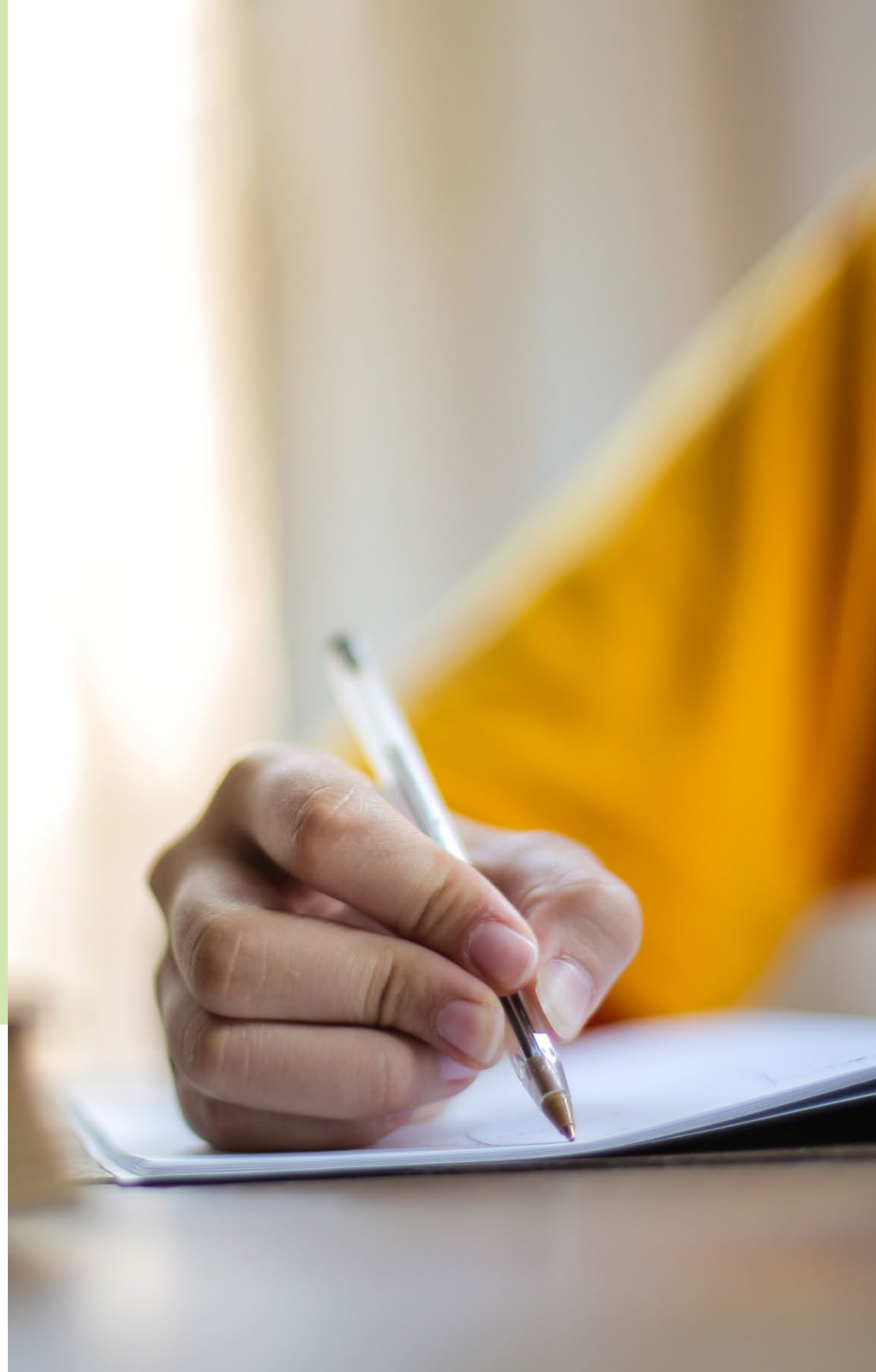


Interim Quality Report

Cork Education and Training Board

Date: February - 2025



PREFACE

The inaugural review by QQI of the quality assurance in the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) took place between March 2021 and May 2022. Following the review, each ETB provided an **action plan** and **follow-up report** in response to the recommendations made in the individual review report. QQI's role is to monitor and review the QA of providers, and the effectiveness of provider's internal QA system. Systematic quality reporting by providers is an integral part of this process. The development of an integrated and systematic annual quality reporting model for ETBs has commenced; for this quality reporting period, ETBs are submitting an interim quality report. This interim quality report records progress, developments and impacts in furtherance of recommendations arising from each ETB's review report, as well as other QA enhancements and initiatives.

In addition, the interim quality report requires each ETB to include updated links to its published quality assurance policies and procedures.

This is the interim quality report for Cork Education and Training Board

It is to be submitted by 28/02/25

The interim quality report has been approved by Cork ETB FET Strategy Group and is submitted by John Fitzgibbons, Director of FET

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GUIDELINES ON COMPLETING THE REPORT

This **interim quality report** provides a progress update to the ETB's inaugural review follow-up report, in addition to information regarding quality plans and initiatives in the ETB. Whereas details regarding all inaugural review recommendations were included in the follow-up report, please note that information relating to completed actions in response to recommendations, if any, are not required in this interim quality report.

Links to the published quality assurance policies and procedures of the ETB must be included in this interim quality report. Each ETB should ensure before submission that all links within the report are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available.

The ETB is asked to give particular attention to specific impacts arising from QA actions/initiatives, this includes:

- the key areas of focus prioritised for action and any specific changes arising as well as links to any associated outputs (e.g., procedures, reports etc.)
- reflections on the Follow-up reporting **process** and any barriers or challenges arising in implementation of the review recommendations.

The ETB is also asked to include additional **reflections** in the commentary.

The ETB is invited to provide up to 3 short case studies, 1-2 pages, demonstrating QA enhancements and their impacts.

There is a short survey on the follow-up process in Section 6. The results of this will be used to inform QQI and will not be published as part of this report.

1.0 Interim Quality Report

Include all links to published QA policies and procedures relevant to each section in the table below.

Please add or delete rows in the tables below, as required.

1.01 ETB Mission and Strategy

1.02 Structures & Terms of Reference for Governance of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Makes more extensive use of quantitative information and data in the monitoring, evaluation, and review of each college/centre/service's provision e.g., through the use of key performance indicators.	<p>Since 2023, Cork ETB have set up the Strategy, Planning and Reporting Support Unit (SPPSU) which has been monitoring and reporting on external data sources (labour market, economic, and social) relevant to Cork College of FET's strategic goals. This involves systematic reporting, sectoral analysis, and creating analytical frameworks. Labour market reports using reputable data for meaningful interpretation are published regularly.</p> <p>Internal data for analytics has been archived and databased from weekly and monthly snapshots of all PLSS data, totalling over 37 million records. This data includes learners, courses, applications, programmes, modules, and venues, and is matched with QQI data, CSO census data, Pobal Small Area deprivation data, OSI mapping shapefiles, and Open Route Service API commuting routes.</p>

In-house software, developed using Python and Jupyter Notebook, tracks 92 metrics over time by ETB Division, Provider, Venue, Programme Category, QQI Level, ISCED, and more. These metrics cover applications, activity, certification, data quality, issues, SPA metrics, data gaps, and other KPIs. Continuous development and internal auditing have significantly improved data quality for 2024.

The Strategic, Planning and Reporting Support Unit provides staff training and support in PLSS data administration, ensuring data completion, correction, and compliance with ESF+ and SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement metrics. This group collaborates nationally with the PLSS Advisory Group, FETCH Working Group, and IAU/PLSS Audit Working Group.

In 2024, a comprehensive data procedure was developed and focuses on best practices and data quality, which is in final draft awaiting significant updates to PLSS and FETCH and will be implemented in 2025. A policy shift towards online applications in Quarter 4 2023 has significantly improved data quality and application process visibility.

Key Performance Indicators (including SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement metrics) are calculated and reported locally to identify strengths, gaps, and potential improvements. All provisions and learners are mapped to CSO Small Areas and Electoral Divisions for service reach analysis. This includes examining population proportions, urban and rural certification levels, service distribution, gaps in provision, and the role of FET in addressing systemic deprivation. Additionally, completion, attainment, and certification levels are analysed by deprivation index.

Campus-level profiles offer insights into catchment mapping, commuting, deprivation levels, population, and service reach. With significant improvements in data quality, future data analysis will focus on themes such as certification, attainment, completion, progression, inclusive participation, deprivation levels, and national skills requirements. Ad-hoc data reports and analysis support managers and decision-makers.

The Strategy, Planning and Reporting Support Unit also manages Cork College of FET's Learner Experience Survey, which gathers feedback from learners as they near the end of their courses. There are three annual and three continuous survey instruments, resulting in nine reports generated yearly.

Industry-standard Tableau server is used for internal data analytics and audits, providing interactive visualizations, reports, commentaries, maps, ad-hoc data requests, and regular audits to Cork ETB managers and senior leaders. External data reports, such as the South-West Quarterly Labour Market Report and National Monthly Live Register Analysis, are published on the FET Strategy Group and Data Reporting & Support team channels on Microsoft Teams, using integrated Power BI interactive reports.

The Strategy, Planning and Reporting Support Unit's, Learner Experience Survey, is an anonymous feedback tool on programme organisation, delivery, and assessment procedures, capturing insights and respondent characteristics at campus and centre levels. Using six instruments to reflect the diverse learner population, the survey aims to gather high-quality, statistically significant data. The resulting analysis generates indicators for monitoring,

	<p>planning, and marketing, which can be interpreted via dashboards and filtered to inform decision-making at various levels (campus, centre, region, programme).</p> <p>Learner Experience Survey reports and analysis are provided to centres and campuses for decision-making and future planning. From 2025 onwards, campuses and centres will prepare task plans based on their survey findings to support continuous improvement.</p> <p>The Learner Experience Survey addresses wellbeing and focuses on confidence achievement and future expectations. As the survey develops, it will further explore learner wellbeing variables. This is in addition to incorporating feedback and recommendations from the “Learners Voice Group” and AONTAS learner consultation day.</p> <p>Campus and service profiles by ISCED, QQI level, etc., are mapped to commuting routes for learners (over 70,000 unique routes using the Open Route Service API). This data is further developed against OSI Small Areas, Electoral Divisions, Local Electoral Divisions, CSO, and Pobal deprivation index data to provide decision-makers with interactive maps of service provision across Cork ETB.</p>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>Focus has largely been on data quality and significant improvements have been made.</p>	

All data reports are shared with the Senior Leader team through a repository on SharePoint / Teams. The internal and external data reports are presented and reviewed at Cork ETB FET Strategy Group meetings, informing policy, planning and decision making. These are further discussed with staff at campus and area level.

Priorities for 2025 include

- ratification and implementation of the Strategy, Planning and Reporting Support Unit's draft data procedure which focuses on best practice and quality of data
- designing a model and communication to enable us to use descriptive data in a more predictive and prescriptive manner

Link to published policies and procedures

[Strategic Performance Agreement 2022-2024](#)

[Strategy Statement 2022 - 2026](#)

1.03 Documentation of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Develops and implements a quality assurance approach for all areas of the ETB's provision.	<p>The Quality Assurance Office utilise SharePoint as a document repository for all Quality Assurance procedures. While all QA information is available on this site, news and updates are also shared to Work Vivo and via email on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The Terms of Reference for the Quality Assurance Steering Group are currently under review with a view to form a Sub-Group to aid in oversight of Quality Assurance. This is to ensure that</p>

	<p>membership of the group reflects all services including HR/Finance/ICT. The work of these groups will further enhance the culture of quality across all provisions in Cork ETB.</p> <p>In March 2023, Cork ETB's Assessment Working Group undertook a review of all QA policies, procedures and associated templates and resources, which were implemented in the 2023/2024 academic year. A series of short video tutorials were developed and published to the QA SharePoint site.</p>
Develops and implements systematic and regular monitoring of the quality of individual centres/services.	<p>Once the terms of reference for Quality Assurance Steering Group are finalised, a system will be developed and implemented to both internally and externally monitor the quality within campuses/centres. One of the actions of this group and proposed sub-group will inform a monitoring and evaluation framework for Cork ETB. This framework will include a mechanism to benchmark based on Cork ETB's Strategic Performance Agreement targets with SOLAS.</p> <p>In addition, the framework will allow for monitoring of Cork ETB's priorities, goals and objectives as outlined in the Strategy Statement and improve quality oversight and will facilitate the rollout of Continuous Improvement Plans across all campuses and centres in the 2025/2026 academic year. These plans will provide valuable insights and opportunities to further benchmark and enhance the quality of each individual campus and centre.</p>
Explore what opportunities exist to use indicators to 'benchmark' the quality of individual centres' provision.	<p>SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement metrics are independently calculated locally and available as a Revealed Comparative Advantage benchmark by ETB division and programme category, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.</p> <p>Each provider, venue, and course are measured against 92 metrics, including data quality, gaps, certification, attainment, completion, progression, inclusive participation, deprivation</p>

levels, national skills requirements, KPIs, and SOLAS metrics. QQI provides annual grading distributions by centre, which are compared with internal records.

Cork ETB receive data arising from QQI Certification and Validation. These statistics are compiled and disseminated to campuses and centres, providing benchmarks for each centre in comparison to all centres on a national level.

Commentary and Reflections

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Cork ETB Quality Assurance Procedures](#)

[Strategic Performance Agreement 2022-2024](#)

[Strategy Statement 2022 - 2026](#)

[Learner Experience Survey – Adult Literacy and Community Groups \(ALC\)](#)

[National FET Learner Forum – Learner Report 2021-2022](#)



National FET Learner
Forum_CorkETB.pdf

1.04 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Use quality assurance processes to enhance and strengthen the existing HR procedures.	The development of Cork ETB's People Strategy, in line with the strategic objectives set out in its Strategy Statement for 2022- 2026, is being progressed by the Corporate Services and Human Resources units within the ETB.
Develop a much better understanding of the effectiveness of work placements and learners' work-based learning.	The concept of the Work based learning group has been expanded. Cork ETB elected a new board in 2024 and as part of this a sub-group is being established, under the direction of the Chief Executive to ensure that Cork ETB continues to engage with and support business in Cork into the future. This sub-group will aim to strengthen the effectiveness of Work Based Learning in Cork ETB.
Develop a much better understanding of the effectiveness of the existing, and any future, mentoring schemes.	<p>A specific FET Leadership Development programme has been developed and is currently going through the approval process with a view to offering to relevant staff from September 2025.</p> <p>Three members of staff from the Quality Assurance department are currently enrolled in the Postgraduate Certificate in Programme Development and Validation (Level 9) at Maynooth University.</p>
	<p><u>Induction & Mentoring</u></p> <p>Progress has been made in induction and mentoring at Cork ETB, but further development is needed to establish comprehensive programmes. In 2023, the Professional Learning Development (PLD) Support Service and PLD Steering Group initiated the development of a FET Induction Programme for staff, opting for an e-learning approach due to the size and diversity of the staff. The PLD team trained in Storyline for e-learning development in June</p>

	<p>2024 and is compiling relevant content for a modular, interactive induction programme. This programme will provide essential onboarding information and an organisational map, available continuously on Cork ETB's digital platform, which will include text, links, instructions, and infographics to guide staff in their duties.</p> <p>For mentoring, the PLD Support Service has compiled options for a mentoring scheme and prepared operational guidelines for consideration. Once a leadership programme is in place, a suitable mentoring system for FET staff will be identified and implemented.</p> <p><u>Leadership & Management</u></p> <p>Adaptive Leadership training was provided for senior and middle managers in Cork ETB in 2022-23, and the development of leadership skills for all staff is ongoing. The PLD Support Service and PLD Steering Group are developing a bespoke leadership programme for FET staff at Cork ETB. A leadership programme decision is expected by March 2025.</p> <p>The concept is that management is for managers, but leadership is for everyone. Cork ETB plans to deliver two iterations of the in-house leadership programme each academic year (Autumn and Spring), over six weeks (one hour per week), certified by Cork ETB. All FET staff will have access to register for this programme.</p> <p>Additionally, ongoing and funded management training for newly or recently appointed managers is offered using external training providers as needed.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.</p>	

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

All HR policies and procedures are published to our Internal Communications platform – Work Vivo.

1.05 Programme Development, Approval & Submission

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>Rapidly implements a manageable process of programme review to ensure all programmes are up-to-date and meet the needs of learners, employers, and society.</p>	<p>The membership and terms of reference for the Programme Approval Group are currently under review. It is proposed to establish a subgroup within the Programme Approval Group. Cork ETB remains committed to collaborating with ETBs on a national level, having shared several programmes and processed and approved applications for differential validation.</p> <p>The Programme Approval Group application forms are presently in draft format and will be made available to Cork ETB staff upon approval.</p> <p>Cork ETB participated in the development of the first micro-qualifications in conjunction with SOLAS in Sustainability and has received validation approval for several awards in this category.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Specific Purpose Award in Environmental Sustainability Awareness 4S21809- Specific Purpose Certificate in Building Digital Business Skills 5S21869- Specific Purpose Certificate in Construction Skills for Energy Conservation 5S22107- Specific Purpose Certificate in Fish Farm Techniques 5S21795

- Specific Purpose Award in Sustainable Procurement and Supply Chain 5S22199
- Specific Purpose Certificate in Lean Practice for Sustainable Business 5S22193
- Specific Purpose Certificate in Resource Efficiency in the Workplace 5S21997
- Specific Purpose Certificate in Utilising Robotics in Advanced Manufacturing 6S21965
- Specific Purpose Certificate in Business Innovation and Market Development 6S22003
- Specific Purpose Certificate in Circular Economy in the Workplace 6S22103

Cork ETB has also completed differential validation for several other programmes.

Furthermore, Cork College of FET, in collaboration with SOLAS, is currently developing Micro-qualifications as part of an initiative funded by the SOLAS Innovation Fund. These industry-focused qualifications aim to enhance workforce skills and future-proof businesses. As part of this project, three specialised micro-qualifications are being developed for the Life Science Sector: Continuous Processing, Bioprocessing Technology, and Cleanroom Controls. This initiative supports and promotes lifelong learning and industry-driven skills development, equipping professionals with the expertise needed to remain competitive in the rapidly evolving Life Science Sector.

Cork ETB in collaboration with Cork College of FET Tramore Road Campus, developed a level 4 Programme Derived Award Standard (PDAS) Music programme which has been submitted to QQI for validation in December 2024. This programme is designed to provide basic instruction in music for individuals interested in learning about music and consists of five modules each contributing to the overall understanding and skills development in music. The programme aims to cater to a group of learners, without formal music education, seeking

foundational skills and a pathway to further education or entry-level employment. Cork ETB is currently awaiting validation.

Cork ETB in collaboration with Sport Ireland and National Governing Bodies (NGBs) are currently developing four new Programme Derived Award Standard (PDAS) Programmes. The development of the programmes involved various stakeholders including Higher Education HE, Industry and the NGBs. The programmes aim to address both the practical and theoretical knowledge required for careers in physical education and sports-related fields. During the programme consultation phase, the sports department in Cork College of FET Tramore Road Campus identified the gaps and stressed the absence of options that the current Sport, Recreation & Exercise programme had, there was little or no practical application in the content and a lack of synergy between the modules. The new programmes seek to fill this void by increasing partnership with NGBs to increase participation in exercise. Also, the new programme will aim to enhance technological innovation in the new modules and foster physical literacy throughout the programmes.

Since September 2024, programme development staff have collaborated with colleagues in Cork and Waterford ETB and other ETBs on piloting module updates. There are currently six modules which have been updated on the Level 5 Life Science programme. Spreadsheets at levels 4-6 are at the final stage for consultation. Thirty modules across different fields of learning and levels will be available by end of April 2025 for use by campuses and centres in the next academic year.

	Cork College of FET Kinsale Campus have identified a gap in the provision of programmes in the Universal Design field at NFQ level 5 for the FET Sector and an application through Cork ETB's governance structure to develop an award was approved. The development of a PDAS Specific Purpose award in Equity and Universal Design has commenced with Cork ETB staff currently enrolled in the Maynooth University programme. This programme aims to provide a qualification in Universal Design, addressing the lack of options for those interested in this field. The curriculum covers an introduction to Equity and Universal Design, its principles, and practical applications, aiming to develop relevant skills and competencies in this area.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.	

1.06 Access, Transfer and Progression

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Additional support relating to progression is provided to vocational learners outside the PLC sector.	Cork College of FET (CCFET) has a dedicated website with pathways to each level 5 and 6 campus and their dedicated sites. These are all based on common and unified branding for CCFET. Efforts are currently underway to extend this to encompass Levels 1 to 4.

As part of the Cork College of FET project and related workstream recommendations, a dedicated learner portal is also under development with a planned go live date of May 2025 for the initial version. This will be further developed and enhanced as the project develops.

A centralised admissions system for all Cork ETB campuses, delivering Level 5 and Level 6 programmes, was launched in March 2024. The system streamlines the application process for learners and allows the applicant to apply for up to 5 courses across all campuses and to rank the order of preference for their chosen course. Initial figures indicated a reduction in the amount of 'no-shows at interviews with the majority of applicants obtaining a place on their course of preference.

A dedicated 'Learner Link' service was also launched in the Summer of 2024 providing a dedicated phone and email service for support and queries regarding the courses on offer and the application and registration process.

Staff members have been assigned roles focused solely on progression, with a particular emphasis on Youthreach and Mainstream. Additionally, some staff have had progression-related tasks, such as apprenticeships, added to their responsibilities. Furthermore, a cross-sectoral working group on progression has been established, including representatives from Cork ETB head office (DFET), University College Cork, all Cork ETB PLC colleges and associated annexes, Youthreach, Mainstream, and Apprenticeships. This group meets on a monthly basis.

	<p>The planned actions for this group include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of effective structures and links with centre co-ordinators, management in FET campuses and any other relevant stakeholders in Cork ETB to develop a co-ordinated approach to learner progression - Promote FET opportunities, increase awareness and understanding of available opportunities amongst Youthreach learners and staff - Develop employer engagement and assist in identifying potential employers to engage in the Working Connections Initiative for Youthreach learners - Monitor the progression outcomes of Youthreach learners on to FET and employment - Support the implementation of life skills training in the Youthreach curriculum as a core part of progression for Youthreach learners
	<p><u>Transition to Employment and Training</u></p> <p>Cork ETB's Active Inclusion Support Service have created links and networks to aid the training to employment and training for learners with Cork prison and the Dillon's Cross Project. Pathways to employment have been created through the employment transition programme and information is available in accessible formats.</p> <p><u>Supporting Traveller and Roma Education</u></p> <p>The Active Inclusion Support Service team have worked closely with the Traveller Visibility Group (TVG) providing additional support through information, mentoring and assistance in navigating pathways.</p>

Traveller Mentoring Programme

A Traveller Mentoring Programme has been developed following the successful completion of the QQI L6 Train the Trainer module. Some of those course participants are now employed on the mentoring programme. Additionally, a TIG welding programme co-designed by Bishopstown Campus and the Traveller Visibility Group, has been implemented and delivered. This programme builds on the traditional trades, enterprise and craftwork inherent to Traveller heritage. Cork ETB is committed to breaking down the systematic barriers facing Traveller's in education.

Great to Train Programme

The Great to Train programme was developed in partnership with Cork Simon to address employment progression for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness with an addiction & trauma background. This demographic typically encounters higher unemployment rates, lower educational levels, social exclusion, higher levels of poverty and deprivation than the general population. This programme provides; a large variety of Work-related training along with skills development, therapy & learning in a trauma informed, learner centred environment.

Boxing Clever Programme

The Boxing Clever programme developed in partnership with Cork ETB, The Recovery Academy and University College Cork, is a twenty-week integrated educational, substance use recovery and fitness programme that aims to support participants to develop more

resilient identities, while encouraging educational achievement, physical wellness and reduction in harmful or risky behaviours.

Inclusive Music Ensemble

The Inclusive Music Ensemble programme developed in partnership with Cork ETB & Munster Technological University, where Level 3 learners (many with both intellectual and physical disabilities) participate in a level 3 Specific Purpose Award in a Higher Education environment and campus along with their peers studying at Level 7 and Level 8.

Tertiary Degrees in the Cork College of FET

The tertiary education landscape across the New Horizons, Southern Strategic Alliance, encompassing Further Education institutions under the Cork and Kerry Education and Training Boards (CETB/KETB), Cork College of Further Education and Training (Cork College of FET), and Kerry College, alongside Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), University College Cork (UCC) and Munster Technological University (MTU), has experienced significant growth in 2024. The Alliance has successfully implemented a working model of embedded QQI awards, ensuring that tertiary education remains both accessible and cohesive. Rather than delivering HEI content directly in a College of FET setting, the alliance has prioritised a collaborative approach where institutions come together to co-create educational degrees in the tertiary space. This model fosters respectful engagement among all partners, valuing the distinct roles

each institution plays in the educational journey. By avoiding a 'second provider' approach, the alliance promotes an integrated framework where Further and Higher Education institutions work in tandem to develop degrees that are academically rigorous, industry-aligned, and reflective of student needs.

In the Cork College of FET there are currently pathways that link from Morrison's Island Campus to both MTU and UCC which ran for the first time in 2024.

The 1+3 Model

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) 1+3 model at UCC exemplifies excellence in collaboration, breaking down barriers to higher education and creating seamless pathways for students. This model embeds dual engagement for the students enabling students to attend UCC each week, actively engaging with the university environment while undertaking 10 credits as part of their tertiary degree. Through this integration, students not only gain valuable academic experience but also build connections with their peers, fostering a sense of belonging and confidence in their transition to full-time study next year. The success of the model highlights the power of partnership in expanding access to higher education and supporting students in achieving their full potential.

The 1 + 4 Model

The development and implementation of the 1 + 4 model in General and Mental Health Nursing in the Cork region has provided opportunities for students to complete their nursing qualification in MTU's Kerry Campus. This model, which integrates one year of foundational education within Further Education institutions followed by four years in MTU, has created an accessible and structured pathway for these students. The success of this initiative has paved the way for tertiary expansion into new disciplines such as Occupational Therapy in UCC in the future. This expansion broadens access to professional careers for students who might have previously

been unable to consider these pathways, thus enhancing participation and diversity in key health and social care sectors.

Dual Registration and Its Implications

A key feature of the tertiary model is dual registration, which allows students to be registered with both their College of FET and their partner HEI. This offers several advantages including early university exposure as students gain access to university resources, including academic supports, library facilities, and student services while still completing their foundational year in Further Education. When they are ready to progress, they are guided in a seamless transition due to the early exposure. By engaging with the university environment from an early stage, students experience reduced transition anxiety and an increased sense of belonging upon full integration into their degree programme. In the 1+3 model students participate in university tutorials, group work, and learning activities alongside their future full-time peers, fostering stronger academic preparedness and peer connections.

Degrees Commenced in Cork under Tertiary Provision

In 2023 and 2024, new tertiary degrees have been successfully launched, expanding opportunities for Cork learners. These include:

- 2023
 - BSc (Hons) Software Development [NCC: National Course Calendar](#)
 - BBus in Business (Common Entry) [NCC: National Course Calendar](#)
 - BA Honours in Animation, Visual Effect & Motion Design [NCC: National Course Calendar](#)

- 2024

- Two Nursing opportunities under a 1+4 model from Cork's Morrison's Island Campus- BSc (Hons) in General Nursing NCC: National Course Calendar and BSc (Hons) in Mental Health Nursing NCC: National Course Calendar
- A 1+3 degree in the Bachelor of Social Work BSW (HONS) Degree NCC: National Course Calendar

The positive engagement between both universities and the Cork College of FET has provided valuable opportunities for learners in the region. This collaborative approach ensures that students have the resources and support they need to thrive in their academic journeys and professional careers. The New Horizons Southern Strategic Alliance continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of tertiary education in Cork, strengthening pathways, and enhancing educational opportunities for all learners.

Commentary and Reflections

Cork ETB's Active Inclusion team visits the learners who are nearing release in the education unit of Cork Prison each month and mentors them in finding a training course or employment post release. The team arranged for staff from Cork ETB and WWETB to meet with the learners and were involved in the Cork Prison open day.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Cork ETB's Statutory Review Report](#)

[Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024-2030](#)

[Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities](#)

1.07 Integrity and Approval of Learner Results

1.08 Information and Data Management

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Explore how the ETB could develop and strengthen its arrangements for tracking learners following the completion of their programme.	The SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement "Supporting Jobs" metrics track employment attainment (12 weeks of continuous employment within 12 months of exiting FET, possibly with multiple employers). Data is sent to the CSO/Revenue for return in the second next year. SOLAS also sends data to the CSO for statistics on progression to Higher Education.

Progression within FET (including to other ETBs) is tracked by SOLAS, while Cork ETB tracks all local FET progression. This includes comprehensive tracking and analysis of learner attainment over time, covering initial, current, and maximum QQI levels. (Progression to FET outside Cork ETB is not tracked locally).

A Cork ETB learner successfully completed their Junior Certificate and QQI Level 3 components at Cork City Learning Support Services in June 2023. During their studies, they secured part time employment to enhance their English language skills. Subsequently, they progressed to complete QQI Level 4 in General Learning at Tramore Road Campus from September 2023 to June 2024. Currently, they are pursuing QQI Level 5 in Business and Marketing at Morrisons Island Campus, with an anticipated completion date of June 2025.

A rigorous programme of data quality improvement is in place for learner entrance education and economic status, and learner outcomes, and has made significant improvements in key target areas, i.e. *ESF+* programmes. This will be expanded to all learner groups in 2025.

Starting in 2025, Cork ETB will implement a new Learner Exit Form and procedures, developing a new template as part of the ETBI Internal Audit Unit (IAU) working group.

The Unit is also designing a Longitudinal (Panel) Study of Post-FET graduates to track learners after their studies with Cork College of FET.

	<p>This study will involve recruiting a panel of learners (respondents) upon completion of their studies across all programmes, certifications, and ISCED levels, and surveying this group over time (e.g., every 2 years). This approach will allow for describing a population of FET graduates at a single point in time, as well as tracking and comparing their experiences in further and higher education over time. The data and subsequent analysis could provide a deeper understanding of FET learners' experiences in the labour market and other related themes</p> <p>While maintaining common variables over time will be essential, there will also be opportunities to introduce new variables for limited periods, considered as different waves on particular themes. Over time, the data could enable the creation of 'case studies' of FET graduates and explorations of phenomena in the labour market, which may help in suggesting new programmes and learning pathways.</p>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>Cork ETB is striving to improve links between groups to develop common projects so that data analytics can be put to best use in learner tracking. Opportunities exist for groups to use the Data, Planning and Reporting Support Unit's data analytics to indicate preferred pathways for progression within Cork ETB and to measure the success of policy pathways established - while considering commuting times for progression options from one centre to another across a geography as wide as Cork ETB.</p>	

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

Click here to enter text.

1.09 Public Information and Communication

2.0 Teaching, Learning & Assessment

2.01 The Learning Environment

2.02 Assessment of Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Considers how it can strengthen the quality assurance of teaching and learning or enhance the accuracy and validity of the proxy measures which are being used.	<p>Cork ETB's ESOL strategy has been developed and support the implementation of Cork ETB's Strategic Statement by considering each of the Strategic Priorities, goals and objectives and identifying how ESOL provision will support Cork ETB in achieving its goals for each of the Strategic Priorities.</p> <p>Since 2023, Cork ETB has appointed two ESOL Adult Literacy Organisers to further staff across the provision. Between 2023/2024, 4,543 learners were registered on ESOL courses across the county with a total of 297 ESOL courses across the academic year, 21% of which were certified.</p> <p>The ESOL Adult Literacy Organisers planned actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Devising curriculum, syllabi and resources in line with international best practice- Increasing rates of certification across ESOL provision- Devising initial assessment tool- Supporting ESOL Community of Practice for networking, sharing of experience and peer support

- Providing online & in-person ESOL PLD workshops to consolidate the organisation's position as a learning organisation which effectively meets the needs of ESOL learners
- Conducting annual tutor survey to review PLD needs, engagement with PLD provision and resources on teams, learner needs and scope for enhancement within ESOL provision
- Collaborating with stakeholders, communities, community organisations and learners to support learner recruitment and retention
- Effectively promoting ESOL courses and progression pathways to all new migrant communities in County Cork
- Developing teaching and learning resources on topics including equality, inclusion, diversity and the Equal Status Act

A framework for Cork College of FET, Communities of Practice has been drafted and is currently going through the final stages of approval for implementation, in cognate areas, within and across centres and Campuses.

In February 2025, Cork ETB submitted a Blended Learning Action Plan to QQI. A Blended Learning Working Group comprising members from across FET Campuses and Centres as well as staff from the Quality Assurance (QA), Professional Learning Development (PLD), Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Departments will be formed in March 2025. This group will follow the Action Plan in planning for and developing Cork ETB's application to QQI to extend its scope of provision and develop a Blended Learning Strategy to

comprehend Cork ETB's approach to developing and implementing blended programmes through synchronous and asynchronous delivery.

In December 2024, the Universal Design (UD) Steering Group was established and seeks to lead, foster and support high and consistent standards of inclusive practices in learning and teaching, extending its provision to all services and facilities across Cork ETB. It also extends to the provision of services and facilities across Cork ETB.

The Professional Learning Development Support Service (PLDSS) regularly promotes, and often funds, micro credentials provided by external institutions. They are an ideal way for staff to upskill in a new area or further develop skills in a flexible manner. Micro credential courses, including Special Purpose Awards, Single Subject Certificates, and Minor Awards, are being offered by a wide range of institutions as examples SETU, NCIRL and UCD PA.

The direct development of micro credentials at Cork ETB is limited. The development of access to in-house delivery of same is more advanced. To date concentrated promotion in Sustainability with provision of both the Environmental Sustainability Awareness Level 4 and Environmental Sustainability in the Workplace Level 5 modules being offered and undertaken by Cork ETB staff.

The Skills to Advance programme, which provides access to micro credentials to all employed individuals, is also available to Cork ETB staff to self-select relevant micro

	<p>credentials. Staff awareness to these training opportunities is done via direct email, Work vivo and the External Training tab on the PLD Training site.</p> <p>Professional Learning and Development Support Service have also been considering non accredited micro training for staff. The Adult Safeguarding eLearning course, developed from content created by ETBI, has proven successful in this regard. More consideration can now be given to developing bite size FET focused mini eLearning courses, providing internal recognition, which could be assigned to targeted staff to enhance quality assurance of Teaching and Learning. While not accredited training they would still have merit as a training provision.</p>
Produce an annual internal analysis of the effectiveness of the assessment process be conducted in order to avoid a dependence on this external perspective. This internal perspective should combine quantitative and qualitative information and inform the content of any continuing professional development programme for staff.	<p>The Quality Assurance FET Support team provides assistance to campuses, centres, and services in the regional areas within Cork ETB. Annual consultations are conducted to gather feedback from staff on Cork ETB's assessment process, and this feedback is shared where applicable.</p> <p>Once the draft terms of reference for all groups have been finalised, the objective is for these groups to collaborate in exploring methods and systems to produce annual internal analysis reports of the Cork ETB assessment process across all campuses and centres.</p>
Strengthen the quality assurance of teaching and learning or enhance the accuracy and validity of the proxy measures which are being used (the review team recognises the ETB operates within a national context).	<p>The Quality Assurance Office offer training in conjunction with the Professional Learning and Development Support Unit. These training offerings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cork ETB Assessment Process - Writing Assessment Briefs at levels 1 – 3 - Writing Assessment Briefs and Examinations at levels 4 - 6 - Provision of Feedback to Learners

- Integrated Assessment
- How to set up Assessor and Learner Portfolios
- Secure Storage of Assessment Materials including OneDrive/Cloud
- Internal Verification Training
- QQI Business Systems (QBS) Training

In 2023/2024, the Quality Assurance Office piloted QA Clinics across the provision. These clinics involved the designated QA FET support contact person attending onsite to provide support and training, in particular to new assessors delivering QQI modules for the first time, at centre level if required. These clinics received positive feedback and are now ongoing at the request per campus/centre.

Cork ETB also piloted an External Authenticator – Pre-Assessment Engagement process in 2023/2024, as a means of support in the development of assessments at campus/centre level. External Authenticators were engaged in the assessment process at the beginning of the academic year/or beginning of course and it is mainly aimed at new assessors or assessors working in isolated settings. This support is ongoing at the request per campus/centre.

Awareness, Sharing of Resource Mechanisms & Best Practice Tools

The Professional Learning Development Support Service regularly update staff on training opportunities and resources available via email. Information is also posted on Work vivo, Cork ETB's internal communication platform.

However, the PLD SharePoint Training site is the principal avenue through which training provision and resources are shared. The site houses all training related information, both internal and external, to the organisation and is available to all Cork ETB staff. The training site advertises all training provision via its calendar, and staff may register for any training event, subject to line management approval.

61 internal training events, across a range of thematic areas, were organised and advertised by PLDSS and attended by over 600 Cork ETB staff in 2024.

All training is tracked which dovetails with the SOLAS Strategy to further enable expertise and commitment of FET practitioners. Staff can easily identify relevant training provision available to them and managers can identify possible gaps in staff training. It ensures staff have access to training provision to develop all the skills and tools required to deliver high quality teaching and learning provision.

The site also houses a PLD Resources page where staff can access a wide range of stakeholder provided resources. Staff also have the option to share resources with the PLDSS for consideration for inclusion on the page. The Suggestion Box allows staff to interact directly with the PLDSS with any ideas they might have with regards to training provision.

The SOLAS strategy also referenced opportunities for FET practitioners to ensure learning is up-to-date and industry related. The PLDSS support individual staff funding applications to access courses to update existing and develop new skill set. For example, in 2024, 46 applications for L7 and above courses to facilitate staff upskilling in their area of competency were partially or fully funded by the service.

While work shadowing is a thematic area associated with PLD, the PLDSS is not tasked with directly organising work shadowing, this falls to the Enterprise Engagement team at Cork ETB.

The Erasmus project coordinator facilitates Cork ETB staff shadowing their counterparts in European countries.

Digital Transformation & Technology Enhanced Learning

The SOLAS Strategy identified Digital Transformation as a priority area. This is supported at Cork ETB via a variety of pathways.

The TEL Support Service, in conjunction with PLD, deliver a wide range of TEL related live training events in both Spring and Autumn Training Calendar. These include trainings such as:

- Using LMS – Moodle/Google Classroom
- Introduction to MS 365
- OneDrive/OneNote/PP
- MS Teams
- Working with video: Clipchamp
- Excel – beginners/intermediate/advanced
- Introduction to Gen AI
- Top 4 applications for use in the classroom
- Power Toys

- Gen AI in Teaching

The TEL Support Service visit centres to provide any in house training requested and also has a TEL Hub where they share resources and provide links to external training. Self-directed training available through the hub also provide opportunities for staff to obtain micro credentials. In fact, TEL is probably one of the best provisioned of the support services.

Considering the remit for digital transformation and upskilling of staff for the FET College of the Future the PLDSS introduced a pilot programme for staff to complete Digital Learning Institute's Certificate in Instructional Design. The aim of the programme was to upskill staff to consider the implications of teaching in the Digital Age and to provide the necessary tools to staff to facilitate blended and online delivery to learners. 15 staff completed the programme. Review of the impact on their teaching is yet to be completed.

Disability Support Training

All staff delivering to participants with disabilities undergo intellectual disability training. Terms of engagement are clearly outlined for centres using the services of the participants. Proper onboarding via Cork ETB's HR department and support roles are clearly outlined. Meetings with all stakeholders take place. Opportunities identified with the WAM scheme by AHEAD. WPEP, Work Placement Experience Programme with DSP.

Commentary and Reflections

Click here to enter text.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Cork ETB's Service Plan 2024](#)

[Strategic Performance Agreement 2022-2024](#)

2.03 Supports for Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Strengthen the learners' voice in all aspects of the ETB's provision and governance.	<p><u>Interactive English Writing Support Tool</u></p> <p>Since the previous report was submitted, a Cork ETB project in collaboration ROC Noorderpoort and supported by Erasmus K2 funding has been commenced with the aim to develop an accessible, interactive English writing support tool for Adult Education and VET students who face challenges when progressing between part-time QQI L3/4 courses to fulltime QQI L5/6 programmes. The tool will be inclusive of all students, regardless of age, experience, learning needs, or nationality, and will address key writing and digital literacy skills needed for 2025 and beyond. It will enhance course participation and provide greater access for students with lower writing skills. The project prioritises inclusion and diversity, addressing barriers such as difficulty in expressing course content in written English and lack of digital technology use. It will</p>

support older students facing digital literacy challenges and younger students who primarily communicate digitally. The tool will present content in various formats to cater to diverse learning styles.

Additionally, the project focuses on digital transformation by promoting digital readiness and resilience through the use of digital tools. It also aims to create innovative, collaborative courses to support essential English skills for all EU students, tailored to both English and non-English speakers.

This project was motivated by feedback from Cork ETB students and tutors on the need for assistance with writing and digital skills for vocational training courses. Consultations and trials with students and staff identified key areas of support, leading to the development of sample resources on the Articulate 360 platform. Positive feedback and collaboration with Noorderpoort staff in the Netherlands highlighted the potential for a cross-programme partnership to support English writing skills for both Irish and Dutch students.

Literacy Assessment Pilot

Assessment forms have been finalised and are used for all self-referred learners in Cork ETB. These forms identify difficulties with literacy and numeracy skills at levels 1-3. Cork ETB's Active Inclusion Team contact centres twice yearly to monitor forms and provide support to staff throughout the year. The recording of assessment is tracked electronically and utilising the SOLAS toolkit the standardisation of recording has been completed. Monitoring and evaluation pilot on feedback is ongoing.

Dyslexia Assessment Pilot

The Active Inclusion Support Service in collaboration with Dyslexia Ireland, SOLAS and Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) to develop an alternative model to support adults to get a dyslexia assessment in an efficient timeframe. In the proposed model, the Educational Psychologist's role is to engage with the learner for the assessment. The pre and post administration will be done by Active Inclusion Support Service staff. Six learners to be tested in one day in both March and April 2025.

Psychoeducational Assessments

Psychoeducational assessments, planned for in 2020 and positioned in 2022 focusing on Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, ADHD, ASD and many other learning differences, continue to be administered to learners at all levels of Cork ETB's FET provision including the education unit at Cork Prison and apprenticeship programmes. The Cork ETB Steering group approved system that involves, a layered hierarchy of staff, variously qualified in the administration of a variety of psychoeducational testing tools the interpretation of the results generated and the confirmation of diagnosis of learner difference, has been developed within Cork ETB to support the need for ascertaining a measure of learners cognitive and literacy strengths, weaknesses and the conformation of diagnosis where appropriate.

The training and the protocols followed are positioned to facilitate access to academic learning support within centres, access to various funding streams e.g. The FSD fund (including the FSD Pilot scheme for the broader FET provision), and the Learner Support

framework (once budgeted). They also facilitate learners gaining access to supports when they progress within the Cork ETB and/or to university or employment. These assessments arise from information gathered from the needs assessments completed when learners register within their centres for extra supports and or exam accommodations. They are predominantly completed in-house but occasionally they are outsourced to other Educational Psychologists when necessary/appropriate. A variety of assessment tools and protocols are engaged with, to make the process as 'fit for purpose' as possible, for the diversity of need amongst the stakeholders involved. A document outlining good practice guidelines for all Cork ETB staff involved in Psychoeducational assessments has been compiled and the final version of same will be resubmitted to the FET steering committee very shortly. These guidelines are also planned for review by the National Network of Learning Support staff representing all 16 ETBs who are working to standardise assessment protocols and tools for FET learners nationally.

FSD Pilot Programme

The FSD Pilot programme which began in 2021 and ran for almost three years, fed into the creation of the Learner Support Framework document, which was proposed on March 2024, supported by the SOLAS position paper August 2024 and the SOLAS framework guidelines in August 2024, and is presently being budgeted for at Cork ETB level. In the interim learners are being supported as per the pilot guidelines. The SOLAS Learner Support Framework document identifies a system of supports that is very similar to that provided by the FSD fund for QQI level 5-10 with one major difference; this funding

stream does not require the learner to have a diagnosis to gain appropriate supports. It requires that the learner is assessed in-house, (just like the system provided in mainstream for RACE) and they are provided with supports for any cognitive or literacy difficulties they are navigating on the strength of verifiable scores generated from valid and up to date testing tools that are RACE, DARE and JCQ compliant. This project began in 2020 and is being enhanced and improved on an ongoing basis throughout all FET provision QQI levels 1 to 6 inclusive.

Active Consent Workshops

From September 2023 to present, Cork ETB is striving to increase awareness of the causes and effects of sexual violence. The Active Inclusion Support Service rolled out eLearning consent modules in all centres in a supervised setting to reach all learners. In person workshops with PLC, Youthreach and Apprentice Learners also took place between September to December 2024.

Cork College of FET Kinsale Campus has two trained Active Consent Workshop Facilitators who frequently run workshops for all learners. Local and national support services are shared permanently across campus and regular feedback for same is sought and provided. Cork College of FET Kinsale Campus is also a member of the FET National Review Panel, which met in December 2024 in Dublin. Cross-collaborations have taken place with University of Galway and Dublin City ETB as well as with DASH bus for sexual health clinics.

Inclusive Interior Spaces

A pilot study, creating pathways towards more inclusive learning through small environmental changes across 5 FET centres. This included broadening sensory, communicative, physical and emotional awareness around neurodiversity and aiming to provide best practice around learner-centred needs in a universally designed manner. Awareness training for staff is also a part of the programme with a healthy human ecosystem at its core, sustainable resources were created to support this such as videos for staff and a live Padlet.

Disability Support

Cork ETB's Supported Employment Pilot offers diverse and relevant opportunities for people with specific skills and disability to engage in work, both paid and unpaid. It provides a flexible model that can be adapted for other skills areas and used by other organisations and in other areas of Cork ETB.

Cork ETB supports two employees with disabilities and their line managers, in their roles as graphic designer and videographer for Cork College of FET. Support included time, expectation, and anxiety management, writing emails, processing information, navigating the Cork ETB procedures and processes, dealing with the centres, organising the workload and timelines and career development.

In addition, training has been delivered to staff, learners, external organisations and visiting Erasmus groups. Staff and Learners were also supported via email, telephone,

Teams and one-to-one. Morrisons Island Campus, Tramore Road Campus, Erasmus visiting teachers, ALCE forum, Lifelong Learning Festival, TU Dublin, Tech Industry Alliance, and CCLS. Online Disability Awareness training was designed and delivered in collaboration with PLD.

Research in Self Advocacy

The Centre on Community Living and Careers (CCLC) at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community of Indiana University conducted a mixed methods research project for the Crann Centre and Turnstone.

The aim of this Programme was to promote Self-Advocacy to Enhance Educational Attainment and Reduce Health Disparities for Students with Disabilities.

The Active Inclusion Support Service in Cork ETB supported this research and continues to make valuable input.

Learner Voice Activities

The Learner Voice Group is represented on Cork ETB's Assessment Working Group and attended various scheduled meetings. In 2024/2025 academic year, a part time FET Learners Voice Support Role was assigned to support Cork ETB's Learner Voice Group.

The Ambassador Training Programme was implemented in 2023/2024 which led to certification for the learner voice group members.

The learner voice group newsletter was developed in 2023/2024 which informs other learners of learner specific issues and activities. The additional design and production of the learner voice group poster increases visibility across Cork ETB campuses/centres.

Following learner feedback on the need for support at levels 4 and 5, the Learner Voice Group in Cork ETB participated in the piloting of a new digital learning tool between October and December 2024. This will be rolled out across Cork ETB's provision to enhance the FET learner experience for all learners.

The learner voice group have been engaging with external agencies such as AONTAS and were shortlisted for a star award in 2025 in the category of Adult Learning Initiatives which will be held on the 7th of March 2025.

Since November 2024, the learner voice group has collaborated with Youthreach Co-Ordinator's across Cork ETB which informed the roll out of a learner voice Youthreach subgroup. This is a pilot project across all Youthreach centres which will aim to target learners directly to gain more tailored feedback.

Additional collaboration initiatives include face to face and online meetings with Tipperary ETB which share, and exchange learner voice ideas and this collaboration is ongoing in Cork ETB.

Facilitated networking and training for staff in learner support has also been provided. The Launch of Student Diversity UCC project on the 10th of January 2025, Plain English

Language Part 1, October 2024 – *Access – Transforming the Framework of Community Education 29th November 2024.*

Learner Charter

The Learner Charter was launched by Cork ETB's Chief Executive, Denis Leamy, in March 2022. At present the learner voice group structure is under review and a draft proposal composed by learner support is available for consultation in February 2025.

Feedback Mechanisms

In 2023/2024, the Learner Voice Support Unit carried out on site visits to campuses/centres to obtain learner feedback. The findings highlighted the high satisfaction of learners in Cork ETB. New supports have been incorporated in various campuses/centres as a result of identified need where required.

Cork ETB partnered with AONTAS and 8 other Education and Training Boards to host the National FET Learner Forum 2023/2024. The Cork ETB feedback report was issued to ETB FET Inclusion Manager in November 2024.

Under the remit of the Quality Assurance office, Cork ETB's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) supports learners who wish to have their prior learning formally recognised. Cork ETB's RPL Procedure is published on the QA SharePoint site and is available on the Cork ETB website. The Cork ETB RPL Coordinator liaises with RPL Coordinators and

	Mentors in various Cork College of FET campuses. RPL is publicised at the start of the academic year, and workshops and mentoring are provided to learners.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p><u>Dyslexia Assessment Pilot</u></p> <p>The learner can use the assessment for work, training or education. It is signed by an Educational Psychologist and is a recognised, legitimate and professional diagnosis. There is no cost to the learner and assessments will be far more accessible. One team member has completed a Certificate of Competency in Educational Testing.</p> <p><u>Psychoeducational Assessments</u></p> <p>A layered hierarchy of staff, variously qualified in the administration of a variety of psychoeducational testing tools, the interpretation of the results generated and the confirmation of diagnosis of learner difference, has been developed within Cork ETB to support the need for ascertaining a measure of learners cognitive and literacy strengths, weaknesses and the confirmation of diagnosis where appropriate. This training and the protocols followed are positioned to facilitate access to academic learning support within centres, funding streams e.g. The FSD fund (including the FSD Pilot scheme for the broader FET provision), and the Learner Support framework (once budgeted). They also facilitate learners gaining access to supports when they progress within the Cork ETB and/or to university or employment. These assessments arise from information gathered from the needs assessments completed when learners register within their centres for extra supports and/or exam accommodations. They are predominantly completed in-house but occasionally they are outsourced to other Educational Psychologists when necessary/appropriate. A variety of assessment tools and protocols are engaged with, in an effort to make the process as ‘fit for purpose’ as possible, for the diversity of need amongst the stakeholders involved. A document outlining good practice guidelines for all Cork ETB staff involved in Psychoeducational assessments has been compiled and the final version of same will be resubmitted to the FET steering committee very shortly. These guidelines are also planned for review by the National network of Learning Support staff representing all 16 ETBs who are working to standardise assessment protocols and tools for FET learners nationally.</p> <p><u>FSD Pilot</u></p>	

The SOLAS Learner Support Framework document identifies a system of supports that is very similar to that provided by the FSD fund for QQI level 5-10 with one major difference; this funding stream does not require the learner to have a diagnosis to gain appropriate supports. What is required is that the learner is assessed in-house, (just like the system provided in mainstream for RACE) and they are provided with supports for any cognitive or literacy difficulties they are navigating on the strength of verifiable scores generated from valid and up to date testing tools that are RACE, DARE and JCQ compliant.

The learner can use the assessment for work, training or education. It is signed by an Educational Psychologist and is a recognised, legitimate and professional diagnosis. There is no cost to the learner and assessments will be far more accessible. One team member has completed a Certificate of Competency in Educational Testing.

Active Consent Workshops

While in person workshops have received great feedback, the eLearning module has not been successful due to the facilitators lack of comfort with the subject matter. We have reverted to in person workshops but need to train more facilitators to share the workload with us. Two team members who have completed the Level 9 Consent, Sexual Violence and Harassment: Practitioner Skills and Practice In NUIG are on the FET Advisory Group for Active* Consent.

Inclusive Interior Spaces

The feedback from the inclusive interior spaces project has been very positive. The online resources within the Padlet are easily accessible and informative for both part-time and full-time staff. The foundation of the project stemmed from a universally designed initiative at Trinity College Dublin, called the SENSE project. It has been adapted for FET services, and there are many layers that are unfolding as it continues to evolve. All documentation linked to this as well as other aligned inclusive spaces are within the Padlet.

Research in Self Advocacy

The existing research on self-advocacy about education, self-advocacy skills for young people with disabilities can improve quality of life at home, in school, in the workplace, and within communities. This summary is an overview of CCLC's work to identify, categorize, and highlight gaps across existing curricula, toolkits, and resources that support student and family self-advocacy and self-determination. This will inform Phase 2 of the funders' project: development of a curriculum, resource, or toolkit that supports self-advocacy of students with disabilities in education in both the U.S. and Ireland.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Cork ETB Strategy Statement 2022 – 2026](#)

[esol_part3_toolkit.pdf](#)

[SOLAS framework for consistent learner supports – July 2024](#)

<https://www.consenthub.ie/wp-content/uploads/eLearning-Module/index.html#/>

<https://padlet.com/carriestudios20/inclusive-learning-spaces-2023-bq8sul6w0mkkz6pc>

[Learner Charter](#)

[Cork College of FET for Learners webpage](#)

[AONTAS National FET Learner Forum took place in Cork ETB](#)

[Learner Voices across Ireland Report 2023.2024](#)

[LV Poster](#)

[Newsletter](#)

3.0 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review

3.01 Self-Evaluation Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Consider how to monitor the ETB's central services (e.g. finance, IT, HR etc.) contribution to the quality of FET provision.	Cork ETB is committed to align with new various strategic initiatives emerging from the Cork ETB Strategy Statement 2022-2026. The priorities, goals and objectives outlined in the statement form the basis for a series of implementation plans across the different strands and units within Cork ETB.
Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures Cork ETB Strategy Statement 2022 - 2026	

3.02 Programme Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Rapidly implements a manageable process of programme review to ensure all programmes are up-to-	As per Section 1.05 as above

date and meet the needs of learners, employers, and society.	
Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.	

3.03 Oversight, monitoring & review of relationships with external parties

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Simplify and streamline the opportunities for external partners (particularly employers) to contact and engage with the FET directorate.	<p>Skills for Work provides part-time training courses for both full-time and part-time employees. The programme is specifically designed for low-skilled workers who may lack the confidence to embrace changes in the workplace or advance in their current roles without the opportunity to participate in this training.</p> <p><u>Cork College of FET – Bishopstown Campus</u></p> <p>The Cork College of FET, Bishopstown Campus, are responsible for Skills to Advance activity. Measures taken to strengthen the employer engagement priority of Cork ETB under Skills to Advance is well progressed. The FET for Enterprise initiative aims to promote the education and training services of Cork College of FET businesses, provide</p>

opportunities for upskilling and reskilling to those in employment and provide bespoke training for companies.

The Cork College of FET Bishopstown Campus website has been updated and revised to clearly indicate to industry how to engage with the FET for Enterprise Section.

The staff in the FET for Enterprise Section provide a range of upskilling and reskilling courses for those in employment. In 2024, 2,042 learners were upskilled and 57 businesses engaged in training. Cork ETB engages with industry through membership of networking groups such as the Cork Electronics Industry Association, Cork Chamber of Commerce and Network Ireland Cork.

Cork College of FET Bishopstown Campus has partnered with ALCON, the global leader in eye care, to launch the inaugural Maintenance Skills Technology Upskilling Programme for ALCON staff. This collaboration exemplifies the power of industry - education partnerships in fostering employee growth and supporting the local economy.

In addition to this, a further leadership and management upskilling programme for the retail members of Cork Business Association has been announced. This programme offers reskilling and upskilling opportunities for staff, providing an excellent pathway for retail business to foster emerging leadership talent within their organisation.

Cork College of FET - Kinsale Campus

In 2024, Kinsale Campus organised site visits to Lily Pharma to build industry links for Business learners. Lily Pharma sponsored annual awards for Business and Entrepreneurship at graduations in September 2024. A mentorship programme for learners has also been developed.

TYCE Transition Year Taster Programme

Piloting in March 2025, Cork College of FET Kinsale Campus plan to roll out two TYCE TY Taster Programmes for Transition Year students in the locality. Students are invited to experience life on campus for 1 day and avail of a bespoke taster programme in Healthcare or Sustainable Permaculture. These two courses are thriving on campus and each year prove to be extremely popular amongst learners and both local and international employers. On the day, the TY students will meet and greet with our tutors, enjoy a tour of the campus and attend 3 mini lectures based on key course topics. Once completed, students will receive a micro-certificate which can be included in their overall TY credential pack. It is envisaged to welcome students from nearby Post Primary schools and Youthreach centres. In addition, Cork College of FET Kinsale Campus is a representative on the Cork ETB Progressions Workstream.

	<p><u>Cork College of FET - Morrison's Island Campus</u></p> <p>There are a number of significant industry related contributions within the campus that inform programme updates. The Employer Connect Networking Event held in the campus allows for employment opportunities to be directly presented to learners. This joins the Recruitment Registration Day, Jobs Hub, Enterprise Day, Jobs Register, Guest Speaker Panel and Industry Course Reviews.</p>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p> <p><u>Skills to Advance - Cork College of FET - Bishopstown Campus</u></p> <p><u>Home - Cork College of FET - Kinsale Campus</u></p> <p><u>Home - Cork College of FET - Morrison's Island Campus</u></p>	

4.0 Quality Developments and Enhancements

In this section, please provide an update on QA developments and enhancements within the ETB. This could include programme and curriculum developments and initiatives, and enhancements of teaching, learning and assessment.

Guide:

An update should be provided on any objectives/planned actions for the year **not already addressed in the Interim quality report** in sections 1-3.

The table is designed to assist in this process and should include headline information only.

No.	QA Objectives <small>These should relate to objectives not already discussed in the progress report.</small>	Update on Status <small>Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress.</small>	Link to updated/new Policy
1	Establishment of a Blended Learning Working Group and Blended Learning Strategy for Cork ETB. This will lead to a further review of all Cork ETB Quality Assurance Assessment Procedures.	It is envisaged that this group will encompass representatives from TEL, PLD, ICT, QA and campuses/centres. This group will work on developing a Blended Learning Framework for Cork ETB.	Click here to enter text.
2	Development of a Programme Development Policy	Review the programme development and review policy	Click here to enter text.
3	Establishment of a Blended Learning Working Group and Blended Learning Strategy for Cork ETB. This will lead to a	It is envisaged that this group will encompass representatives from TEL, PLD, ICT, QA and	Click here to enter text.

	further review of all Cork ETB Quality Assurance Assessment Procedures.	campuses/centres. This group will work on developing a Blended Learning Framework for Cork ETB.	
4	Continue to develop and validate new and existing programmes.	Ongoing	Click here to enter text.
5	Development of an Academic Integrity Policy	Planned action and further review of all Quality Assurance Assessment Procedures as required.	Click here to enter text.
6	Development of Artificial Intelligence Policy	Planned action and further review of all Quality Assurance Assessment Procedures as required.	Click here to enter text.

5.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies (optional)

Guide:

The ETB is invited to provide up to 3 x **short case studies**, 1-2 pages, demonstrating QA enhancements and their impacts (these may relate to topics covered in sections above). **You are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other providers and would benefit**

from wider dissemination. Note: Submission of case studies are not mandatory. However, please know that any submitted case studies will be published on QQI's website in full unabridged format.

Guideline for Case Study

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

- ⇒ Be between half a page and two pages in length
- ⇒ Limited to 2-2500 words
- ⇒ Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue
- ⇒ Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters
- ⇒ Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis
- ⇒ Include links to any sources cited
- ⇒ Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning

Case Study Title: Inclusive Spaces Project 2024/2025

Introduction

The Inclusive Spaces Project is a pilot initiative, developed and rolled out, by Cork ETB's Active Inclusion Support Services, to 5 FET Centres across Cork City and County. The project encompasses two areas of exploration: an assessment of the learning environment, and the provision of staff awareness and strategies to support them in assisting the learners. Five factors are considered within the evaluation of the environment; sensory, communication, emotional, social as well as the physical where possible.

Description of issue

The ambition is that the pilot will lead onto a longer-term project creating cultural awareness around inclusion through manageable changes, using Universal Design for all our learners and staff. Through UD all accommodations provided for our neurodiverse learners, ultimately benefit the greater Cork ETB community.

Action

Supported through Universal Design, a comprehensive and integrative assessment of the five centres was carried out. Prior to this, the following preliminary, preparatory steps were undertaken:

- research – visit to Trinity College to meet with staff involved in development of a similar project
- Team meetings to agree the pilot centres (one was selected from each geographical area)
- Getting support from Trinity College, Aslam and Shine and UCC

Once the centres had been identified the AISS team met with centre staff to review centre environment and demographics of their learners. Following on from that, both student and staff surveys were produced, consisting of questions around special environments, sensory complexities and on specific learning challenges. The information from the surveys and site visits was collated and reviewed, then recommendations on potential changes were drafted and a report

given to each centre. These recommended changes were achievable steps in the first instance looking at; signage, arrangement of furniture, lighting, specific sensory needs and staff awareness. Changes were made, at centre level and follow-up visits informed the final report, which is currently being prepared.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

By making one change at each level (environment; sensory, communication, emotional, social and physical) we began the process of recognising the vast and diverse needs in all our learners. In addition to the changes made at centre level, the following outcomes were achieved as a result of this pilot programme:

- Assistive and diagnostic tools are being rolled out where a need is identified and required.
- A comprehensive resource Padlet has been developed and is now accessible to centre staff. [Inclusive Learning Spaces](#). This contains bite-sized support videos for staff around sensory and learning strategies and is being continually updated. The Padlet also contains up-to-date resources from both professional bodies as well as well-researched projects, and strategies to support staff, in a quick and accessible way, as they encounter issues.
- A resource presentation on Neurodiversity has been developed and is ready to be rolled out in early 2025.

Key Learnings

- The project will be expanded to include other centres in 2025, as well as ongoing development of the Padlet.
- It is also proposed to introduce the use of Virtual Reality (VR) for smaller centres that don't have the space to provide a suitable relaxation space for learners.
- VR will also be used as a tool to engage and connect more remote groups of learners, embracing an andragogical approach where learners and their learning styles are centre stage to the process.

Case Study Title: Digital Literacy

Introduction

In 2024 Cork College of FET Cobh Centre began collaborating with the Cobh branch of the Cork County Library Service in facilitating a series of "Smartphones and Digital Literacy" courses.

Description of issue

These were 8 weeks courses, two hours a week (16 hours in total) taking place in Cobh Library with a Cork ETB tutor. The courses were incredibly successful with such a high demand that we have now scheduled a further three courses for 2025 starting in January, after Easter and in September.

Action

The initiative provided learners the opportunity to practice using their personal smartphone in a group setting enabling the learner to make the most of the features available. For example; taking and sending photos to friends and family, accessing emails and listening to podcasts. Learners shared advice and tips in the group whilst receiving support from the tutor

Key Outcomes/Impacts

One of the most noticeable benefits of the collaboration was the increase in participants compared with previous courses run in either the local FET centre or the library due to the collaborative marketing effort and partnership approach. The library kept a list of names of interested participants and shared these with the FET Resource Worker who in turn informed them how to apply prior to the course starting.

Key Learnings

Following a wider review of this successful collaboration by both parties, similar courses are also being considered in other townlands across the county in which Cork ETB and the Cork County Library Service have services located.

Case Study Title: Cork College of FET creates pathways in Traveller education

Introduction

Cork College of FET- Bishopstown Campus has celebrated the graduation of Traveller specific welding training programme.

The TIG Welding programme was co-designed by Bishopstown Campus and the Traveller Visibility Group to build on the traditional trades, enterprise and craftwork inherent to Traveller heritage.

Description of issue

Cork College of FET is committed to breaking down the systematic barriers facing Travellers in education by creating accessible and culturally aware training opportunities for members of the Travelling community.

Action

The TIG Welding programme was co-designed by Bishopstown Campus and the Traveller Visibility Group to build on the traditional trades, enterprise and craftwork inherent to Traveller heritage.

Staff who worked on the programmes completed Traveller Cultural Awareness training in advance of the programmes commencing.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

Seven Traveller men have successfully completed a certificate in TIG Welding, this is a continuation on from a previous programme in ARC welding completed by the group in 2023.

Cork College of FET- Bishopstown Campus was honoured to receive a Traveller Ally award from the TVG in 2023 in recognition of the work being done to provide pathways for Traveller men through this course.

Key Learnings

Programmes such as the Traveller specific welding programme provide a pathway for learning and continue to build on further initiatives and work with the Traveller Community to break down barriers into the future.

Case Study Title: Tertiary Degrees in Cork College of FET

Introduction

The development of tertiary degrees in the Cork region has been a strategic priority in advancing access to higher education. Through the New Horizons Southern Strategic Alliance, a collaborative effort has been undertaken to integrate pathways that support student progression from further education into university settings. Active in this alliance are University College Cork (UCC), Munster Technological University (MTU), Cork and Kerry Education and Training Boards (CETB; KETB). This initiative reflects a commitment to breaking down barriers and fostering educational inclusivity.

The New Horizons Southern Strategic Alliance has been instrumental in enhancing tertiary opportunities within the Cork region. Recognising the need for structured progression routes, the alliance has facilitated collaboration between the educational institutions, enabling a seamless transition for students pursuing higher education.

Description of issue

A key challenge in the Cork region has been the integration of tertiary opportunities across different educational institutions. Ensuring coherence between courses and alignment with professional competencies is essential. To address this, campus teams from both UCC and CETB's Cork College of FET, Morrison's Island Campus (MIC), conducted a detailed mapping exercise. This initiative examined modules thematically and in light of CORU competencies, ensuring that course content meets professional accreditation standards.

Action

As part of the response to this challenge, a structured pathway has been developed for students pursuing the [Bachelor of Social Work](#) at UCC. A dedicated tertiary degree route has been established between Morrison's Island Campus and UCC, following a '1 + 3' model. Under this model students complete the Level 5 Social Studies (5M2181) major award at Morrison's Island Campus in their first year. During this year, they also undertake 10 credits in Social Theory and Practice at UCC over two semesters.

Students are dual registered (registered with both institutions), enabling them to experience university-level learning while still being based at their College of FET. This dual registration system provides early exposure to academic expectations and university life.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

The 1 + 3 structured approach has yielded several key benefits including the reduction of barrier to higher education through university integration. Students participate in UCC activities one day a week, fostering early engagement with the university environment. The initiative helps students adjust to university life, easing the transition from further to higher education.

The Learners can access the resources on the university campus including UCC's Skills Centre allowing students to develop academic writing and other essential competencies paving a route to success.

The collaborative approach has strengthened relationships between staff in both institutions, ensuring students receive comprehensive support. Upon successful completion of their first year, students transition into UCC's Bachelor of Social Work programme second year to complete their degree.

Key Learnings

The implementation of the 1 + 3 model has demonstrated the effectiveness of structured tertiary pathways in promoting educational progression. Key takeaways include:

- The model provides a clear, supportive route into university for students from further education backgrounds.
- Early exposure to university learning and engagement with academic support services enhances student success.
- Strong institutional collaboration is critical in ensuring seamless transitions.
- This initiative serves as a foundation for future tertiary education partnerships, paving the way for expanded engagement and additional pathways.

The New Horizons Southern Strategic Alliance continues to be a cornerstone in fostering tertiary opportunities in Cork, demonstrating the impact of collaboration in widening participation and enhancing student success.

6.0 Follow-Up Report Survey

(This section will not be published)

Please complete a short survey in relation to the Follow Up Reporting **process** using this [link](#).