



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

# FET Strategic Regional Planning Network - Terms of Reference

Policy Area	FET Strategic Framework
Version	7.0
Date	Created: July 2015 Revised: December 2015; September 2019; February 2020; November 2020, March 2021
Monitored	N/A
Responsibility	FET Division
Approval	November 2020

## 1.0 Background

### 1.1 *Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA)*

The development of the SPA between LCETB and SOLAS in 2018 marked an important milestone in the development of a strategic, integrated and outcome-focused Further Education and Training system across Limerick and Clare. This agreement links the unique context and profile of LCETB to a set of strategic priorities and commitments to deliver on both the overall national FET Strategy and other FET relevant policies, strategies and initiatives (present and future). The agreement sets out plans for LCETB's contribution to six core national FET sector targets to be delivered over the period 2018-2020. Further SPAs will be developed for 2021+.

The agreement provides a means to harness policy, strategies, targets, labour market insight and a continuing process of programme evaluation and improvement that sets out a clear direction for the development of LCETB's FET Division from which annual plans can then flow and be linked to resource allocations.

The agreement, as per its title, focuses on the **strategic** development of LCETB's FET Division and as such does not seek to provide comprehensive or detailed plans on how LCETB will deliver on a particular national FET requirement. The agreement also acknowledges that there is a constantly evolving social, economic and policy context that must be reflected in the way by which LCETB's FET Division coordinates activity on an ongoing basis.

The process in establishing the agreement also provided insight into how planning could be further developed and appropriate requirements framed. This was supported in January 2018 by SOLAS providing to LCETB with two key documents:

1. ***Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Requirements 2018-2020***
2. ***Strategic Approach to Planning and Funding for Further Education and Training Provision***

Together these two documents set out the broad multi-annual framework from which 3 year strategic performance agreements and annual planning for 2018, 2019 and 2020 would progress.

There was also a recognition of the need to issue annual updates to the Funding Parameters and Requirements document to reflect both the strategic context, direction and progress of the agreement and the updated situation since the overarching framework was developed.

In relation to this latter point, we have seen a number of significant developments during 2018 and 2019 which needs to be taken into account including:

- 'Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth', a new employee development policy framework;

- The completion of the evaluation of PLC provision and Youthreach provision;
- Publication of good practice guidelines on assessment of literacy and numeracy at Levels 1-3, a report on integration of literacy and numeracy and a review of ESOL provision;
- An independent progress review of the FET Strategy 2014-2019;
- The development of the FET Strategy 2020-2024;
- The development of the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance for the ETB Sector and the publication of LCETB's QA Self-Evaluation Report;
- The development of other local and regional strategies where LCETB is the authority responsible for the achievement of specific named actions e.g. Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP) in Counties Clare and Limerick.

### 1.2 *FET Strategic Regional Planning Network (FET SRPN)*

The above coupled with ongoing FARR and PLSS developments allows a process of evolution and streamlining to continue. In this context, the ETB's FET Division must continuously review and develop its FET Provision and Support Services.

To support this, a FET Strategic Regional Planning Network will provide a coherent regional-based approach to planning in consultation with all relevant stakeholders in order to identify needs, avoid duplication, enhance integration and ensure that strategic priorities and targets are addressed. This will also support the emergence of the development of curriculum specialisms.

The FET Strategic Regional Planning Network will promote a shared vision across the ETB's FET Division and guide its FET Colleges and Centres in the development of integrated implementation plans for full-time and part-time FET Provision and Support Services.

## **2.0 Title**

### 2.1 FET Strategic Regional Planning Network (FET SRPN)

There will exist one overarching Strategic Regional Planning Network covering Limerick and Clare.

## **3.0 Purpose**

Historically, the development of Further Education and Training provision placed an emphasis on the planning, delivery and quality assurance systems being effectively operated at local Centre and Provision level.

The emphasis is now on corporate strategic planning and review and the requirement for the introduction of management systems that monitor the quality of provision and support services delivered across the wider range of FET Colleges and Centres.

The FET SRPN will facilitate integrated curriculum planning with a cross-provision and cross-campus development focus in line with the Strategic Priorities and the Enabling Themes in the FET Strategy 2020-2024.

The work of the FET SRPN will ensure the avoidance of programme duplication, enhanced communications and integration to ensure a strategic focus in achieving the targets as set out in the SPA. This will result in the development of integrated further education and training plans on a regional basis across Limerick and Clare.

The FET SRPN will:

- 1) consider and make recommendations to the CE/Director of FET regarding the implementation of the '*FET College of the Future*' concept as outlined in the national FET Strategy;
- 2) examine the Further Education and Training needs in the region and examine the current range of provision with a view to developing strategies for transforming the planning and implementation of FET Provision and Support Services;
- 3) support the annual planning cycle and processes, funding allocations, projected provision inputs, outputs and outcomes in achieving SPA targets;
- 4) develop integrated FET Provision and Support Services plans at a regional level across all provision cognisant of the local and regional dimension and any DFHERIS/SOLAS guidelines and parameters;
- 5) develop a co-ordinated process of delivery of FET Provision and Support Services with progression options to employment and/or further studies;
- 6) outline operational challenges and issues that may impede the successful delivery of the goals/actions outlined in the FET Strategy, FET Strategic Framework/Action Plans, Strategic Performance Agreement etc.;
- 7) be aware of regional consultations and other ETB engagements i.e. DSP, LEO, MWRSF, LCDC, Partnerships etc. in order to progress co-ordinated planning;
- 8) make recommendations to the Quality Council Sub-Group (Programme Governance) regarding any new curriculum requests to enhance FET provision through reviewing the currency of the curriculum on offer and supporting the development and delivery of new learning curriculum including innovative cross-provision and cross-campus courses;
- 9) contribute to the development and implementation of all ETB FET Strategies, for example, Employer Engagement, Guidance, PD, Learning Technology, Programme & Curriculum Development, QA, Monitoring and Evaluation etc.;

- 10) be self-reflective as to how the FET SRPN is performing;
- 11) discuss such performance of FET Provision and Support Services and provide feedback and suggestions regarding improvements where necessary.

#### **4.0. Membership**

4.1 The functions of the Strategic Regional Planning Network will be carried out by a sub-group of the FET Steering Group consisting of nine (9) members to include:

- Director of Further Education and Training
- FET Manager, Active Inclusion Support Service
- FET Manager, Work-Based Learning & Development
- FET Manager, Innovation, Development & Quality
- FET Manager, Operations, Planning & Resourcing
- FET Manager, Full-Time and Part-Time Provision
- FET Managers, Training Provision
- FET Manager, PLC Provision

4.2. The network may invite persons with relevant expertise to attend meetings to provide advice and assistance<sup>1</sup>.

#### **5.0 Facilitators**

5.1 The FET SRPN will be facilitated by the Director of FET and one (1) other member nominated by the Director of FET. The latter position will be on a rotational basis every two years.

5.2 The FET SRPN will have access to relevant inputs from members of various FET Provision & Support Services.

5.3 The meeting Agenda will be circulated for input.

#### **6.0 Administration Support**

6.1 The network will nominate one (1) administration staff member from among the administration staff to:

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

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<sup>1</sup> For example, LEO, Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU)

## **7.0 Meetings**

- The network shall meet at least three times per year and the timing of network meetings should take place in order to maximise the accuracy of FARR in reflecting planned programmes in terms of inputs, outputs, outcomes, numbers, levels, subject areas, award areas, certification etc.
- The FARR system captures quantitative data for planning and reporting purposes. The system has 'open/edit periods' i.e. open for data entry and for editing and is open during the following periods:
  - a. planning from September to November (for following year),
  - b. reporting
    - i. January to June
    - ii. July to December
- Meetings will be scheduled by the Facilitators.