

Interim Quality Report

Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board

Date: March - 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 LOETB

It is to be submitted by 27/02/2026

The interim quality report has been approved by LOETB's Senior Management Team and is submitted by Anne Marie Keane

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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.
The review team recommends that LOETB mission & strategy be shared with and reiterated to staff at all levels and across all services and centres with greater frequency.	Completed - refer to 2025 Interim Report
Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.	

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>Management of Quality Assurance</p> <p>The review team recommends that LOETB engages in a full review of all existing policies and ToR which relate to the function and membership of management groups and subgroups. The review should take a particular focus on ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency in relation to terms of reference and the organisational structure • Group membership that includes all relevant stakeholders • The provision of relevant inductions and ongoing training for all group members • Clarity and co-ordination between the various quality groups 	<p>Completed – refer to 2025 Interim Report</p>
<p>Governance Groups in General</p> <p>The review team recommends that the ETB provide training for members of governance groups and that information from the various groups should be published on the LOETB website. Publication of information should also include communication with staff at centre and service level. This could be addressed in conjunction with the development of the internal communications strategy which is recommended elsewhere in this report.</p> <p>The review team also recommends that LOETB ensure increased clarity and co-ordination between the various quality groups. This would improve understanding of the system by all staff members. It would also improve efficiency and minimise the likelihood of nugatory duplication.</p>	<p>Completed – refer to 2025 Interim Report</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>	
<p>Link to published policies and procedures</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>	

1.03 Documentation of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>The review team recommends that the ETB establish policy review groups without delay, taking into consideration the recommendations set out under Objective 1(b) and which should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prioritise the remaining areas in need of policy development and proceed on that basis. • establish a formal schedule for a continual rolling review of existing policies. • publish all policies on the website, arranged under specific categories. These should be accessible to the specific groups to whom they are relevant, e.g., staff (password secured), learners, general public. 	<p>LOETB has prioritised and completed several important QA policies aligned to identified gaps and sectoral good practice. During the reporting period, the following policies were developed, approved, and prepared for phased implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Policy – establishing consistent, transparent processes for learner entry, eligibility, and selection across programmes. • Repeat Assessment Policy – providing clear guidance on conditions, timelines, and responsibilities for repeat assessment opportunities. • Compassionate Consideration Policy – formalising supports and procedures for learners impacted by personal or extenuating circumstances affecting assessment or participation. • Guidelines on the Use of AI in Assessment – outlining appropriate, ethical, and transparent use of generative AI tools by learners and staff, with safeguards to protect academic integrity. • Recognition of Prior Learning Policy <p>These policies bring LOETB into closer alignment with QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and support greater consistency across centres and programme areas.</p> <p>To support sustained quality enhancement, LOETB has established policy review groups with cross-organisational representation from QA, FET management, centre management, and programme delivery staff. We have also implemented a review schedule to ensure existing policies are updated on a cyclical basis and remain current with national guidelines and operational need. A standardised policy template has been developed to ensure clarity, version control, and traceability.</p> <p>Work on the LOETB Quality Assurance Manual is well underway. The manual will consolidate all QA policies, procedures, and processes into a single coherent framework. Completion and publication of the QA Manual remains a priority and will form a key milestone for September 2026.</p>

	<p>In response to the recommendation on accessibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOETB has published its QA policies on the organisation’s website. • Learner-facing and public-facing policies are being prepared for open publication, while staff-specific policies will be made available through a secure, password-protected staff portal. • This work will continue as additional policies are developed and as the QA Manual moves toward completion.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB has made steady progress in strengthening its policy development and review processes. The development of new policies has helped bring greater clarity and consistency across the organisation. These developments also demonstrate improved alignment with national QA expectations and emerging areas of practice.</p> <p>The establishment of policy review groups has been an important step in creating a more collaborative approach to policy development. While they are still becoming fully embedded, they offer a sustainable mechanism for ongoing review and continuous improvement.</p> <p>The introduction of a rolling review schedule marks a shift towards a more strategic and proactive approach to policy maintenance. LOETB recognises that maintaining momentum in this area will be important to ensure policies remain up to date and responsive to sectoral changes. Progress on the QA Manual has helped clarify how policies and procedures fit together within the wider QA framework. Although the manual is still in development, the work completed so far has provided valuable direction and highlighted the need for clear, accessible documentation for staff and learners.</p> <p>A key reflection from this phase is the need for more defined roles, responsibilities, and dedicated capacity within QA, particularly in the areas of policy development and programme development. At present, the absence of clearly structured roles and sufficient dedicated time can create challenges in maintaining momentum and delivering work at the pace required. Strengthening these areas would support more efficient processes, clearer accountability, and sustained progress.</p> <p>Overall, LOETB is encouraged by the progress made and recognises that this work forms the foundation for continued improvement. The next phase will focus on completing the QA Manual, improving policy accessibility on the website, and ensuring the new structures continue to support a culture of quality enhancement.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures https://loetb.ie/further-education-and-training-fet-service/quality-assurance/policies-and-procedures/</p>	

1.04 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>Staff Professional Development</p> <p>The review team recommends a revision of the Staff Professional Development Policy to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal recognition of the position of Professional Development Coordinator • A mechanism to survey staff on CPD needs, which takes the centre as well as broader LOETB requirements into account. • A mechanism to establish communities of practice for teaching staff in specific areas as well as subject-specific areas. • Formal recognition of, and a structure for, an LOETB staff mentoring programme • Formal recognition of an induction process tailored to the needs of the various staff cohorts, including an input into the process which relates to LOETB as a corporate body. • A major focus on online/blended learning, which could be addressed in the context of an LOETB digital strategy, recommended elsewhere in this report. <p>The review team also recommends that an appropriate model of teaching observation be introduced to support staff development and the realisation of institutional strategic objectives.</p>	<p>LOETB has continued to strengthen its approach to staff professional development in line with the recommendations.</p> <p>1. Establishment and Growth of Communities of Practice</p> <p>LOETB has made significant advances in supporting collaborative professional development through new and existing Communities of Practice (CoPs):</p> <p>Business and IT Community of Practice</p> <p>A new CoP in Business and IT has been established. Its timing has proven particularly valuable, as a significant number of modules in these subject areas were revised nationally as part of the module update process. The CoP has provided a coordinated space for staff to understand changes, share resources, and support consistent implementation across centres.</p> <p>Healthcare Community of Practice (expanded scope)</p> <p>The long-standing Healthcare CoP continues to function effectively and has now been formally extended to include Special Needs Assisting (SNA). This expansion reflects the overlap in learner pathways and staff expertise across Healthcare and SNA, and supports greater alignment in assessment practice and resource development.</p> <p>Early Learning and Care CoP</p> <p>The ELC CoP continues to operate successfully, offering peer support and contributing to consistency in programme delivery and assessment.</p> <p>These CoPs demonstrate growing organisational capacity to support subject-specific collaboration and practitioner-led professional learning.</p> <p>2. Development of Induction Resources</p> <p>To strengthen induction processes—particularly in relation to QA:</p>

	<p>LOETB has produced a suite of online video briefings covering core QA requirements, QA-related policies and procedures, and organisational expectations for new FET teaching staff. These resources provide a consistent baseline across centres and complement centre-level induction activity.</p> <p>3. Identification of Staff Training Needs</p> <p>As part of LOETB’s application to QQI for approval to extend its scope of provision to include blended learning, a structured analysis of staff development needs was completed. The needs identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing and delivering blended learning • Use of learning technologies and virtual learning environments • Supporting learner engagement and wellbeing in online contexts <p>This analysis will inform future CPD planning and aligns directly with the review team’s recommendation to strengthen provision in online and blended learning.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB acknowledges that significant progress has been made in strengthening staff professional development since the inaugural review. The establishment and expansion of Communities of Practice has provided important spaces for collaboration, peer learning, and shared problem-solving. These groups have been especially valuable in subject areas undergoing national module updates or where staff are adapting to new programme requirements.</p> <p>The development of online QA induction videos represents another meaningful step forward, offering consistent, accessible supports for new staff. This work reflects a growing recognition of the need for clear, standardised guidance on QA processes and expectations.</p> <p>The identification of staff training needs through the blended-learning scope application has also provided an evidence-based foundation for future CPD planning. It highlights the emerging skills required for digital and blended delivery and reinforces the importance of targeted professional development as LOETB expands its provision.</p> <p>At the same time, LOETB recognises that continued progress will require additional capacity and more clearly defined roles within QA and professional development functions. Current staff shortages in development roles in QA and in professional development poses challenges in sustaining momentum, supporting mentoring structures, and providing hands-on assistance to staff teaching in new or revised subject areas. The progress to date demonstrates growing structures and a clear direction of travel, but further investment in staffing and role clarity will be essential to fully realise the ambitions outlined in the review team’s recommendations.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.</p>	

1.05 Programme Development, Approval & Submission

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>Programme Development & Validation</p> <p>The review team recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and support to be provided to staff in programme development and validation. • Staff secondment to programme development initiatives which are relevant to LOETB and being led by other ETBs, should be facilitated where possible. 	<p>LOETB has made substantial progress in programme development and validation since the inaugural review, with a marked increase in the number and complexity of programmes being designed, validated, and prepared for delivery. This reflects a strong organisational commitment to expanding provision, responding to sectoral skills needs, and building internal capacity in line with the review team’s recommendations.</p> <p>LOETB has engaged in the development and submission to QQI for validation of several major and special-purpose awards, including programmes of strategic importance at regional and national levels. Key developments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 4 Major Award in Agriculture – developed and progressed through validation to support local and national agricultural skills needs. – submitted in December 2025 • Level 5 Electrical Overhead Lines Technician Apprenticeship – a new apprenticeship programme submitted in November 2025, representing a significant expansion into the apprenticeship space for LOETB. • Level 4 Major Award in Construction – currently in development to support evolving workforce demands in the construction sector – expected to be submitted to QQI in May 2026. • Special Purpose Awards Under Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Level 5 Bovine Artificial Insemination (April 2026) ○ Level 5 Hoof Trimming (April 2026) ○ Level 5 Safe Tractor Driving (April 2026) ○ Level 6 Bovine Scanning (April 2026) ○ Level 6 Embedding Sustainability into Business (April 2026) ○ Level 5 MMC Assembly (July 2026) ○ Level 5 Insulated Concrete Formwork (ICF) (July 2026) ○ Level 5 Light Gauge Steel (July 2026) <p>This growing portfolio demonstrates a strong organisational commitment to programme innovation and responsiveness to employers, industry partners, and national policy priorities.</p>

	<p>In line with the recommendation for training and support for staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOETB's QA staff involved in programme development are gaining significant experience through practice, effectively learning by doing. • The process has enhanced their understanding of programme design, curriculum mapping, assessment strategy development, and QQI validation requirements. • Staff are receiving ongoing guidance from experienced internal colleagues and subject matter experts. <p>Although this approach has been effective, LOETB recognises that it is heavily dependent on the commitment and adaptability of a small number of QA staff.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB acknowledges that significant progress has been made to date in programme development and validation in recent years. The volume, diversity, and strategic importance of the programmes developed—including major awards at Levels 4 and 5, a new apprenticeship programme, and a suite of specialised awards—demonstrates our growing capability and responsiveness to employer, learner, and regional needs. This level of programme development activity marks a significant advancement in LOETB's capacity to expand and modernise its provision.</p> <p>The process has also enabled QA staff to develop valuable skills and expertise. Much of this growth has occurred through practical involvement in real development and validation processes, supported by internal practitioners and external subject matter experts. At the same time, LOETB recognises that this progress has taken place within the context of limited staffing capacity, particularly in the specialised area of programme development. A small number of QA staff are managing a significant workload, and this places pressure on the organisation's ability to progress multiple initiatives concurrently, provide mentoring to newer staff, or fully support teaching staff who are delivering programmes in new or revised subject areas.</p> <p>The reliance on internal and external subject expertise has worked well to date, but LOETB acknowledges the need for more formalised structures and dedicated roles to ensure programme development can be sustained as demand continues to grow. Strengthening capacity in this area will be essential to support ongoing innovation, meet national skills needs, and deliver on the ambitions outlined in LOETB's strategic development priorities.</p> <p>Overall, LOETB is encouraged by the progress achieved and the positive outcomes already emerging. The next phase will focus on consolidating internal expertise, exploring opportunities for staff development, and ensuring that programme development activity remains both robust and sustainable.</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>Access, Transfer and Progression</p> <p>The review team recommends an overarching LOETB policy or suite of policies on access, transfer and progression for learners, which will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out and clarify the standard application procedures across LOETB services. • Clarify the status of learner applications. • Outline transfer and progression routes as well as the transfer of credits that apply to all validated programmes. • Detail a formal internal transfer system, applications for which should be underpinned by policy and procedures. <p>The review team recommends that training and support be provided to centres and services, to ensure consistent implementation of the induction process.</p>	<p>LOETB has made meaningful progress in developing policies and practices that strengthen access, transfer, and progression (ATP) pathways for learners across the service. While a full overarching ATP policy is still under development, the organisation has taken several important steps that collectively contribute to greater consistency, clarity, and learner support.</p> <p>1. Development of LOETB's FET Admissions Policy</p> <p>The publication of the Admissions Policy represents a significant milestone in establishing standardised application procedures across centres and services. The policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clear, transparent guidance on the admissions process for learners. • Establishes consistent procedures for eligibility checks, application handling, and communication of decisions. • Clarifies the status of learner applications at each stage of the process. <p>Following the policy's approval, LOETB has convened a working group to determine appropriate assessment processes to support fair and consistent programme entry decisions. This work will further strengthen the admissions process and ensure alignment with programme-specific requirements.</p> <p>2. Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy</p> <p>The introduction of a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy has enhanced LOETB's ability to support learner progression and mobility. The policy has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled learners to demonstrate prior certified and non-certified learning for the purposes of exemptions or advanced entry. • Supported learners in meeting programme entry requirements where they may not possess traditional qualifications but have relevant experience. • Facilitated learners to meet employer requirements where their original certified learning was from a different region or a lesser-known awarding body. • Provided centres with a structured, transparent framework for assessing RPL applications.

This has contributed to improved access and flexibility for learners and has strengthened LOETB's compliance with national RPL guidance.

3. Internal Transfer Processes

LOETB does not have a formal internal transfer policy, as recommended by the review team. However, we currently support learner transfers on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that individual learner circumstances are considered carefully. These cases are managed collaboratively, with significant support from the Guidance Service to ensure that transfers are appropriate, clearly documented, and in the best interests of the learner.

Commentary and Reflections

LOETB reflects positively on the progress achieved to date in strengthening access, transfer, and progression pathways for learners. The development of the FET Admissions Policy has been particularly impactful, providing much-needed clarity and consistency in how applications are managed across centres.

The implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy has also significantly enhanced LOETB's ability to support learner mobility and progression. The policy has enabled learners to access exemptions, meet entry requirements, or satisfy employer expectations where their previous learning may not have been easily recognised. This has already resulted in improved access and flexibility, and has brought LOETB into stronger alignment with national expectations on RPL practice.

A broader reflection emerging from this area of work relates to staff capacity. Progress has been achieved despite resource constraints, particularly in areas requiring specialist QA and policy development expertise. Ensuring consistently high-quality implementation of access and induction processes across centres will require dedicated time, structured support, and ongoing training for staff.

Overall, while further work remains—particularly the development of an overarching ATP policy—LOETB is encouraged by the meaningful steps taken to date. The organisation is building a more coherent and learner-focused approach to access, transfer, and progression, and is committed to strengthening this work as staff capacity and structures continue to develop.

Link to Published Policies and Procedures
<https://loetb.ie/further-education-and-training-fet-service/quality-assurance/policies-and-procedures/>

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>The review team recommends that LOETB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the possibility of providing an opportunity within the RAP for teaching staff and EAs to review the outcomes of the Exam Board's deliberations and, where appropriate, a mechanism to challenge their findings. Strengthen the process around the communication of feedback from EA reports to teaching staff (involving the EAs if possible) and as part of that process that examples of good practice are also highlighted. Ensure that all policies and procedures relating to the assessment process are accessible in a specific section for learners on the LOETB website. This could be undertaken in conjunction with the recommendation (Section 1i) relating to internal communications and review of the web site 	<p>LOETB has made targeted improvements to enhance transparency, communication, and accessibility within the assessment process in response to the review team's recommendations.</p> <p>1. Mechanisms for providing feedback to Results Approval Panels</p> <p>Teaching staff have been consistently informed—and reminded on several occasions—that they are welcome to attend RAP meetings directly where they feel their input is required (in relation to their own class groups only). They are also encouraged to submit written queries, clarifications, or disagreements with EA recommendations for consideration at the RAP.</p> <p>This process is active and well-used, with teachers regularly forwarding submissions when they wish to raise issues regarding EA findings. These contributions are reviewed by the RAP, supported by centre management and QA, ensuring transparency and a learner-centred approach.</p> <p>2. Strengthening Communication of EA Feedback</p> <p>In response to the recommendation to improve the communication of EA feedback:</p> <p>EA feedback for individual teachers is now uploaded directly to each teacher's Moodle programme tile by the QA Office. This ensures that every teacher reliably receives their EA feedback in a timely manner, in advance of the Results Approval Panel meeting.</p> <p>While this process is labour-intensive for the QA team, it has proven to be the most reliable way to ensure full coverage and eliminate gaps in communication.</p> <p>This improvement has significantly strengthened consistency in the dissemination of EA reports. LOETB continues to explore ways of involving EAs more directly in feedback processes and providing examples of good practice across centres.</p> <p>3. Accessibility of Assessment Policies and Learner Information</p> <p>To ensure assessment policies and procedures are easily accessible to learners, the QA team has established a dedicated Learner Information tile on Moodle.</p>

Learners can now access all relevant QA policies, procedures, forms, and explanatory documents in a single unified location. The tile also includes video guides supporting key learner tasks such as uploading assessments, understanding assessment deadlines, and engaging with feedback.

This development represents a major improvement in accessibility and consistency across all FET centres.

Commentary and Reflections

LOETB acknowledges strong progress in enhancing transparency, communication, and accessibility within the assessment process. The systems now in place demonstrate a clear commitment to strengthening assessment governance and responding directly to the review team's recommendations.

The practice of inviting teachers to attend RAP meetings or submit written queries where they disagree with EA recommendations has proven effective and meaningful. Staff engagement with this process has increased, and there is clear evidence that teachers regularly use these channels to raise concerns or seek clarification. This has contributed to more open dialogue during the RAP process and supports a learner-centred approach to resolving issues.

The new approach to communicating EA feedback has been particularly impactful. Although labour-intensive, this method has ensured consistency, reliability, and full coverage across all FET centres. Teachers now have direct access to their feedback in a timely manner, enabling them to better engage in reflective practice. LOETB recognises the workload implications for QA but also acknowledges the significant enhancement this has brought to assessment communication.

The development of the Moodle-based Learner Information Tile represents another important step toward improving learner access to assessment information. Having centralised access to policies, procedures, forms, and video guides has created a more consistent learner experience and reduced variability across centres. This initiative supports transparency, strengthens learners' understanding of assessment requirements, and provides accessible, technology-supported guidance on key processes.

LOETB recognises the need for continued investment in QA capacity to sustain these improvements. The current systems rely heavily on the time and effort of a small number of staff, and as assessment governance continues to evolve, additional resources and more formal structures will be needed.

[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.
The review team recommends that, as a matter of urgency, there be an increased focus on the inclusion of all relevant learner data on the PLSS system as part of the application process, as well as the appointment of a specialist data analyst to the IT or QASS Team.	Completed - refer to 2025 Interim Report
Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.	
Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.	

1.09 Public Information and Communication

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>Information to Learners</p> <p>The review team recommends that every available opportunity be used to better highlight FET opportunities and pathways for school leavers as well as for current LOETB learners. This should be addressed as part of the review of communications recommended in Section 1i.</p>	<p>LOETB has actively worked to increase awareness of FET opportunities and progression pathways among school leavers and current learners. A range of targeted engagement activities has been undertaken across the region, ensuring that FET is more visible, better understood, and more strongly positioned as an attractive and viable option for young people.</p> <p>1. Presence at Major National and Regional Events</p> <p>LOETB has significantly increased its engagement at high-profile public events where young people, families, and schools are in attendance. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Ploughing Championships – providing a major platform to showcase the breadth of FET programmes and engage directly with prospective learners and parents. • WorldSkills annual event – highlighting apprenticeship opportunities and skills-based career pathways. • Tullamore Agricultural Show – engaging rural communities and demonstrating FET routes linked to agriculture <p>Participation in these events has helped raise the profile of FET across diverse audiences and strengthened LOETB’s visibility locally and nationally.</p> <p>2. Engagement with Schools and Careers Events</p> <p>To strengthen early awareness of FET pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOETB staff regularly participate in second-level school careers events, providing information on apprenticeships, traineeships, PLC courses, and progression routes. • Direct engagement with guidance counsellors and school leadership teams has supported stronger links between second-level and FET. <p>This has helped position FET as an accessible and credible progression route for senior-cycle students.</p> <p>3. Transition Year Taster and Engagement Programmes</p>

	<p>LOETB has developed a suite of Transition Year (TY) programmes designed to give school learners hands-on experience of FET subject areas. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barista Skills • Introduction to Agriculture • Cleanroom / Life Sciences Introduction <p>These initiatives offer practical, interactive experiences that help young people explore FET-related career paths and build early interest in skills-focused learning.</p>
<p>Communication</p> <p>The review team recommends an immediate focus on developing an internal and external communication strategy, which would include amongst others the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancement of the proposal to develop information hubs as soon as circumstances allow. • More comprehensive and targeted use of social media • Additions to the web site, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A search facility to assist navigation ○ A FAQ section in the staff zone with a focus on QA policies and procedure 	<p>LOETB has made steady progress in strengthening internal and external communication structures, in line with the review team’s recommendations. Several significant developments have taken place that collectively improve access to information, enhance visibility, and support more consistent communication across the organisation.</p> <p>1. Development of a new LOETB Website</p> <p>A major milestone has been the launch of the new LOETB website, which offers a more modern, user-friendly interface and significantly improved navigation and accessibility. Key features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated staff section, accessible via password protection, where staff can find relevant policies, updates, and organisational information. • Improved structure and layout to support clearer communication with learners, staff, employers, and the wider community. • Ongoing work to expand the site with additional resources aligned to QA and FET operations. <p>This redevelopment aligns directly with the recommendation to strengthen external communication and improve information accessibility.</p> <p>2. Publication of the LOETB Style Guide</p> <p>To support more consistent and professional communication across the organisation, LOETB has developed and published a Style Guide. This guide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides clear standards for written communication, branding, document presentation, and tone of voice. • Supports staff in producing materials that reflect LOETB’s identity and values.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to a more cohesive and recognisable public profile across all platforms <p>This initiative directly supports both internal and external communication priorities.</p> <p>3. Progress on the SharePoint Project</p> <p>LOETB’s SharePoint-based internal communication and information hub is progressing well and is scheduled to go live in Q3 2026. The SharePoint project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a unified digital space for staff to access policies, procedures, templates, meeting notes, and operational updates. • Facilitate better document management, version control, and transparency across the organisation. • Strengthen internal communications by creating a central, searchable repository of organisational information.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB is satisfied with the progress achieved in strengthening internal and external communication and in enhancing the visibility of FET opportunities across the region. The launch of the new LOETB website has been particularly impactful, providing a modern, accessible platform that supports clearer communication with staff, learners, employers, and the wider community. The addition of a dedicated staff section has improved access to policies and updates, while ongoing development work continues to expand the availability of QA and FET-related resources.</p> <p>The publication of the LOETB Style Guide represents an important step in building a consistent organisational identity and ensuring high-quality communication across all centres and services. Progress on the SharePoint project also reflects LOETB’s commitment to improving the internal flow of information. Once launched in Q3 2026, SharePoint will provide a centralised, searchable hub for policies, procedures, operational documents, and staff communications. This will significantly enhance transparency and consistency, addressing key concerns raised during the inaugural review about the accessibility of information and the fragmentation of internal communications.</p> <p>Beyond internal communication, LOETB has made strong efforts to raise awareness of FET pathways for school leavers and current learners. Participation in high-profile events has significantly increased the visibility of FET opportunities. Engagement in school-based career events has further supported second-level students in exploring FET as a meaningful and credible post-school option. The development of Transition Year taster programmes provides young people with hands-on experience of FET subject areas and strengthens early engagement with skills-based learning.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</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>Monitoring the Learning Experience</p> <p>The review team strongly recommends that formal arrangements be standardised across all LOETB centres and services to ensure the surveying of student feedback and that these surveys be undertaken at key stages during the course delivery cycle.</p>	<p>LOETB has continued to strengthen its arrangements for gathering learner feedback across centres and services. While a fully standardised organisation-wide approach is still in development, significant progress has been made in enhancing consistency and ensuring that learner voice is embedded at key points in the learner journey.</p> <p>1. Use of Multiple Feedback Mechanisms</p> <p>All LOETB centres now routinely employ a combination of formal and informal mechanisms to gather learner feedback. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-induction surveys that capture learners’ initial impressions, support needs, and early experiences. • End-of-programme surveys that gather comprehensive feedback on teaching, assessment, learning supports, facilities, and overall satisfaction. • Ongoing centre-based feedback activities, such as class discussions, reflective activities, learner suggestion boxes, and informal check-ins. <p>These mechanisms support ongoing monitoring of learner experience and help centres identify emerging issues in real time.</p> <p>2. Student Councils</p> <p>LOETB’s larger FET centres operate active Student Councils, which provide a highly effective forum for learner representation and structured dialogue. Student Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate regular communication between learners and centre management. • Provide valuable insights into learner needs, concerns, and suggestions. • Contribute to centre decision-making, programme improvements, and the overall learner experience. <p>These councils serve as an important complementary mechanism to formal surveys and help ensure that learner voice is captured in a meaningful and proactive way.</p>

	<p>While strong practices exist across centres, LOETB recognises the need to further standardise survey processes and ensure consistency in the timing, format, and analysis of learner feedback. Work is ongoing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align survey tools and schedules across centres. • Ensure learner feedback is systematically incorporated into self-evaluation and programme improvement processes. <p>These developments will support a more unified approach to monitoring the learner experience across LOETB.</p>
<p>The review team further recommends that LOETB support the continued development of online tools and digital resources as part of the QA system.</p>	<p>LOETB has made significant progress in enhancing the digital infrastructure that supports teaching, learning, and quality assurance. In line with the review team’s recommendation, a number of new tools and accessibility-focused resources have been introduced, strengthening learner support and improving the usability of programme materials.</p> <p>1. Introduction of SensusAccess as an Accessibility Tool</p> <p>LOETB has implemented SensusAccess, an online file-conversion service that enables both learners and teachers to convert learning materials into more accessible formats. This tool provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio versions of notes or handouts, supporting learners who prefer auditory learning or who have visual impairments. • Podcast-style outputs, allowing learners to engage with content on mobile devices. • Simplified or summarised versions of more complex documents, supporting learners with additional reading, comprehension, or language needs. • Conversions into e-books, Braille-friendly formats, or tagged PDFs, improving access for assistive technologies. <p>The introduction of SensusAccess represents a significant enhancement to LOETB’s commitment to universal design and accessibility.</p> <p>2. Inclusion of Audio on Examinations</p> <p>To further support accessibility, LOETB has introduced audio-enabled examinations for learners who benefit from auditory support. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio playback of exam questions for learners with reading, literacy, or processing difficulties.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardisation of audio-enabled exam formats across centres where appropriate. <p>This development has improved equity of access and aligns with inclusive assessment practices.</p> <p>3. Use of Brickfield for Moodle Accessibility</p> <p>LOETB has also strengthened the accessibility of online learning content through the use of the Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit within Moodle. Brickfield is now used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify accessibility issues within programme content (e.g., missing alt text, unsuitable fonts, poor colour contrast). • Provide corrective suggestions to teaching staff to enhance digital content quality. • Support the gradual standardisation of accessible practice across all Moodle course tiles. <p>The use of Brickfield demonstrates LOETB's commitment to improving the digital learning environment and ensuring that all learners can access programme materials effectively.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB has made meaningful progress in improving how learner feedback is gathered and in strengthening the digital tools that support quality assurance.</p> <p>LOETB has strengthened its approach to capturing learner voice through post-induction and end-of-programme surveys, which now operate consistently across centres. These tools provide valuable insights at key stages and help centres respond quickly to any emerging issues. Although strong practices are in place, LOETB acknowledges that further work is required to standardise feedback processes across all centres. Continued coordination and QA support will help ensure that data is collected and analysed consistently.</p> <p>Significant progress has also been made in digital accessibility and learner support. The introduction of SensusAccess has allowed both learners and teachers to convert materials into accessible formats, including audio, simplified text, and mobile-friendly versions. The rollout of audio-enabled examinations further supports inclusive practice for learners with literacy or processing needs. The use of the Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit within Moodle has improved the quality and accessibility of online content, helping staff identify and correct issues and contributing to a more consistent digital learning environment.</p> <p>Overall, LOETB is encouraged by the progress made in both learner-feedback processes and digital supports. Sustained improvement will require ongoing capacity building, standardisation, and continued collaboration across centres, but the foundations now in place represent a strong response to the review team's recommendations.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p> <p>Click here to enter text.</p>	

2.02 Assessment of Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>Assessment of Learners</p> <p>The review team recommends that LOETB establish a policy and procedures to support RPL and that it should also introduce formal arrangements, standardised across all centres and services to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity for all students around module descriptors • Facilitation of teacher planning in the delivery of modules while avoiding content overlap. • Regular student feedback on assignments and assessments 	<p>LOETB has made meaningful progress in developing and implementing procedures to support Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and strengthening clarity and consistency in module delivery. These actions reflect a strong response to the review team’s recommendations.</p> <p>1. Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy</p> <p>Since the adoption of the RPL Policy in mid-2025, LOETB has processed a growing number of RPL applications across several programme areas. The policy has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabled learners to access exemptions, credit, or entry pathways based on prior certified or experiential learning. • Provided a consistent framework for reviewing and documenting RPL applications. • Created opportunities for prospective learners who may not meet traditional entry criteria. <p>Feedback from External Authenticators reviewing RPL cases has been exceptionally positive, describing LOETB’s approach as flexible, innovative, and well aligned with national principles of RPL practice.</p> <p>While this has been encouraging, LOETB acknowledges that the RPL process is highly labour-intensive, requiring significant staff time for support, assessment, and quality assurance. There is substantial potential to expand RPL offerings further, but this will require additional resourcing and dedicated personnel.</p> <p>2. Clarity for Students Around Module Descriptors</p> <p>LOETB continues to improve the consistency with which module descriptors and expectations are shared with learners. Progress includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making module descriptors available via Moodle and induction sessions. • Encouraging teachers to explicitly outline learning outcomes, assessment methods, and module expectations at programme commencement. <p>3. Supporting Teacher Planning and Avoiding Content Overlap</p>

	<p>To enhance teacher planning and reduce unnecessary duplication, LOETB has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoted structured communication between teaching staff within centres and subject teams. • Encouraged Communities of Practice to support shared planning and avoid overlap across modules. <p>In addition, LOETB is actively encouraging the integration of assessments across modules where appropriate. This approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces learner workload, • Strengthens cross-curricular links, and • Encourages more holistic and authentic assessment design. <p>This is an emerging area of good practice and aligns strongly with national trends toward integrated assessment models.</p> <p>4. Regular Student Feedback on Assignments and Assessments</p> <p>Teachers across centres continue to provide regular feedback on assignments and assessments, with EA reports consistently noting strong examples of good practice. Teachers are facilitated and encouraged to provide audio feedback on Moodle for their learners – as this is a very efficient and effective means of feedback which prevents any misunderstandings.</p>
<p>Work Experience / Work Placement Module</p> <p>The review team recommends that LOETB engage the expertise of the Employer Services Team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the current arrangements that are in place to support the consistency of workplace competency assessment. • Recommend the formal arrangements necessary for the delivery, monitoring and assessment of work experience/Placement 	<p>LOETB has made important progress in strengthening workplace competency assessment and placement arrangements across several programme areas. Work led through relevant Communities of Practice (CoPs) has significantly improved clarity and consistency for learners, employers, and centre staff.</p> <p>The Early Learning and Care (ELC) and Healthcare/Nursing Communities of Practice have developed comprehensive workplace task lists that clearly articulate the competencies, activities, and learning expectations required during placement. These task lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide absolute clarity for learners, placement providers, and teaching staff. • Ensure consistency in the types of tasks learners complete across different centres and host organisations. • Support more reliable and transparent workplace competency assessment. • Strengthen alignment with programme learning outcomes and sectoral requirements.

	<p>Similar progress has been made within Hospitality programmes, where structured workplace task lists are now in place. This structured approach has been welcomed by employers and has resulted in more consistent monitoring and assessment of placement activity.</p> <p>Given the national requirement for work placement at Levels 5 and 6 in Special Needs Assisting, LOETB has extended the scope of the existing Healthcare CoP to include SNA activity. The CoP will now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a dedicated workplace task list for SNA placements, • Clarify expectations for learners and placement settings, and • Support teachers in assessing competency consistently across centres. <p>This work will provide a structured approach to assessing SNA placement activity and ensure alignment with national occupational expectations.</p> <p>Although the Employer Services Team has not yet been formally engaged in revising placement assessment arrangements, the work undertaken through CoPs aligns strongly with the review team’s recommendation.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB has made steady progress in strengthening how learner experiences are monitored and in improving the consistency of workplace-based assessment.</p> <p>The expanded use of post-induction and end-of-programme surveys has improved the regular collection of learner feedback across centres. Student Councils in larger centres provide an additional, effective forum for learner voice, offering valuable insights that inform centre-level decision-making.</p> <p>While these practices are working well, LOETB acknowledges that further standardisation across all centres is needed to ensure consistency in how feedback is captured, analysed, and used.</p> <p>Significant progress has also been made in strengthening workplace learning. The workplace task lists used in Healthcare/Nursing, Early Learning and Care and Hospitality support consistent competency assessment and ensure that placement expectations are transparent for learners, employers, and staff. The extension of this work to Special Needs Assisting reflects LOETB’s responsiveness to national developments and evolving programme requirements.</p> <p>Overall, LOETB is encouraged by the progress to date. Continued improvement will depend on further standardisation, enhanced capacity, and deeper engagement with employers and internal teams.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures</p>	

2.03 Supports for Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that LOETB appoint a learner support officer to establish a de facto learner support service, consolidating all existing learner supports.	Completed – see 2025 Interim update
Commentary and Reflections Click here to enter text.	
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.
<p>Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review</p> <p>The review team recommends that LOETB work to embed a formal process of self-evaluation from institutional level up through to SMT and board level, and that this should be more fully documented in a form of a 'quality manual/handbook' or similar. The process should be structured to include, among others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FET Management Team as well as the QASS in order to facilitate the evaluation of provision at centre and service level on a formal basis and so that the entire process can be considered at a strategic level • The learner voice across all centres and services. 	<p>LOETB has made meaningful progress in developing and embedding formal self-evaluation processes across centres and services. While work on a fully integrated, organisation-wide framework is ongoing and will ultimately be consolidated in the forthcoming Quality Manual, several significant steps have already been taken to strengthen evaluation practice and learner involvement.</p> <p>1. Centre-Level Self-Evaluations</p> <p>Most LOETB FET centres have now completed formal centre-level self-evaluations, marking an important step toward systematic internal review. These self-evaluations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote reflective practice at centre level • Support structured discussion of strengths, challenges, and priority areas • Provide valuable input to strategic planning supported by the Pathways Manager <p>2. Strengthening the Learner Voice</p> <p>To ensure that the learner voice is meaningfully embedded in evaluation processes across the organisation, LOETB has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated learner-voice training with AONTAS in 2025/2026, equipping staff and learners with tools to support authentic learner involvement in feedback, consultation, and governance. • Engaged annually with AONTAS to host a FET Learner Forum specifically for LOETB learners. • Supported the inclusion of learner perspectives through the AONTAS-published Learner Forum reports, which provide independent, high-quality feedback on the learner experience. <p>These actions strengthen the role of learner voice in self-evaluation and align with national commitments to meaningful learner engagement.</p> <p>3. Towards an Organisation-Wide Evaluation Framework</p>

	<p>The learning generated from centre self-evaluations and AONTAS engagement is informing the development of a more formal and structured self-evaluation framework. This framework will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be integrated into the LOETB QA Manual currently in development • Provide clarity on roles, responsibilities, timelines, and reporting pathways • Ensure that findings are considered at strategic levels, including FET Management Team, QASS, SMT • Embed learner input as a core element of quality assurance and planning <p>This work represents an important step toward creating a coherent, organisation-wide approach to quality enhancement.</p>
<p>SER Steering Group</p> <p>The review team recommends that the actions identified in the SER, together with the recommendations in this report, be incorporated into a strategic plan – such as the annual QIP – with SMART targets and embedded in a projected timeline.</p>	<p>LOETB has made clear progress in incorporating the actions identified through the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and the inaugural review into a structured and monitored quality improvement process. While LOETB does not operate an annual QIP, the organisation has strengthened the way actions are planned, tracked, and integrated into wider QA work.</p> <p>1. Introduction of Centre-Level Quality Improvement Plans (CQIPs) From 2026</p> <p>Beginning in 2026, each FET centre and service will be required to develop a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). These QIPs will be informed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner feedback (e.g., induction and end-of-programme surveys, learner fora) • Staff feedback and centre reflective practice • Findings from the certification process, including external authentication, internal verification, and RAP outcomes • Completion and certification outcomes data <p>QIPs will feed into LOETB’s wider QA planning processes, ensuring that quality improvement is embedded consistently and informed by local evidence.</p> <p>2. Development of a Projected Timeline for Key QA Initiatives</p> <p>LOETB has created a projected timeline to track major quality initiatives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the QA Manual • Policy development and review • Programme Development and Review

	<p>This allows for improved coordination, visibility, and alignment of tasks across the organisation.</p> <p>3. Strengthened Governance for Oversight and Monitoring</p> <p>Progress on quality improvement actions will be monitored through existing governance structures. These structures ensure that improvement actions are reviewed and supported at both operational and strategic levels.</p>
<p>Self-Evaluation Monitoring and Review</p> <p>The review team recommends a full revision and subsequent issuing of the documentation associated with TQAS</p>	<p>LOETB has initiated significant work to revise and modernise the documentation associated with the Training Quality and Assurance System (TQAS). A major two-year project, which commenced in 2025, is currently underway to enhance assessment practice and ensure that documentation and processes better reflect the needs of learners in Community Training.</p> <p>A central component of this project is the planned phasing out of Assessment Instrument Specifications (AIS) for assessment purposes within Community Training provision. AIS have historically been used as standardised assessment tools; however, they have presented limitations in terms of flexibility and responsiveness to learner needs.</p> <p>Under the new approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIS will be replaced with locally devised assessments, developed by programme delivery staff with QA support. • Locally designed assessments will align more closely with programme learning outcomes and centres' specific learner profiles. • This shift will enable centres to design assessments that are more authentic, relevant, and responsive to diverse contexts. <p>This represents a substantial transformation of assessment practice within Community Training settings. The project places a strong emphasis on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. As part of this work, locally designed assessments will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more flexible and accessible • Offer multiple means of engagement, demonstration, and expression • Reduce unnecessary barriers to assessment • Enable learners to better demonstrate their competence and skills

	<p>This approach significantly strengthens the inclusivity and fairness of assessment practices. By moving away from rigid AIS formats and adopting a universal-design-informed assessment model, LOETB aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve learner confidence and engagement • Increase the relevance and accessibility of assessments • Provide a more supportive and equitable learning experience • Promote retention, completion, and progression <p>This project demonstrates LOETB’s strong commitment to learner-centred, flexible, and socially responsive provision.</p>
<p>The review team recommends a review of the effectiveness of the FET centre model</p>	<p>LOETB acknowledges the importance of ensuring that the FET Centre model remains effective, coherent, and responsive to learner, employer, and community needs. While a full formal review has not yet been completed, a number of actions have contributed to ongoing reflection and incremental improvement of the model.</p> <p>1. Emerging Insights from Centre Self-Evaluations</p> <p>The centre self-evaluation process undertaken across most LOETB centres and service has already generated valuable insights into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre structures and staffing • Communication processes • Local learner needs <p>This information is supporting a deeper understanding of how the FET Centre model is working in practice and where adjustments may be required.</p> <p>2. Increased Use of Learner and Staff Feedback</p> <p>Feedback gathered through has highlighted areas where the model is functioning well, as well as areas where learner experience, timetabling, programme integration, or learner support could be strengthened. This feedback is informing ongoing refinements to centre operations and quality enhancement processes.</p> <p>3. Cross-Centre Collaboration</p>

	<p>The establishment and expansion of Communities of Practice (ELC, Healthcare/Nursing, Hospitality, Business/IT, and emerging SNA work) is increasing alignment across centres. This collaboration provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared understanding of programme delivery • Greater consistency in workplace assessment • Opportunities to identify structural challenges or gaps in the centre model <p>This cross-centre dialogue is an important source of intelligence on the functioning of the FET Centre model.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LOETB has made steady and meaningful progress across these four areas, with clearer structures emerging for self-evaluation, strategic planning, assessment reform, and centre-model review. The developments to date reflect a strong commitment to learner-centred quality enhancement, while also highlighting areas where further standardisation and capacity building are needed. The rollout of centre self-evaluations and increased engagement with AONTAS learner-voice initiatives have strengthened reflective practice and helped embed learner feedback into decision-making. The foundations are strong, but further standardisation of tools, timelines, and reporting processes will be needed to ensure self-evaluation outputs flow consistently through the governance structure. Integrating SER and review recommendations into QA work planning and the introduction of QIPs from 2026 marks important steps toward more structured, evidence-based quality enhancement. Success will depend on clear templates, reliable data, and consistent follow-through at centre level.</p> <p>The two-year project to replace AIS with locally devised, UDL-aligned assessments in Community Training is a learner-centred reform that responds to the needs of more marginalised learners. The direction is strong, though the work is resource-intensive and will require ongoing support, staff training, and clear documentation to maintain consistency across centres.</p>	
<p>Link to Published Policies and Procedures Click here to enter text.</p>	

3.02 Programme Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>Programme Review</p> <p>The review team recommends that there should be a policy to underpin an annual review of programmes (as suggested Objective 3, Section (a)), with the review of programmes taking place strategically on an annual rolling basis at ETB level.</p>	<p>LOETB has continued to strengthen its approach to programme review and is making progress toward a more structured, rolling process as recommended by the review team. While a formal policy has not yet been developed, several key steps have been taken to support more active, data-informed programme evaluation.</p> <p>1. Increased Use of Reliable Data to Review Provision</p> <p>The introduction of the FET Data and Information Management role has significantly improved access to reliable programme data. This has enabled the FET Management Team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review programme performance using up-to-date data on enrolment, retention, completion, and certification • Identify trends and areas requiring attention • Make more strategic decisions about future programme provision • Ensure alignment with LOETB's strategic priorities and regional skills needs <p>Data-informed decision-making is now an embedded part of programme discussions at FMT level.</p> <p>2. Use of Centre Evaluations and Learner Voice</p> <p>Centre evaluations provide additional evidence to inform programme review. These evaluations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner feedback (induction surveys, end-of-programme surveys, AONTAS learner forum reports) • Staff reflections • Certification process outcomes (EA/IV/RAP findings) <p>This information is increasingly used to guide programme improvements and local planning.</p> <p>3. Programme Review Process</p> <p>While LOETB does not yet operate a formal annual review process, the following developments support movement toward a rolling approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme performance and learner feedback are discussed regularly at FMT • Certification outcomes and EA findings are reviewed after each RAP cycle

- Emerging issues trigger targeted review and follow-up with centres
- From 2026, each centre's QIP will require reference to programme-level data and actions

These elements are gradually creating a more structured and consistent approach across the ETB.

LOETB acknowledges that further work is required to fully meet the recommendation. Planned next steps include:

- Developing a more standardised approach for reviewing programmes across centres
- Creating templates or guidance to support consistency in how programme data and feedback are analysed
- Ensuring programme review findings feed into centre QIPs and LOETB-wide planning

Commentary and Reflections

Progress has been made toward developing a more structured and evidence-based approach to programme review. The introduction of the FET Data and Information Management function has been particularly valuable, enabling the organisation to base programme decisions on reliable, consistent data. This has enhanced the quality of discussions at the FET Management Team and strengthened the connection between programme performance, learner outcomes, and strategic planning.

The roll-out of centre self-evaluations and the growing use of learner feedback have added important depth to programme review. These sources provide rich qualitative insights that complement the quantitative data and help ensure that the learner experience is central to programme development and improvement. This combination of data and learner voice represents a strong emerging foundation for a more systematic review process.

LOETB recognises that additional work is needed to fully embed a consistent annual or rolling review process across all centres and programme areas. Currently, programme reviews take place through a variety of mechanisms rather than through a single unified system. The planned introduction of QIPs from 2026 is an important next step, as these will create a clear structure for centres to analyse programme data, identify priorities, and link findings directly to improvement actions.

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	Blended Learning	LOETB submitted application for extension of scope to include blended learning in November 2025.	Blended Learning Policy
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

5.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies (optional)

Guide:

The ETB is invited to provide up to 3 x **short case studies**, 1-2 pages, demonstrating QA enhancements and their impacts (these may relate to topics covered in sections above). **You are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other providers and would benefit from wider dissemination.** Note: Submission of case studies are not mandatory. However, please know that any submitted case studies will be published on QQI's website in full unabridged format.

Guideline for Case Study

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

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

Case Study Title: Implementing SensusAccess and Digital Accessibility Tools in LOETB

Introduction

LOETB serves a highly diverse FET learner community, including individuals with literacy and numeracy challenges, disabilities, migrant and refugee backgrounds, social and economic disadvantage, trauma or disrupted education, and those balancing work or caring responsibilities. This diversity requires flexible, accessible teaching, learning, and assessment.

Description of issue

LOETB's FET staff (in particular the Access Officer and Learner Support Workers) had identified inconsistencies in digital content accessibility across centres. Many learners struggled with:

- Complex documents
- Limited audio or alternative formats
- Academic language barriers
- Difficulty accessing content on mobile devices
- Need for accommodations not easily provided

This challenged learner engagement, retention, and equity.

Action

LOETB introduced a suite of digital accessibility supports:

- SensusAccess: An automated file-conversion service allowing learners and teachers to convert notes, guides, and readings into audio, simplified text, e-books, and mobile-friendly formats.
- Audio-enabled examinations, improving accessibility for learners with literacy or processing difficulties.
- Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit rolled out across Moodle, identifying issues (e.g., missing alternative text, colour contrast issues) and guiding teachers to fix them.
- Training for teachers on UDL principles and accessible content creation.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

- Increased learner engagement, particularly for learners with SEN, literacy needs, and those for whom English is a second language.
- 258+ files converted in the first year of using Sensus Access.
- More consistent digital content quality across centres.

- Positive anecdotal feedback from learners who said audio versions helped them study during travel, caring duties, or work commitments.
- Improved alignment with SOLAS and ETBI priorities on accessibility and UDL.

Key Learnings

- Learners use flexible formats far more than anticipated.
- Teachers require ongoing support and simple workflows for accessible content.
- Digital UDL tools can support progression for marginalised learners.

Case Study Title: Developing Locally Devised, Universal-Design Assessments in Community Training

Introduction

LOETB Community Training serves highly diverse and often marginalised learners (e.g., trauma backgrounds, refugees, early school leavers). Traditional Assessment Instrument Specifications (AIS) created barriers and did not always reflect learner strengths.

Description of issue

AIS assessments often lacked flexibility and were not suitable for:

- Learners with literacy or language needs
- Learners with anxiety, social issues, or trauma
- Practical or vocational learners
- Learners who require varied ways to demonstrate competence

Centres needed a more learner-centred approach.

Action

In 2025 LOETB launched a two-year project to phase out use of AIS in Community Training. Key actions include:

- Development of locally devised assessments tailored to learning outcomes and learner profiles.
- Embedding UDL principles to allow multiple ways for learners to demonstrate skills.
- Collaborative assessment design sessions with teachers, QA staff, and external experts.
- Pilot testing new assessments in several community training programmes.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

While the project is still at an early stage, the expected outcomes and impacts are:

- Higher learner engagement and reduced anxiety around assessment.
- more authentic assessments, reflecting real-world tasks and employment contexts.
- Greater inclusivity for learners who would struggle to engage with AIS-based assessments.

- Improved retention and more positive assessment experiences.

Key Learnings

So far, the key learnings have been:

- Local assessment design requires significant staff time and QA support.
- Clear documentation and exemplars are vital to maintain consistency across centres.
- Strong EA involvement helps ensure credibility, reliability, and quality.

Case Study Title: A Multi-Modal QA Briefing and Support Model for FET Staff

Introduction

LOETB QA Support Service (QASS) has evolved into a multi-modal staff briefing and support model to strengthen the consistency and confidence of programme delivery and assessment across all centres and services. The approach combines in-person annual briefings, a designated QA contact for each centre, and a year-round on-demand video library covering QA briefing topics and Moodle “how-to” features. The model was designed to address variation in staff access to QA information, to support new and part-time staff, and to enable timely and relevant provision of information to FET staff as required.

Description of issue

Prior to this initiative, feedback from centres highlighted several recurring challenges:

- Information fragmentation and variability: Not all staff were available to attend the staff briefings on a given date, leading to inconsistent practice in areas like assessment procedures, IV/EA/RAP processes, RPL, compassionate consideration, and repeat assessment.
- Onboarding gaps: New and part-time staff could miss key briefings or receive second-hand guidance.
- Limited “refresh” options: Staff who were unsure about a process mid-year had no easy way to access guidance.
- Digital practice variability: Adoption of Moodle features (e.g., assignment setup, rubric use, feedback tools, accessibility checks) varied by centre, impacting learner experience and assessment reliability.

These issues were amplified by staff turnover, expanding programme portfolios, and ongoing policy development. A solution was needed that was consistent, accessible, and sustainable.

Action

QASS implemented a three-strand model to ensure universal access, ongoing support, and repeatable learning:

1. In-Person Annual QA Briefings (Start-of-Year)

- Delivered to all centres and services at the commencement of the academic year.
- Standardised content covering core QA requirements (assessment processes, IV/EA/RAP timelines, appeals, academic integrity incl. AI guidelines, compassionate consideration and repeat assessment, RPL).
- Contextualised centre-level Q&A to surface local risks and support planning.

2. Designated QA Contact for Each Centre (Continuous Support)

- Each centre is assigned a named QA contact who acts as the first point of support for real-time queries, document signposting, etc.

- The QA contact facilitates feedback loops to QASS, helping identify systemic issues (e.g., recurring queries on assessment setup or policy interpretation) and feeding into targeted micro-briefings.
- 3. On-Demand Video Library (Anytime Access)**
- Short, topic-specific QA briefing videos mirroring the in-person sessions (e.g., “How to prepare for IV/EA,” “Repeat Assessment Policy,” “Compassionate Consideration Policy,” “Guidance on Use of AI in Assessments”).
- A companion suite of Moodle ‘how-to’ videos (e.g., creating assignments and rubrics, Turnitin/academic integrity settings, feedback options, managing groups, accessibility checks).
- Videos are hosted in a password-protected staff area and on Moodle, enabling staff to revisit guidance on demand.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

- Improved consistency of practice
- Faster issue resolution
- Higher staff confidence
- Better onboarding
- Increased adoption of Moodle features
- Fewer centre-specific deviations flagged in IV/EA feedback
- Staff appreciate “watch-back” access close to deadlines.

Key Learnings

- A single annual briefing is not enough — staff need ongoing, easy-to-access support throughout the year.
- Having a designated QA contact for each centre works — it improves communication, trust, and consistency.
- Short, topic-specific videos are more useful than long documents — staff prefer quick, on-demand reminders.
- Standardised materials reduce confusion — using the same slides and documentation across centres keeps messaging consistent.
- Continuous feedback helps refine the system — tracking common queries, video usage, and EA/IV/RAP findings ensures the model keeps improving.
- QA capacity is crucial — while the model is effective, it requires time and coordination to maintain.

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](#).