

Interim Quality Report

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board

Date: 24th 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 Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board

It is to be submitted by [24/02/25]

The interim quality report has been approved by Martha Bolger, Director of Further Education and Training chair of the Quality Assurance Oversight Committee and is submitted by Sarah Barron, Tertiary Co-ordinator.

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1.0 Interim Quality Report

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.
KCETB reviews its approach to specifying and cross-referencing recommendations within the Inaugural Review SER and associated institutional documentation, in order to improve clarity and accountability.	<p><u>This recommendation is complete.</u></p> <p>KCETB is committed to implementing and maintaining high standards when writing and reviewing documents. For complex documents including key policies and reports, it is standard to adopt a collaborative approach. The mechanisms used to cross reference the recommendations and mechanisms have now been put in place to ensure documents are cross referenced.</p>
<p>Alongside its own recommendations in relation to governance and management of QA, the review team recommends that it considers:</p> <p>1. Monitor the KCETB action plan to ensure progress is made on all areas identified.</p> <p>2. Engage with SOLAS in a new Strategic Performance agreement which will include Governance and Management of Quality as a key theme.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>1. An Action Plan has been set up to monitor progress on the recommendations. These are reviewed at defined intervals throughout the year by the Annual Quality Reporting (AQR) Committee and progress is reported to the Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC) meeting.</p> <p>2. KCETB engaged with SOLAS in its Strategic Performance Agreement from 2022-2024. This agreement focused on a number of Strategic Pillars including</p>

	<p>Building Skills; Fostering Inclusion; and Creating Pathways all of which KCETB responded to positively.</p> <p>KCETB met most of its targets over the 3 years and is now engaging with SOLAS for the next formation of a Strategic Performance Agreement. There was a significant increase in learners' inputs and outcomes within this time frame.</p>
<p>Opportunities to involve the Board more fully in self-evaluation and the monitoring of quality improvement plans and other FET performance indicators.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>Ensuring a robust QA Governance process has been a key goal for KCETB over the last number of years. KCETB currently has a KCETB Board member on our QA Oversight Committee and have also added additional external members to ensure impartiality in our decision-making processes.</p> <p>The KCETB Board member that sits on the QAOC engages fully in self-evaluation and the monitoring of quality improvement plans and other FET performance indicators.</p> <p>The CE & DFET report regularly on QA activities to the KCETB Board and QA present a report. An QAOC annual reporting template for circulation to the CE has been created as part of the QA Governance review.</p>
<p>Group membership (including the IRSG if it is maintained), to involve other relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p>

<p>The function of the various working groups, to avoid any potential unnecessary and potentially confusing duplication of QA activities.</p> <p>Opportunities to increase external representatives on QA committees (QAOC and PAC) to ensure impartiality.</p>	<p>In March 2024 the QAOC approved a full review of KCETB quality assurance structures. The review was conducted by an independent consultant and returned a series of recommendations. The key aim of these recommendations for reconfiguring the Further Education and Training (FET) Quality Assurance (QA) Governance System, focused on improving organisational effectiveness and clarity. The process undertaken and the outcome for same and the outcomes are detailed below in Case Study 2.</p>
<p>The structure and roles of the QA Team, to ensure that it has the necessary capacity and capability.</p>	<p>The Director of Further Education and Training supported by the AEO with responsibility for QA continues to review the staffing requirements for the QA Team. In line with the growth in Apprenticeship services a Grade V and Grade IV were appointed to support the ongoing QA administrative requirements.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections KCETB has continued to strategically review its Quality Assurance structure both in terms of its Governance structure and the capacity of the QA Team</p>	
<p>Link to published policies and procedures Governance and Management of Quality Policy – Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board</p>	

1.03 Documentation of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>The new Statement of Strategy (2022-2026) is strongly aligned with the outcomes of self-assessment, including the outcomes of the</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p>

<p>inaugural review. The review team also recommends that KCETB's self-evaluation action planning is cross referenced to its mission and strategy.</p>	<p>KCETB's Statement of Strategy has a series of strategic themes within a framework through which the goals, objectives and actions are prioritised. The Strategy, mission and vision are all strongly aligned with the outcomes of the inaugural review. Teaching, Learning and Quality Standards promote high-quality teaching, learning and service delivery standards embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches. This is the core of KCETB's work. We aim for excellence and seek to enhance what we do through a process of continued evaluation and improvement.</p> <p>KCETB recognises that, as learning is constantly evolving, we need to shape its future by embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches in order to enhance the learner experience. Embedded in this is self-assessment, review and self-evaluation.</p> <p>KCETB has reviewed its governance structure during 2024, and the implementation of these recommendations has commenced.</p> <p>The Statement of Strategy is reported on annually to the KCETB Board and quarterly through its annual service plan.</p>
<p>The Teaching and Learning policy is concluded and communicated to all stakeholders as soon as possible.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete.</u></p> <p>The Teaching and Learning Policy was completed and approved by the QAOC in May 2023.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>The new Statement of Strategy which was formally adopted by the KCETB Board in November 2021, has outlined the strategic vision mission and values for KCETB for the next five years. This coupled with the publication of the Teaching and Learning policy in May 2023 provides KCETB with a clear road map for supporting high quality teaching and learning across the organisation.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p> <p>KCETB Strategy Statement</p> <p>Teaching and Learning policy</p>	

1.04 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>KCETB conducts a CPD needs analysis across centres.</p> <p>The output of this would feed into the creation of Professional Development Strategy to support KCETB's progress towards achieving its strategic goals.</p> <p>The review team recommends that consideration be given to establishing a formal structure operating through centre managers to ensure that the development needs of each centre as well as the collective needs of KCETB can be taken into and addressed in a CPD strategy.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>KCETB has successfully implemented a comprehensive approach to conducting Professional Development (PD) needs analysis across its centres. A formal structure has been established, operating through centre managers, to ensure that both individual centre needs and the collective requirements of KCETB are addressed in the CPD strategy. The cornerstone of this process is a needs analysis survey, efficiently facilitated through a Microsoft Form, which is distributed across all areas of provision within KCETB. This digital approach allows for widespread participation and easy data collection. Once the survey responses are gathered, they undergo a thorough evaluation to identify key areas of development and common themes across centres. The insights gained from this analysis directly inform the creation of a Professional Development Calendar, aligning with KCETB's strategic goals. As a tangible outcome of this process, a calendar of events is produced, offering a structured and targeted approach to addressing the identified PD needs. This systematic method ensures that KCETB's professional development initiatives are both responsive to current needs and proactive in supporting the organisation's long-term objectives.</p>
<p>Related to the CPD strategy, the review team recommends KCETB develop an induction</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p>

programme for new staff around governance, policies, and processes to ensure a continued consistency in message.	A comprehensive process is now in place for the induction of new staff. A series of QA training videos covering the Governance and Management of Quality, Quality Assurance Policies, an Overview of Authentication Processes and QA Communications was developed in June 2022. In addition, both FET specific and ETB wide training is offered to new staff. This covers a wide range of areas including an overview of the organisation, expectations, operational matters and organisation supports.
KCETB fills the currently vacant TEL Co-ordinator (or equivalent) position with a suitably qualified and experienced professional with a background in teaching and learning using technology.	<u>This recommendation is complete.</u> This position has been successfully filled by a suitably qualified and experienced professional with a background in education.
Formal communities of practice are created to support staff development and sharing of best practice. Community of practice networks could be established for staff teaching in specific areas as well as in subject-specific areas in addition to any existing communities of practice already established.	The PD and TEL officer supported by the QA team has continued to support the development of communities of practice and specific interest forums to support collaboration among teaching staff. To date the following areas have been supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Office Administration, Business and Tourism ➤ Healthcare ➤ Art, Craft and Design ➤ Early Learning and Care ➤ Adult Learning- five subgroups comprising of ESOL, Literacy, Numeracy, Family Learning, and IT ➤ E-Portfolios ➤ Establishing assessment standards

	<p>Professional Development on chairing meetings with confidence was provided to members of KCETB communities of practice in September 2024.</p> <p>National communities of practice are also facilitated through relevant forums to support collaboration in the sector.</p>
<p>The creation of a consistent KCETB wide policy governing the formal staff appraisal process. KCETB may wish to consider introducing an appropriate model of teaching observation to support staff appraisal and development and the realisation of institutional strategic objectives.</p>	<p>KCETB acknowledges that, in line with panel recommendations, consideration needs to be given to the “<i>creation of a consistent KCETB wide policy governing the formal staff appraisal process</i>” and the formalisation of “<i>arrangements in relation to the monitoring of teaching and learning be standardised across all KCETB centres</i>”. It must be noted however that KCETB works within national frameworks of partnership with representative organisations and is limited in some instances by national agreements in how these recommendations could be considered.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections Ensuring access to high quality professional development opportunities is a key priority for KCETB. This is clearly set out in our Statement of Strategy and underpinned in our Professional Development policy that has been developed.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Professional Development Policy – Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board KCETB Strategy Statement</p>	

1.05 Programme Development, Approval & Submission

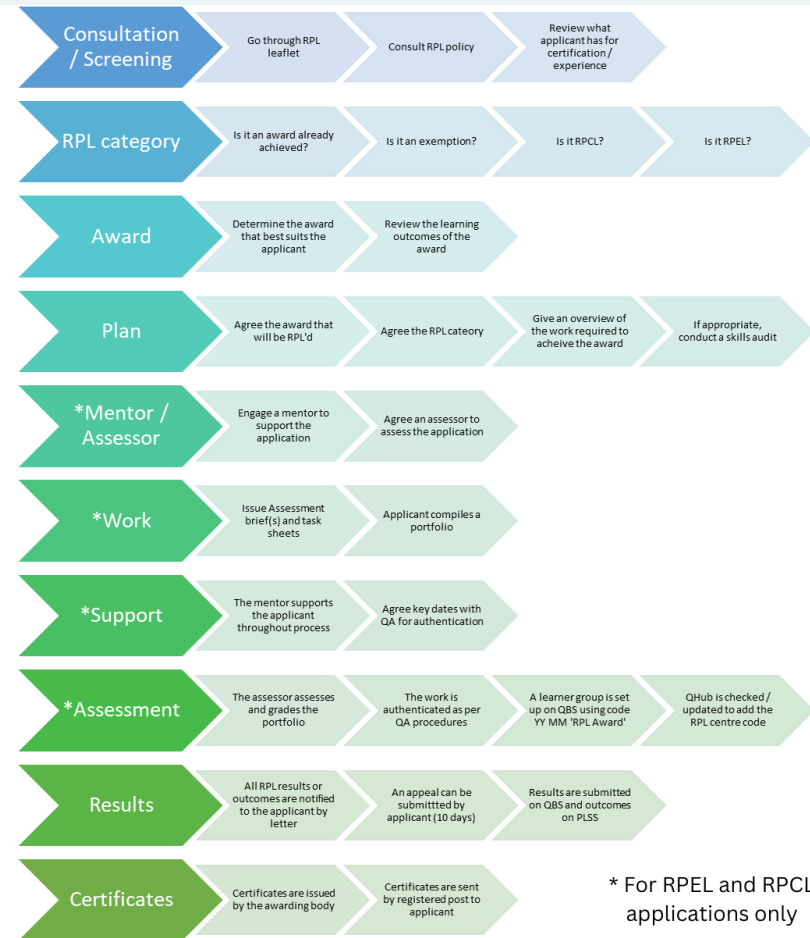
Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>KCETB continues to build upon its collaborative approach to developing programmes and awards with industry. The review team agrees with the requirement (identified in the SER) to work closely with employers with a view to developing leading programmes for industry. This will require a practice of horizon scanning to see what opportunities exist for collaboration with industry and to ensure programmes align with upcoming employment opportunities within the region. One such opportunity is the potential for development of Traineeships, Apprenticeships and Micro-qualifications/Digital Badging.</p>	<p>KCETB continues to prioritise meaningful engagement with industry to ensure provision meets current and future workforce needs.</p> <p>There are strong collaborations in place with key regional stakeholders, across Carlow and Kilkenny's Chambers of Commerce, Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), Local Development Companies, County Councils, Department of Social Protection and the South East Regional Skills Forum. Our active participation in Chamber events, including adjudicating annual awards, has bolstered our visibility and strengthened employer connections. Close coordination with LEOs has enabled integrated initiatives, such as promoting LEO's "Start Your Own Business" programmes to craft apprentices and linking LEO Lean initiatives with KCETB's Skills to Advance Lean training. These partnerships highlight our commitment to strong employer engagement delivering cohesive and targeted solutions that drive regional growth and support our shared vision for workforce development.</p> <p>Over the past three years, KCETB has made significant contributions to addressing the national shortage of skilled drivers, particularly in the areas of HGV and Bus Driving. This shortage has had a major impact on the transport sector, and we have focused our efforts on creating training pathways that directly respond to this demand. Between 2022 and 2024, KCETB has delivered 82 driving related courses to 1,117 learners.</p>

	<p>This initiative is a prime example of how KCETB is targeting a specific sector - Transport, Distribution, and Logistics - and developing a structured pathway to build the necessary skills to fill critical skills shortages in the workforce. Our approach reflects the ongoing priority of delivering specialised, sector-specific training solutions that directly align with national workforce demands.</p> <p>As part of the review of the governance structure, a key priority identified by the QAOC for 2024-2025 is the establishment of an ETB-wide Employer Engagement Framework. A task group has been established to create a framework and ETB-wide Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to manage and map employer engagement across FET. The existing Training Services CRM is being considered as part of this process for potential rollout across all FET provisions.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections Ensuring the needs of our learners and employers in the region are met is a key strategic priority. As detailed above, a clear roadmap for strategic actions in the area of employer engagement is also underway.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p>	

1.06 Access, Transfer and Progression

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>KCETB review their current implementation of the RPL Policy to ensure it is being applied consistently cross centres and programmes and to develop a formal community of practice around RPL.</p> <p>It might be helpful to compile and disseminate RPL studies to assist both the learner and teaching staff in understanding and applying RPL within FET.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete</u></p> <p>Significant progress has been made by KCETB with regard to the documentation and implementation of RPL across FET. This progress is detailed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. KCETB organised RPL training for staff in Q1 and 2 2024. This provided a platform to establish a formal Community of Practice with trained mentors / assessors. This Community of Practice is available to participate in the support and review of RPL applications and RPL assessment. The group can input into the RPL handbook and its contents.

2. An RPL Handbook is being finalised to structure the approach to RPL in KCETB. A summary of the RPL process in place is included here:



This process flow is designed to provide an overview for staff, learners and other stakeholders of the key steps involved in the RPL process. The process can differ greatly from classroom-based assessment, and applicants are often external to KCETB. Therefore, it is important that, as part of the induction process, all stakeholders understand the different elements of the process.

3. Case Studies:

The following case studies have been compiled to further demonstrate the RPL process at KCETB:

- #1 RPL Case Study - RPEL Major award (Cohort)
- #2 RPL Case Study - RPEL Major award (Individual)
- #3 RPL Case Study - RPCL Minor award (Individual)

These are available on the [KCETB QA Website](#). The case studies presented are a demonstration of 'RPL in action'. They show how applicants can build on previous experience and qualifications and use that to obtain a QQI award. The benefits for learners are real and significant.

- ### 4. A National RPL Network across all 16 ETB's was established in Q4 2024. KCETB actively participates in and contributes to this network. Initially, this group will focus on mainstreaming RPL in ETB's.
- ### 5. VPL (Validation of Prior Learning) Biennale:

Kilkenny was delighted to host the 5th VPL Biennale. Over the two days, there were 45 concurrent sessions and 31 lightning talks.

KCETB were well represented with one concurrent session and one lightning talk:

- Exploring how Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) strengthens inclusion in an Irish and Finnish context
- UDL for VPL – Empowering Individuals for VPL Assessment

Commentary and Reflections

KCETB is committed to inclusivity, equality, and widening participation in further education and training. We aim to facilitate learner mobility, allowing individuals to pursue educational pathways. To support this, KCETB has developed an Access, Transfer, and Progression Policy, which is currently in the consultation phase and will be published in Q2 2025. We continue to be committed to developing RPL across FET and this is strongly evidenced in the examples presented above.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

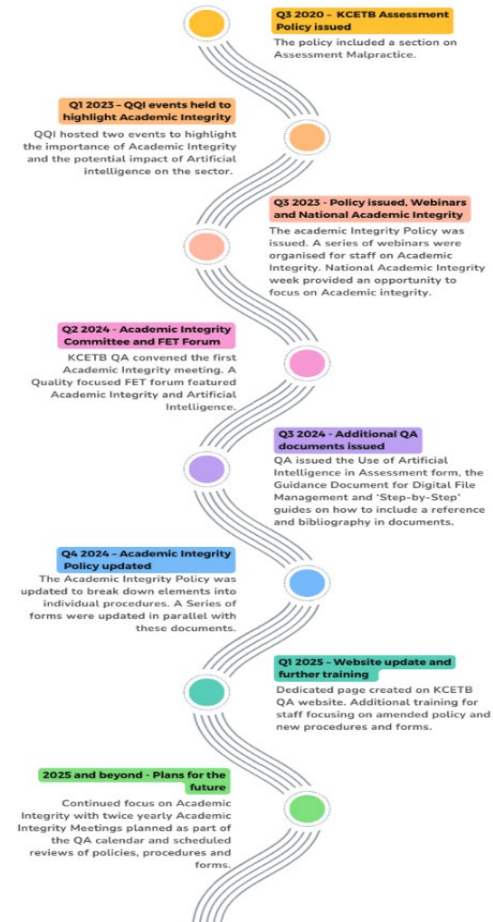
[KCETB RPL Policy](#) .

An easy to follow [leaflet](#) is available to support learners, staff and stakeholders.

1.07 Integrity and Approval of Learner Results

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The Assessment Policy should be updated to provide clear and practical guidelines around plagiarism detection and actions to be taken so that a consistent approach can be applied across centres.	<p><u>This recommendation is complete</u></p> <p>KCETB acknowledge the importance of academic integrity within its quality system. A detailed case study on mapping the development and implementation of Academic Integrity including resources is included in the case study section of this report. This overview demonstrates the academic integrity journey in KCETB in relation to assessment. The illustration below provides a timeline for this:</p>

The KCETB Academic Integrity Journey



	<p>To provide consistency in approach, KCETB centres have been directed that all assessments submitted through Microsoft platforms or Moodle must be screened using a plagiarism checker. This applies to assessments at NFQ levels 4, 5 and 6. The recommended plagiarism checker at KCETB is Turnitin. More details are available in the 'Guidance Document for Digital File Management' section 'Information on Plagiarism checkers issued in August 2024. Detailed instructions on the content of Turnitin reports and how to interpret the reports are included in the section 'How to Review Turnitin Similarity Reports'.</p> <p>Further details on how academic integrity has become a central part of assessment and quality assurance is presented in the Case Study: Academic Integrity appended to this report.</p>
<p>In addition, the review team recommends that KCETB clarify its position with regard to online invigilation in its Blended Learning, Assessment and Data Protection Policies, having regard to QQI publications on this topic. Should KCETB decide to employ online invigilation, clear guidelines and training needs to be provided, with appropriate checks put in place.</p>	<p>KCETB has confirmed its intention to apply for the extension of its scope of provision to include Blended and Online learning. The process for approval includes a review of our current blended learning policies, guidelines, procedures and associated policies. The first stage of the approval documentation will be submitted to QQI in January 2025 with final approval documentation to be submitted in June 2025. The deployment of online proctoring is being explored as part of this process.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>KCETB acknowledge the importance of integrity within its quality system. The processes put in place with regard to academic integrity demonstrates this and is underpinned by the case studies provided. In addition, the addition of Blended Learning to the scope of KCETB's provision will underpin this integrity and also support learner access into the future.</p>	

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Academic Integrity Policy – Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board](#)

1.08 Information and Data Management

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
KCETB consider the resourcing of data management across its centres to ensure that an ETB wide data strategy can be implemented, and data related issues can be addressed cross functionally within the ETB.	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>Following the publication of the Programme Data Analytics Policy in October 2023 and the recruitment of a Programme Development Officer with data forming a key part of the role a number of key areas have been progressed and detailed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• QA has become the central point of data for centres in KCETB, with Tableau the preferred software.• PLSS data is checked to close gaps in educational, economic, completion and certification data for centres. Courses are also checked for start and finish dates against learner start and finish dates and finished courses that may have learners still attached. Monthly reports are issued to centres to close these gaps and ensure the accuracy of the data.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All courses on PLSS are QA Approved. No accredited courses can be made active without this check. This is to ensure that what is advertised to learners is correct, and has the correct programme, modules, credits and information. • RAP centre data reports are matched to PLSS to ensure all programmes scheduled on PLSS are presented to RAP. RAP data is collated and presented to the Quality Assurance Oversight Committee bi-monthly. • Data report listing modules scheduled on PLSS is used to manage the sharing of programme and module descriptors on the QA Portal for FET staff. • The same date report is cross-referenced against what is scheduled for external authentication to ensure all required modules and programmes are externally authenticated. • Annual centre data reports are generated for centres focusing on completion rates, certification rates, early leaver reasons, outcomes and benchmarking the centre across the previous 3 years. • Tableau is also used to create reports for KCETB and for individual centres on learner feedback, both mid-course and end-of-year feedback.
<p>Conducting an audit of where learner records are stored (both online and in physical locations) and documentation on who has access to this information should be completed as soon as possible. This should be referenced in the Data Protection, Records Retention and Assessment policies and updated at appropriate regular intervals.</p>	<p><u>These recommendations are complete.</u></p> <p>Supported by the actions identified in the follow-up report in 2023, an audit was conducted by Corporate Services in June 2024 of GDPR compliance and the location of data present in centres.</p> <p>Key findings from this review were compiled and presented to centre managers as part of a GDPR and Data Management PD event in October 2024. The data retention</p>

<p>Developing Standard Operating Procedures for all of their centres and second providers around data protection, to include an audit schedule and consideration of the most effective way to achieve high-level oversight of data management between IT and OSD.</p>	<p>schedule and Annual Assurance Declarations are being updated to support oversight and compliance in this area going forward.</p>
<p>Prioritising the unification of data through an appropriate IT system and policy to provide for a single source of truth to inform decision making.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>In September 2022, the QA office took over responsibility for PLSS. Since January 2023, with the new KCETB Data Management Policy, PLSS data has become the primary data source (single source of truth) for KCETB. Now, PLSS data is integrated into many systems within KCETB. Efforts are ongoing to expand this integration and improve staff understanding of the importance of PLSS and the accuracy of the data entered.</p> <p>Current Processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All accredited courses are QA approved to check accuracy of data and ensure information to learners is correct. • Data from PLSS is used to prepopulate RAP Centre reports to ensure all accredited courses are presented to RAP. • Data from PLSS is used to populate module descriptor folders shared with centre staff, with active modules listed on PLSS shared.

- Gap reports highlighting gaps in data on PLSS are circulated monthly to centres to ensure completeness of PLSS data.
- Annual centre data reports are published for each centre drawing on data from PLSS
- PLSS training has been delivered and videos developed to upskill staff on inputting data on PLSS and the importance of complete and accurate data.
- KCETB continues to work with the National PLSS Advisory group to support the enhancement of PLSS and consistency of implementation across all ETBs.
- Data from PLSS has informed plans and report such as the FET College of the future proposal, Pathways project and the development of Tertiary programmes within KCETB, for example.

Future Processes:

- Utilising Tableau to form data connections between PLSS data and other data e.g. QQI benchmarking data to further enhance the quality of input for decision making purposes.
- Expanding the use of Tableau to create reports such as bi-annual learner feedback reports
- Exploring access to Tableau for increased access for local centres to their data.

Commentary and Reflections

The recommendations received from the review panel provided KCETB with an opportunity to review data sources and enhance the management of their integrity. We have developed clear processes and procedures that are being implemented and utilised across FET. In

addition to these improvements, we are implementing enhanced data management practices and establishing an audit schedule to ensure robust data retention. This will help maintain the integrity and security of our data sources.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Data Management Policy](#)

1.09 Public Information and Communication

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>KCETB should develop a clear and comprehensive corporate branding strategy and policy to showcase their offerings. To support with public information and communication, the review team recommends that KCETB administer constant updates and resources on the public facing website.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>The area of communication of our message continues to be a key priority for the ETB. Following the launch of the KCETB website in September 2023 and the subsequent approval of the social media policy focus was given to increased brand awareness. Key actions undertaken included the development of promotional material, consistent signage across KCETB FET sites and ongoing updating of the KCETB website.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>The area of communication of our message has been a key strategic priority for KCETB over the last number of years. A key focus has been on enhancing brand awareness and developing a clear FET branding strategy. These initiatives will further strengthen our communication efforts and ensure a consistent brand presence.</p>	

2.0 Teaching, Learning & Assessment

2.01 The Learning Environment

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Formal arrangements in relation to the monitoring of teaching and learning be standardised across all KCETB centres and services to ensure a consistent approach.	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. The actions put in place to do so are detailed below.</u></p> <p>The new Statement of Strategy was formally adopted by the KCETB Board on the 16th of November 2021. Strategic Goal One: “<i>Promote high-quality teaching, learning and service delivery standards, embracing new methodologies and innovative approaches</i>” underpins our commitment to high standards in teaching and learning across the organisation. The development and implementation of the Teaching and Learning Policy has been a key step in the implementation of this strategic goal and coupled with the professional development policy supports high-quality teaching and learning across FET.</p>

	KCETB acknowledges the recommendation received but notes that the organisation operates within national frameworks of partnership with representative organisations and is limited in some instances by national agreements in how these recommendations could be considered beyond what is outlined above.
Commentary and Reflections Ensuring access to high quality teaching and learning is a key priority for KCETB. This is clearly set out in our Statement of Strategy and underpinned in our Professional Development and Teaching and Learning policies.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures KCETB Strategy Statement Teaching and Learning policy Professional Development Policy	

2.02 Assessment of Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
KCETB review the current arrangements that are in place to support the consistency of workplace competency assessment and thereafter create the formal arrangements necessary for the delivery, monitoring and assessment of work experience and placement.	<p>The KCETB Work Placement policy was issued in 2022. The policy outlines how learning takes place in many contexts is recognised and how the value of learning in the workplace is promoted. The policy details how the learner's personal development, skills acquisition, competencies, and contextual awareness are enhanced through structured work experience and work-based learning activity on work placement.</p> <p>KCETB believes that learners should be given adequate opportunity to generate the evidence to demonstrate the standards of knowledge, skill and competence required to</p>

	undertake key occupationally related tasks within the workplace. The policy provides a framework for centres in terms of the monitoring of work placement and work placement durations in line with the validation requirements of the programme. This structure in turn provides a consistency in arrangements throughout FET.
Commentary and Reflections Ensuring learners obtain vocational-relevant work placement that is supported and monitored to a high standard is addressed by the presence of a Work Placement policy. KCETB will continue to build on this structure through engagements with employers. The work of the employer engagement task group will further enhance these engagements into the future.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures The <u>KCETB Work Placement Policy</u> is published on the KCETB QA website. Associated forms are only available internally on the KCETB QA Portal (a SharePoint site)	

2.03 Supports for Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
KCETB implement a standard Learner Handbook and finalise development of the Learner Support Portal to ensure that learners in all settings have a clear understanding of how and why they are assessed and relevant assessment procedures for appeals	In mid-May 2024, a Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator was appointed to the FET service. The appointment of a designated staff member and the establishment of a FET Learner Support Service, as a central resource for learner support services across all FET centres/services was a significant move towards our commitment to ensuring that all learners are supported in a consistent manner. The key tasks being prioritised include the creation of an FET Learner Handbook and the

	enhancement of the Learner Support Portal. Further details can be found in Case Study 3 below.
Commentary and Reflections The appointment of a Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator has been a significant enabler and by the end of the 2024/2025 academic year Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's commitment to the development of a FET Learner Handbook and updating of the FET Learner Support Portal will have materialised. Moving into the 2025/2026 academic year all FET learners will have access to a KCETB handbook (digital and/or printed) and the ongoing development and updating of the Learner Support Portal will have the benefit of both learner and staff feedback, which will assist in shaping the learner resource to ensure it meets the needs of all learners in KCETB.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures	

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.
The QA Handbook is prioritised and finalised ahead of the current completion date of September 2023	<u>This recommendation is complete.</u> The Quality Assurance (QA) handbook was published in November 2024. This was the culmination of many years of work by the QA Team and with significant input from the

	wider KCETB FET team. The QA team will now work to ensure that the policies and processes are implementable across all of KCETB FET.
Commentary and Reflections The completion and publication of the Quality Assurance Handbook in November 2024 was a significant milestone in the KCETB QA journey. The focus now turns to monitoring the implementation and continued review of these policies.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures QA Handbook – Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board	

3.02 Programme Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
KCETB develops a systematic approach to reviewing course content to ensure modules and programmes are fit for purpose for both learners and industry and re-examine programme review schedule to link with national priorities.	<p>KCETB published its Programme and Awards Approval and Review policy in 2022, this policy which was subsequently reviewed in 2023 outlines the process in place for the approval and review of programmes in KCETB.</p> <p>The stages programme approval process outlined in the policy is as follows:</p> <p>Stage 1 requires centres to complete an online Awards Request and Review form, submitting it to the QA Office. At Stage 1 the requesting person or centre will be required to follow one of the following processes:</p> <p>Process 1: Add a new module to existing in centre provision</p> <p>Process 2: Add a new programme that KCETB is validated to run to our centre</p> <p>Process 3: Create a new award that is currently not accredited</p> <p>Process 4: Review an existing award (major/minor/special purpose/supplemental) and</p>

	<p>update it</p> <p>Process 5: Add an existing award that is being delivered by another ETB but not KCETB</p> <p>Process 6: Add an existing award that is not being run by another ETB</p> <p>Process 7: Submit an alternative assessment brief or update a current assessment brief</p> <p>Process 8: Request a Module Descriptor for viewing</p> <p>Depending on the type of request submitted QA may be in touch for additional information. All requests are brought to a Programme and Awards Committee (PAC), which meets every two months.</p> <p>This process provides staff with a process (process 4) to review an existing award (major/minor/special purpose/supplemental) and update it. The update process is managed by QA and updated modules/programmes are implemented across KCETB during the next suitable timeframe, usually on an academic year basis.</p> <p>This process has also supported KCETB to engage in the national module update process. The aim of this process is to address the issue of out-of-date descriptors, KCETB is working collectively with other ETBs on updating a selection of CAS (Common Awards System) Module Descriptors, as part of the National Module Update process (MUP) with the first phase due for completion in May 2025.</p>
Putting mechanisms in place to standardise the approach to learner feedback to ensure areas for improvement development are acted upon in a timely	<p><u>This recommendation is complete.</u></p> <p>Following on from the work completed by the Public Information and Communication group a suite of Learner Feedback forms and processes have been established. This includes:</p>

<p>manner. This will support KCETB's work to ensure that learner voice is heard at all levels of provision.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learner early exit form 2. Mid-year feedback form 3. End-of-year feedback form (short course versions for courses 14 weeks and under) 4. End-of-year feedback form (long course versions for courses over 14 weeks) <p>The feedback received is broken down by centre with the information shared with centres for their consideration.</p> <p>In addition, KCETB holds an annual Learner Forum that coincides with ETB week to ensure the learners have a place to come together and have their voices heard.</p> <p>Learner feedback on topics relating to programme provision and reviews is obtained through the learner feedback processes which have been established. A past KCETB learner sat on the QAOC until 2024. Consideration is being given to the best way to integrate the learner voice into governance and policy development into the future.</p>
<p>Making greater use of data and evidence to enhance performance, and support quality within and across the ETB.</p> <p>PLSS data can play a key role in determining programme suitability and future-proofing provision.</p>	<p><u>This recommendation is complete. (Linked to 1.08 above)</u></p> <p>There has been a noticeable increase in the capacity of QA to use data and evidence to enhance performance and support quality within and across the ETB since the last report. The filling of a Programme Development Officer position, with data as part of the role has supported this increase. In addition to the points mentioned in 1.08, there has</p>

	<p>complete adoption of Tableau as a data analytics software, with the creation of data files that enable KCETB to analyse, in-depth, the volume of data available to them, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual centre reports, focusing on learner and programme outputs and outcomes. • Reviewing Skills to Compete & Skills to Advance outcomes • KCETB Year in Review snapshot • Create reports for both mid and end of course Learner Feedback • Prepopulating RAP centre reports to ensure all accredited courses are presented at RAP • Reviewing unsuccessful learners • RAP consolidated data <p>KCETB's capacity to engage with its data continues to grow and has become an integral element in KCETB's quality process.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>The recommendations received from the review panel provided KCETB with an opportunity to review our data sources and our capacity to utilise data to inform programme provision. Our capacity has grown significantly in this area over the last year and there is a clear road map for how this can be further enhanced in the coming years.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p> <p>Programme and Awards Approval and Review policy</p> <p>Data Management Policy</p> <p>Learner Management Information System Policy</p>	

4.0 Quality Developments and Enhancements

No.	QA Objectives	Update on Status	Link to updated/new Policy
1.	Access, Transfer and Progression KCETB have worked over the last year to enhance its access, transfer and progression processes to support seamless transition opportunities across our system. This has included the integration of VTOS into PLC to provide clear progression opportunities for learners from Level 4 to Level 5 programmes. In addition, the development and delivery of four Tertiary Degrees with SETU, supports learner progression on to Higher Education.	In progress	Access, Transfer and Progression policy to be published in Q2 2025
2.	Governance and Management of Quality: In line with the publication of QQI guidelines regarding the integration of Listed Awarding Bodies into the National Framework of Qualifications processes are being put in place to ensure consistency to how centres engage with these bodies into the future. In the interim these policies are covered under the Policy for Collaborative Provision published in 2023.	In progress	Collaborative Provision Policy
3.	Teaching, Learning and Assessment The Wider Benefits of Learning Pilot Project aimed at measuring the distance travelled by learners as a result of their engagement with education was completed in November 2024. KCETB is one of five ETBs that piloted a “distance travelled tool” with learners/clients in the Adult Literacy Service and Adult Guidance Service.	Complete	Report to be published in 2025

5.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

Case Study One: Academic Integrity

Introduction

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB) has had a unified approach to assessment across Further Education and Training (FET) since the issuing of the KCETB Assessment Policy in 2020. Comprehended in the policy were the procedures for processing alleged malpractice allegations. Plagiarism detection tools have been incorporated into Microsoft Teams and Moodle as standard. Since then, the landscape for academic integrity has changed dramatically. This case study will outline the academic integrity initiatives undertaken by KCETB.

Description of issue

KCETB is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. As part of this commitment, KCETB endeavours to provide the necessary information, training and resources for staff and learners to support the integrity of assessments. Activities and initiatives in this area since the issuing of the KCETB Assessment Policy are highlighted below.

Action

Phase 1 – Highlighting concerns

The Quality Assurance (QA) portal is an internal SharePoint site used to provide resources for KCETB FET staff. To provide information and support in a timely manner, QA created an Academic Integrity Resources page. This featured a poster highlighting threats to Academic Integrity and information and links to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) advice and FAQ on Section 43a.

The annual FET forum with a Quality theme was a full day event held in June 2023. This provided an opportunity to highlight and discuss:

- Artificial intelligence
- ChatGPT
- Section 43a

- The KCETB RACE approach (Recognise Alert Capture Escalate)

Phase 2 – Creating resources

In September 2023, KCETB Academic Integrity policy approved by QAOC and published on the KCETB QA website. This new policy comprehended procedures for assessment malpractice previously included in the Assessment Policy. The policy also outlines the principles and responsibilities for academic integrity within KCETB FET centres and colleges and the expected behaviours and practices regarding academic conduct for all learners and staff.

Leaflets and posters were developed to support staff in relation to referencing. These were circulated to centres and published on the QA portal.

The QA portal was also updated with resources including the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) handbooks.

In 2024, additional resources were created to further support learners in learning how to reference correctly using the Harvard referencing system.

Phase 3 – Implementation and Training

The Academic Integrity policy was issued and published at the start of the academic year. QA, in conjunction with Professional Development and Technology Enhanced Learning (PD and Tel), delivered a series of training on Academic Integrity in September 2023. Recorded sessions are available on the QA portal for staff to access remotely.

- Academic Integrity Webinar 1: Introduction to Academic Integrity
- Academic Integrity Webinar 2: Challenges to Academic Integrity
- Academic Integrity Webinar 3: Academic Integrity Policy

To further support staff in upskilling around Artificial intelligence, a series of webinars were held:

- Welcome session to the course introduction to generative AI and its uses in FET
- Introduction to AI and its uses in FET
- Generative AI and FET Education making you more productive

Phase 4 – Communicating with learners

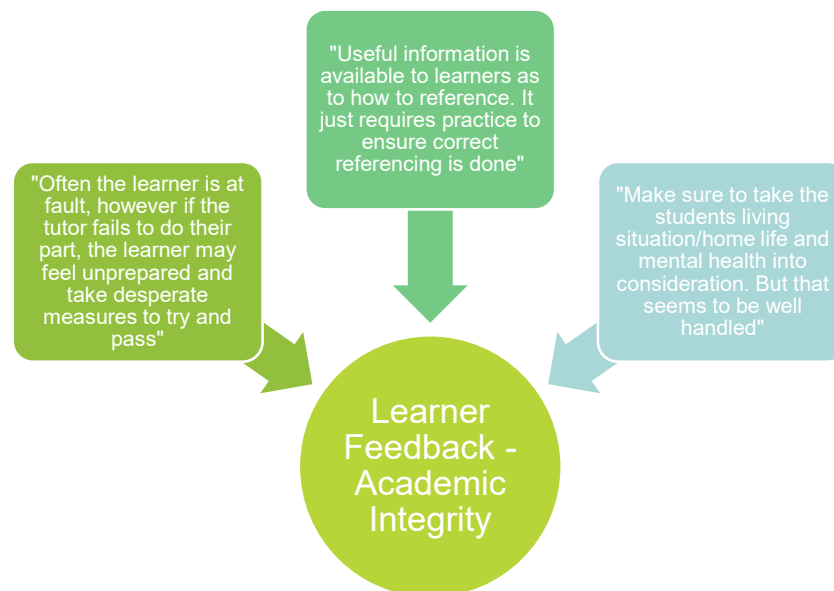
To promote discussion and focus on Academic Integrity, National Academic Integrity week was held from 16th to 20th October 2023. This was in line with a national initiative promoted by QQI and NAIN.

At KCETB we had a number of initiatives to focus on each day:

- Monday: Academic Integrity - Recognising the Challenges
- o Tuesday: Artificial Intelligence - What's good? What's not so good?
- o Wednesday: The Learner Perspective on Academic Integrity
- o Thursday: Focus: A Learner's Guide to Academic Integrity
- o Friday: KCETB policy and procedures - Key questions
(an opportunity to reflect on the awareness of published documents in this area)

Key Outcomes/Impacts

Learners gave some valuable feedback to the survey questions and some quotes are included below:



As part of continuous improvement and the 'Plan Do Review' approach to quality, established policies and procedures are regularly reviewed. To further develop investigating reporting and monitoring procedures, the Academic Integrity Policy was updated to reflect the ongoing challenges with widespread access to artificial intelligence tools. Specific individual procedures were also issued to make it easier for staff and stakeholders to

access specific information in relation to assessment malpractice actions. Additional resources to support staff and leaders included the 'Use of Artificial Intelligence in Assessment form' and the Plagiarism Spectrum with two versions: one for learners and one for staff.

The KCETB Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC) committee has also approved the creation of an Academic Integrity Committee. Member of this committee will be responsible for reviewing allegations of assessment malpractice and notifications of any contract cheating services that are identified. The committee will also monitor ongoing threats and developments in the area of artificial intelligence, review monitoring of academic integrity and support staff, when required, to make assessments more robust.

Key Learnings

KCETB as an education provider has recognised threats that exist to academic integrity. Academic integrity is central to the fair and consistent assessment of all learners. Individual assessors are aware of the risks and have been supported in the form of professional development opportunities and developed resources to support them in assessment. Ongoing vigilance in the area of academic integrity is a priority for Quality Assurance.

Case Study Two: Quality Assurance Governance Review

Introduction

In January 2024, KCETB commissioned an independent consultant to review its FET QA governance system, in consultation with its governance members and the QA team. The purpose of the review was to identify the strengths of the current system, which has been in existence since 2018 and to recommend improvements that could be made as it continues to develop. In carrying out this review a wide variety of sources were reviewed including agendas and minutes of the Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC), presentations to the QAOC on Working Group outcomes, key policies and procedures along with questionnaires and focus groups with key stakeholders. The recommendations were presented to the QAOC in March 2024 and work has commenced on implementing these findings. This case study will detail the process undertaken and the tasks undertaken since.

Description of Issue

The review of the QAOC and its working group structure revealed several significant governance challenges that required strategic attention. Despite previous effectiveness, the existing system experienced operational and structural complexities that impacted its overall performance. Key observations indicated fundamental uncertainties about the QAOC's core role, with members unsure whether they should provide strategic direction or merely acknowledge operational reports. Working groups were predominantly task-oriented, increasingly operating at an operational level rather than a governance layer. Their work plans were not being informed by the QAOC, and conversely, the QAOC was not providing clear parameters or expectations to these groups. The working group structure was inconsistently functional, with some groups inactive for months, creating challenges for the Quality Assurance team's progress. While some groups like the Programmes and Awards Committee operated systematically, others struggled with consistent oversight.

A notable concern was the policy development process, where working groups were developing documents and submitting them directly to the QAOC for approval, inverting the intended governance hierarchy. Additionally, the terms of reference for the QAOC and its working groups lacked specificity regarding approval and recommendation responsibilities. The Quality Assurance team's supportive role was

expanding and required more precise documentation. While the current model was effective initially, the increasing operational burden had led to member fatigue, signalling a need for strategic restructuring.

Key Outcomes/ Impact:

The review led to strategic recommendations that transformed the governance structure and quality assurance processes. Four key strategic areas were identified and are detailed below.

1. Terminology and Structure:

Significant changes were recommended around the clarify organisational oversight. It was recommended that the terminology shifted from "working groups" to "committees" to emphasise governance-level responsibilities. Comprehensive terms of reference were developed for the Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC) and its associated committees, establishing clear boundaries between strategic oversight and operational execution. In order to further enhance this separation, the chair of the QAOC no longer chairs the oversight, evaluation and reporting element of the structure, Figure 1 below details this revised structure.

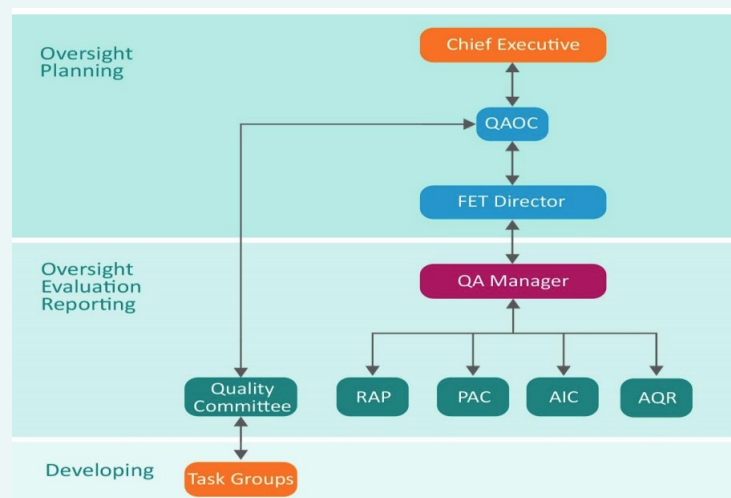


Figure 1 KCETB Governance Structure for QA and Associated Subgroups

2. Working Group Management:

The significant work undertaken by the working groups to date was acknowledged by the reviewer. To move to the next phase, it was recommended more task-specific groups be established. These groups would only be established for substantial developmental tasks with clear tasks set by the QAOC with further guidance set by the Quality Committee (QC). The Quality Assurance team are now coordinating and managing the task groups. The task group will report regularly to the QC and will report to the QAOC. Once the task is completed the group will be disbanded.

3. Strategic Planning:

As a result of the review clarity was provided for the QAOC around the strategic role they hold in the governance structure. The revised structure has been repositioned to drive strategic direction by:

- Developing annual priority frameworks aligned with FET strategic objectives
- Collaboratively establishing annual work plans with committees
- Defining precise scope and priority outcomes for each organisational work area

These key priorities have been set for the QC and the Task Groups for 2024-2025, covering Blended Learning, Employer Engagement and Learner Support. These groups have been established, with membership from across all of FET.

4. Reporting and Accountability:

It was acknowledged during the review that while there were reporting structures in place these needed to be to improve transparency and oversight. With this in mind, the following areas were identified and are being progressed:

- The QAOC was mandated to submit annual reports to the Chief Executive

- Committees were required to provide periodic progress updates and highlight potential implementation barriers
- Communication protocols were strengthened to ensure organisational transparency

Key Learnings

The review found that KCETB has a mature and evolving quality management system with several notable strengths and strategic development opportunities. Introduced in 2018, the QA governance system has become a well-established decision-making framework across the organisation. During the review the consultant acknowledged the strengths of the governance structure namely the presence of external membership, commitment from enthusiastic team members, the presence of an inclusive policy development process and the presence of a comprehensive "Governance and Management of Quality Policy" was also noted.

The review has provided KCETB with a clear road map to continue enhancing and developing its FET QA governance system. The recommendations received were strategically focused on the current governance structure, QAOC and working group roles, and enhancing documentation to support governance operations. Implementation of the recommendations is well underway, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement. KCETB is positioning itself as a forward-thinking education and training board dedicated to high-quality provision and ongoing organisational development.

Case Study Three: Learner Support

Introduction

In mid-May 2024, a Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator was appointed. While each FET centre/service provides a range of learner supports to their learners and clients, the appointment of a designated staff member and the establishment of a FET Learner Support Service, as a central resource for learner support services across all FET centres/services was significant move towards our commitment to ensuring that all learners are supported in a consistent manner. This case study will detail the key priorities undertaken to ensure consistency in learner support across all FET provision.

Description of issue

In line with strategic priority number 6: Fostering Inclusion, of the *Future FET: Transforming Learning: The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-2024* the Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator in collaboration with all FET centres/services has a responsibility to oversee, develop and progress the work of the FET Learner Support Service and ensure that KCETB engage in providing the highest level of quality and standardised learners supports. Given the diverse nature of FET there was a wide range of learner supports in place across provision. There was not, however, a consistent process in place in terms of how learners accessed or were informed about these supports.

Action

Acknowledging the diversity in supports across FET, one of the first pieces of work completed by the Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator which laid the foundation for developmental work was the completion of a survey, aimed at identifying and mapping current learner supports (academic and non-academic) across all centres/services.

This survey covered a number of different areas in relation to academic and wellbeing (non-academic) supports in each FET Centre, under the following headings:

- Designated learner support staff.
- In centre supports.
- Learner handbook.
- Initial assessment.
- Type of disability / learning difficulty / illness.
- Needs assessment.
- In class supports.
- Assistive technology.
- Reasonable accommodation.

Following collection, the data from the survey was compiled and analysed. The final report included the presentation of data analysis (quantitative and qualitative), and a number of key recommendations. As part of this process, consideration was also given to the relevant requirements outlined in the SOLAS FET Strategy, *Future FET: Transforming Learning: The National Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2020-2024*¹ and QQI *Core Statutory Assurance Guidelines 2016*². In July 2024, SOLAS published a position paper entitled *Learner Support in Further Education and Training: Towards a Consistent Learner Experience*. As part the conclusion section, it was noted that:

...in line with the ETBs' QA requirements, set and monitored by QQI, we have conceptualised Learner Support in a broad sense, with learner supports including, but not limited to, individualised supports for people with a disability. We recognise that supports

¹ [SOLAS fet strategy web.pdf](#)

² [Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.pdf](#)

are provided along a continuum and can assist learners not only with their academic engagement, but also in related personal, social, and financial issues. (Solas, 2024)³

It was also fundamental to develop awareness and a clear understanding of the Guidelines for Funds with Students with Disabilities. This would be essential to ensure that the guidelines were central to the work of the Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator and the development of clear procedures and processes for learners, for example developing a standardised Needs Assessment Form and a Learner Educational Needs Summary (LENS report). The link to the guidelines is provided here [FSD-Guidelines 2024 25.pdf](#).

Having access to the Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD)⁴ means that learners in colleges of further education – Level 5 and 6 courses) can avail of necessary assistance and equipment which will enable them to fully participate and successfully complete their FET course. As part of the report and future work in this area, it was important to incorporate and align the Fund for Students with Disabilities, as there are a number of procedures which are required as part of the implementation of this funding. The development of a system to facilitate the collection of learner data will be an important part of the role of the Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator. Since 2020 SOLAS, at a national level have taken on responsibility to oversee and monitor the Fund for Students with Disabilities. During the summer of 2024 SOLAS began work on Guidelines for a Fund for Learners with Disabilities (FLD). The aim of which is to broaden access to the fund for other learners in FET, including learners attending VTOS and Youthreach-funded programmes (full time courses).

³ [Learner Support in Further Education and Training: Towards a Consistent Learner Experience](#), p. 47

⁴ [Fund for Students with Disabilities | Funding, Governance and Performance | Higher Education Authority](#)

Key Outcomes/Impacts

The Learner Support and Wellbeing Mapping Report was finalised in August 2024 and in September the Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator presented the report and its findings to members of the FET Forum⁵. The report included a breakdown of the survey results and infographics, supporting information gathered on the site visits, recommendations and a number of appendices.

There were a number of key recommendations outlined in the report, some of which include the following:

- Learner Support Service: to promote, implement and grow the Learner Support Service across KCETB FET provision, including for e.g. supporting learners to register with the Learner Support Service via the FET Learner Support Portal.
- Learner Handbook: following on from the site visits, it was proposed that one of the first important areas of work is the development of a standard Learner Handbook for all FET learners.
- Learner Support Policy: the development and implementation of a FET Learner Support Policy across FET centres/service.
- Designated Learner Support Roles and Open Learning Hubs/Centres across all FET centres. Through the hubs support can be provided to learners in a number of practical ways for e.g. IT support, literacy / numeracy support. This support is currently available in a small number of FET centres. Further developmental work is needed to embed this across FET provision as relevant.
- Standardised Needs Assessment: a standardised needs assessment form to be developed by the Learner Support Service and associated guidelines for use.
- Standardised LENS (Learner Educational Needs Summary) report to be developed. The LENS report will assist teaching staff ensure that the learner has access to their appropriate supports and will be completed after the needs assessment.
- Reasonable Accommodation: at present the reasonable accommodation policy sits within the assessment policy of KCETB. It is proposed the Reasonable Accommodation application form AP04 be completed at the same time as the Needs Assessment.

⁵ FET Forum Members – Director of FET/FET College Principals x 2/Adult Education Officers x 3/Training Service Manager/Assistant Training Service Manager/Authorised Officers x 3/Project Officers x 2/Recruitment Officer/VTOS Co-ordinators x 2/Youthreach Co-ordinators x 2/BTEI Co-ordinators x 2/Adult Literacy Organisers x 2/Community Education Facilitators x 2/Adult Guidance Co-ordinators x 2/Regional Literacy Co-ordinator/Employment Engagement Co-ordinator/Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator/PD and TEL Co-ordinator

- Universal Design for Learning and Plain English Training: continued focus on UDL and plain English training. Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator to work with PD and TEL (Professional Development and Technology Enhanced Learning) Co-ordinator to organise and promote staff training in this area. A simple UDL checklist/toolkit should be created and distributed to KCETB FET teaching staff and shared on the QA portal.

In order to progress the recommendations outlined in the Learner Support and Wellbeing Mapping Report and to support the ongoing work of the Learner Support Service, a further recommendation was proposed in the report. That was to establish a Learner Support and Wellbeing Working group, to include representation from each FET centre/service and to include different staff roles, e.g. management, teaching, support etc. The initial meeting for this group was held online in November 2024 and at this time it was agreed that the group would be re-named as the Learner Support and Wellbeing Advisory Group.

This group has met twice since its establishment and a further meeting was held on the 31st January 2025. The advisory group is currently focused on the development of the FET Learner Handbook scheduled for circulation to learners in the September 2025 (2025/2026 academic year).

Key Learnings

The appointment of a Learner Support and Wellbeing Co-ordinator has been a significant enabler. The completion of the Learner Support and Mapping Report has laid the foundations of the current and future work of the Learner Support Service in KCETB FET. By the end of the 2024/2025 academic year Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's commitment to developing a FET Learner Handbook and the continued development and updating of the FET Learner Support Portal will have materialised. Moving into the 2025/2026 academic year, all FET learners will have access to a KCETB handbook (digital and/or printed) and the ongoing development and updating of the Learner Support Portal will have the benefit of both learner and staff feedback, which will assist in shaping the learner resource to ensure it meets the needs of all learners in KCETB.

Other recommendations outlined in the report including the Needs Assessment Form and the LENS report have been progressed, and further work will be completed on these in Spring 2025.

The establishment of the Learner Support Advisory Group will further support and enhance the work of the centralised Learner Support Service. Building capacity and ongoing development and improvement in this structure will prove an important resource for both learners and staff.

Ultimately the work of the Learner Support Service and the Learner and Wellbeing Co-ordinator is ongoing, to ensure that the needs of the learner and FET are identified and met in a consistent manner across all of KCETB FET centres/service. This work is incremental and visible and can be achieved through a collaborative approach across our FET provision. In KCETB we strive to ensure that all our learners “flourish through learning”⁶ and the development of a fit for purpose, responsive central Lerner Support Service is core to achieving this.

⁶ [KCETB-Strategy-Statement-English.pdf](#)