

FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

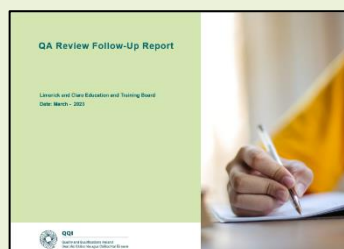
QUALITY ASSURANCE NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Tenth Edition of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Newsletter.

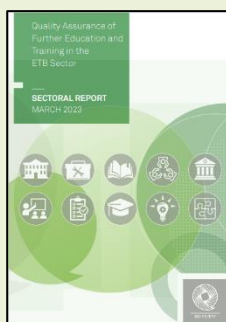
Key Features of this issue



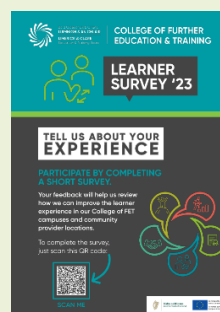
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1. CONTACT DETAILS

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QA SUPPORT SERVICE

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| Patsy Hogan | Quality Assurance Officer, Policies and Procedures | patsy.hogan@lcetb.ie | 086 143 7473 |
| Josephine Dempsey | Quality Assurance Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation | josephine.dempsey@lcetb.ie | 086 418 3811 |

Quality Assurance Support Officers

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QASS Administrator

| | | | |
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2. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION POLICY

Following development, extensive consultation and Quality Council approval, the College of FET Access, Transfer and Progression policy has been published on the College's Quality Assurance website ([Quality Assurance | College of FET](#)).¹

This policy sets out the approach taken by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board to Access, Transfer & Progression (ATP) in the ETB's College of FET ensuring inclusivity and equality of opportunity for our prospective and current learners.

The policy is available to view or download via the following link -


[22_12_05_college_of_fet_access_transfer_progression_policy_v1.0.pdf\(collegeoffet.ie\)](#)²

All College of FET provision and support services are required to consider the policy to ensure that all practices relating to access, transfer and progression conform to the overarching College of FET policy.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's College of FET is committed to widening participation and access to Further Education and Training, particularly for learners coming from under-represented and/or non-traditional routes. This commitment is reflected in the ETB's vision statement:

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board plays a leading role in the provision of high-quality lifelong education, training and enterprise skills needs. We achieve this by providing caring, effective, innovative, flexible and inclusive pathways for all our students and learners, which are reflective of the diverse needs of our community.

Access, Transfer & Progression Policy

 COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

Access, Transfer & Progression Policy

| | |
|--|---|
| Policy Area | College of FET |
| Version | 1.0 |
| Date | Created: October 2022 Approved: December 2022 Implemented: January 2023 |
| Revision Details | |
| Monitored | Ongoing |
| Responsibility | Director of FET |
| Approval | Quality Council |
| This policy document is an uncontrolled copy. Each staff member should consult StaffCONNECT for the latest version of this document. | |

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The policy specifically details access processes, including Equality and Diversity statements; Entry Procedures from Initial Contact, Pre-Entry Information, Advice and Guidance, Admission/Registration Process (including Course Briefing sessions), Access to courses for International Protection Applicants and Learner Induction; Learners with a Disability; Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for Access etc.

This Access, Transfer & Progression Policy should be read in conjunction with the other elements of the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) as approved by the Quality Council. It is a working document and is subject to a regular 6 monthly review from experience in implementing its procedures and in the light of feedback received from staff, learners, outside interests and new educational developments. All College of FET Staff are invited to recommend improvements arising from their experience. They can do so by informing their Provision Co-ordinator or contacting the Director of FET.

¹ <https://collegeoffet.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/>

² https://collegeoffet.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/22_12_05_College_of_FET_Access_Transfer_Progression_Policy_V1.0.pdf

UPDATED INTERNAL VERIFICATION AND EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATION GUIDELINES

The updated IV and EA Guidelines are available on [StaffCONNECT | Quality Assurance | Certification | IV and EA Guidelines](#)³. The main change to the documents is the removal of reference to Covid-19 as both IV and EA have returned to pre-Covid processes. Exceptions include the requirement to adhere to any Covid-19 hygiene measures on campus, in relation to the Risk Categorisation table and where using any Contingency Measures such as the modifications to the CAS awards and assignments in lieu of exams.

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) ASSESSMENT TEMPLATES

Certain templates normally used in the assessment process are not applicable when putting applicants through the RPL process combined with an identified need for additional templates to capture RPL grades.

Below is a list of the current assessment templates and the corresponding template version for RPL (where applicable) or completely new RPL template where it was required.

| Traditional Assessment Template | RPL Template |
|--|---|
| 01_Course Assessment Schedule | N/A for RPL |
| 02_Module Outline | N/A for RPL |
| 03_Assessment Cover Sheet L1-3 | 03_Assessment Cover Sheet L1-3_RPL |
| 03_Assessment Cover Sheet L4-6 | 03_Assessment Cover Sheet L4-6_RPL |
| 04_Assessment Brief | 04_Assessment Brief_RPL |
| 05_Marking Scheme | 05_Grading Rubric_RPL New template required for RPL portfolios. This template must be used to record grades for individual learning outcomes. These grades are then transferred to template 18_Grading Report Levels 1-6 (see below). |
| 06_Outline Solutions | Exams generally not done for RPL in FET. QASS will develop if need arises. |
| 07_Examination Attendance Register | Exams generally not done for RPL in FET. QASS will develop if need arises. |
| 08_Examination Cover Sheet | Exams generally not done for RPL in FET. QASS will develop if need arises. |
| 09_Assessment Submission List L1-3 | 09_Assessment Submission List L1-3_RPL |
| 09_Assessment Submission List L4-6 | 09_Assessment Submission List L4-6_RPL |
| 10_Module Results Summary Sheet | 10_Module Results Summary Sheet_RPL |
| 11_Portfolio Submission Checklist | 11_Portfolio Submission Checklist_RPL |
| 12_Portfolio Box Label A4 | 12_Portfolio Box Label A4 (stays the same) |
| 13_Portfolio Box Label A5 | 13_Portfolio Box Label A5 (stays the same) |
| 14_IV Checklist and 14a_IV Checklist | 14_IV Checklist_RPL |
| 15_IV Report | 15_IV Report (stays the same) |
| 16_EA Report | 16_EA Report EA (stays the same) |
| 17_Assessor Feedback Form | 17_Assessor Feedback Form (stays the same) |
| No equivalent in traditional template. New template required for RPL portfolios. | 18_Grading Report Levels 1-6 New template required for RPL portfolios. This template must be used to record grades for RPL modules as the QQI Learner Marking Sheets at the back of the module descriptor aren't applicable to RPL. |

³ <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Certification/IV%20and%20EA%20Guidelines>

3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICER – MONITORING AND EVALUATION

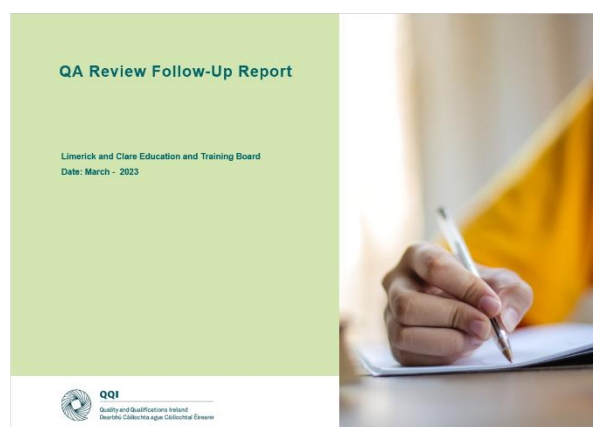
The Quality Assurance Support Service would like to welcome Josephine Dempsey into her new role as Quality Assurance Officer – Monitoring and Evaluation.

Josephine's role will support the development and implementation of evaluation and monitoring processes to ensure effective quality improvement and enhancement processes across the College of FET.

We look forward to working with Josephine in her new role which will be based in the Quality Assurance Support Service offices in Ennis Campus.

QA REVIEW FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Following publication of the review report of the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance, and one year after submission of its QA Review Action Plan, Limerick and Clare ETB have submitted a follow-up report to QQI on progress against the plan, and how it is addressing the outcomes of the review. The report identifies the range of strategic and logistical developments and decisions that have occurred within the ETB since the publication of the review report and addresses each of the key findings and recommendations that the reviewers presented. Significant milestones are also included, as well as reflections and learnings from the inaugural review process.



The report can be viewed or downloaded from the [Self-Evaluation and Quality Improvement] area of the College of FET Quality Assurance website ([Quality Assurance | College of FET](https://collegeoffet.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/))⁴ at [23_03_13_LCETB_QAR_PROGRESS_REPORT.pdf](https://collegeoffet.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/23_03_13_LCETB_QAR_PROGRESS_REPORT.pdf) (collegeoffet.ie)⁵.

QQI QUALITY DIALOGUE MEETING

As part of its monitoring process, QQI conducts biennial Quality Dialogue Meetings with education providers. During Covid-19 restrictions, these meetings were held online. This year, the Quality Dialogue Meetings will return on-site.

Quality Dialogue Meetings are an important part of QQI's engagement with ETBs. The meeting between QQI and Limerick and Clare ETB will take place on 23rd June 2023. The QDM is an opportunity for both parties to provide mutual strategic and high-level updates, to discuss Limerick and Clare ETB's follow-up report, the Annual Quality Report (AQR) and share updates on more general developments and plans.

QQI will be represented by Pdraig Walsh, Chief Executive, together with senior colleagues from across QQI Directorates. Limerick and Clare ETB will be represented by George O'Callaghan, Limerick and Clare ETB Chief Executive, along with members of the Quality Council.

⁴ <https://collegeoffet.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/>

⁵ https://collegeoffet.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/23_03_13_LCETB_QAR_PROGRESS_REPORT.pdf

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE ETB SECTOR

QQI have launched “Quality Assurance of Further Education and Training in the ETB Sector - Sectoral Report, March 2023”

Quality of FET in the Education and Training Boards | Quality and Qualifications Ireland (qqi.ie)⁶

A new report published by Quality and Qualifications Ireland provides an independent analysis of quality assurance of further education and training in the Education and Training Boards (ETB). Prepared by an independent group of international experts, the report analyses the first-ever quality assurance reviews of the 16 education and training boards (ETBs) which took place from March 2021 to May 2022.

The sectoral report team identified many aspects of the quality assurance of FET in ETBs which were well managed, as well as some areas where improvements could be made.

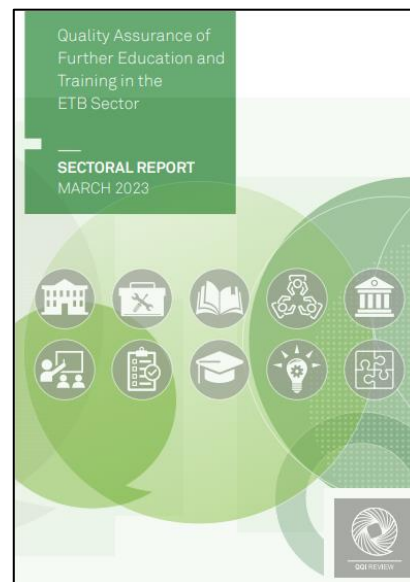
To further strengthen the effectiveness of quality assurance in further education and training in the ETB sector, the sectoral report team is making the following four main recommendations:

1. ETB autonomy in relation to planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing their approaches to quality assurance needs to be encouraged and strengthened,
2. The quality assurance of the effectiveness of individuals’ teaching is underdeveloped and more needs to be done to improve its monitoring and evaluation,
3. The processes which are used to review and update programmes need to be strengthened,
4. ETBs and the ETB sector need to make better use of quantitative data to support quality assurance.

The sectoral report team also identified areas where the effectiveness of quality assurance could be improved. The following are areas where some, but not all, ETBs would benefit from adopting the best practice in the sector:

- the importance of strengthening the learner voice in quality assurance,
- reducing the differences between learner experiences when these depend on which ETB centre provides FET,
- strengthening the quality assurance of work placements particularly through more systematic use of employer and learner feedback,
- reviewing the quality assurance approaches used in relation to blended and on-line learning,
- considering whether the provision of data through PLSS can be simplified,
- considering how to provide training and community education providers with access to ETB quality assurance information,
- considering how to strengthen the ETB brand,
- considering how the sector and its representative organisation(s) can support the development of quality assurance procedures and best practice,
- considering how regional partnerships can enhance quality assurance,
- considering how ETB Boards can take oversight of the quality assurance of FET provision.

All report recommendations and suggested improvements will be reviewed by the College of FET Strategic Regional Planning Network and Quality Council.



⁶ <https://www.qqi.ie/news/quality-of-fet-in-the-education-and-training-boards>

5. LEARNER VOICE

QQI in their 2021 review recommended that Limerick and Clare ETB establish clear mechanisms to capture learners' feedback in a consistent manner.

In our QAIR Action Plan and subsequent QA Review follow up report we have committed to the following "An internal audit of Learner's feedback mechanisms across FET campuses was carried out, and a working group was set up comprising FET provision and support services to develop a Learners' Feedback System across the College of FET. A draft questionnaire has been piloted in FET sites to be rolled out across the College of FET to be rolled out in 2023."

The College of FET Learner voice consultation process will be carried out via an online survey to be completed by all learners during a "College of FET Learner Consultation Week", commencing Monday 17th April 2023.

The "College of FET Learner Consultation Week" access to the Learner Survey is as follows:

- Email to all FET email addresses.
- Text message to all PLSS registered learners, with a short text message invitation to complete the survey with the survey link to be sent out.
- A3 Posters printed and displayed in all campuses – with QR code for scanning and mobile phone access.
- Image displayed on SignageLive in all campuses.

Data will be collated by the Quality Assurance Support Service, with a summary report developed for the Quality Council.

This distributed survey applies to all learners and apprentices studying in Campuses and centres associated with the College of FET and aligned to Limerick and Clare ETB Quality Assurance responsibilities.



6. PROGRAMME AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

LEVEL 3 - IT MODULES

Following a curriculum review process involving Quality Assurance Support Service staff members, Limerick and Clare ETB College of FET assessors, and staff from one of our second providers, there is now a single version of all nine level 3 module descriptors for use across all provision.

Working groups were established for all nine modules, and members reviewed all versions of the assigned descriptor, including the assessment instrument specifications (AIS) from training provision. An independent subject matter expert was then engaged to review all nine updated and reviewed descriptors.

These have been uploaded to StaffCONNECT and will be the only version of the nine Level 3 IT modules for use across the College of FET from September 2023. Many thanks to all who were involved in this process.

The modules are - [Level 3 - IT modules](#)⁷

| | |
|--------|---------------------|
| 3N0881 | Computer Literacy |
| 3N0550 | Database |
| 3N0551 | Desktop Publishing |
| 3N0552 | Digital Media |
| 3N0791 | Digital Photography |
| 3N0931 | Internet Skills |
| 3N0792 | Media Expression |
| 3N0542 | Spreadsheets |
| 3N0588 | Word Processing |

BEAUTY THERAPY AND BARBERING APPRENTICESHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Consortium Steering Groups of the Beauty Therapy Apprenticeship and the Barbering Apprenticeship met in College of FET, Ennis Campus on Monday 27th February to progress the development of the Occupational Profiles for the two occupations.

It was a very constructive and positive meeting, and the two Occupational Profiles are currently being drafted in preparation for broader industry consultation prior to submission to the National Apprenticeship Alliance for approval.

Once approved, the curriculum development process for the programmes will commence.



⁷ <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Programmes/Level%203?csf=1&web=1>

7. CERTIFICATION SUMMARY

QQI Certification Data – December 2022, February and April 2023 Certification Analysis

| Campus | Total Learners | Total Portfolios | Major Awards | Grade changes at External Authentication | Appeals |
|--|----------------|------------------|--------------|--|---------|
| Shannon Campus | 243 | 243 | 181 | | |
| Raheen Campus | 195 | 230 | 5 | | |
| Ennis Campus | | | | | |
| Part Time Provision, VESD | 211 | 268 | 27 | 1 | |
| Part Time Provision, Core Skills | 140 | 140 | 1 | | |
| Full Time Provision, VTOS, Ennis & Scariff CFE | 13 | 20 | 2 | | |
| Full Time Provision, Mid Clare Youthreach | 6 | 12 | | | |
| O'Connell Avenue Campus | | | | | |
| Part Time Provision, VESD | 192 | 255 | 15 | 1 | |
| Part Time Provision, Core Skills | 192 | 232 | 15 | 1 | |
| Full Time Provision, Youthreach | 2 | 2 | | | |
| Education Unit, Limerick Prison | 85 | 145 | | | |
| Abbeyfeale & Newcastlewest Campuses | 84 | 84 | | | |
| Kilmallock Road Campus | 20 | 29 | 2 | 7 | |
| Limerick Community Education Network (LCEN) | 15 | 15 | | | |
| Organic Campus | 14 | 69 | 2 | | |
| Shanagolden Campus - Youthreach | 4 | 28 | 4 | | |
| Kilrush Campus | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Total | 1,306 | 1,675 | 264 | 10 | |

THEMATIC FEEDBACK FROM EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATION REPORTS

Briefs / Marking Schemes / Rubrics

- The rubric should be part of the brief so that learners have complete information on their assessment marking. Ideally the briefs will include the specific task questions and the marking criteria / rubrics.
- Learners should be aware of marks being allocated. Marks available for each task should be indicated on the assignment brief. A learner may think that the tasks are evenly weighted, which may not be the case.
- Marks need to be broken down to show the learners how important all the elements of the Briefs are.
- Be careful of not breaking marks down too small as it may not allow for a differentiation in standards of the work presented. This may also lead to near perfect scores (e.g. 99%) which implies that there is no improvement possible for the learner with their work.
- Where marks are not awarded it is important and encouraging for learners to provide them with detail on loss of marks. I would recommend expanding on this in the feedback comments.

Feedback - Evidence of learner feedback required as it is hugely important that there is clear structures in place to provide timely and constructive feedback to all learners in all components. Summative feedback could be provided in written evidence to the learner with a copy to remain on the assessment. This final feedback could be available to EA to assist with interpretation of allocated marks and assigned grades.

Presentation of evidence - Learners were required to present evidence in a word processing format, one learner presented in a hand-written format. At level 5, learners should be encouraged and provided with the skills to present in a word processing format.

Referencing - Support Learners in referencing styles, this will enable them to gain confidence in this area and support continuation of learning to higher education where applicable

8. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Details of upcoming Quality Assurance Professional Learning and Developments.

Academic Writing and Referencing

Location: O'Connell Avenue Campus

Date: 29th March

Time: 2.00 – 4.00 pm

Providing Learner Feedback

Location: O'Connell Avenue Campus

Date: 26th April

Time: 2.00 – 4.00 pm

Quality Assurance Professional Learning And Developments Available On Request From Provision:

- Devising Exam Questions and Outline Solutions
- Internal Verification (IV) training

All Professional Learning And Developments communicated monthly by Tara Robinson, Professional Learning and Development Co-ordinator. Details of upcoming Quality Assurance training and booking links available on PL&D Newsletter on Wakelet and PDF.

Contact: pld@lcebtb.ie

9. NCC QA APPROVALS PROCESS

The National Course Calendar (NCC) QA Approvals Process has been developed by QASS to ensure that a consistent approach is used by Provision when scheduling courses on the NCC and that clear and accurate information is provided to learners on the courses being offered. This process applies to both certified and non-certified courses and all information relating to the process can be found [here](#)⁸. As part of this process, in conjunction with Provision, a bank of descriptions and learning outcomes for non-certified courses has been developed and uploaded to StaffCONNECT [here](#)⁹. These must be used for all non-certified courses being scheduled. If there is not a suitable description available please send your proposed course description and learning outcomes to Máire Lynch or Victoria Hook for review. QASS would like to thank all those who have contributed to the bank thus far and recognise the wide variety of innovative and engaging non-certified courses on offer across our organisation.

⁸

<https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Ffetdivision%2FQAS%2FPolicies%2FNCC%20QA%20Approval>

⁹ <https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Programmes/Non%20Certified%20Programmes/Non-Certified%20Courses%20Descriptions%20and%20Outcomes%20V1.6.pdf>

10. NATIONAL HAIRDRESSING APPRENTICESHIP

CEREMONY RECOGNISES FIRST EVER NATIONAL GRADUATES OF ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN HAIRDRESSING

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board held a ceremony on Monday, November 28, 2022 to mark the conferral of the first eight graduates of the new QQI award 'Advanced Certificate in Hairdressing'. These graduates are the first nationally-recognised, qualified hairdressers in the country.



TV presenter, fashion designer and former hairdresser, Brendan Courtney, hosted the ceremony in the Limerick Strand Hotel, in front of the graduates' family, friends and invited guests.

During the conferral the eight Advanced Certificate in Hairdressing graduates, all experienced hairdressers, employers, salon owners, mentors and teachers, expressed their delight in receiving their certification and spoke positively of their experience of RPL. The innovative new process of RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) was developed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in collaboration with an industry-led Consortium Steering Group. This is the first time that the process has been used for certification of a full level 6 major award. RPL recognises all forms of prior learning and validates hairdressers who would not have had the opportunity to avail of a formal qualification in their field. Catherine Finn, salon owner and graduate, said: "This award completes all I strived for during my career as a hairdresser. I am humbled and delighted to have achieved this recognised qualification. Thank you to the ETB for believing in our industry and making it all possible."

EXCELLENCE IN FET AWARD FOR INNOVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY SUPPORT SERVICES

At the recent National ETB Excellence Awards which took place on ETB Day on Thursday March 2nd, the FET Innovation, Development and Quality Support Service was recognised for Excellence in Further Education and Training. The service was awarded runner-up for its ground-breaking Recognition of Prior Learning initiative for the Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Hairdressing. Alan Hogan, FET Manager, Innovation, Development & Quality and Patsy Hogan, Quality Assurance Officer accepted the runner up award in the Excellence in FET category for Recognition of Prior Learning for Level 6 Advanced Cert in Hairdressing project from Andrew Brownlee, CE, SOLAS.





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