

Interim Quality Report

Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board

Date: February 2026



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 Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board

It is to be submitted by 27/02/2026

The interim quality report was approved by Dublin College Quality Council on February 24th, 2026, and is submitted by Clodagh Beare, QA Manager

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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 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 reporting 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

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)

Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

<p>1. The review team recommends that DDLETB create a strategy that identifies and prioritises areas for improvement.</p>	<p>The Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ETB (DDLETB) Statement of Strategy was completed and reported upon in the 2024 & 2025 Interim Quality Reports</p>
<p>Not included in the original recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebranding of the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire FET services and its 32 centres as Dublin College. This work was supported by the establishment of a Dublin College Steering Group which reported to the FET Leadership Team. The work of the Steering Group was supported by a number of working groups. These were the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding Working Group • Provisions Working Group • Admissions Working Group • Learner Supports Working Group. <p>A strategic decision was made to ensure that the steering group, and all working groups would have representatives from each of the original four services in FET (Adult Education, Further Education, Training Centres and Youthreach). This was to ensure that everybody's voice was</p>

	heard, and their needs represented, as the new structures, policies and procedures were developed for Dublin College.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>The rebrand of the DDLETB FET services to <i>Dublin College</i> during the reporting period represents an important strategic development. It provides a unified organisational strategic identify that supports clearer communication, stronger learner pathways and a more coherent framework for identifying and prioritising areas for improvement. This means that the emerging Dublin College identity is informing ongoing strategic planning and helping to align centre-level activity with system-wide quality enhancement goals.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures <u>DDLETB Statement of Strategy 2022-2026</u></p>	

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.

<p>3. The review team recommends that DDLETB implement the recommendations identified in the external review of Quality Governance by O'Brien Governance Design (OBGD). The relaunching of</p>	<p>The recommendations from the O'Brien report were fully implemented, and reported upon in the 2025 Interim Quality Report.</p> <p>Since then, the various governance groups have continued to meet as required by their Terms of Reference.</p>
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the different governance roles is necessary in the next phase of development of the QA system.

Commentary and Reflections

DDLETB undertook the governance review because it was felt that there was considerable uncertainty about the roles of the individual groups, the role of the governance system as a whole in overseeing provision in DDLETB FET services, and the role of those governance groups in assuring the Senior Leadership Team of the quality of that provision.

The process of undertaking the review provided the groups with the opportunity to reflect deeply on their role within the wider governance system, and to understand it more fully. As a result, the three governance groups (Quality Council, supported by the Quality Enhancement Committee and the Programmes Committee) are functioning well, and continue to grow in confidence as both advisory bodies, and approval bodies where appropriate.

This growing confidence was evidenced in 2025, in the governance groups' responses to the considerable body of policy development work that the QA Unit undertook over the course of the year. The governance bodies guided the development of the policies, reviewed them, provided feedback, and where appropriate, stipulated requirements that were deemed essential to safeguard the integrity and delivery of Dublin College's programmes of education and training.

This confidence was further evidenced when the existing Director of Further Education and Training (DFET) resigned, and a new DFET was appointed. The governance bodies were able to continue their work, support the new DFET in stepping into their role and gain an understanding of the Quality Assurance context in DDLETB/Dublin College, and assure the DFET of the quality of provision within Dublin College.

[Link to published policies and procedures](#)

1.03 Documentation of QA

2. The review team recommends that DDLETB continue developing a single, standardised quality assurance system for all its provision in the next academic year.

During 2025, DDLETB continued to develop and establish a single, standardised quality assurance (QA) system across all FET provision. This work represents a significant phase of system-building in alignment with QQI's Core Statutory QA Guidelines and the recommendations arising from the inaugural review.

Policy & Procedure development completed in 2025

A major focus for the QA Unit in 2025 was the development and completion of a suite of policies and procedures designed to bring consistency, clarity and standardisation to teaching, learning, assessment, and blended delivery across the service. The following were completed and formally approved during the reporting period:

- Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy
- Teaching and Learning Procedures
- Assessment Procedures
- Procedures for Documenting and Reporting QA Issues and Non-Compliance
- Feedback Procedures
- Policy for Accredited Programmes
- Blended Learning Policy
- Blended Learning Strategy
- Procedures for Centres Delivering Blended Learning
- Procedures for Practitioners Delivering Blended Learning
- Moodle Guidelines for Centres Delivering Blended Learning
- Moodle Quick Guide for Local Admins

Collectively, this body of work represents a significant step toward a unified and coherent QA framework, ensuring that learners, practitioners and centres operate within consistent and clearly articulated processes.

Policy & Procedure development commenced in 2025

Building on this progress, the QA Unit initiated further development work to complete the other components required for a fully standardised QA system. Work is currently underway on:

- Procedure for Course Approvals
- Procedure for Tertiary Programmes
- Procedure for Assessment Instrument Specifications
- Procedure for Programme Development
- Procedure for Programme Review
- Moodle Guidelines for Practitioners
- Moodle Supports for Learners
- Safe Exam Browser Protocols following the completion of the pilot project. This included the development of a mandatory asynchronous course for staff to undertake prior to using the Safe Exam Browser tool, in order to safeguard the integrity of the assessment process.

4. The review team recommends that DDLETB create a QA handbook that focuses on specific elements, including:

- a policy review schedule that ensures that all policies are not being reviewed at the same time and that everyone involved in quality assurance is aware of the schedule

- The DDLETB policy review schedule is managed by the QA Unit and overseen by the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC).
- As noted in last year's response, and still relevant in 2025, the organisation experienced a substantial volume of new policy development during this period, which necessarily took precedence over scheduled policy reviews
- All new policies continue to include explicit review dates, and the QA Unit maintains a live log of these dates to ensure appropriate oversight and planning. The system in place remains flexible: where an urgent or unforeseen need for review is identified, the matter can be escalated to the QEC, which can authorise an immediate review to ensure continued compliance and quality assurance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the course of developing the revised policy framework (listed in Section 2 above), the QA Unit also identified the need to review the existing authentication guidelines (i.e., Internal Verification, External Authentication, and Results Approval Panel Guidelines), and this work has now been added to the review schedule.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> investment in quality culture (based on professionalism, leadership and ownership) using communities of practice (CoPs) and other methods to address issues experienced across the organisation 	<p>During 2025, DDLETB/Dublin College continued to strengthen its quality culture by investing in staff capability, shared understanding, and leadership in quality assurance. This work has focused on equipping practitioners and centre leaders to engage confidently with QA requirements and to take ownership of continuous enhancement.</p> <p>Key areas of progress include:</p> <p>The Professional Learning and Development Unit delivered 2 courses as part of a Leadership Development Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entire FET Leadership Team consisting of all FET Managers participated in 3 half-day Leadership Development workshops A cohort of 26 middle managers (e.g. deputy principals and assistant managers), participated in a shorter version of that original course, with further sessions planned in 2026. <p>Developing a Culture of Quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QA coordinator and Training Standards training plus biannual briefings to support local QA Coordination - DDLETB strengthened its structured training and support model by introducing mandatory training for all new QA Coordinators and Training Standards Officers (TSOs). This requirement, now embedded in the Teaching,

	<p>Learning and Assessment Policy, ensures that anyone undertaking QA coordination receives consistent and comprehensive preparation from the outset. The combined approach to training and support ensure that staff across all centres understand evolving QA requirements, new procedures and the expectations of the unified QA system. This structured support reinforces professionalism, builds confidence and promotes consistent interpretation and application of QA policies across the organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding the Procedures for Documenting and Reporting QA Issues and Non-Compliance - Following the development of this procedure, targeted training of QA Coordinators and TSOs, and ongoing support from the QA Unit supported its rollout across centres in 2025. These procedures have strengthened a culture of openness, accountability and shared responsibility for quality, enabling staff to identify, report and address issues promptly. Embedding them also reinforces a learning-focused quality culture where improvement is regulated rather than reactive. <p>These actions demonstrate DDLETB's investment in a quality culture that is participatory, professional and grounded in shared ownership.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking the balance between diversity (the different centres and activities) and standardisation 	<p>DDLETB continues to work toward achieving an appropriate balance between the diversity of centres, learner cohorts and programme types, and the need for a coherent, standardised QA system. A key strategy has been using Communities of Practice and national collaborative groups to share challenges, develop common understandings of policy and promote consistent practice while still allowing for centre-level flexibility.</p>

It is a matter of principle and policy, that all governance groups have representatives from all services, and that working groups will have representatives from each of the services which will be impacted by the work of that group. Therefore, all services must have a say in any developments which will impact on the work of their service.

Examples from the reporting period include:

- **The Dublin College Steering Group.** This group was convened to oversee the rebrand and launch of the 32 FET centres to the unified *Dublin College*. The work of this group is further supported by four working groups (Admissions, Provision, Branding and Learner Support). In order to ensure that the needs of the learners of each of the FET services are fully addressed in the new Dublin College, all FET services are represented in these working groups.
- **The Learner Support Working Group** brings together staff from diverse centres to address variations in learner support needs and operational practices. The group provides a structured mechanism for sharing best practice, identifying challenges and highlighting gaps. It is developing a framework of recommendations to support a more consistent approach across Dublin College, while still allowing for centre-specific flexibility.
- **The National Reasonable Accommodation (RA) in FET Working group (ETBI and AHEAD)** - DDLETB's active participation in this national Community of Practice supports the development of shared principles and coherent RA practices across the sector. The completion of the RA Maturity Model has helped identify gaps and variations across the organisation, while the expert support of AHEAD and ETBI is

guiding DDLETB in strengthening and standardising its approach to reasonable accommodations across diverse programme contexts.

These groups illustrate how DDLETB uses collaborative structures to achieve standardisation where appropriate, while supporting the diverse contexts in which centres operate.

Commentary and Reflections

Through the substantial volume of policy and procedure development completed in 2025, alongside the structured development work currently underway, DDLETB/Dublin College continues to progress toward a single, standardised QA system for all provision. The work undertaken reflects an organisational commitment to consistency, compliance and continuous enhancement, and will remain a central focus for the coming academic year.

A key element of that developmental work was DDLETB/Dublin College's application for its scope of provision to be extended to include Blended Learning. This involved undertaking a full gap analysis—identifying the structures, policies and procedures that were already in place, as well as those that would need to be developed. As part of that work, a framework of interrelated policies, procedures and guidelines were created, such as the Blended Learning Strategy, the Blended Learning Policy, the Procedures for Centres, Procedures for Practitioners, and Moodle Guidelines for Centres. Since submitting the application on December 19th, more work has been undertaken on a range of guidelines and protocols. This is a critical piece of work for DDLETB/Dublin College, as Blended Learning will be an important tool in ensuring that we can flexibly meet the needs of all learners, including those who are in full-time employment. Engaging in this development project was challenging given its scale, but proved very valuable in terms of the learning and insights that were gained.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

- [Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy](#)
- [Teaching and Learning Procedures](#)
- [Assessment Procedures](#)
- [Procedures for Documenting and Reporting QA Issues and Non-Compliance](#)
- [Feedback Procedures](#)

- [Policy for Accredited Programmes](#)
- [Blended Learning Policy](#)
- [Blended Learning Strategy](#)
- [Procedures for Centres Delivering Blended Learning](#)
- [Procedures for Practitioners Delivering Blended Learning](#)
- [Moodle Guidelines for Centres Delivering Blended Learning](#)
- [Moodle Quick Guide for Local Admins](#)

1.04 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Recommendation (as recorded in the review

Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review

Policy Development

A major initiative in 2025 was the development of quality assured procedures to bring Dublin College's approach to Professional Learning and Development, within the remit and structures of the QA Framework. This included the development of the:

- **Professional Learning and Development (PL&D) Policy:**

In 2025, Dublin College developed its Professional Learning & Development Policy was aligned to the revised, overarching Professional Development Policy developed by the DDLETB Human Resources department. This policy re-stated Dublin College's commitment to the professional learning and development (PL&D) of its staff, and provided guidance regarding organisational support for that professional development. The policy applies to all employees working in DDLETB's FET services. These include Adult Education Centres, Further Education colleges and centres, Training Centres and Youthreach centres, and staff members in all roles and grades.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dublin College Professional Learning & Development Guidelines & Quick Guide: The policy was accompanied by comprehensive Guidelines as well as a Quick Guide, which outlined the different types of professional learning and development opportunities which are available to staff members, ranging from Type A (a locally-organised PL&D workshop) to Type E (funding for an extensive programme of externally certified education and training, such as a Masters' or Doctorate programme). The guidelines transparently outline the amount of funding, and other supports (travel costs, study leave) etc. that is available for each type of PL&D, and how to apply for it. <p>As a result of this new policy and the new support guidelines, the PL&D Unit supported 25 of staff members to attend 12 different courses.</p>
<p>5. The review team recommends that, while it is always appropriate to recruit the most qualified candidate, DDLETB also develop a diversity and inclusion agenda to be introduced into the current recruitment and selection process to reflect the diversity of the learner population.</p>	<p>In 2025, DDLETB further rolled out training in competency-based interview training, with a focus on the 9 grounds, to facilitate a consideration of the need for diversity and inclusion in the recruitment process. This training was made available for all staff who may be in a position to participate on interview panels.</p> <p>HR has now included a statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on application forms for advertised positions.</p>
<p>13 The review team recommends that continuous professional development of DDLETB FET staff be managed and planned through a formal training needs analysis and review process. The review</p>	<p>In 2025, the PL&D Unit organised 28 different courses/workshops for 324 staff members.</p> <p>In past years, there had been a persistent problem of people registering for PL&D workshops, but then not attending on the day, without cancelling prior to the event. While there can be</p>

team deems this should be introduced in the academic year of 2023-24 and linked to the new statement of strategy.

many reasons why someone cannot attend a session they have registered, they are requested to cancel in advance if at all possible.

Addressing the problem of ‘no-shows’

Given the high number of unexplained ‘no-shows’, the PD & Unit revised its approach to the registration and follow-up process. Not only were staff members still obliged to get their line manager’s approval to attend training, but those line managers were informed if the staff member had not attended the session, and had not contacted the PL&D Unit to say that they could not attend. This new approach resulted in **26% more staff attending sessions when they said they would, and 49% less ‘no-shows’**, over 2024 figures.

FET Moodle Site

Another approach that the PL&D Unit adopted to overcome the issue of ‘no-shows’ was to develop a FET Moodle site hosted on the Professional Development (PD) Hub. The PD Hub, is a ‘one-stop’ SharePoint site for all Professional Development in Dublin College, and it was showcased in the last Quality Report.

The FET Moodle site will allow online or in-person workshops to be converted into asynchronous courses (**where this is deemed appropriate**), so that those staff who were unable to attend at the scheduled time, would still be able to engage in their own time. This initiative was introduced in late 2025, and as of the end of January 2026, 7 staff members have completed Moodle courses, with a further 27 still undertaking courses.

External Webinars

	<p>In addition to promoting locally organised workshops and seminars, the PD Hub also promotes externally organised webinars. In 2025, 136 FET staff members attended 34 different webinars delivered by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).</p>
	<p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <p>Dublin College has purchased licenses for LinkedIn Learning for all of its staff members. As of the end of 2025, 944 FET staff members has activated their accounts.</p>
	<p>Embedding a commitment to Professional Learning and Development</p> <p>Dublin College’s commitment to Professional Learning and Development is gradually being embedded over time into a range of other policy documents and initiatives. For example, the Teaching Learning & Assessment Policy now states that, ‘Practitioners must recognise that continuous professional development is not optional but a fundamental obligation to uphold the quality and effectiveness of the education and training services provided’.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>In addition to developing the Professional Learning and Development Policy and Guidelines, Dublin College appointed a Professional Learning and Development Committee. The role of this committee is to review applications for Type E funding, where Dublin College is making a greater financial commitment to the individual staff member, and where there are thus greater budgetary implications. The committee considers whether the proposed programme of education and training meets the strategic or operational needs of the organisation, and approves the applications where appropriate. This committee thus has an important oversight function, and it reports annually to the Quality Council as part of its governance function.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Learning and Development Policy • Professional Learning and Development Guidelines • Professional Learning and Development Quick Guide 	

1.05 Programme Development, Approval & Submission

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)

Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

<p>7. The review team recommends that DDLETB use communities of practice as a working method and model of good practice in curriculum design and QA processes and expand this to other appropriate curricular areas.</p>	<p>QA Coordinator and TSO Biannual Briefings - These briefings function as an internal Community of Practice, providing a structured space for QA Coordinators and TSOs to network, share challenges, compare interpretations of policy and collectively solve problems. This approach strengthens consistency in QA processes across centres, while encouraging leadership and shared ownership of quality enhancement.</p>
<p>A more holistic approach should be taken in course development, involving industry experts, external authenticators, prospective learners and tutors in order to ensure a complete learning programme where the learner's needs can be fully met so that the learner can become a highly employable member of the labour force.</p>	<p>Using Industry Experts in Curriculum Design</p> <p>In 2025, Dublin College developed and validated a Level 5 Special Purpose Award in Transversal Skills for Caregivers. This development process benefitted from the inputs of an Advisory Steering Group, comprising of a number of employers in the hospitals, hospices and care homes as well as experts in Immersive and Virtual Reality enhancements in education. Consultations took place with existing and prospective learners.</p>
<p>15. The review team recommends that DDLETB develop further pathways for learners to contribute to society by creating programmes that support the Euro Skills agenda or contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). New and</p>	<p>Award Development and Validation</p> <p>In 2025, Dublin College led on the development and validation of a number of micro-qualifications and special purpose awards such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 5 Special Purpose Award (SPA) in Transversal Skills for Caregivers—a healthcare award using virtual reality, with embedded awards in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communications Skills for Caregivers

existing programmes should be developed support these global goals and local needs.

- Interpersonal Skills for Caregivers
- Cultural Awareness for Caregivers
- Self-care for Caregivers
- Level 6 SPA in Learning and Skills Development for Business
- Level 6 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategic Planning and Legal Review with embedded awards in:
 - AI Legal and Ethical Considerations
 - Strategic Planning for AI

Differential Validation

Dublin College also differentially validated a number of special purpose awards such as:

- Level 4 Introduction to AI
- Level 5 Enhancing Productivity with AI
- Level 6 Maintenance Skills Technology.

A number of SPAs were submitted for differential in late 2025, and are due to be validated by QQI at their next PAEC meeting. These include:

Corporate Sustainability Reporting

- Sustainability Leadership
- Immersive Technology
- Wind Energy and Immersive Technologies

	The Policy for Accredited Programmes specifies that the Sustainable Development Goals should inform programme development. DDLETB programme development staff have undertaken a micro-accreditation in Education for Sustainable Development to support that goal.
Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review	Devolved Responsibility In 2025, DDLETB/Dublin College was selected as one of 7 ETBs to pilot Devolved Responsibility. This will require the development of policies, procedures, terms of reference etc, This work commenced in late 2026, and will be completed in 2026, when DDLETB/Dublin College submits its application for Devolved Responsibility to the QQI PAEC.
Commentary and Reflections Dublin College is committed to ensuring that it can respond agilely to the needs of learners, employers and community partners for new programmes that are up-to-date, and fit-for-purpose. To that end, we welcome the opportunity to participate in the Devolved Responsibility pilot with 6 other ETBs, and value the recognition of Dublin College’s expertise in programme development, that being selected for this pilot implies.	
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.

8. The review team recommends that work needs to be done to increase recognition of prior learning	Recognition of Prior Learning
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<p>(RPL) so that opportunities are opened up for those who have built up on-the-job experience and to create a more accessible learning environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDLETB/Dublin College continues to expand recognition of prior learning (RPL) through an active RPL pilot in which an External Authenticator (EA) is mentoring an RPL applicant. This approach may resolve the payment issue identified during the 2024 pilot and is providing valuable insights into operationalising RPL in a sustainable way. • The Learner Support Working Group has included a recommendation in its emerging framework that an organisation-wide RPL policy (beyond Early Learning and Care) should be developed to ensure accessibility, inclusivity and equitable pathways for learners. • DDLETB/Dublin College recognises that the administration and coordination of RPL require dedicated resourcing, and this will be an important consideration in planning for a sustainable, equitable RPL model across the service.
<p>Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review</p>	<p>Tertiary Award Development</p> <p>Dublin College launched its first Tertiary Programme in 2025 which is a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Politics, Society and Media. The Tertiary Degree was co-designed and is being co-delivered between TU Dublin, Dublin College, and City of Dublin ETB.</p> <p>Collaboration on the development on the following prospective tertiary programmes commenced in 2025, for completion in 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEd in Primary Teaching (DDLETB, CDETБ & Marino Institute of Education) • BSc (Hons) in Networking Technologies (DDLETB & TU Dublin) • BSc (Hons) Radiography (DDLETB, CDETБ & UCD)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSc (Hons) in Digital Business (DDLETB & IADT)
<p>Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review</p>	<p>FET to HE Pathways Project</p> <p>Participating in collaborative project with a number of higher education institutions, operating under the Leinster Pillar 1 Cluster. These include: University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, IADT, Marino Institute of Education, Royal College of Surgeons and the National College of Art and Design.</p> <p>The purpose of the project was to:</p> <p>Strengthen transitions between further education & higher education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Formalise partnerships between FE and HE •Increase the number of students using the route •Strengthen student transition <p>For more information about this project, please see Case Study 1 below.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>Dublin College is deeply committed to the development of further Tertiary Awards. To this end, work commenced in 2025 on the development of a Procedure for the development of tertiary awards, as well as for the development of the advisory and governance structures that will be required to oversee, the identification, development, and validation of future tertiary award collaborations. This procedure will be submitted to the Quality Enhancement Committee and the Quality Council for approval in 2026.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.</p>	

1.07 Integrity and Approval of Learner Results

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)

Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

<p>4. an accessible, easily read, simplified reporting system for all internal verification (IV), external authentication (EA) and results approvals panel (RAP) processes and procedures policy and processes on assessment. T</p>	<p>Simplified IV, EA and RAP Processes</p> <p>The development of the new Dublin College Assessment Procedures highlighted the need to review and update the internal verification (IV), external authentication (EA) and results approval process (RAP) Guidelines to ensure alignment, clarity and consistency. This review has now been added to the action plan timeline to ensure it is prioritised and progressed in a structured way.</p> <p>The Results Appeals Process Hub continues to provide a streamlined and accessible approach to the Results Appeals process, with the majority of Appeals Examiners now working remotely on digital learner evidence.</p>
<p>Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review</p>	<p>Safe Exam Browser</p> <p>Dublin College is committed to ensuring the integrity of learner assessments, particularly in the context of blended learning. To this end, in 2025, the QA Unit proposed piloting a tool called <i>Safe Exam Browser</i>, a tool that can be plugged into Moodle to allow learners to complete an exam on a computer, without having access to the internet or anything else which might undermine the integrity of the assessment process. This proposal was approved by the Quality Council, with the caveats that all exams must take place <i>within</i> the centre, and that any teacher using Safe Exam must be trained in using it appropriately. Therefore, a training course was developed and a group of teachers were trained for the pilot project. Following the</p>

training, they were allowed to use Safe Exam Browser with some of their students, with other students using the traditional paper and ink exam as a control group. The pilot was evaluated following the assessment period and was deemed to be successful. Therefore, the Quality Council gave permission to be rolled out more extensively, on the condition that all staff using it be trained, and that learners who did not want to use the computer could undertake the same exam with paper and ink.

In order to roll out the training more efficiently, and to build up capacity, the PL&D unit adapted the original training course to be a self-paced asynchronous Moodle course, and the QA Unit has developed protocols to ensure that nobody can use *Safe Exam Browser* without having completed the training.

Commentary and Reflections

The Results Appeals Process Hub has improved consistency, turnaround times and ease of access for both staff and examiners, demonstrating the value of simplified, user-centred reporting systems within the broader IV, EA and RAP processes.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures
Click here to enter text.

1.08 Information and Data Management

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report) Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

<p>4. The standardisation and consistency of practice and documentation around annual monitoring and gathering data, including information relating to drop out rates, in order to work efficiently on attaining improvement for learners based on evidence presented by research and analyses</p>	<p>The QA Unit has a Data support officer, and the impact of this role addressed in the 2025 report.</p>
<p>9. The review team recommends that DDLETB develop a set of key performance indicators (KPIs), perhaps in collaboration with other ETBs, for each of the services provided. Indicators can be motivating for all involved, including instructors and learners. At a local level, these indicators can be linked to risk assessment and strong leadership. The review team recommends that DDLETB set targets on essential indicators at corporate management level, to limit the number of indicators that need to be managed at each organisational level.</p>	<p>Data analysis using purposive and random sampling</p> <p>Following the Inaugural Review, the QA Manager had put considerable effort into exploring how its data could be effectively, yet sustainably used, both for monitoring purposes, and for evidence-based decision-making.</p> <p>This involved purposive sampling, using Key Performance Indicators from quantitative certification data provided by QQI and other sources, as well as random sampling using the qualitative data generated from the authentication processes.</p> <p>Having been piloted in 2024, this approach was further rolled out in 2025, to great success. This approach to analysing the data allowed for key insights to be gained, and to identify areas of strength, and areas where more support was needed.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>This approach to data analytics, using purposive and random sampling, allowed for meaningful analysis of data, and provided valuable insights, which would otherwise not have been possible given the large volume of data to be analysed from across Dublin College's 32 centres by the very small Quality Assurance team.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.</p>	

1.09 Public Information and Communication

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report) Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

<p>10 The review team recommends that DDLETB increase the effectiveness of its communication policy (including media policy) by monitoring and publishing results that appeal to more employers, learners and stakeholders in the community. This should include more qualitative data (testimonials, success stories, community involvement) in reports on quality assurance.</p>	<p>Dublin College Communications Officer</p> <p>Dublin College has identified a Communications Officer, whose role it is to manage the Dublin College social media other sites, and to gather and publish testimonials and other success stories, which can be used to appeal to prospective learners, employers and community stakeholders.</p>
<p>Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review</p>	<p>Dublin College Website</p> <p>In 2025, the DDLETB FET services and their 32 centres rebranded under the unified banner of Dublin College. As part of this new, unified brand, a new Dublin College Website has been developed. Worked commenced in 2025 to develop a QA site which will be accessible through the new Dublin College website, and this will be completed in early 2026.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.</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.

<p>11. The review team recommends that DDLETB implement a standardised assessment of learners' level of English for relevant courses so that all learners can start at a base level and progress simultaneously, making it easier for learners to relate to each other.</p>	<p>In 2025, the ESOL Development Officer once again delivered training on the standardised assessment of English, for staff who are involved in the admissions process.</p>
<p>3 Expanding the role and organising the view of learners is recommended by the review team</p>	<p>QA Officer for Learner Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dublin College continues to strengthen its focus on the learner experience through the established QA Officer role with responsibility for Learner Experience. This role actively engages with the Dublin College Learner Support Working Group and the National Reasonable Accommodation in FET Group (ETBI–AHEAD), providing structured mechanisms for understanding learner needs, identifying barriers and informing learner-centred quality enhancements. These groups support the review team’s recommendation by expanding and organising how learner perspectives are captured and integrated into Teaching, Learning and Assessment processes. <p>Aontas Learner Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dublin College also collaborates with the AONTAS Learner Forum, a national independent mechanism for gathering learner perspectives. While no forum cycle

	<p>took place during the reporting period, the biennial schedule provides space to address issues previously raised and implement improvements. Engagement with centres to resolve issues and clarify queries has been very effective, ensuring that learner feedback continues to shape improvements to the learning environment and to Teaching, Learning and Assessment.</p>
<p>Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review</p>	<p>Assessors' Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the 2025 reporting period, the Assessors Hub continued to be actively used as the central resource for assessment guidance and Teaching, Learning and Assessment policies, procedures and resource materials. Over an average 90 day period, the site recorded 781 visits, indicating consistent engagement by assessors and centre staff. Recent usage trends show that the most frequently accessed pages relate to core QA practice, including <i>Teaching, Learning and QQI Assessment</i>, the <i>Role and Responsibilities of the Assessor</i>, and <i>Devising Summative QQI Assessments</i>. Document analytics also show strong engagement with key resources such as the <i>Assessors Hub Contents List</i> and the updated <i>Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy</i> and associated procedures. Almost all traffic (99.7%) comes from desktop devices, suggesting use during work hours and within centre environments, with peak activity occurring on Monday mornings suggesting weekly planning and preparation.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>These usage patterns outline above demonstrate that the Hub continues to support assessors in implementing consistent, policy-aligned assessment practice, and that the updated Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures are being accessed and embedded across centres.</p>	

Link to Published Policies and Procedures
Click here to enter text.

2.02 Assessment of Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report) Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

There were no recommendations made relating to Assessment of Learners in the Inaugural Review Report.

No recommendations relating to the Assessment of Learners were issued in the Inaugural Review Report. However, significant developmental work was progressed during the reporting period to further strengthen the governance, consistency and transparency of assessment practice across DDLETB Dublin College. This included the development and publication of the:

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Procedures for Teaching and Learning
- Procedures for Assessment of Learners
- Procedures for Providing Feedback to Learners

Commentary and Reflections

Collectively, these documents provide a coherent and comprehensive framework for assessment design, implementation, marking, feedback and authentication of results. They clarify assessor responsibilities, support consistency across centres and reinforce principles of fairness, academic integrity and learner-centred practice. These developments ensure that, despite the absence of formal recommendations, DDLETB continues to enhance the quality and reliability of its assessment processes in line with QQI's Core Statutory Guidelines.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

- [Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy](#)
- [Teaching and Learning Procedures](#)
- [Procedures for Assessment of Learners](#)
- [Procedures for Documenting and Reporting QA Issues and Non-Compliance](#)
- [Feedback Procedures](#)

2.03 Supports for Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report) Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

12 The review team recommends that DDLETB invest in resourcing additional counselling services for learners in the FET centres.

Psychological support for learners

- The Psychological Support Service (PSS) is available to many staff and learners in Further Education within Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education Training Board (DDLETB). Interventions by the team are directed towards:
 - The provision of both direct and indirect support to students.
 - The resolution of behavioural, motivational, emotional and cognitive difficulties of individuals, through assessment and therapeutic intervention.
 - Preventative work with target groups.
 - Professional support of teaching staff, e.g. Consultation.
 - In-service training in a range of areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Critical incident response
<p>Not addressed in original recommendations from the Inaugural Review</p>	<p>Dublin College Learner Support Working Group</p> <p>The Dublin College Learner Support Working Group commenced work in 2025 to develop a Learner Support Framework offering a standardised system of support across Dublin College. Sanction will be sought for the appointment of a dedicated Access and Inclusion Officer in 2026.</p>
	<p>PL&D Opportunities for staff to support learners needs.</p> <p>In 2025, the Dublin College PL&D Unit organised a number of workshops intended for teachers/instructors who work with learners with additional support needs. These workshops included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Learners with Additional Needs • Introduction to Universal Design for Learning • Working with Learners with Autism: A Practical Approach (AsIAm) • Dyslexia Awareness • Standardised Testing • Dyspraxia Awareness Training <p>Furthermore, the Dublin College Professional Learning and Development Committee agreed to support a staff member to undertake a PhD, under the new Professional Learning and Development Policy and Procedures. This PhD will focus on the challenges of aligning the national FET strategy with inclusive practice in PLC colleges,</p>

particularly in the context of outcomes-based funding and supports for learners with disabilities.

Commentary and Reflections

Dublin College is fully committed to ensure that all its learners are supported to succeed to the best of their abilities, and especially those who have additional needs. To this end, the college is adopting a holistic approach to learner supports in: developing a Learner Support Framework to provide consistent support all learners who join a Dublin College Class; identifying PL& D opportunities to support the staff working with learners with additional needs; prioritising the availability of the Psychological Support Services for those learners with greater support needs or who find themselves in crisis. Finally, Dublin College seeks to remain at the forefront in the development of learner supports, by supporting staff to undertake PhDs and other programmes of study. However, while these are positive developments, and are to be welcomed as such, Dublin College recognises that the appointment of an Access and Inclusion Officer will allow the strategic and comprehensive development of learner supports that we aspire to. Therefore, Dublin College will be seeking sanction for that post in 2026.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Click here to enter text.](#)

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.

13 The review team recommends that continuous professional development of DDLETB FET staff be managed and planned through a formal training needs analysis and review process. The review team deems this should be introduced in the academic year of 2023-24 and linked to the new statement of strategy.

This was the only recommendation given for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review in the Review Report, but it actually refers to staff development. An update on relevant actions has been included in Section 1.04 Staff Development above

A **Self-evaluation, monitoring and review policy** was scheduled for development, but was delayed. This was due to the need to submit the Dublin College application to extend its scope of provision to include Blended Learning, and the extensive policy and procedural development work that had to be undertaken. A revised schedule for the development of a Self-evaluation, monitoring and review policy will be considered at the next Quality Enhancement Committee meeting.

Commentary and Reflections

Click here to enter text.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

Click here to enter text.

3.02 Programme Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report) Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.

4. a systematic internal review process whereby programmes that require updating can be identified within a periodic review cycle

6. The review team recommends that DDLETB continue to review and update its programmes and to ensure they are current and up to date. Planning schedule can be part of the QA Handbook.

14 The review team recommends that DDLETB ensure all programmes that require updating within a periodic review cycle are appropriately resourced to ensure appropriate curriculum design that meets the needs of learners and employers. This will also require prioritising programme reviews to resource reviews in the best order.

Module Reviews

- The development of the *Procedure for Programme Review* was commenced 2025, and is due for completion in 2026.
- The DDLETB module review process facilitates centres to identify CAS modules that require review. In 2025, 14 module updates were approved by the Course Approvals Committee at monthly meetings, managed by the QA Unit and overseen by the Programmes Committee.

National Module Update Process

- DDLETB collaborated with all 16 ETBs in the national module update process, overseen by QQI and ETBI. In 2025, this update process was completed, and the revised modules were rolled out across the ETB,

<p>The review Team recommends DDLETB identify all FÁS Legacy programmes that require updating and progress as a matter of urgency.</p>	<p>Work on protocols for the updating of Assessment Instrument Specifications for the FAS Legacy programmes commenced in 2025, and will be completed in 2026.</p>
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.</p>	

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.

<p>16. The review team recommends that DDLETB be more proactive in recruiting employers. Most of the employers the review team met had made the initial approach to ETB. The review team recommends that DDLETB establish a range of employer advisory boards in the academic year 2023-2024 that will contribute to ongoing curricular and programme evaluation.</p>	<p>Enterprise Engagement</p> <p>Enterprise Engagement across Dublin College is led by a centralised Enterprise Engagement Manager, whose role it is to drive coordination and integration of enterprise engagement activity across FET, ensuring that there is a single point of contact for enterprise and industry stakeholders in our region. There are also enterprise engagement officers in the three training centres and workplace education coordinators in three of the adult education services.</p> <p>The DDLETB enterprise engagement team built strong links with employers across our region and key stakeholders in 2025, including the five chambers of commerce in Dublin, the Dublin Regional Skills Forum, the Dublin Regional Enterprise Plan, County Councils, Department of Social Protection Employer Engagement unit and industry bodies. The team worked directly with local business, providing consultation to discuss and analyse their training needs followed by the provision of appropriate, funded training responses to</p>
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	<p>those needs. A dedicated Enterprise Information Officer acts as a resource to enterprise in the DDLETB region providing information on the range of supports available including, funded workforce development, apprenticeship, traineeship and work placement opportunities. DDLETB also work with employers to develop traineeships where there is an identified skills need.</p> <p>SEED CRM Database:</p> <p>The SEED CRM system allows the sharing of intelligence on enterprises and enterprise contacts that DDLETB interact and facilitates the management of ETB/Enterprise relationships. The SEED system has been successfully rolled out and Enterprise Engagement staff in Training Centres and head office have been trained on how to use it. Next steps include managing user adoption of the new CRM system for staff who have been trained to use it. to Phase two of SEED roll-out will provide access on the new CRM system and staff training to enterprise engagement staff based in Adult Education Services, FE Colleges and Youthreach Centres.</p>
<p>17 The review team recommends that DDLETB gather qualitative data on the value of nonaccredited courses for these learners who have come through the ETB to help with marketing and image. DDLETB should develop its training needs analysis and progression plans for these learners.</p>	<p>Wider Benefits of Learning Project: 2024- present</p> <p>2024 - DDLETB took part in the Wider Benefits of Learning, with 252 learners providing over 500 inputs to the Wider Benefits of Learning tool/survey. The pilot took place from September to December 2024.</p> <p>Each class group involved, completed the WBL survey twice, at the beginning and near the end of the course. Following this a learner reflection report was generated and used to facilitate learner reflection on the wider benefits of learning.</p>

The WBL researcher met with educators to evaluate the tool. Educators met with learners to get their feedback.

In 2025, using the evaluations from learners and educators, improvements to the tool were discussed and applied, this included improving support documentation for educators, improvements upon a learner reflection report and providing more prompts for Educators to explain what the questions on the tool were asking (if the learner didn't understand).

The programmes involved were ESOL, Adult Literacy and Community Education.

Dublin College Balbriggan and Swords recently took part in creating a promo video, led by ETBI. One learner and one educator contributed to this video with other inputs from other ETB's also. This will be ready soon and placed on the ETBI website.

ETBI developed a Wider Benefits of Learning section on the ETBI digital library.

2026 - The WBL tool/survey is currently being rolled out nationwide with the other adult education services in DDLETB testing the process of using the tool with learners now.

Commentary and Reflections

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Link to Published Policies and Procedures

[Click here to enter text.](#)

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	Excel Marking Sheets: to support of the integrity of the assessment process, and support the accurate marking of learner assessments, the QA Unit developed Excel Marking Sheets for all QQI modules delivered in Dublin College	complete	Click here to enter text.
2	Development of new QA website to support the new Dublin College website	Commenced 2025, to be completed Spring 2026	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 1:

An Evidence-Based Approach to Developing Dublin College Procedures for Providing Feedback to Learners

Introduction

This case study outlines the research informed and evidence-based development of the *Dublin College Procedures for Providing Feedback to Learners*. This project was carried out within Dublin College, the further education and training (FET) provision within Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). The procedures were developed to bring coherence, clarity and consistency to feedback practices across four distinct service areas, each of which serves a different learner demographic and operates within a unique teaching, learning and assessment context.

1. Adult Education Service (AES)
2. Colleges of Further Education (CFE) including Post Leaving Cert Colleges (PLC)
3. The Youthreach Programme (YR)
4. Training Centres (TC)

Through the analysis of centre authentication reports, the Quality Assurance (QA) Officer with responsibility for Learner Experience identified recurring inconsistencies in how feedback was documented, interpreted and implemented across Dublin College. These findings signalled the need for deeper exploration into feedback practices to better understand the root causes of variation. This resulted in a dedicated research study, undertaken as part of a graduate project, which examined practitioner perspectives on the feedback requirements within the Dublin College QA Framework.

Once the research was completed, the Dublin College Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC), recognising both the need and the opportunity to enhance the learner experience, commissioned the development of formalised procedures. While QQI already requires providers to have feedback procedures in place, the intention was not merely to fulfil a compliance requirement. Instead, the objective was to develop a meaningful, evidence-

informed set of procedures that would deepen the organisation's approach, ensure consistency across all four services, and firmly embed feedback as a core component of quality teaching, learning and assessment.

The development process was firmly grounded in evidence-based decision-making and built upon multiple forms of data, including formal academic research conducted by the QA Officer, iterative draft development, structured practitioner consultation and insights from learner support activities across the organisation. The finalised document reflects the Dublin College feedback philosophy and is underpinned by principles identified in the completed version of the procedures (timely, constructive, clear, learner centred, ethical and evidenced).

The following sections present the description of the issue, the actions taken, the key outcomes and impacts and the key learnings that emerged throughout the development process, demonstrating how Dublin College strengthened its QA culture through rigorous, research-based practice.

Description of issue

Prior to the development of the procedures, feedback practices across Dublin College varied significantly between and within the four service areas. These inconsistencies related to *how* feedback was delivered, *what* information it contained, *when* it was issued, and *what* level of documentation accompanied it. The learner experience was therefore inconsistent and, in several centres, dependent heavily on individual practitioner interpretation.

The QA Officer identified several problematic themes during the early scoping and research review phase:

1. Varied Understanding of the QA Requirements for Feedback

Feedback was interpreted differently by practitioners across services, particularly in relation to what constituted the QA requirement to provide evidence of feedback given to learners. Some practitioners viewed this QA requirement as something separate from the teaching and learning process, rather than an integrated part of ongoing learner development. Others believed that providing learner signatures at the end of assessment briefs was sufficient evidence that feedback had been given. In addition, some practitioners experienced confusion due to inconsistent expectations

communicated by different External Authenticators (EAs), who at times imposed their own QA interpretations on centres. This inconsistency highlighted the need for EAs working with Dublin College centres to apply Dublin College QA standards consistently.

This variability created divergence not only in the form and depth of feedback provided, but also in how it was documented, stored and verified. As a result, practices did not always meet QA expectations for traceability, transparency and alignment to learning outcomes, contributing to inconsistency across the four service areas of Dublin College.

2. Unequal Learner Experience

It was understood that, due to the diversity of provision across the four service areas, learners were experiencing different levels of:

- Clarity in understanding how to interpret feedback
- Timeliness and format of feedback
- Access to written feedback records
- Understanding of how feedback connected to learning outcomes

These variations reflected the wide range of teaching contexts, programme types and learner needs across Dublin College. However, they also highlighted opportunities to strengthen equity and transparency, two central principles of good assessment practice, and reinforced the value of developing a shared, organisation wide approach to feedback.

3. Limited Documentation and Traceability

In many settings, feedback was not recorded in a way that was accessible, auditable or useful for internal verification or external authentication. Lack of documentation also made it difficult for learners to reflect on progress over time, and for the Dublin College QA Unit to review the robustness of feedback practices.

4. Inconsistencies Across Four Service Areas

Because each service operates within a unique pedagogical and operational environment, practices had naturally evolved separately. However, this independence had created a patchwork of feedback approaches that no longer aligned with the Dublin College strategic direction of consistent QA practice.

5. Governance Indicators from QEC

With support from the QA Unit, the Quality Enhancement Committee noted these concerns, and together with insights from learner support needs, highlighted the necessity of establishing coherent, research informed procedures for feedback practice.

Action

The development of the procedures followed a structured, rigorous and iterative process grounded in research, practitioner insight, governance guidance and evidence gathered from multiple internal sources. The actions taken can be grouped into five key phases.

Phase 1: Research and Evidence Gathering

Led by: Quality Assurance Officer with responsibility for Learner Experience

The process began with a research project completed by the QA Officer as part of a graduate qualification. This research examined:

- How practitioners understood and interpreted existing QA requirements on feedback.
- International and national best practice.
- Current research on learner centred feedback, academic integrity, dialogic approaches and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Challenges practitioners faced in providing evidence of meaningful and inclusive feedback.

This project produced rich learning, highlighting gaps in shared understanding across Dublin College services and revealing opportunities for strengthening practice in areas such as academic integrity, clarity of learning outcomes and accessibility of feedback.

This research served as the primary evidence base and directly informed how the conceptual principles in the finalised procedures were interpreted and applied. These principles: timely, constructive, clear, learner centred, ethical, and evidenced, reflect both the findings of the research and existing QQI expectations for effective, transparent and learner focused assessment practice, as documented in the governance approved version of the procedures.

Phase 2: Commissioning and Governance Oversight

Led by: The QEC

Developed by: QA Officer with responsibility for Learner Experience

Following review of the research findings, the QEC requested that the QA Officer develop a complete set of procedures for Dublin College. The QEC confirmed:

- The scope of the work.
- Alignment requirements with existing Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and procedures.
- Governance alignment with the Dublin College QA Framework.

Drafts were submitted to the QEC for feedback and monitoring. Any completed work would ultimately be recommended by the QEC for progression to the Quality Council for approval, as required under Dublin College QA governance structures.

Phase 3: Drafting and Development of Early Versions

Led by: QA Officer, supported by the QA Manager

Several drafts were produced and these include early and mid-stage versions. These versions formed the basis for consultation and were structured around:

- Key principles and philosophy.
- Procedures to guide practice.
- Comprehensive appendices offering sample templates and tools.

- Links to the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and associated procedures.

The draft development involved integrating research findings with day-to-day realities of different teaching contexts. Tools were refined to ensure inclusivity, accessibility and practical usability.

Drafts were cross-checked to ensure alignment with governance processes and linked to the broader QA Framework.

Phase 4: Practitioner Consultation Through a Focus Group

Led by: QA Officer

Participants: Practitioners from AES, CFE, YR, and TC

A structured focus group was established to ensure broad and equitable representation across all four learner demographics.

The focus group reviewed:

- The draft procedures.
- Practical tools and templates.
- Clarity and accessibility of language.
- Inclusivity and UDL alignment.
- Implications for workload and documentation.

The QA Officer provided guiding questions to support structured reflection and distributed drafts to participants in advance.

Consultation ensured that:

- All services contributed equally.
- Diverse learner needs informed development.
- Feedback tools were appropriate for multiple assessment contexts.
- Procedures were realistic and implementable.

Phase 5: Integration of Learner Support Insights

Participants: The Dublin College Learner Support Working Group

Insights from the Dublin College Learner Support Working Group informed the developmental process, particularly where feedback intersects with learner progression, support needs, reasonable accommodations and communication strategies.

These insights reinforced the importance of:

- Clarity in feedback to learners with varied needs.
- Documented guidance for consistency.
- Accessible communication formats.
- Feedback that recognises diverse learner pathways.

Phase 6: Final Revision, QEC Review and Approval Pathway

Following the consultation and iterative revision process, the QA Officer prepared the finalised version of the procedures. The QEC reviewed the document to ensure:

- Alignment with Dublin College QA Framework.
- Coherence with existing policies.
- Clear applicability across all four services.

The QEC then recommended the document to the Quality Council for final approval.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

The development and implementation of the procedures generated significant organisational, pedagogical and learner-focused benefits.

1. A Unified Organisational Standard

For the first time, Dublin College established an organisation wide, research informed standard for learner feedback. The principles outlined in the final document (timely, constructive, clear, learner centred, ethical, evidenced) now underpin all feedback practice across Dublin College, strengthening coherence and quality across provision.

2. Improved Equity and Transparency in Learner Experience

Learners now benefit from a more consistent and equitable experience regardless of the service, programme or centre attended. Expected standards of feedback are clearly articulated, and learners have improved access to documented, accessible feedback that is aligned to learning outcomes and presented in inclusive formats.

3. Strengthened Academic Integrity and Ethical Practice

The procedures reinforce ethical practice by outlining how feedback should support learners in developing academic integrity, understanding referencing requirements and engaging responsibly with their work. Emphasis on transparent and respectful communication further supports ethical learner practitioner relationships.

4. Clearer Expectations and Greater Confidence for Practitioners

Learning practitioners now have access to:

- Clear definitions and expectations.
- Templates that reduce ambiguity.
- Procedural guidance aligned to QA requirements.
- Tools that are sensitive to workload and accessible across varied teaching contexts.

This significantly increases confidence, reduces uncertainty and provides assurance of consistency across Dublin College centres and support teams.

5. Enhanced Quality Assurance and Auditability

Documented feedback is now:

- Clear and aligned to assessment criteria, supporting learners to understand their progress and next steps.
- Consistent and transparent, enabling shared expectations across centres and services.
- Evidenced and verifiable, providing a reliable record that reflects feedback given throughout the learning process.
- Aligned with QQI assessment requirements and with the Dublin College Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and associated procedures.

This strengthens centre quality standards, supports authentication processes and reduces procedural risk.

6. Greater Clarity for Learner Support and Progression Pathways

Through connections with learner support insights, the procedures ensure feedback contributes meaningfully to learner progression planning and identification of additional supports. This aligns pedagogical feedback with broader learner support frameworks.

Key Learnings

The development of the *Dublin College Procedures for Providing Feedback to Learners* generated several important organisational insights:

1. Research is Essential for Strong Policy and Procedure Development

The initial graduate research project provided a robust evidence base, demonstrating that policy development grounded in empirical inquiry leads to stronger, more relevant outputs.

2. Practitioner Engagement Enhances Relevance, Buy-In and Sustainability

The focus group ensured that voices from all four service areas contributed to the consultative review process. Their input strengthened clarity, improved usability and ensured practical relevance.

3. Governance Structures Provide Essential Oversight and Direction

The Quality Enhancement Committee's role in identifying the need, commissioning the work, reviewing drafts and recommending final approval ensured that development was systematic, transparent and strategically aligned with organisational priorities.

4. Multi-layered Evidence Strengthens Decision-Making

Effective procedure development relied on synthesising research, practitioner insights, learner support experience, draft evaluation and governance guidance.

5. Consistency Requires Supportive Tools, Not Standardisation for Its Own Sake

Comprehensive templates, clear principles and supporting information helped standardise practice without imposing overly rigid formats, allowing flexibility while maintaining quality.

6. Quality Feedback Helps Drive Quality Learning

High quality, timely, documented and accessible feedback enhances learner clarity, supports progression, encourages academic integrity and improves teaching, learning and assessment practice.

In Conclusion

This case study demonstrates how a research informed, stakeholder engaged and governance guided approach led to the development of a comprehensive, high-quality set of *Procedures for Providing Feedback to Learners*. The process strengthened Dublin College's QA culture, improved equity and transparency for learners, enhanced practitioner confidence and established a clear, auditable standard for feedback practice across Dublin College. The key outcome is a coherent, inclusive and evidence-based set of procedures that both reflect and support best practice in Further Education and Training.

Case Study 2 Title:

The Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) FET to HE Collaboration Project

Introduction.

Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB has been involved as a further education partner, in a collaborative project since 2024 with 5 Higher Education Institutions HEIs: UCD, Trinity College Dublin, NCAD, IADT and Marino Institute of Education. This project, the *Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH)*, was underpinned by the HEA National Access Plan (NAP) 2022-28. A dedicated project officer was appointed on the 1 April 2024 for the duration of the two-year project. (1 April 2024 - 31 March 2026). A steering committee, consisting of representatives from UCD, as well as the DDLETB Quality Assurance Manager, a FET Principal, an Adult Education Officer and a DDLETB Guidance Counsellor, oversaw the project with regular meetings, and guided that approach that the project should take.

Description of issue

- Data regarding Further Education and Training (FET) learners gathered from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), showed that FET learners face barriers that may hinder their progression and transition to higher education or may have difficulty engaging and immersing themselves in the higher education experience and developing a sense of belonging.
- The steering committee decided to try and address some of those barriers by consolidating and strengthening the links between FET and Higher Education (HE), in order to develop the conditions which would allow FET learners to recognise Higher Education as a viable option, and to have a sense of belonging once they got there.

Action

In order to achieve those goals, the Steering Committee decided on the following actions:

- Development of a clear governance framework based on parity of esteem and clear working principles and values. This created an atmosphere of trust and ensured that from both FET and HEIs were committed to the project's goals.

- Ensuring stakeholder engagement. Four stakeholder consultations workshops allowed both DDLETB and HE staff to discuss the challenges and agree actions for progress. Further networking and information events were organised including with the Adult Guidance Association.
- Roll-out of a survey to determine the barriers encountered by FET learners in their transition to HE.
- Delivery of a number of pilot initiatives for FET learners, including, *Critical Thinking and Academic Skills workshops*, tours of the HE Library, FET learners attending taster lectures, information sharing events and peer-to-peer engagements.
- A review of similar initiatives taking place nationally.
- Promotion and implementation of the Principles of Universal Design (UDL) in Teaching and UDL Beyond the Classroom to ease the transition between the sectors for FET learners.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

The following outcomes were identified by the Steering Committee:

- A FET to HE Communications and Networking Strategy will be developed to ensure continuation of the successful networking and relationship building to date.
- A suite of transitional supports was developed and embedded, including:
 - A planned outreach programme
 - Bespoke FET learner experience days.
 - A FET to HE Guidebook for FET Learners providing the information they identified they felt they did not have.
 - Academic and Maths Skills Workshops delivered by the HE
- The principles of a HE College Ready Badge have been explored.
- Higher engagement with of the Principles of Universal Design (UDL) in Teaching and UDL Beyond the Classroom training programmes.

Key Learnings

- Trust was built and fostered by agreeing a governance structure from the beginning where both sectors had parity of esteem.
- A key understanding of both sectors was developed due to the collaborative nature of the project and contributed enormously to developing relationships in boosting engagement and positive progress.
- An awareness in HE of the barriers and challenges faced by FET progression learners provides the HE sector with the opportunity to consider the implementation of relevant supports to assist in the retention of the FET Pathway Student, fostering a sense of belonging in HE.
- The importance of the Principles of Universal Design (UDL) in Teaching and UDL Beyond the Classroom to ease the transition between the sectors for FET learners.

6.0 Reporting Feedback Survey

(This section will not be published)

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