA Management and development team to

- Support the curriculum development process embedding TEL in curriculum design
- Develop www.hairapp.ie a national VLE/e-Portfolio platform for Apprenticeship using Moodle & Moodle Plug-ins as appropriate
- Lead the process of Formation of national network to develop TEL Resources
- Effectively integrate multiple innovations including interactive video content, personalised learning using tag clouds, a learning analytics plug-in and ePortfolios.

The bespoke content development model developed for this project has been recognised as an exemplar model and is currently being documented for SOLAS in order to share nationally.

Digital Inclusion and Community Education Innovations

- The FET Division, through its TEL Officer, chairs the SMART Limerick Digital Inclusion Working Group. The Tavistock Institute were commissioned in 2019 to conduct research exploring the nature and extent of digital exclusion in the region with a view to developing evidence based response to addressing digital exclusion.
- The FET Division has also developed an eTool as part of its '*Capturing the Wider Benefits of Learning*' Initiative. This enables our learners to rate their own progress on a course and the skills they have developed. Learners can also describe wider benefits of the course including personal learning, health and wellbeing, family and community and future plans for education or employment. In 2019, the tool was made available on our website on <https://learningandskills.ie/wider-benefits/>



Section 4 – Outcomes Based Planning and Funding

SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 – 2019 ⁵	
Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective
Integrated Planning and Funding The aim of this goal is that FET provision will be planned and funded on the basis of objective analysis of needs and evidence of social and economic impact.	<u>Strategic Objective 1:</u> Implement a new integrated and coordinated FET planning model.
	<u>Strategic Objective 2:</u> Develop and install a “fit for purpose” data infrastructure to support FET policy and provision.
	<u>Strategic Objective 3:</u> Introduce performance related funding (appropriate to the type of FET provision and defined strategic outcomes).
	<u>Strategic Objective 4:</u> Evaluate the effectiveness of all current FET provision.

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

1. Data Infrastructure

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board’s outcomes-based planning is co-ordinated by the FET Director and the FET Steering Group. During 2019, work in relation to the data infrastructure included:

- Funding Allocation Request and Reporting (FARR) Planning facilitated through the FET Director and the FET Steering Group.
- PLSS familiarisation training sessions and FARR planning workshops were delivered in 2019 to ensure that all FET Coordinators/Managers/Users are familiar with latest data entry and reporting requirements as communicated by SOLAS.
- PLSS provision was closely monitored and reviewed locally during 2019 with frequent ETB-wide activity and planning reports issuing, drilling down to individual providers to ensure that course/learner commencements, finishes and associated outputs/outcomes are accurately entered, and that outputs/outcomes are updated with minimum lag.
- Actuals achieved are monitored frequently against the annual plan to identify any corrective measures to be taken throughout the year.
- Regular communications are maintained by the FET Operations Manager so that all users are fully aware of reporting obligations and the need for accurate data.
- During 2019, FETCH has been increasingly adopted for learner registrations to ensure that ESF critical data reporting obligations are met, via a self-declaration process by learners.
- Sighting evidence of learner identity and PPSN has also been put in place to ensure accurate records are retained and the retention of submission evidence in relation to learner reported outcomes is currently being rolled out.
- FARR planning of PLSS and Apprenticeship provision was supported in 2019 with provision category specific workshops to ensure that the annual plan is accurately/realistically developed and aligned to the corresponding

⁵ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>



- year of the SPA. Apprenticeship planning is entered directly in FARR with associated planned/actuals achieved inputs, outputs and outcomes entered and reviewed for accuracy and consistency.
- Prior to submission, the overall FARR annual plan is compared to projected and actuals achieved in the previous year for reference and aligned to the target commitments made in the upcoming year of the SPA, via an iterative process with consideration given to reported CSO outcomes for Targets 1 & 2.
- A FET Operational Planning and Reporting Calendar was developed in 2019 by the FET Operations Manager to help guide this process locally.
- SOLAS recognises Community Education provision as a space within FET for non-formal learning and in Limerick City this is predominantly non-certified. Maintaining quality teaching and learning in Community Education is supported by a number of initiatives. Capturing the Wider Benefits of Learning has been a focus of community education provision for many years. It is a self-assessment tool which enables learners to rate their progress on a course both in terms of skills they have developed and the wider benefits of learning. In 2019 a digital version of the original paper-based version was developed and can be accessed at <http://learningandskills.ie/wider-benefits/>
- Community Education provision offers short courses as one way of attracting learners back to education. In 2019 300 courses were run in 30 community venues. The use of IT in managing and administering provision has been crucial. An example of this has been the use of Microsoft Office 365 to create an online form which is completed by local community groups and provides Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board staff and course Tutor with detailed practical information about the courses the groups are scheduling. This can be found on www.learningandskills.ie [Course Startup Request / Change of Details Form](#)
- Community Education is flexible provision which is dispersed across 30 venues. Tutors may teach classes in many venues at various times of the day and thus have little contact with each other. The absence of regular peer support is an issue which is addressed to some extent by CPD events throughout the year. In addition, two half-day meetings for Community Education Tutors were organised in 2019 along with the larger meeting of all Part-Time Tutors and Local Co-ordinators in September. The meetings with Community Education Tutors included relevant information updates which support quality teaching, such as guidance support, and online systems for registering and tracking learner attendance. Time for networking and peer support was also included.

2. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

In 2019, a number of initiatives were supported by the FET Research, Planning and Evaluation Officer to continue to promote a culture of planning, reflection and stakeholder engagement throughout the FET Division. The FET Monitoring and Evaluation framework continued to be implemented across the FET Division, including key tools to monitor its progress against the implementation of its FET Strategic Framework and national priorities.

- In 2019, the FET Division continued to comply with statutory requirements by producing its 2018 FET Annual Report and the 2020 FET Service Plan, which were submitted to Corporate Affairs.
- Implementation of the annual Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) used by Senior Managers to capture higher level goals/actions planned by the FET Division, in line with the SOLAS FET goals.
- A regular internal publication of FET Policy Updates also continued in 2019 - an internal newsletter summarising in one place key relevant policies/research documents at EU and national level. This has proved popular with FET Managers, who need to keep up with the vast range of policies and strategies impacting their work.



Other key planning/review and stakeholder engagement initiatives in 2019 included:

- Planning and Facilitation of VTOS Limerick City staff Review day on the current policy context to inform review of curriculum towards a clearer labour-market rationale for VTOS provision.
- Facilitation of Action Planning for Community Education Limerick City - re. implementation of recommendations from internal review.
- BTEI Staff Review session to reflect on lessons learnt in the area of Teaching & Learning, and identification of key priorities for annual work plan.
- Design and facilitation of Review and development of new Action Plan for LCFE
- Design and facilitation of a Mid-Term Review process of the Strategic Plan of the Learning Limerick Steering Group, chaired by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
- Design of an internal communication and self-evaluation process for the QQI Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance, which will be rolled out in 2020. This is the first review of its kind for the FET sector, and a significant milestone for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.
- Capturing the voices of Learners: coordination of an AONTAS full-time Learners Forum for Limerick and Clare Education and Training FET learners in March 2019 in (Full report available)



Spotlight on National FET Learner Forum March 2019



Over 50 learners from Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board convened at a regional meeting of the National Further Education and Training Learner Forum on Tuesday 5th March. The meeting took place at the Further Education and Training Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus and involved learners from a variety of FET provision offered by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. The National FET Learner Forum is a collaborative effort between AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation; SOLAS, the

Further Education and Training Authority; and Education and Training Boards (ETBs).



Section 5 – Standing of FET

SOLAS FET Strategy 2014 – 2019 ⁶	
Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective
Standing of FET The aim of this goal is to ensure a valued learning path leading to agreed employment, career developmental, personal and social options.	<u>Strategic Objective 1:</u> Promote and provide high quality FET responsive to the needs of industry and learners. <u>Strategic Objective 2:</u> Conduct an economic and social impact study of each ETB.

The **Standing of FET Strategic Goal** aims to ensure “a valued learning path leading to agreed employment, career developmental, personal and social options”. Within Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division this translates into:

- the need to invest in the **marketing and branding** of FET to highlight FET provision as a real alternative to the traditional pathways into third level.
- the need to work with SOLAS, NALA and others to maximise the value and impact of **national campaigns** to promote further education and training
- a requirement for the ETB to create and engage with key initiatives, **partnerships and interagency collaboration** at a regional and national level
- a requirement to **plan, monitor, evaluate** and improve, on an ongoing basis, the quality of programmes and services we offer.

1. Marketing and Branding of FET in 2019

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board continued to invest in the marketing and branding of FET in 2019 in order to highlight FET provision as a real alternative to the traditional pathways into third level. This is being achieved through a combination of internal and external communication tools.

- Internal tools include Signage Live/Email/Office 365/ Staff Connect.
- External: Website/ Branding, Promotion, Collateral, Information Hub, FET Forum, Awards.

Our network of local FET Centres and staffing structures facilitate individuals, communities and employers to access full-time and part-time opportunities and these are promoted through local media, social media channels, libraries, learning networks, schools, family resource centres, DEASP Case Officers, Local Development Companies and Public Participation Networks.

More information is available on <http://learningandskills.ie/our-courses/> and <https://lcteb.ie/news/> ;
<http://www.clarelearningnetwork.org/clln/www/index.asp?magpage=5&tid=3841> and <https://www.lcen.ie/>

⁶ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>



Some Marketing and Branding Initiatives undertaken in 2019 include:

- In October 2019, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Communications Team developed a new marketing campaign using **#Findthebestinyou** tagline, using poster and video to be used in cinemas, social media, billboards, media and on public buses.



<https://www.facebook.com/learningandskills.ie/videos/764473830653995/>.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division promotional collateral was used on Limerick City buses in 2019 to promote Further Education and Training on routes across the city.

- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Website <https://learningandskills.ie/> continues to be updated with new sections added to the website in 2019.
- Promotional collateral has been developed during 2019 with a common look and feel across all brochures and leaflets.
- During 2019, marking and branding of FET was a feature of a range of key showcase events including Limerick for Engineering Expo in Shannon in March 2019 and the Mid-West Apprenticeship & Traineeship Careers Showcase in October 2019.

2. Maximising the Value and Impact of National Campaigns to Promote FET in 2019

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division participated in a range of national and international events to promote the standing of FET during 2019. Some examples are outlined below.

• FET Centre Shannon Campus Wins 2019 Generation Apprenticeship Competition

A team of 41 apprentices and staff of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Centre, Shannon Campus, were announced joint winners of the 2019 Generation Apprenticeship Competition on Thursday 11th April 2019. The event organised by SOLAS, the national further education and training authority, took place in Dublin's Clayton Hotel Burlington Road. The Shannon Campus shared the top prize with CDS Architectural Metalwork.



The competition challenged apprentices to construct a three-dimensional letter 'A' using materials and skills that are core to their industry. The competition aims to highlight the importance and value of apprenticeships as a route to skills development in 21st Century Ireland. The Shannon Campus was one of nine finalists competing for this year's prize. The team included four Electrical apprentices, twelve Metal Fabrication apprentices, fourteen Toolmaking apprentices, five Aviation apprentices, two Refrigeration apprentices, three Carpentry apprentices and one Plumbing apprentice.



- **Catex Chef Ireland 2019 Culinary Competition**

CATEX is Ireland's largest foodservice and networking event. It takes place annually over a three day period in the RDS, Dublin and attracts up to 12,000 visitors per year. Level 6 Commis Chef Apprentices Marilena Gherbezan and Jose Mata, from our Hospitality Education & Training Centre won gold at the Chef Ireland Culinary Championships 2019 at the CATEX Exhibition in the RDS, Dublin.



- **VET Excellence Awards Helsinki**



The VET Excellence Awards highlight best practice and recognise excellence in Vocational Education and Training (VET) all over Europe.

Tom Flavin and the Limerick Strand Hotel, along with apprentice Jose Mata from our Hospitality Education & Training Centre won the 2019 SME (European Alliance for Apprenticeships) Training and Apprenticeship Award in Helsinki in October 2019

Many other awards were won by both FET Learners and staff in 2019, showcasing the excellence of our staff, and the accomplishments of our FET Learners.

For instance, in 2019, Hope Shannon O'Brien, former Youthreach learner from O'Connell Avenue Campus (and currently studying at LCFE), received an award from the Engineering Technology Teachers Association for achieving the highest result for a female learner in Ordinary Level Leaving Certificate Engineering.





3. Partnerships and inter-agency Collaboration

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division is represented on a range of local, regional and national partnerships and networks. Paul Patton, Director of FET is the representative on the Clare LCDC (6 meetings in 2019), Innovate Limerick (3 meetings in 2019), Paul Partnership (8 meetings in 2019) and while the ETB/ DEASP Interagency Group met 4 times in 2019. Other examples of 2019 networking and collaboration contributing to the standing of FET are outlined below:

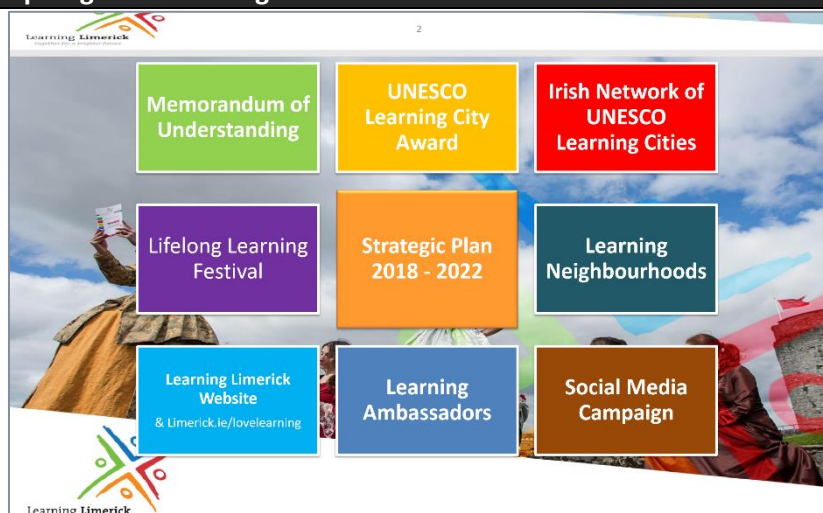
- **Limerick City Community Education Cluster Process:** Collaboration and partnership was identified as a strength in the 2018 Process Review of Community Education Provision. One example of this is the Cluster Process which involves community organisations and schools as well as FET Division staff from part-time community based provision. Two Cluster meetings were held in Spring and Autumn in 2019 attended by 30 local Co-ordinators and HSCL Co-ordinators. There were inputs at the Spring meeting from the Local Employment Service and the Limerick Interagency Working Group and at the Autumn meeting from the new Child and Family Centre in Galvone. The value of these inputs from a Community Education perspective is that they inform planning at local level and also strengthen networking between agencies and community groups and schools. Feedback from participants was that the Cluster meetings support integration and developing shared approaches to provision.

An Implementation Plan was developed in January 2019 based on the recommendations of the Process Review of Community Education Provision carried out in 2018. Among key actions from the plan which were completed in 2019 were (1) A Memorandum of Agreement was drawn up between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Community Education Provision and local Co-ordinators (2) A reference document for the MoA was devised in partnership with Limerick Community Education Network. This 'Handbook for Community Education Co-ordinators' sets out best practice guidelines for community education provision in Limerick City.

- A Creative Writing project in **St Camillus' Hospital** culminated in the production of a book of learner writings that was launched on the 18th July 2019. The book entitled 'Twas the Way It Was', was a partnership between HSE (St Camillus' Hospital) and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division (Core Skills) and it featured 100+ stories recounted by residents within St Camillus' (some had sadly passed away before the launch). Tracey Conroy played a pivotal role in the creation and execution of this publication. In Tracey's own words the book features 'beautiful and tragic accounts of Irish life'.
- **Learning Neighbourhoods** is an initiative of Limerick Community Education Network which is supported by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. Its purpose is to bring together groups in their local neighbourhood involved in learning and working to promote learning e.g. Schools, Community Centres, Sports Clubs, Youth groups, Day Care Centres, Community Guards, Credit Unions, local businesses etc. A Learning Neighbourhoods logo was created through an Art competition for school children in Moyross, Garryowen, Southill, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Mary's. The winning logo was presented at an event which officially launched Limerick Learning Neighbourhoods during the Limerick Lifelong Festival. The launch also included performances, displays and short films from around the City which highlighted Learning Neighbourhood activities.



Spotlight on Learning Limerick in 2019



Learning Limerick is a partnership that is collaborating to advance Limerick's progress as a Learning Region. Membership includes Local Government, Higher Education, Further Education and Training, Local Development, Community Education, Culture and Arts, Youth Work, Social Welfare, Childcare, Migrant Integration, Mental Health Services and Limerick Chamber Skillnet.

The partnership is led by the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Limerick City and County Council, and the

PAUL Partnership, and the FET Division, through its FET Manager, chairs the Steering Group. Learning Limerick is a member of the **UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities** which has 170 active members from 53 countries in every region of the world. In 2017, Limerick received the UNESCO Learning City Award. In October 2019, Councillor Sarah Kiely, Deputising for the Mayor for Limerick City and County, Pdraig Malone, Limerick City and County and Yvonne Lane, Learning Limerick Coordinator, were invited by **UNESCO** to participate in the **fourth International Conference on Learning Cities** on 'Inclusion – A principle for lifelong learning and sustainable cities' in Medellín, Colombia.

2019 was a significant year for the Learning Limerick initiative. In March 2019, the Learning Limerick partners signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** in Limerick City Hall. This agreement is a strong statement of their intent and support for the Learning City-Region initiative for Limerick.

The Learning Ambassador Initiative was also launched, where community champions from various backgrounds help reach as many people as possible to inspire them to participate in learning. They promote the idea of lifelong learning in their own communities, workplaces and neighbourhoods.



The Learning Limerick flagship event each year is the week-long **Festival**, which celebrates all kinds of formal and informal learning opportunities in Limerick City and County. This year the Festival included an All-Ireland Seminar held on April 10th in King John's Castle under the theme 'Bridging the Gap'. The first meeting of the **All-Ireland Network of Learning Cities** to include Limerick, Dublin, Cork, and Derry took place in Limerick. A new **Learning City Charter** was signed by the mayors on behalf of their cities.. *it brings political support at the highest levels to our shared work to develop our cities as places where all learning, lifelong and lifewide, for all ages, interests and abilities is promoted and celebrated.*



In addition, the new **website for Learning Limerick** was launched in June 2019. [LearningLimerick.ie](https://www.learninglimerick.ie) is a dedicated website that will make it easier for those interested in lifelong learning to get information about the range of courses and insight into the whole area of Lifelong Learning. It will strengthen Learning Limerick's online presence; thus contributing to the group's strategic priority of enhancing the visibility and presence of Learning Limerick.



Representatives from Learning Limerick and the other cities from the Irish Network of Learning Cities, Cork, Dublin and Derry also attended a seminar hosted by **Belfast Learning City in June**. The seminar event was part of some research and engagement work that the group in Belfast Learning City had commissioned to help them build a framework for the development of a learning city plan for Belfast Learning City. Limerick Chairperson Eimear Brophy and Jim Prior of LCEN presented on Learning Limerick and Limerick Learning Neighbourhoods.

- **Partnership with Third Level providers**

There has been a number of initiatives to develop pathways for FET learners to third level education, and work towards developing a tertiary education landscape.

Spotlight on New Alliance between GMIT and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board



The President of GMIT, Dr Michael Hannon, and the Chief Executive of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, George O'Callaghan, today (10 June) formed a new partnership aimed at enhancing access and new opportunities to higher and further education provision in the West and Mid-West region in June 2019. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was formally signed by the heads of the two organisations at a reception in the offices of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in Ennis, County Clare.

Equity of access to higher education is a core objective nationally. The vision for the Higher Education Authority's National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19 is to ensure that learners enter, participate in and complete higher education at all levels, reflecting the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population. This vision is shared by GMIT and the ETB.

- Ennis Community College of Further Education and **LIT Ennis** campus have formed a progression alliance enabling graduates of ECCE with a full level 5 QQI award to move directly to any degree programme in LIT Ennis campus. A number of graduates from class of 2019 have taken up their places on degree programmes including social care and childcare. Accounting Technician Learners had a talk by James Collins, Head of Department Business & Financial Services, LIT. He spoke to classes about progression to degree programmes. Successful completion of year 2 Accounting Technicians at ECCE allows direct access to professional accounting degree programmes in the Institutes of Technology.
- **New routes for FET learners into Mary Immaculate College**

MIC launched its first QQI route into Post-Primary Teacher Education in MIC, St Patrick's Campus, Thurles, and CAO applications are now open for eligible QQI applicants to apply to MI009 (BA in Education, Business Studies and Accounting) and MI010 (BA in Education, Business Studies and Religious Studies). In terms of the routes into MI002 (Bachelor of Arts), CAO applications are now also open for eligible QQI applicants who hold a distinction in five modules in any major award.



- **European partnerships**

- FET Centre, KRC, VTOS provision are partners in the **ERASMUS+ RISE (2018-2020) Project**, Realising Integration through Social Enterprise involves Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Romania, Portugal and Ireland. The focus of the project is on enabling learners to upskill in the area of social enterprise. The DEMOS (2018-2020) Project, Democracy and Equality Matters for Our Society involves Austria, Ireland, Romania, Germany, Sweden, Poland, Finland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and here the focus is on developing democratic values and practices with our learners. In 2019, representatives from Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board visited Romania, Sweden, Germany and Belgium. Two international meetings were held in KRC (RISE and DEMOS). As part of the **DEMOS Project**, a public debate on the theme of democracy was held at Kilmallock Road Campus. The event was chaired by Professor Eoin Devereux from UL and was also attended by several local councillors. The teams were comprised of VTOS learners.
- Ennis Community College PLC has forged links with **University of Southampton**. Mr Jim Bird, Senior Lecturer with the School of Health Sciences at the University of Southampton recently visited the nursing and community health classes at Ennis College of Further Education to discuss UCAS applications to nursing degree programs. A number of learners from the class of 2019 have progress to nursing in Southampton.

6. Research and Planning 2019

- **Identification of Assessment Tools**

A focus of the Integration of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (ILLN) implementation group was to identify assessment tools and professional development for all FET staff. A sub-group on LLN Initial Assessment was established to lead the work in this area across the FET Division. The sub-group identified the need for two pieces of work that would be carried out in parallel:

- A pilot exercise for the FET literacy provision (Core Skills) to evaluate the usability and feasibility of the roll out of the ETBI / SOLAS Initial and Ongoing Skills Assessment for Adult Literacy and Numeracy Learners – Guidelines (2018). An Internal Evaluation Report (November 2018), prepared by the FET Planning & Evaluation Officer, is available to present the findings and inform the FET Division's approach to the implementation of the guidelines. The ILLN implementation group responded to recommendations from this pilot by staff attending national training and also running PD sessions with Elizabeth McSkeane the author of the national guidelines locally within the ETB. This will allow the those provision areas delivering levels 1-3 the opportunity to become skilled in the rollout of the guidelines. All staff encouraged to attend training in related to initial assessment and the guidelines.
- An internal audit of all LLN initial assessments processes and procedures across the FET full-time and part-time provision in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. This would provide a baseline from which to plan for the introduction of LLN initial assessment into all FET provision, with the objective to enhance the consistency of initial assessment processes across the service.
- The ILLN Implementation team have contributed to **ETBI and SOLAS national research and development projects in 2019** by responding to questionnaire and facilitating local focus groups from the researchers. These included:
 - SOLAS-ETBI-NALA research report and guidelines for Family Learning .
 - Development of Good Practice Guidelines for Screening and Assessment of Literacy and Numeracy at NFQ Levels 4-6 in Further Education and Training (FET) Development of good practice guidelines and toolkit for the initial assessment of the English Language competency of migrant learners
 - SOLAS Numeracy Research Project.



Section 6 – Contributions to National Targets

Target	National Sectoral Target	2018	2019	Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Contribution
1. More learners securing employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market	10% over 3 years Baseline: 1000	71% Equating to : 1710	Awaiting June CSO Figures	30% over 3 years, equating to 1,301 learners securing employment in 2020
2. More learners progressing to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose	10% over 3 years Baseline: 1355	-15% Equating to : 1145	Awaiting June CSO Figures	46% over 3 years, equating to 1,978 learners progressing to other courses in 2020
3. Increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills development	10% over 3 years Baseline: 821	-2% Equating to : 801	2% Equating to : 839	28% over 3 years, equating to 1,048 completers certified in 2020
4. Increase in adults seeking FET level provision engaging in lifelong learning interventions	10% over 3 years Baseline: 11,962	1% Equating to : 12104	21% Equating to : 14520	11% over 3 years, equating to 13,310 learners starting LLL relevant programmes in 2020
5. Increase in learners securing relevant qualifications in sectors where employment growth/skills needs have been identified	10,000 learners per annum Baseline: 2228	40% Equating to : 3111	58% Equating to : 3530	Average annual increase of 1,625 per annum and a 73% increase in learners in 2020 compared with 2017
6. New trainee registrations in the period 2017 to 2019	13,900 over 3 years Baseline: 140	26% Equating to : 176	145% Equating to : 343	712 over 3 years or an 86% increase



Further Education Provision and Support Services

Full-Time Education and Training Provision

PLC - Post-Leaving Certificate

Limerick College of Further Education (includes outreach location in Cappamore)
 Croom College of Further Education, Croom, Co. Limerick
 Ennis College of Further Education, Ennis, Co. Clare Coláiste Chiaráin, Croom, Co. Limerick
 Ennistymon Vocational School, Ennistymon, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - An t-Ionad Glas (Organic College), Dromcollogher, Co. Limerick
 FET Centre - Kilmallock Town Campus, Co. Limerick

VTOS - Vocational Training and Opportunities Scheme

FET Centre - An t-Ionad Glas (Organic College), Dromcollogher, Co. Limerick
 FET Centre - Clonroad Campus, Ennis, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - Kilmallock Road Campus, Limerick City
 FET Centre - Kilmallock Town Campus, Co. Limerick
 FET Centre - Kilrush Campus, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - Scariff Campus, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - Shanagolden Campus, Co. Limerick

Training Provision

FET Centre - Raheen Campus, Raheen Business Park, Limerick
 FET Centre - Shannon Campus, Shannon Industrial Estate, Shannon, Co. Clare
 Hospitality Education and Training Centre, LEDP Park, Roxboro, Limerick
 Second-Chance Education & Training
 Youth Provision

Youth Education & Training Provision

Youthreach

FET Centre - Clonroad Campus, Ennis, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - Kilmallock Road Campus, Limerick City
 FET Centre - Kilrush Campus, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - Hospital Campus, Co. Limerick
 FET Centre - Mid-Clare Campus, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - O'Connell Avenue Campus, Limerick City
 FET Centre - Shanagolden Campus, Co. Limerick
 FET Centre - Tuamgraney Campus, Co. Clare
 FET Centre - Watch House Cross Campus, Limerick City

Community Training Centres

Limerick City - under the auspices of Limerick Youth Service
 Ennis - under the auspices of Clare Youth Service



Part-Time Provision

Core Skills, BTEI - Back to Education Initiative, Community Education, Skills for Work

FET Centre - Abbeyfeale Campus, Co. Limerick
FET Centre - Clonroad Campus, Ennis, Co. Clare
FET Centre - Kilmallock Town Campus, Co. Limerick
FET Centre - Kilrush Campus, Co. Clare
FET Centre - Newcastle West Campus, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick
FET Centre - O'Connell Avenue Campus, Limerick City
FET Centre - Scariff Campus, Co. Clare
FET Centre - Shannon Town Campus, Brú na Sionna, Co. Clare

Evening Provision

Limerick College of Further Education (includes outreach location in Cappamore)
FET Centre - Raheen Campus, Raheen Business Park, Limerick
FET Centre - Shannon Campus, Shannon Industrial Estate, Shannon, Co. Clare
Hospitality Education and Training Centre, LEDP Park, Roxboro, Limerick
Ennis College of Further Education and Training

Outdoor Education & Training Centres

Outdoor Education & Training Centre The Burren, Bell Harbour, Co. Clare
Outdoor Education & Training Centre Kilfinane, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick

Music Education Provision

Limerick School of Music
Music Generation Limerick City
Music Generation Clare

Co-operation with Other Institutions⁷

Catherine McAuley School
Céim ar Chéim
Clare Immigrant Support Centre
Moyross Youth Academy
Cura (Parent and Teen Support, Limerick Social Services Centre)
Learning Hub Limerick
Centre for the Unemployed
Limerick Prison Education Unit
Limerick School of Music
Limerick Youth Service
St Anne's Special School
St Canice's Special School (Mt St Vincent)

⁷ Information based on 2019



Social Services

Irish Wheelchair Association
MS Society
Deaf Community Centre
Le Chéile, Limerick Mental Health Association
Rehabcare
Alzheimer Society
5B University Hospital Limerick
Brothers of Charity Limerick
Brothers of Charity Clare
Iniscara Day Centre
Clare Mental Health (Ennis Day Hospital)
Seanoira St. Camillus

Disadvantaged Community Youth

Ballynanty Garda Youth Diversion Project
Garryowen Community Development Project
Limerick City Sports Partnership
Our Lady of Lourdes Youth Centre
Southill Area Centre
Southside Youth Initiative
Kileely 3 o'clock School
Clare Youth Service
St. Augustine's

Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service (IRGSS)

IRGSS Limerick City and County, FET Centre - O'Connell Avenue Campus, Limerick City
IRGSS County Clare, FET Centre - Clonroad Campus, Ennis, Co. Clare

FET Development Support Services

- Active Inclusion Support Service
- Enterprise Engagement Support Service
- Professional Development Support Service
- Quality Assurance Support Service
- Research & Development Support Service
- Technology-Enhanced Learning Support Service

Abbreviations



AEGI	Adult Education Guidance Initiative
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CBA	Classroom-Based Assessment
CC	Community College
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference to Languages
CFE	College of Further Education
CGVU	Central Garda Vetting Unit
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DEIS	Delivering Equal Opportunity In Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DLP	Designated Liaison Person
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FARR	Funding Allocation Request and Reporting
FET	Further Education and Training
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GV	Garda Vetting
H&S	Health and Safety
IA	Initial Assessment
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IRG	Information, Recruitment and Guidance
LAOS	Looking at Our Schools Quality Framework
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LDC	Local Development Company
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
MAPP	Multi-Annual Procurement Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWRSF	Mid-West Regional Skills Forum
NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
NZEB	Nearly-Zero Energy Building Standard
OETC	Outdoor Education and Training Centre
OGP	Office for Government Procurement
OSD	Organisation Support and Development



PD	Professional Development
PDA	Performance Delivery Agreement
PDST	Professional Development Service for Teachers
PLC	Post-Leaving Certificate
PLSS	Programme Learner Support System
QA	Quality Assurance
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SPA	Strategic Performance Agreement
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
SSE	Schools Self Evaluation
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
TEL	Technology-Enhanced Learning
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WSE	Whole School Evaluation