

# QQI Review Report 2021

Inaugural Review  
of Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training  
Board



QQI REVIEW

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>THE REVIEW TEAM</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION 2: SELF-EVALUATION METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>SECTION 3: QUALITY ASSURANCE &amp; ENHANCEMENT</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>52</b>
<b>SECTION 5: RESPONSE TO QOI INAUGURAL REVIEW REPORT</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: REVIEW TERMS OF REFERENCE</b> .....	<b>72</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: MAIN REVIEW VISIT SCHEDULE</b> .....	<b>85</b>
<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b> .....	<b>122</b>

# Foreword

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training in Ireland. One of QQI's most important statutory functions is to ensure that the quality assurance procedures that providers have in place have been implemented and are effective. To this end, QQI conducts external reviews of providers of further and higher education and training on a cyclical basis. QQI is currently conducting the inaugural review of quality assurance in education and training boards. Cyclical review is an element of the broader quality framework for ETBs composed of: statutory quality assurance guidelines; quality assurance approval; annual quality reporting; dialogue meetings; the National Framework of Qualifications; validation of programmes; and, most crucially, the quality assurance system established by each ETB. The inaugural review of quality assurance in education and training boards runs from 2020-2023. During this period, QQI will organise and oversee independent reviews of each of the sixteen education and training boards. On conclusion of the sixteen reviews, a sectoral report will also be produced identifying system-level observations and findings.

The inaugural review evaluates the implementation and effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of each ETB with a particular focus on the arrangements for the governance and management of quality; teaching, learning and assessment; and self-evaluation, monitoring and review. These are considered in the context of the expectations set out in the relevant QQI statutory quality assurance guidelines and adherence to other relevant QQI policies and procedures.

The review methodology is based on the internationally accepted and recognised approach to review:

- a self-evaluation conducted by the provider, resulting in the production of a self-evaluation report;
- an external assessment and site visit by a team of reviewers (due to the government's restrictions due to COVID-19, the review team completed a virtual visit);
- the publication of a review report including findings and recommendations; and
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken.

This inaugural virtual review of Cavan & Monaghan Education and Training Board was conducted by an independent review team in line with the Terms of Reference at Appendix A. This is the report of the findings of the review team.

# The Review Team

Each inaugural review is carried out by a team of independent experts and peers. The 2021 inaugural review of Cavan & Monaghan Education and Training Board was conducted by a 6-person review team selected by QQI. The review team attended a virtual briefing and training session with QQI staff on 10 September 2021 and the virtual planning visit to Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board took place on 16 September 2021. The main virtual review was conducted by the full team via Microsoft Teams between 1 and 5 November 2021.

## **Chair: Ken Rutherford**

Ken Rutherford has worked in Tertiary Education for 30 years, including 15 years on the College's Senior Management Team, and then 7 years as an Assistant Director at Scottish Funding Council (SFC). Ken led planning and decision making at a strategic level for the college and university sectors in Scotland. He has also delivered outcomes/outputs within Community Learning, Knowledge Transfer and Creativity, Innovation and Enterprise Strategies areas of work. He has considerable experience working with complex, multi-faceted priorities including work with government and interpreting priorities to set the planning for working with the higher education institutions and regional colleges within Scotland where the diversity between institutions missions is considerable.

Ken has been involved in many international consultancies including Curriculum reviews and planning, Quality enhancement arrangement and educational management, latterly in Slovenia introducing Performance Agreements to their universities and most recently over 2020/ 21 as an expert panel member on SOLAS's review of funding of regional ETBs in Ireland.

## **Coordinating Reviewer: Carol Hanney**

Carol Hanney is an education consultant who was Chief Executive of City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) from 2016 to 2021 where she led and developed its broad range of second and further education provision. Her role also involved overall management responsibility for the national grants-awarding body, SUSI. Prior to becoming CE in CDETb she was a Further Education Specialist in the Department of Education and Skills. From 2008 to 2013 she was Chief Executive Officer of Dún Laoghaire VEC and she had previously held the position of Principal of Bray Institute of Further Education from 1999 to 2008.

She has worked in education all her life and has a particular interest in public education and how people move from disadvantage to success. She has been a member of several national educational

bodies and committees and has participated in many international educational projects and conferences. She is currently a member of the Governing Authority of DCU.

She holds a BA and Higher Diploma in Education from NUIG and a Master's in Education from Trinity College Dublin.

Throughout her teaching career Carol was involved in curriculum and course development at second and at FE level and is committed to the promotion of quality in education. As a teacher she sat on a number of NCCA committees reforming both Junior and Senior Cycles, worked for a period as TUI Assistant General Secretary and has served as a member of Boards of Management, Partnership Boards and various other bodies.

Her experience in senior education leadership roles has involved leading and managing high performing teams through times of strategic change and development and through times of creative growth and innovation.

### **Learner Representative: Jeremy Kennedy**

Jeremy Kennedy relocated to Donegal, the family home of his wife, in early 2018. Unsure of which direction or opportunity to pursue, he made the decision to transition from the civil construction industry. Jeremy was invited to participate in Level 5 Business and Tourism Studies with Donegal Town VTOS. He found unanticipated resources and support through the ETB. Upskilling and reskilling allowed Jeremy the chance to apply for a position within the ETB (part-time tutor, FET). Having completed the two-year course, gaining employment, and continuing to take advantage of professional development courses and career guidance, he now enjoys being an active participant in the Irish education system.

### **Peer Expert: Marge Kroonmäe**

Marge Kroonmäe is assessment director for VET Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education/The Education and Youth Board (Estonia), where she is responsible for the development and implementation of quality assessment in vocational education and training (VET), engaging with stakeholders and enhancing internal evaluation and improvement of VET providers.

Previously, Marge was an adviser for the internal assessment of educational institutions with the National Examination and Qualification Centre, Tallinn, where she supported the development and implementation of internal evaluation systems and external counselling and evaluation systems for educational institutions. In that role, Marge also coordinated the ESF programme "Substantive development of VET 2008-2013", designing the system of national recognition/external evaluation of QA in VET. Marge has also worked as a development manager at Paide Secondary Vocational School, Paide (Estonia).

Since 2010, Marge has been a member of the European Network for Quality Assurance in VET (EQAVET). From 2019-2021, she was coordinator of the Estonian team that participated in the EQAVET peer review project, Joint activity with NRPs Finland, Croatia, Slovenia, and Estonia: Promoting the use of Transnational Peer Reviews by updating the criteria. Marge is an expert on twinning projects on QA in VET.

Marge holds an MA in Educational Sciences (educational management) from Tallinn University (Estonia), where she wrote her master's thesis on "Partnerships of vocational educational institutions and enterprises as a key factor of quality in vocational education and training".

### **Peer Expert: Dr Washington Marovatsanga**

Dr Washington Marovatsanga is a lecturer, researcher and diversity and inclusion consultant. He holds a PhD in Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences from National University of Ireland Galway.

His other qualifications and experiences encompass social work, social care, youth work and community development. Relevant experiences include designing new programmes, updating existing courses, writing strategic plans, reviewing their implementation and outcome measure.

### **Industry Representative: Aoife McNena**

Aoife McNena holds a BA in Legal Science and Economics from NUI Galway (NUIG), Higher Diploma in Business Studies, NUIG and a Master's in Corporate Strategy and HRM from NUIG. A qualified Executive Leadership Coach and Senior HR Professional, Aoife has over 18 years' experience working with organisations across the public and private sector.





Section

1

National OEM  
Apprenticeship Programme  
- QQI Level 6  
Earn, Learn & Thrive!  
Engineering for the Future  
Three years of  
apprenticeship  
commence

AiSLE  
MASTER

COMBiLiFT  
LIFTING INNOVATION

Agri-Spread

COMBiLiFT  
LIFTING INNOVATION  
20 YEARS

COMBiLiFT  
LIFTING INNOVATION  
20 YEARS

COMBiLiFT  
LIFTING INNOVATION  
20 YEARS

Introduction and Context



# Section 1: Introduction and Context

## Introduction and Context for the Review

Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB) is one of sixteen ETBs established in 2013, following the enactment of the Education and Training Boards Act (2013). It initially involved the amalgamation of Cavan and Monaghan Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and, in 2015, the training functions, previously carried out by FÁS (and later SOLAS) in the area, were formally transferred to CMETB.

CMETB is governed by a board of 21 members consisting of elected public representatives, staff representatives, parent representatives and community representatives. The Board operates in accordance with a formal schedule of reserved functions as set out in the Education and Training Board Act (2013). Its work is supported by a range of committees: Audit and Risk Committee, Finance Committee and Boards of Management. The executive functions of the Board are vested in the Chief Executive, Mr John Kearney, who is accountable to the Board for the due performance of those functions.

CMETB serves a population of 137,562, manages a budget of €27.5 million and employs approximately 1,300 full and part-time staff. As one of sixteen local statutory education authorities, CMETB offers education and training services to over 12,000 learners through eleven post-primary schools and fourteen further education and training (FET) centres. It also oversees the provision of youth services, music education and the operation of *The Garage Theatre* and *Tanagh Outdoor Education and Training Centre*. CMETB also provides training at Loughan House Open Prison in conjunction with the Irish Prison Service<sup>1</sup>.

This review is concerned with the quality assurance of CMETB's FET provision. CMETB offers a broad range of full-time and part-time FET programmes and supports to individuals over the age of sixteen across its colleges and centres. As part of the wide delivery of its services, it also operates with several second providers and a diverse range of community groups.

CMETB is situated in a border region which is predominantly rural and is one of the region's main employers. It plays an important role not only in local education and training but also in the economic and social life of the Cavan-Monaghan region. The review team finds that CMETB, both in the self-evaluation report (SER) and during the review week, acknowledged the importance of engaging the

---

<sup>1</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p21



trust and confidence of local employers and works closely with them in providing ongoing education and training relevant to their needs.<sup>2</sup>

Data from the self-evaluation report (SER) indicates that unemployment rates in the region had fallen significantly since the recession's peak in 2012, but recently the Covid-19 pandemic impacted considerably on employment levels with 15.4% of the labour force in the Border Region in receipt of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment (PUP) in Quarter 3, 2020<sup>3</sup>. Census data also shows that, when looking at the highest level of educational attainment, 33.5% of those aged over 15 in Co Cavan and 35.8% of those aged over 15 in Co Monaghan have only reached a standard of lower secondary education or below compared to a national average of 27%.<sup>4</sup>

CMETB outlined its overall mission and its dedicated QA mission in their SER:



CMETB's Statement of Strategy 2017-2021 clearly sets out its key strategic actions and targets. This strategy was developed through consultation with staff, learners and external stakeholders and in line

---

<sup>2</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p214-221 and discussions with CMETB and employers during the review week.

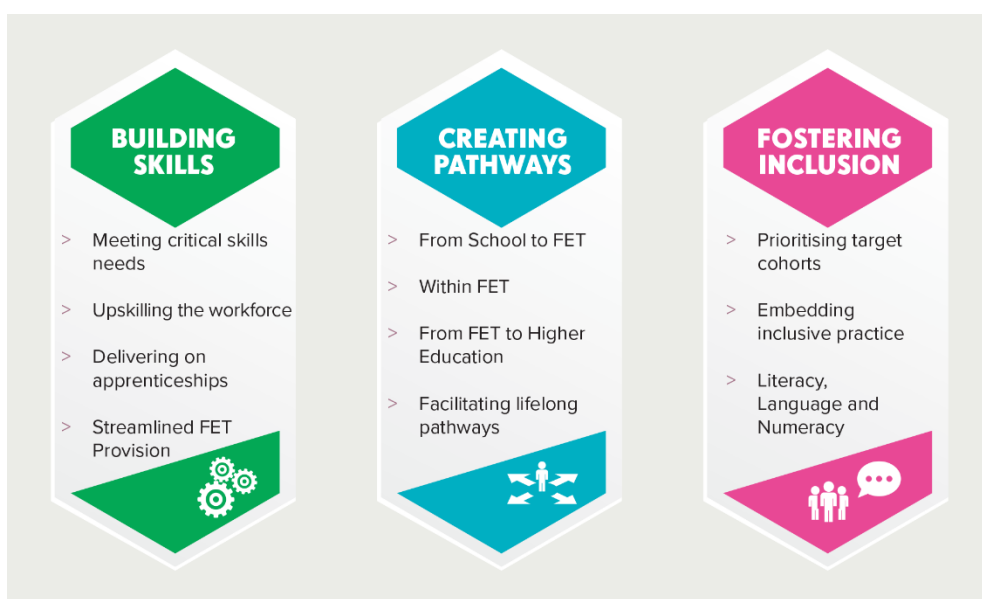
<sup>3</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p29.

<sup>4</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p27-28 and Central Statistics Office, Census 2016.

with national strategies developed at both SOLAS and departmental level. The review team found CMETB to be proactive in its response to the SOLAS National FET Strategy 2020-2024 as it had already developed the CMETB Further Education and Training (FET) Strategy 2021-2024.<sup>5</sup> The document which was published in October 2021 brings its strategic objectives into line with the SOLAS strategy. In the SER, the ETB illustrated that its FET Strategy was structured around the three core strategic pillars set out in the national FET strategy:

- Building Skills;
- Creating Pathways and
- Fostering Inclusion.<sup>6</sup>

Work has commenced on developing the new CMETB Strategy 2021-2024.



At the time of the review CMETB was facing two major external challenges: the impact of Brexit and of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Brexit

Due to its location along the border with Northern Ireland, the Cavan-Monaghan region is particularly exposed to the UK's withdrawal from the European Union. The changing scenario is creating uncertainty among employers and investors and the ETB is engaging with SOLAS, the North East Regional Skills Forum, the Department of Social Protection (DSP), employers, learners and other

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cmetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Cavan-and-Monaghan-Education-and-Training-Board-Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2021-24-PDF.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 44-45

concerned stakeholders in developing a response.<sup>7</sup> A commendable example of this is its recent securing of funding as part of a €3 million investment for local projects under the Border Enterprise Development Fund, to develop a new FET Centre of Excellence in Supply Chain Logistics and Procurement.

A further concern is the uncertainty regarding the future cross-border currency of qualifications post-Brexit. CMETB is endeavouring to pre-empt problems in this area by seeking validation from QQI in new programme and award areas. Cavan Institute is currently working on the development of a QQI Level 6 programme in Audio and Music Production (AMP) to address a specific gap in existing provision and to avoid potential difficulties arising from Brexit.

## Impact of Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on the delivery of education and training in CMETB. Delivery of programmes went online for most of the 2020/2021 academic year and the number of beneficiaries in FET was 9,328, down from 13,742 in 2019.<sup>8</sup> During the main review visit staff and learners were disappointed that few learners had been able to engage in meaningful work experience during the Covid-19 period. The Adult Education services spoke of continuing to try to address the “hard to reach” who they feared were becoming more alienated. However, it is the view of the review team that the ETB has responded comprehensively and promptly in terms of providing continuity of learning, assessment and qualification. During the review, it was evident that teaching moved quickly to online provision, new methodologies were introduced, alternative assessment methods were developed, and every effort was made to ensure that, where possible, the maximum number of learners could achieve certification. Laptop computers were also purchased through funding from SOLAS and distributed to learners working from home.

At the time of review, learners had returned to in-house tuition albeit under continuing restrictions for both learners and staff. However, there was evidence of a positive side-effect to Covid-19 in that staff and learners’ use of ICT has progressed; learning and teaching staff have developed new teaching and training methodologies; they have upskilled in Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and, in its meetings with staff, the review team noted a positive attitude to developing blended and online course provision. The impact of Covid-19 in terms of local employment and the delivery of appropriate education and training responses was still under consideration during the time of the review. CMETB was aware of the social isolation brought about by Covid-19 and was aiming to deliver programmes and supports that promote inclusion and progression. The identification of new needs post-Covid-19

---

<sup>7</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 32 and evidenced in discussions during the review week

<sup>8</sup> Profile of CMETB Further Education and Training Provision, p 44-46.

was seen as crucial, and CMETB saw its responses to the challenges posed by Covid-19 as central in the development of the CMETB FET Strategy 2021 – 2024.

CMETB is the co-ordinating provider for the Level 6 apprenticeship programme in Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM). This programme was led by mid-tier engineering companies nationwide and by Enterprise Ireland and developed by CMETB in collaboration with Limerick and Clare ETB. The programme was validated by QQI on 25 September 2018.

In April 2016, QQI established Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for all providers (including ETBs) and in May 2017 it issued the Sector-Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards and QQI Guidelines for Providers of Apprenticeship Programmes. The quality assurance responsibilities specific to ETBs are addressed in these guidelines and cover all education, training and related services of an ETB leading to QQI awards, other awards recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) or awards of other awarding, regulatory or statutory bodies.

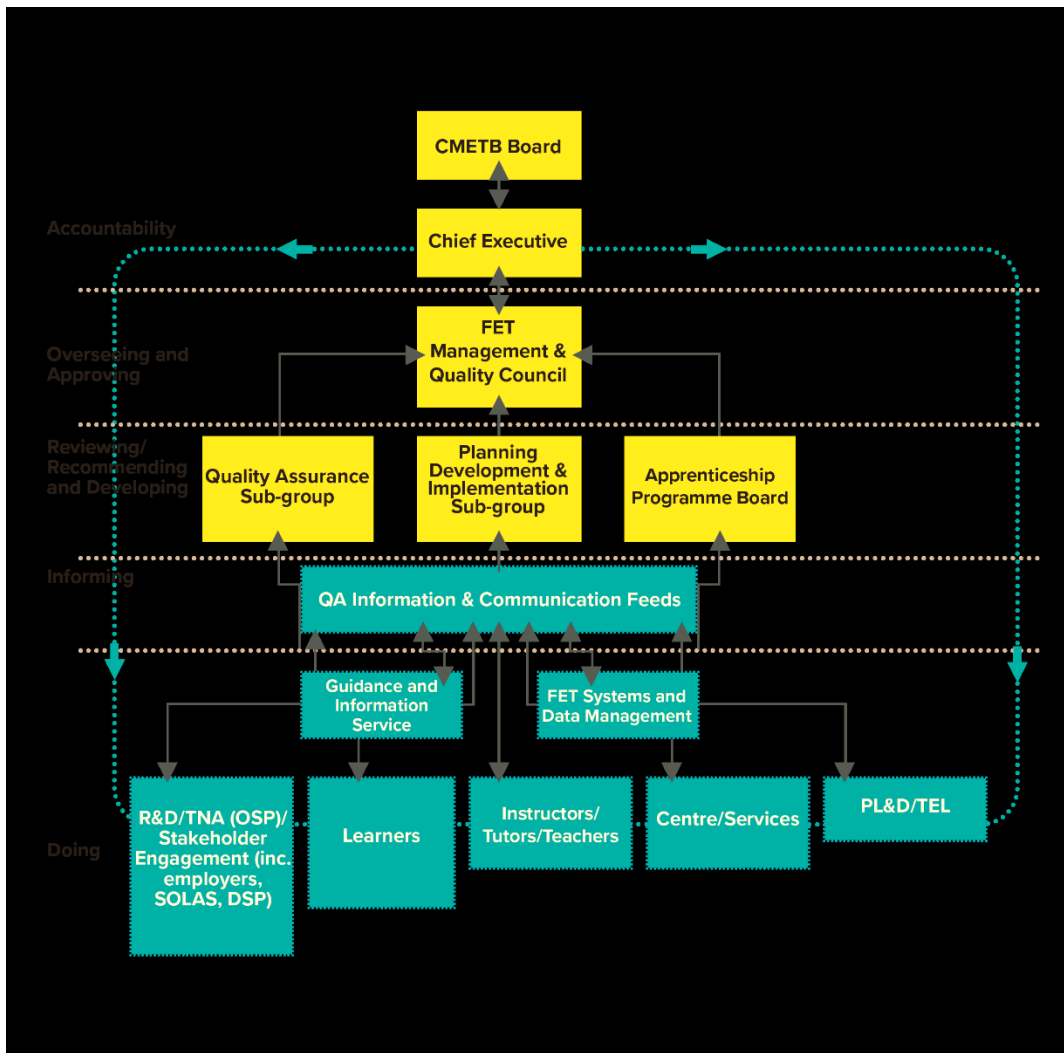
CMETB established a dedicated quality assurance team in 2015 and this became fully operational in 2017. In May 2018, CMETB successfully completed the re-engagement process with QQI. It is evident to the review team, from its review of the SER and discussions with the ETB during the main review visit, that the ETB has been proactively working on the restructuring and development of its quality assurance governance structures, policies, processes and procedures in line with QQI guidelines. Its dedicated quality assurance mission statement which is “to enable CMETB to provide learner-centred education and training that consistently conforms to the highest national standards” illustrates that CMETB is aiming to develop a shared culture of quality in every aspect of its service delivery, placing the learner firmly at the centre.<sup>9</sup>

The review team is confident that CMETB has established the necessary governance structures to satisfy QQI requirements and to enable the enforced separation of responsibilities whilst ensuring sufficient oversight of education and training activities.

---

<sup>9</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 43.





The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for QA across the ETB and the governance structures focus on the oversight, approval, reviewing and development aspects of QA governance. The FET Management and Quality Council oversees the work of the Quality Assurance Group, the Planning Development and Implementation sub-group, and the Apprenticeship Programme Board. Terms of reference have been established for each of the three sub-groups.<sup>10</sup> The key achievements of the three sub-groups are listed in the SER:

<sup>10</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 255-275

PDI Sub-group	QA Sub-group	FET Management & Quality Council
1. CMETB Staff induction pilot programme	1. Standardised assessment process: A. External Authentication (EA) shared response B. Focus on Results Approval Process (RAP) C. Identifying good practice and innovative projects D. Documenting process around EA selection	1. Information sharing: A. Open discussion e.g. re. duplication B. Updates from other subgroups C. Introduction of MS Teams information sharing platform D. Discussions affecting all services
2. Stronger Communications: A. Implementation of PLSS & MIS Reports B. Service awareness through service updates C. Information sharing	2. Standardised assessment policies	2. Effective oversight: A. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Review B. Review of EA reports C. Attention to centre operational issues D. Monitoring MIS data
d. Sharing good practice e. Problem solving f. Identifying risks and duplication g. Introduction of MS Teams as a shared, easy to access platform.		
3. New Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) role and TEL workshops	3. Development of QA Risk Register	3. Development of QA Risk Register
4. New programme approval leading to increased choice of programmes	4. Approval of new programmes, i.e. OEM National Apprenticeship	4. Engagement with SOLAS' Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA)
5. PLC Access Programme for Youthreach learners	5. Introduction of MS Teams to aid paperless meetings	5. Implementation of PLSS

The ETB is aware of the need to ensure flexibility in governance arrangements to meet new and emerging needs and this has been tested in its response to Covid-19 when a wide range of modifications were needed to allow for teaching, learning and assessment to continue. The different sub-groups met on a regular basis and monitored and led the QA processes throughout the period of distance learning.

The QA team supports the work of the FET Management and Quality Council and its sub-groups and provides QA guidance and assistance to all CMETB FET services. It also provides development and management support to centres, with a view to integrating policies and procedures across centres. Understanding that quality is the responsibility of all, a recorded presentation on governance is made available to all FET staff. Staff are also made aware of governance through their centres. Centre level Quality Assurance structures are intrinsic to the day-to-day management of quality assurance across CMETB and they also inform the work of the various services and governance sub-groups.

The day-to-day operation and ongoing monitoring and review of quality assurance processes and procedures is achieved through the development and implementation of an annual Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP review process was completed in 2019 and the current QIP covers the period January 2020 to December 2021. It was developed in line with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

The *Profile of CMETB Further Education and Training Provision* outlines seven core Quality Assurance principles that inform and guide CMETB's approach to planning. <sup>11</sup>

Following discussions during the review week, the review team is confident that the CMETB QA team is focused on the development, implementation and monitoring of an integrated Quality Assurance system across CMETB and is aware that further work is necessary in order to bring about greater cohesion among centres.

---

<sup>11</sup> Profile of CMETB Further Education and Training Provision, p 28.

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a black long-sleeved top, is looking at a bookshelf in a library. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the right. Her right hand is reaching up to a higher shelf, and her left hand is holding a book. The bookshelf is filled with various books, including some with red spines and some with blue spines. The background shows more bookshelves and a grey wall.

Section

# 2

**Self-evaluation Methodology**



## Section 2: Self-evaluation Methodology

CMETB formally commenced the process of preparing for the inaugural review in February 2020 with the appointment of a research and evaluation facilitator to co-ordinate the structurally managed and systemic review process including the preparation of the self-evaluation report (SER) in association with the quality assurance (QA) team. A self-evaluation steering group, chaired by the Director of FET, was established to provide oversight and governance of the internal review of CMETB's quality assurance processes. The steering group's membership includes representatives from all CMETB FET Services, Senior Management, nominees from the Human Resources (HR), Finance, Information Technology (IT), Communications and Compliance Departments. In order to provide additional breadth and insight, other key internal and external stakeholders were also represented with learner and employer representatives included in the membership. Primary methodologies employed included surveys, focus groups, learner forums and case studies.

In the context of Covid-19, the QA Working Group and FET Management and Quality Council played a critical role in ensuring the development of the SER remained on track despite the numerous challenges that the pandemic posed. To help ensure a sufficiently broad and inclusive approach to the consultation process, a wide range of primary and secondary data sources were engaged, including direct feedback from learners, teachers, trainers and tutors.

It was evident to the review team, from the SER and interviews during the review week, that regular consultations had taken place in the preparation of the SER with a broad range of internal and external stakeholders engaged in the process. The ETB had decided that both the QA Working Group and the FET Management and Quality Council would act as the key conduits for consultation on the development of the SER. This was to ensure that the fully constituted steering group could add comprehensive support and value to the process. The steering group met in May 2021 to review and recommend the Provider Profile to the FET Management and Quality Council for approval and submission to QQI. Further meetings took place from May to June 2021 to review and recommend the SER for approval. This process was outlined to the review team during the review visit.

CMETB's Self-Evaluation Report and Profile evidence an organised, systematic and purposefully managed process of reflection and self-evaluation reporting on and covering key-areas of development. The SER development process required and enabled CMETB to take an in-depth review of quality and provision within CMETB, including during the pandemic-period when both swift reactions and attention to the quality of blended and distance-learning were required.

CMETB has built up a quality assurance platform in SharePoint, bringing together statistics and information needed for cross-centre benchmarking and analysis. The team finds that this self-reflection and evaluation has enabled CMETB to critically assess its operations, identify areas of strength and areas requiring further development and enhancement. In the review planning meeting, the review team heard from CMETB's senior management team (SMT) and management groups that the development of the SER was a collaborative process and that it brought greater integration of various parts of CMETB. According to the SMT, the approach to self-evaluation as a self-critical continuous process had benefitted CMETB. During the review week, several references were made by staff to the enhanced synergy between services which resulted from the process of carrying out the SER. References were made to increased collegiality and understanding of services beyond the immediate centres where staff involved in the review worked. It was evident to the review team that, as a result of the process, all parts of CMETB had a better knowledge and understanding of all the ETB services and this included external stakeholders who were complimentary of CMETB. In discussing with the review team their relationship with CMETB, employer representatives praised how CMETB altered curriculum to suit employer needs, developed an apprenticeship and a traineeship and introduced other new programmes.

Before submission, the SER had been shared with all sections within CMETB in order to allow feedback to the Steering Group. Participants informed the review team during the main review visit that the evaluation process helped them crystallise their thinking. After analysing the documents during the review week and further to a demonstration of the QA platform, the review team are of the view that the self-evaluation report and its process provided an evidence-based foundation for the next phase of continuous quality improvement across all aspects of CMETB FET provision.

The review team notes that feedback from staff, learners and external stakeholders was shared with CMETB. Stakeholders informed the team that their voices are heard and matter. However, in interviews with staff and learners during the main review visit, no clear examples emerged regarding how qualitative feedback is gathered and analysed transparently. A systematic and consistent approach to gathering and reporting on quantitative and qualitative findings, and which ensures confidentiality of respondents, is needed to enhance open minded feedback.

### **Commendations**

- The review team commends CMETB on its organised, systematic and purposefully managed process in the development of its self-evaluation report and provider profile. It demonstrates a thorough reflection in covering all key-areas.

- The review team commends CMETB on its quality assurance platform. This platform supports cross-centre benchmarking of statistics and analysis. Their engagement with a broad range of key internal and external stakeholders has ensured a comprehensive and representative consultation process despite challenges posed by the pandemic.

### **Recommendation**

- The review team recommends that there be consistency when reporting findings in quantitative and qualitative terms. Dissenting voices can potentially reveal perspectives not widely experienced or shared by the majority. Such perspectives could enrich the processes and efforts in the true spirit of equality and inclusion.

Overall, the review team regard the self-evaluation methodology as comprehensive, inclusive and insightful. This is evidenced by how key features of the self-evaluation process are clearly articulated. In particular, the detailed membership breakdown of the various actors/stakeholders and roles including the steering committee suggest a broad inclusive consultative process. Additionally, the report timeline and how it is well structured suggests an in-depth and rigorous process. The graphic summary of the seven chapters is useful for a quick grasp of the content of the constituent chapters while the write up of the detailed chapters offers both descriptive and evaluative insights in easy-to-understand language. The review team can say with confidence that CMETB engaged in the inaugural review process and the report write-up with an effective and rigorous self-evaluation methodology that is generally consistent with best practice in research. However, the review team also acknowledges that there are areas that require further attention or improvement. During the review visit the review team heard of inconsistencies of engagement in the self-evaluation and review process from learners and stakeholders across the centres.



A photograph of two mechanics in a workshop. They are wearing blue overalls; one is also wearing a black cap and glasses. They are focused on the engine of a car with its hood open. The mechanic on the right is wearing bright green gloves. The background shows a concrete wall with an orange stripe.

Section

# 3

**Quality Assurance &  
Enhancement**



# Section 3: Quality Assurance & Enhancement

## Objective 1: Governance and Management of Quality

### ETB Mission & Strategy

During the main review visit the review team found strong evidence that, in the area of FET, CMETB was successful in adhering to its mission of providing “quality education and training for young people and adults through a professional inclusive and innovative approach”. Both in the documentation provided and in interviews with management, staff and learners, it was also clear that the ETB is committed to its stated QA mission of providing “learner-centred education and training that consistently conforms to the highest national standards”. The express purpose of the FET services is to “address the needs of all stakeholders including learners, employers and community partners in line with national policy” was evident in the review team’s interviews with stakeholders where they expressed their high regard for the professionalism of CMETB.

CMETB set out its FET priorities in its *Strategy Statement 2017- 2021* as was required by the national *Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019*. As part of the strategic dialogue process for the FET sector, its Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA) also outlined its strategic priorities and how CMETB would contribute to the achievement of key national targets for the sector during the period 2018 to 2020. Following the publication of the National FET Strategy 2020-2024, CMETB developed and published its new FET Strategy reflecting the key priorities and enabling themes identified in the national strategy.

The review team finds that CMETB has adapted very well to the process of strategic planning. It has established new staff roles and is moving to operate more cohesively as an ETB. It had appointed a Workforce Development Officer and is working towards co-ordinating its work with employers. The review team considers that CMETB is in a position to meet critical skills needs and to upskill the workforce in a post- Brexit and post-pandemic economy.

In the SER and in interviews during the main review visit, the review team found evidence that CMETB is closely aligning its mission and strategies to those set out by SOLAS in the National FET Strategy 2020-2024. The key priorities of Building Skills, Creating Pathways and Fostering Inclusion

were repeatedly stressed in the SER and during the review week<sup>12</sup>. CMETB had already been moving in this direction and had introduced new apprenticeships in Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM), Commis Chef, Hairdressing and Accounting Technician.<sup>13</sup> It had also developed a range of Level 5 and Level 6 traineeships in Healthcare, Hospitality, Youth Work, Advanced Building Design, Digital Marketing, Engineering, Laboratory Assistant, Outdoor Pursuits and Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Professional Driving. A Level 6 Audio and Music Production programme was also being developed.<sup>14</sup>

Pathways are being created into FET from second level. Staff members are visiting second level schools on an ongoing basis and in 2019 a “FET into Schools Programme” was developed for Transition Year learners. This included modules on OEM Engineering, Digital Marketing and Personal Care and Presentation. Feedback obtained from the learners and from the schools’ staff was very positive.<sup>15</sup> Upward progression within FET was also being encouraged. The Adult Literacy Service in Cavan and Monaghan had run a range of level 4 courses and a high proportion of the learners had progressed to both Cavan and Monaghan Institutes.<sup>16</sup>

Cavan Institute and Monaghan Institute are part of the North-East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) which includes further and higher institutions in the North East region of Ireland. Learners wishing to progress to third level can avail of the Higher Education Links Scheme and the institutes have also agreed direct entry links to the second year of degree programmes in Dundalk Institute of Technology.<sup>17</sup> Access, transfer and progression arrangements have been developed with Athlone Institute of Technology (now part of the Technological University of the Shannon), Letterkenny Institute of Technology and Sligo Institute of Technology.<sup>18</sup> A variety of progression routes to third level colleges in the UK and other EU countries have also been established.<sup>19</sup>

Learners, community groups and other partners praised the inclusive nature of the ETB and during the main review visit, numerous examples of active and successful inclusion were instanced. These included targeting priority groups, providing literacy and numeracy, integrating literacy into areas such

---

<sup>12</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 44-45.

<sup>13</sup> Profile of CMETB Further Education and Training Provision (Profile), p78

<sup>14</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 82-83.

<sup>15</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 88-90.

<sup>16</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 94-95

<sup>17</sup> Profile of CMETB Further Education and Training Provision (Profile), p78-79.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

as apprenticeships, providing English as a second language and providing numeracy and literacy awareness training to staff across all FET centres and services.

The review team positively notes CMETB's national work, in conjunction with SOLAS, where it has led on the development of good practice guidelines and a toolkit for the initial and ongoing assessment of the English language competency of learners. This is a very welcome development.

### **Commendations**

- The review team commends CMETB's approach to developing strategy and the speed at which the team commenced work on the new strategy.
- The review team commends CMETB for leading on the national research project on the development of good practice guidelines and a toolkit for the initial and ongoing assessment of the English language competency of learners.

### **Recommendation**

- The review team recommends that CMETB continue in its efforts to work more cohesively by improving internal communications and developing and implementing its strategy in a more cohesive manner. Specifically, the review team recommends that CMETB develop a cohesive communications plan, for internal and external communications to inform and support future strategic planning and implementation. While the ETB centres and services are deeply embedded in the communities they serve, the review team recommends that CMETB take proactive steps to strengthen its profile.

## **Structures and Terms of Reference for the Governance and Management of Quality Assurance**

The review team heard that CMETB has a multi-layered governance structure in place to ensure that the QA process is constantly managed and disseminated to support the systematic continuous quality improvement activities of FET provision. This includes the monitoring, reviewing, improving and planning of learning and teaching as a core process of the ETB in a consistent and appropriate way, within and across its various constituent services. The review team finds that the Governance structures in place, as set out Figure 1 (page 8) are in line with QQI requirements. The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for QA, and the FET Management and Quality Council, and the three groups reporting to it, focus on the oversight, approval, review and development aspects of the QA governance structure. (Please see Fig 8 above, page 12).

It is significant that, during the main review visit, all staff interviewees expressed their commitment to perform their work with a high emphasis on quality. Teachers and tutors expressed their approach to quality through learner development and they defined quality as meeting the needs and expectations of learners. However, the review team found during interviews that the entirety of formal QA governance structure was not always clearly understood on the ground.

In terms of gaining insight into the operation and achievements of the FET governance system, CMETB carried out a review in March 2020, one year after the system's initial establishment. An online survey was circulated to the members of the FET Management and Quality Council, QA Sub-group and PDI Sub-group. The responses confirmed a high level of satisfaction among members that they were categorised correctly based on their own skills sets (96%). Furthermore, conscious of CMETB's wider promotion of the philosophy that quality is the responsibility of all, the survey gathered data regarding the sharing of information emanating from governance groups. While the survey data highlights high levels of awareness of governance structures among FET staff, it should not distract from the challenges which were identified. These include the ability to be flexible and responsive while remaining compliant, and successfully embedding a quality culture across FET by creating an awareness that quality is the responsibility of all. Governance arrangements must remain suitably flexible to ensure they are capable of meeting new and emerging needs in a timely and effective manner.

The review team also finds that although the governance and management of quality assurance systems is robust in CMETB, and the roles of the QA team members and sub-groups are in place and monitored, the direct impact on the key process of teaching and learning needs attention during the next phase of self-evaluation. In the context of its ongoing improvement in quality assurance, CMETB needs to focus attention on the effectiveness and efficiency of its teaching and the impact on individual learners and measures to monitor and evaluate this.

The review team finds it praiseworthy that a number of enhancement opportunities aimed at further strengthening the governance and management of quality have been identified e.g., the need to keep staff apprised of QA updates and the need to develop and enhance expertise in emerging areas such as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and programme development. It is evident that CMETB values the importance of the learner voice and is keen to integrate learner representation into its governance structures.



The review team considers that these challenges create an objective which could guide CMETB in planning relevant and specific sets of improving activities that transform challenges into strengths and success-stories.

### **Commendation**

- The review team commends CMETB's quality management system, procedures, governance and management of Quality Assurance, including the regularity and systematicity of the FET Management and Quality Council and sub-groups, emphasised in the SER, and reflected in the main review visit. CMETB has shaped and defined a strong foundation to support an ongoing quality assurance approach.

### **Recommendation**

- The review team recommends that the analysis of desired results and targets could be more strongly emphasised for benchmarking trends. This approach will support the monitoring of the achievement of objectives, allowing quick reactions where needed.

## **Documentation of Quality Assurance**

The QA policies and procedures, including their documentation and the QA platform in SharePoint has, in the view of the review team, helped to create fair and consistent processes for all, while also being an effective way of managing risk. In some centres, where full-time staff are available (e.g., postholders in Cavan and Monaghan institutes), staff review and provide feedback on policies when they are first introduced and also when they have had the opportunity to implement them.

The review team heard that this practice of reviewing QA policies at centre level is supported through reporting via the QA sub-group. Experience of the implementation of policies and procedures is a standing item on the agenda in the service updates. And this provides an opportunity to highlight issues that may arise.

The review team found that as a result of the self-evaluation process, a number of key challenges and threats to the documentation of policies and procedures at CMETB have been identified. These include ensuring policies and procedures remain relevant and fit-for-purpose. During the review visit the review team heard from staff that some centres, such as the Adult Education centres and Youthreach, which have limited full-time co-ordination staff, don't have the necessary supports to

review policies consistently and regularly. Part-time staff, in particular, may not be as aware of relevant policies and procedures as full-time staff.

CMETB has highlighted in the SER that continued centralised work on the development of standardised policies and procedures will reduce the burden on individual centres, while also achieving equality and consistency for learners.

The review team considers these challenges as objectives and there is a need to plan a relevant and specific set of improvement activities to turn challenges into strengths. It is understandable that the first period of quality review has highlighted challenges which will be dealt with in the next phase of QA and time is needed to design the relevant and measurable activities for achieving the necessary goals.

The review team finds, that although CMETB has built up a robust QA system with procedures, rules and regulations determining the management of quality, further attention is needed to ensure a unified approach across all centres.

### **Commendation**

- As a result of the self-evaluation process a number of key challenges and threats to the documentation of policies and procedures at CMETB have been identified. This is a valuable input for continuous QA improvement. The review team commends how CMETB recognises the importance of working towards the implementation of ETB-level QA plans.

### **Recommendations**

- Whereas the review team acknowledges that CMETB realises the importance of working towards the development and implementation of a centre-level QA plan, the review team recommends that comprehensive support be given to the development and implementation of QA plans at centre-level, enhancing cross-centre co-operation and sharing best practice.
- The review team recommends that CMETB should pay attention to achieving equality and consistency for all learners across all centres through examining how quality management procedures and documentation leads to comparable equality and consistency for learners. The review team finds, that although CMETB has built up a robust QA system with procedures, rules and regulations determining the management of quality, further attention is needed to ensure a unified approach across all centres.

## Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

The review team heard that the CMETB recruitment process is centrally managed by the HR Department. Posts are advertised nationally, and candidates are shortlisted against agreed criteria and a competency-based interview format is used in the selection process. The Selection Board recommends candidates to the Chief Executive and a formal offer of employment is made. The ETB piloted a new FET staff induction programme in 2020 focusing on CMETB as an organisation, Teaching and Learning (including Technology Enhanced Learning) and QQI, QA and the assessor. While CMETB is confident in its recruitment and selection process, the review team identified a number of internal/external challenges which could potentially impact the ETB's success rate in terms of recruitment and selection. It is important that these challenges are addressed in a proactive manner with a strategy aligned to the overall CMETB strategy.

Challenges identified include the differentiation of CMETB as an employer of choice in the education sector; the competitiveness/attractiveness of the remuneration package offered and delays in time to recruit due to the sanctioning process for new roles. The communication and advertising of vacancies is also a challenge due to an apparent lack of awareness of websites, such as [www.etbjobs.ie](http://www.etbjobs.ie) and [www.etbvacancies.ie](http://www.etbvacancies.ie), among members of the general public. The availability and recruitment of subject matter experts also poses a significant challenge to the success of programmes. However, the Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) apprenticeship is an example of when CMETB worked very closely with the employer to ensure the tutors had the relevant skills. There are also difficulties associated with terms and conditions of employment and pay grades which are likely to impact the success of any further integration or standardisation of roles.

There are plans to roll out an online induction programme to all staff. Having viewed the SharePoint site and the QA induction process for new FET staff, the review team recognises that there are opportunities to deliver this as part of a CMETB-wide induction programme for all staff during the first weeks of employment. Development opportunities have been identified for existing FET staff in the areas of RPL, blended learning and programme development.

### Commendation

- The review team commends the thorough recruitment process which CMETB has in place, ensuring only candidates with the appropriate qualifications and vetting are progressed. The structured competency-based interview process, as opposed to an unstructured interview format, which follows increases the chance of the best candidate being selected. The team finds that there are good procedures in place for setting up new staff from a HR, payroll and IT perspective and commends CMETB's new FET staff induction programme.

## Recommendations

- The review team recommends that CMETB continue to engage in the national working group in support of an e-recruitment system to further standardise the recruitment process, enhance the candidate experience and improve efficiency in the time it takes to recruit.
  
- The review team recommends that CMETB create the opportunity to address the challenges faced in the areas outlined in the SER in its 'People Strategy' with additional focus on the following areas:
  - As part of a branding/re-branding strategy, CMETB should focus on making CMETB an employer of choice in the region and should develop a social media strategy to reach out to potential candidates.
  - CMETB management should continue to support collaboration and employee engagement through CMETB wide initiatives e.g., the promotion of mental health & wellbeing initiatives and flexible working patterns for learners.
  - The QA induction training and CMETB- wide induction training programme should be integrated to enhance awareness around the impact of QA and the importance of a quality culture.
  - CMETB should identify appropriate accreditations for staff to achieve which would strengthen and improve the existing HR policies and procedures and promote external validation of CMETB as professionally valuable. e.g., *Great Place to Work*, *Keep Well Award*, *Investors in Diversity Award*.

## Management & Development

The SER illustrates CMETB's commitment to providing ongoing Professional Learning and Development (PL&D) opportunities to ensure staff update their skills and competencies, as well as keeping abreast of best practice in teaching, learning and assessment.<sup>20</sup> A PL&D co-ordinator tasked with overseeing, implementing and developing FET-wide PL&D initiatives has recently been appointed. There is some awareness amongst staff of the upskilling opportunities available, but the review team found this was limited, and further promotion of what is on offer is required. During the Covid-19 period the core focus of the PL&D initiatives has been on Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and Information Communications Technology (ICT) supports. A comprehensive programme was rolled out in March 2020 to upskill staff in such areas as Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Lens and Moodle. The PL&D coordinator and the TEL officer developed and co-ordinated the delivery of fully

---

<sup>20</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p29-31



online Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) Word and Excel programmes and IT training was provided to enable staff to cope with remote working. <sup>21</sup>

There are opportunities to work more closely with the HR team in developing an ETB wide Learning and Development (L&D) strategy determining the gaps and the skills required of managers and staff for the next phase of the CMETB journey.



#### Commendation

- The review team commends the strong support provided to FET staff throughout Covid-19 and in the transition from face-to-face to remote working and online delivery of programmes.

---

<sup>21</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 72-73

## Recommendation

- The review team recommends that the PL&D Co-ordinator, operating in conjunction with HR, should complete a CMETB wide Training Needs Analysis and Training Plan which will support the FET College of the future. The review team recommends that CMETB consider expanding PL&D opportunities to include such areas as mentoring, coaching and Learning Portals (LinkedIn learning).

## Programme Development, Approval and Submission for Validation

The review team finds that CMETB has documented internal governance measures in place to oversee programme development and approval and its Programme Proposal Committee (PPC) and Programme Approval Committee (PAC) are both independently chaired. Most of its programmes were developed under the Common Awards System (CAS) through national collaborative processes.

Under QQI validation requirements CMETB, as coordinating provider, led the development of the Level 6 Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) National Apprenticeship and the review team heard of the significant learning that was gained from this experience. During the main review visit it was specifically referenced to illustrate how programme development and implementation was managed. Recommendations from external stakeholders, based on community and industry needs, were brought to the attention of CMETB. In partnership with Limerick and Clare ETB, the OEM National Apprenticeship was developed and has been implemented. This programme has become a benchmark for the PDI sub-committee and implications of its development have already been seen throughout other areas of CMETB. CMETB is also reassessing some of the programme specifications that are outdated and obsolete. It plans to restructure specific modules and alternatively assess learners, trainees, and apprentices with a view to responding quickly to the specific requirements of both learners and outside stakeholders. It is expected that changes to the NFQ Levels 1-4 will also positively impact new programme development nationally.

The SER outlines that CMETB has over 400 existing programmes and modules that are annually monitored. The PAC and PPC process for review outlines the policies and actions being implemented to date. New modules must have justified rationale; there is a strong emphasis on not duplicating courses offered over different centres and new programmes must also be fit for purpose. Recent occupational skills profiling has highlighted skills gaps in industry, and reviews from centres and employer engagements and consultations have offered insight specific to industry needs. Programmes offered are based on regional, national, or even international employment needs or a combination of all three. Many are unique and cater to certain individual needs or self-employment

opportunities. The review team investigated how individual centres were interacting and collaborating regarding their assessment of the appropriateness of existing programmes and how connected and involved they were in identifying new and emerging needs and helping to develop appropriate programmes. Information and examples from the main review visit interviews highlighted a positive and inclusive approach to programme development and approval.

It is the opinion of the review team that CMETB takes a proactive approach to programme development across and from all centres. Staff engage with local community employers to ascertain what needs are not being met and then aim to fashion a response from existing programmes and modules or begin the process of developing new programmes.

The rationale for introducing a new programme must be clear. This is important in order to minimise duplication across centres. Some programmes will be offered at different sites, or only one location, depending on circumstances.

In the main, the ETB would appear to be working from its stock of previously and current validated programmes which should be evaluated in light of current national and regional needs. With the exception of the OEM Apprenticeship, Audio and Music Production and micro-credentials programmes, there is limited new programme development and validation at CMETB.

During the main review visit, learner voice was most evident in discussions regarding the continuation of blended learning. Interviews with learners emphasised the benefits of blended learning: the flexibility allowed to study, research, and work on assignments; the ease of access to information and resources; the adaptability of alternative assessment practices and the reduced time and expense of travel. A blended learning approach was seen as particularly important across rural areas where travel distances were an issue and there was little access to public transport. The importance of maintaining and building on this aspect of programme development was continually referred to as “future-focused and innovative” by learners, teaching staff, support staff, secondary providers, external stakeholders, employers, the quality assurance team members, and governance committees. There is agreement across the board that the blended learning approach works. The staff, systems and support are already in place and being utilised, and the learners, staff, community and CMETB can only benefit from its continued implementation.

CMETB's commitment to programme development and review was particularly displayed in the number of staff who were engaged in the Maynooth University Level 9 Certificate in Programme Design and Validation in FET.

### **Commendations**

- The review team commends CMETB's collaboration with other ETBs, particularly in the development of the OEM National Apprenticeship as a positive response to industry demand.
- The review team finds that CMETB has a well-documented QA system to oversee programme development and it commends the use of an independent chair on the Programme Proposal Committee (PPC) and the Programme Approval Committee (PAC). The review team welcomes CMETB's commitment to programme development and commends staff training and engagement.

### **Recommendations**

- The review team recommends that CMETB develop specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for tracking programme development as this does not seem to be included in the enhancement categories in the Conclusions Section of the SER. The team suggest these could be included as part of the QA SharePoint as this seems to be a powerful tool for accessing the most up-to-date and relevant information.
- The review team recommends that the ETB monitor and review their ongoing programmes in light of being fit for purpose and meeting national and regional needs and consider gaps in provision. It is recommended that the ETB builds on the present momentum and works with other ETBs and QQI to further develop policy and programmes using a blended learning approach. The review team recommends that the ETB, in reviewing programmes and introducing new programmes, should consider reducing the number of programmes and see if existing programmes can be updated.

## **Access, Transfer and Progression**

The review team finds that CMETB offers relevant and necessary support services. This includes the Adult Education Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS) as a free, confidential service for young people and adults over the age of 18 or out of second-level education.

As expressed in the SER and in interviews with learner representatives, learners seeking access to FET programmes either self-refer or are referred by external agencies. According to the SER, learners enrol on courses following advertisements, social media postings, open days, engagement

with AEGIS or by word of mouth. CMETB works in cooperation with external agencies such as the Department of Social Protection (DSP) to support the referral of learners, engaging with vulnerable cohorts including those in long-term unemployment and those displaced through redundancy. It is obvious from engagement during the main review visit that CMETB has a key role in serving society in the region, integrating those suffering from disadvantage and enabling them to be full-fledged members of the community.

CMETB FET Services also provide and support flexible pathways for individual learners within the ETB. Within Adult Education, learners are encouraged and supported to progress through different levels, as well as being supported to progress to other FET services such as PLC or traineeships.

The self-evaluation process has identified a set of key areas requiring attention. CMETB's branding needs to be improved as there isn't always a widespread awareness of the range of services available and continued efforts are necessary to promote FET as a viable option for school leavers. The review team notes that specific measurable goals should be set to achieve these objectives and resourced accordingly.

The review team highlights that all learners interviewed valued the commitment of teachers and tutors and reflected satisfaction with learning opportunities, access and support.

### **Commendations**

- The review team commends how Adult Education (unaccredited programmes) has a rolling intake of learners to keep up numbers and allow flexibility. The review team's engagement with learners indicated that satisfaction regarding access, transfer and progression is high.
- CMETB's support during the Covid-19 period, including the development of blended and distance learning, is to be commended.

## **Integrity and Approval of Learner Results**

Through the SER and the main review visit, the review team received confirmation of CMETB's robust procedures to ensure consistency of the learner assessment process.

The SER explained that, within Further Education, locally devised assessments are utilised, and teaching staff are responsible for the development of these. Centre management and the QA Team



provide support in terms of ensuring that these assessments are appropriate and in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

CMETB has an Assessment Malpractice Policy in place which addresses abuses of assessment processes and procedures, including plagiarism. Prior to the submission of assessments, learners are required to sign a declaration of authenticity, confirming that the submitted assessment is their own work and where the work of others has been used, that appropriate referencing conventions have been applied. To further enhance the integrity of the assessment process CMETB, as part of a national agreement reached by SOLAS in 2018, has access via Moodle to *Urkund*, a similarity checking software. CMETB encourages centres and tutors to make use of this software.

The SER indicates that the need for a greater CMETB-wide approach to assessment that balances academic integrity with assessment security is currently under consideration. CMETB has established robust formal processes which centres are required to complete before learner results can be formally signed off and submitted for certification.

CMETB promotes sharing with centres, ensuring that all services are aware of the areas of best practice and aspects of provision requiring additional improvement. CMETB conducts regular internal audits and supervisions of its programmes to ensure they are validated within specified periods.

CMETB has identified aspects connected to the integrity and approval of learner results where there are opportunities for further improvements. These include FET centres using data from the External Authenticator and Results Approval Panel (RAP) processes to ensure that results remain in line with national comparative indicators and also training relevant staff in the use and interpretation of data.

### **Commendation**

- The review team commends how CMETB has used the self-evaluation process and report to emphasise relevant and important areas for improvement, which are valuable for planning measurable, specific and time-related activities in response.

## Information and Data Management

CMETB utilises a range of systems and platforms to gather and disseminate data across the ETB and support the evaluation of processes across centres. The review team finds that investment in systems has clearly been a priority and this has supported the QA system. However, legacy systems which CMETB inherited through the transfer of the training function in 2015 still exist and the SER confirms that there are over 26 systems in operation across CMETB. It is clear that the integrity and security of those systems is a priority and therefore security awareness training has also been rolled out to all staff.

SharePoint, Office 365 and Microsoft teams are key applications in gathering, sharing and storing information in CMETB. These tools have also supported collaboration, particularly remote working during the Covid-19 period.

A number of key challenges in terms of information and data management were identified in the SER. These include compliance with GDPR and with the Data Protection Acts 1998-2018. Data management and the requirements of GDPR were challenging for the ETB because of the diverse nature of its FET services.

There are specific challenges around the Programme Learner Support System (PLSS) application form. The review team heard from staff during the main review visit that it is long and complex and causes difficulties for some cohorts of learners which can act as a deterrent for learners engaging with FET provision. Learner progression outcomes are also challenging to track due to the amount of time and resources needed and the lack of an agreed national system of follow up. This has an implication for the availability of relevant data when applying for funding and completing reports.

While the review process identified significant good practice across the board in CMETB, it also highlighted a need for further integration of centres to maximise opportunities for sharing best practise, maximising resources and preventing duplication of effort. All of which would ultimately lead to a more consistent high-level learner experience. Interconnectivity of systems will be needed to support the further success of CMETB, and enhancement opportunities have been identified which will lead to significant improvements such as the provision of Tableau licenses.

System Category	System Name
Learner Management Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; FETCH Courses</li> <li>&gt; Programme Learner Support System (PLSS)</li> <li>&gt; QBS</li> <li>&gt; RCCRS</li> <li>&gt; Apprenticeship Client Services</li> <li>&gt; Transition Quality Assurance System (TQAS)</li> <li>&gt; MIT eNROLL</li> <li>&gt; Facility/EPortal</li> </ul>
Virtual Learning Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; eCollege</li> <li>&gt; Microsoft Teams</li> <li>&gt; Moodle</li> </ul>
Human Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; CoreHR</li> <li>&gt; Part Time Tutor (PTT) System</li> </ul>
Information Sharing/Management and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Microsoft SharePoint</li> <li>&gt; Microsoft Teams</li> <li>&gt; MIS</li> <li>&gt; eCohesion</li> </ul>
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Purchase to Pay (P2P)</li> <li>&gt; FARR</li> <li>&gt; SAP</li> <li>&gt; SUN Accounts</li> <li>&gt; Time and Attendance Clocking System (TACS)</li> </ul>
Certification and Validation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; RCCRS</li> <li>&gt; QBS</li> <li>&gt; QHub</li> <li>&gt; Walled Garden</li> <li>&gt; ICDL</li> </ul>

### Commendation

- The review commends CMETB for embracing a whole suite of Microsoft offerings as an effective tool for information sharing/management and reporting. The team especially commends the unique SharePoint site which the QA team had developed as a means of sharing/managing data and information. The review team commends the strong awareness of the importance of the security of information and data in CMETB that is evident in the training provided to staff.

## Recommendations

- The QA platform and database support the analysis of data, performance indicators and trends. The review team recommends that CMETB develop and implement a digital transformation strategy in tandem with work at a national level to further support information collection and dissemination across the whole of CMETB. The review team also recommends that opportunities need to be developed to allow greater access for centres and staff to relevant data and information across CMETB while also adhering to GDPR obligations.
- The review team recommends that the ETB consider its data protection risks and ensure it is compliant with DP and GDPR regulations.

## Public Information and Communication

CMETB uses a wide range of channels to communicate its services to learners, employers, stakeholders and the wider public, with the main conduit being the CMETB website ([www.cmetb.ie](http://www.cmetb.ie)). Some CMETB centres and services (for example, Cavan Institute and Monaghan Institute) maintain their own websites which contain information relevant to the range of services and supports they specifically provide.

The FET learner survey highlighted the top three methods that helped learners decide to participate on a CMETB course. These include word of mouth, information from the CMETB website and open nights/days. The Further Education and Training Course Hub (FETCH) website is also a significant tool used by CMETB to share and register courses available in its centres. Facebook was mentioned by Learners as a useful source of information on course offerings.

The SER references the success of the appointment of a Workforce Development Officer in building awareness of the supports and services available to employers and employees through CMETB. There is evidence that employers who are engaging with CMETB are very happy with the local level of engagement. However, there is always scope for further employer developments.

CMETB currently does not have a mechanism for measuring the impact of its public information and communications. It was evident to the review team, that despite it being almost 8 years since the establishment of ETBs, the VEC brand remains strong, and this is impacting on building a greater

awareness of CMETB and contributing to its being a household name across the wider Cavan-Monaghan region. The review team heard from the ETB that a broader understanding of FET nationally is also an issue impacting on ETBs. The National FET strategy and CMETB FET strategy aim to address this.

The appointment of a dedicated Communications Officer has enabled CMETB to maintain an active social media presence with a variety of ETB and centre/service specific Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram pages in operation. There is evidence to suggest that further integration of these activities across centres is required to prevent duplication of effort and to strengthen brand. Critically the SER recognises that the ETB need to clarify and simplify its core messaging to the public. A digital strategy addressing communication channels and data management would be a significant development in this area.

### Commendation

- The review team commends the excellent relationships that staff at local centres have with employer representatives and that they are known for being responsive, creative and flexible. The review team commends the OEM Apprenticeship as a key success story.

## Objective 2: Teaching, Learning & Assessment

### The Learning Environment

To fully grasp the extent to which CMETB has succeeded in providing a conducive learning environment that is safe and inclusive, the review team critically focused on the information on **facilities, quality of teaching and learning** and **the learner voice** in the SER. Their observations as per Core QA Guidelines were as follows:

#### Facilities

Information presented in the SER shows that there is an awareness of what requires improvement, with new facilities, improvements and upgrades being addressed at many locations.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the CMETB FET Strategy (2021-2024) outlines several key capital investment priorities that suggest

---

<sup>22</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 119 and p130 Figure 4



an ongoing commitment to providing the modern fit- for-purpose and accessible facilities necessary to enhance learning. Despite these noteworthy efforts, a few challenges and threats to the learning environment have been identified. With several services operating out of rented facilities, the ability to expand or modify such facilities to suit learner needs especially with regards to health and safety requirements is notably limited. Additionally, in carrying out minor upgrades and renovations, the ETB reported that the cumbersome and bureaucratic procurement procedures required often resulted in delays to the completion of projects. CMETB, however, remains optimistic that the recently announced SOLAS capital funding stream will assist CMETB in addressing the identified limitations to upgrading facilities. There is documented evidence in the SER that not all instructors thought the facilities were adequate and some offered suggestions for improvement.<sup>23</sup>

### **Commendation**

- The review team finds that CMETB 's report on facilities, while acknowledging difficulties, is commendable. The report indicates CMETB's awareness of the need for new facilities and improvements and identifies potential threats as well as potential solutions.

### **Recommendation**

- The review team recommends that CMETB engage with relevant parties to clarify issues raised and seek to streamline and accelerate procurement procedures.

## **Quality of Teaching and Learning**

The review team finds that the quality and expertise of the teaching staff is central to the facilitation of high-quality learning. CMETB has a robust recruitment process, and it is evident that it has a team of dedicated and professional teachers. However, it sometimes has difficulty attracting and retaining qualified subject-specific teachers, particularly in areas of technical expertise. In an effort to continue to recruit well-qualified staff it should consider broadening the profile of CMETB. CMETB also needs to ensure that all staff are up to date in their areas of expertise and to future plan for the retraining and upskilling of teachers whose skills may become redundant as workplace needs change. Certain upskilling is being addressed and huge progress has been made during the Covid-19 pandemic in developing the IT proficiency of staff. A Professional Learning and Development co-ordinator (PL&D) has also been appointed recently, cross-centre *Communities of Practice* are developing, and these will strengthen the quality of teaching content and practice.

---

<sup>23</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 130

Cognisant that modern and fit-for-purpose facilities are critical to enhancing learning, CMETB is nevertheless aware that these need to be complemented with a psychosocially supportive learning environment to enhance quality teaching and learning. CMETB has taken several measures which evidence its commitment to providing such an environment. Some of the measures cited include requiring new recruits to demonstrate their delivery acumen through presentation at interviews and ensuring that the skills and expertise relevant to the role are represented on selection boards. Recognising that a healthy presence of mind and body is central for learners to be attentive and receptive to teaching and learning, CMETB has secured SOLAS funding for this purpose and a wellbeing coordinator is to be appointed to assist learners requiring emotional wellbeing supports.<sup>24</sup>

CMETB has a FET charter in place which supports engagement with all stakeholders including learners. To evidence learner satisfaction with teaching and learning, CMETB reports that in 2021, 96% responded through a survey saying that they would recommend CMETB to their friends. A link to video testimonials is also provided.<sup>25</sup> On a less positive note, CMETB acknowledges that the operation of some services from multiple centres prevents a cohesive learning environment. A 2020 survey of teaching staff found that 14% had reservations about the quality of teaching facilities and 16% were unsure. However, staff who were unhappy with facilities made suggestions regarding how the facilities could be improved and this should be seen in a positive light.

### **Commendation**

- The review team acknowledges the proactive measures taken by CMETB to ensure quality teaching and learning. These are highly commendable as they largely align with relevant QA requirements and evidence CMETB commitment. Video testimonials from case studies also provide evidence of general satisfaction. The review team found evidence that shows CMETB is committed to self-monitoring and improving the quality of its teaching and learning on an on-going basis. It also aims to provide an inclusive environment by responding to the diversity of learners and by enabling flexible learning pathways.

---

<sup>24</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 148-148.

<sup>25</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 135

## Assessment of Learners

CMETB operates two assessment processes across FET, the former VEC processes and the former FÁS system. Additionally, it has a range of assessment specific policies and procedures focussed on ensuring the integrity and the validity of the assessment process. CMETB engages the expertise of subject matter experts as required as part of their assessments and evaluations. At individual centre level, teachers /tutors/instructors are responsible for the instruction, assessment, marking and submission processes. At individual centre/service level, QA personnel are responsible for receiving assessed portfolios from tutors, data entry to the Quality Business System (QBS), managing the internal verification and external authentication processes, organising Results Approval Panels (RAPs), circulating learner results, certification and the handling of appeals.

The primary assessor is the tutor. The assessment guidelines and marking criteria are monitored to ensure they reflect the learning outcomes stipulated in each component specification. CMETB has both internal and external assessment verification processes and a Results Approval Panel (RAP). All these processes provide different levels of independent oversight. Learners are also encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and to ensure fairness and transparency across all levels, learner surveys are conducted to provide insights into how CMETB has performed from the learner perspective. In recent surveys, 95% in 2020 and 92% in 2021 were satisfied with various aspects of their assessments and 97% received feedback.

As confirmed in its SER, CMETB adheres to QQI Statutory Guidelines and Core Requirements, and Internal Verification (IV) documentation is well detailed and updated. External Authentication (EA) reports are collated annually and shared across CMETB to highlight areas of “best practice and aspects requiring additional improvement”. CMETB also self-audits to ensure program validation and that programmes on offer can be certified.

In its SER, CMETB also identified threats and challenges to the integrity of the assessment processes as well as potential solutions. These included finding suitable external authenticators, especially for new emerging subject areas and, when alternative assessments became necessary due to Covid-19, trying to find ways to assess practical modules or those requiring teamwork. For some learners, alternative assessments were impossible, and the completion of courses had to be deferred. Overall, the review team found the integrity of assessment practices in use to be consistent, fair, and transparent and based on QQI guidelines. The three-part approach adopted to mitigate adverse outcomes of alternative assessments is further evidence of CMETB’s commitment to ensuring the academic integrity of CMETB awards as well as the transparency of assessment.

In the learner surveys carried out by CMETB and referenced in the SER, 503 (16%) out of a total learner population of 3110 responded. Furthermore, the AONTAS survey referenced was completed by only 58 learners. It is not clear if the respondents were a representative sample of learners or if those who responded were predominantly associated with particular programmes, as learner feedback both formative and summative was very different across the ranges of subjects and campuses.

The review team is concerned about learners in community and adult education who are doing short and less formal courses and for whom certification is not available. CMETB was already addressing this matter and was involved in a national effort to develop a “distance travelled” measurement tool.

Availability of processes for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) was raised on several occasions during the main review visit both by learners and staff and particularly by external stakeholders. It is currently seen as a barrier both to placement and advancement. In view of the development of new policies for Higher Education to help recognise prior learning, CMETB is very anxious to pursue a method of recognising prior learning and pointed out that this was a concern across the ETB sector.

How the role of work experience plays an important part of learning was raised during the review and its assessment was also raised directly by the panel of EAs and SMEs. Work placement had recently been difficult due to Covid-19, and CMETB was aware of the need to broaden and extend work experience opportunities and requirements for learners.

Regarding the assessment of learners, the review team found that Quality Assurance learning outcomes, portfolios, briefs, and marking schemes all meet QQI core requirements. This ensures that learner needs are specifically met and that what is promised is delivered through the course work and work placement. Alternative assessment methods were also approved by EAs, meeting QQI standards, and the EAs praised the professionalism of CMETB.

### **Commendations**

- The review team highly commends the integrity of the assessment process and the strong desire to comply with QQI statutory requirements as highlighted in the SER.
- The review team commends the positive relationship with the External Authenticators (EAs) and the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) evident in the SER and during the review week. This

demonstrates the networking ability, accountability and credibility of CMETB, all of which play an integral role in the assessment process and in the learner appeals process.

## Recommendations

- The review team recommends that CMETB develop policies and processes for RPL. The review team also recommends that CMETB liaise with other ETBs and work to develop a tool to measure “distance travelled”. The review team recommends that work placement practices should be further enhanced to improve consistent formative and summative assessment feedback to all learners.

## Supports for Learners

The review team finds that CMETB is committed to ensuring that the various aspects of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018, in the context of equality diversity and inclusion, find practical expression in its FET provision within individual centres and across the wider FET services. Examples of supports in areas such as literacy and numeracy, English language, digital skills and guidance support suggest that CMETB understands the barriers facing learners generally, and particularly those from migrant backgrounds. Additional initiatives include those aimed at supporting learner health and wellbeing, most notably mental health. CMETB’s response to learner support needs indicates strong inclusion of learner voice and a timely response to learner feedback regarding support, opportunity and the availability of resources. The ETB was particularly proactive during the Covid-19 period, and through a grant obtained from SOLAS, had provided laptops and other devices to a large number of learners who otherwise would have found it particularly difficult to participate in online learning. Their Youthreach centres engaged in cross-curricular activities in an effort to support each other and to support learners during the period of lockdown.

The review team observed that, despite the commitment and initiatives of CMETB, some FET learners were not aware of all the various support services currently offered by CMETB.<sup>26</sup> During the review week it was evident that CMETB was aware of this challenge and planning to address it. It was also noted that dedicated guidance services are available in PLC and Adult Education but not in Training Services. However, learners on training programmes can avail of Adult Guidance Services (AGS) but may not always be aware of this.

---

<sup>26</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 160.

Learners and staff identified themselves with an individual centre/college and although they acknowledged they knew about CMETB their experiences were limited to their own location and often knew very little about other campuses and courses within the ETB.

### **Commendation**

- The review team commends CMETB's revision of its governing structures which has resulted in the greater involvement of stakeholders such as learners and staff, through learner surveys, learner forums and staff surveys. This provides much needed balance and further evidences the commitment to embedding continuous improvement in the quality of its organisational culture. Its FET breakfast meetings to inform staff of new developments also allow staff opportunities to engage with FET management on issues.

### **Recommendations**

- The review team recommends that CMETB increase efforts to ensure that all learners are aware of the supports available and can access them in a timely and straightforward manner. Efforts should also be made to ensure that learners involved in the training services are aware of the guidance service offered by the adult guidance Service (AGS). The review team also recommends that the ETB takes a proactive approach to raising the profile of CMETB among learners.

### **Learner Voice**

The review team note that CMETB has put various measures in place to ensure that learners find their voice. Annual learner surveys have become key tools in promoting this and a learner advisory network (LAN) was established in 2021 to further amplify learner voice. The LAN was to support and encourage learners and promote learner surveys and outputs from among their peers while providing the ideas, learner feedback and feed forward which are essential for learner-centred learning. Some LAN members were also learner council members and used such platforms to promote surveys and learners' forums. FET surveys attracted high levels of learner engagements in 2020 and 2021 which provided data that enabled CMETB to compare trends across both years and track progress or lack thereof. Some of the concerns from the 2020 learner surveys have informed CMETB's revised Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2020-2021. Learner inductions at the start of programmes are also used to provide essential information to learners and there is consistency in the approach across centres. Additionally, despite challenges brought about by Covid-19, which resulted in remote learning, CMETB ensured that the learner voice was still heard not only from a learning perspective but also from a mental health and general wellbeing perspective. The quote in the SER from a learner *"It can be lonely in the virtual world"* suggests, there is a downside to online learning that potentially threatens wellbeing, while the quote *"Once we were happy, they were happy"* suggests CMETB staff were aware of such threats and ensured learners received information and resources relating to



mental health and mindfulness.<sup>27</sup> This ensured an optimal quality learning/teaching environment in which the learner voice was prioritised and responded to.

## **Objective 3: Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Review**

### **Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Review**

Based on the SER and interviews with stakeholders, the review team can acknowledge that CMETB QA processes and procedures are supported by ongoing self-evaluation and monitoring activities, involving the staff, learners and external stakeholders. The voices of staff, learners and employers are heard and responded to at both centre and ETB-wide level.

CMETB points out in the SER that when it developed an Executive Self-Evaluation Report (ESER), as part of the re-engagement process with QQI in 2018, it addressed issues regarding the lack of coherent information, coordinated monitoring and consistent documentation feeding in at organisational level, arising from its operation under four separate QA agreements. As this made it difficult to analyse trends and risks, CMETB identified five priority goals in its inaugural Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and it has advanced work in each of these areas.

CMETB is in the process of the ongoing improvement and development of self-evaluation methodology and procedures. This is evident in the increased involvement of learners and staff through annual staff and learner surveys, learner forums, FET briefings and breakfast meetings. Data and feedback from these surveys have been used to aid the review and monitoring process. The review team were assured that in addition to the engagement methods, CMETB systematically monitors key data and statistics.

The review team acknowledges the advances which have already been implemented such as the establishment of the Learner Advisory Network and the completion of the learner survey in March 2021. However, it also points out that there are further challenges including linking and harmonising both the formal and informal feedback of stakeholders across centres.

---

<sup>27</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 165

The Cavan and Monaghan Institutes, the Training Services, Youthreach and Adult Education carry out individual self-evaluation exercises and tools are being developed to further enhance the quality of its self-evaluation and monitoring. The review team suggests that CMETB further examine how to achieve responses and engagement from learners in a manner which ensures the quality and robustness of data to aid the monitoring and review processes and how to manage feedback, especially if it is perceived to be negative.

During the main review visit the review team noted that teaching staff see the main benefits of the self-evaluation process as of value to learners, teachers and tutors. Staff members are strongly focused on meeting learner needs first. All interviewees agreed that the SE process helped standardise and unify procedures across centres and units of CMETB. CMETB has benefited from SE in identifying next steps, areas needing improvement and up-dating policies.

Some areas of concern were pointed out in the interviews. CMETB is a large, merged organisation and it takes time to reach common understandings. Teachers and tutors are committed to their work in dialogue with learners and therefore might perceive that SE and QA is separate work that needs extra time. Therefore, it is recommended that staff member's engagement in the self-evaluation process should be a natural part of everyday work where they reflect, look for best practice and share ideas and opinions between centres.

It was clearly expressed that sub-groups are the key linkage between the Management & Quality Council and staff in the centres. Teachers' first commitment is to their work with learners, which they value highly, and the need for change is sometimes not easily perceived and understood. The review team recommends that opportunities are found to enhance and motivate each staff member's willingness to change through the leadership and empowerment of both staff and learners.

Although progress has been made in developing a stronger relationship between centres and services, the review team acknowledge the need to reach even greater transparency and connection between centres, supported by coherent self-evaluation methods and co-activities. This approach is beneficial to the understanding of common goals and the key role of self-evaluation.

## Programme Monitoring & Review

The review team noted and welcomed the statement in the SER that programmes at the various centres are continuously monitored and updated for continued relevance.<sup>28</sup> Central to this undertaking are centre managers and coordinators who inform the Programme Approval Committee (PAC). The Programme Approval Committee approves new programmes and programmes which have been developed nationally. From both the SER and the review week the review team considered both the structures and mechanisms of the programme proposal and approval processes to be comprehensive and robust. Both committees are led by independent chairpersons, and they are assisted by the work of the Programme Planning, Development and Implementation (PDI) sub-group. If a centre wishes to access a programme which has not been delivered in the previous three years an application must be submitted to the PAC to ensure that the programme is still fit for purpose. Where necessary, external authenticators (EAs) and subject matter experts (SMEs) are employed to add additional expertise. The QA sub-group also regularly monitors QA policies and procedures. CMETB staff have been involved in programme reviews in a number of areas at national level and, as the co-ordinating provider, CMETB is preparing for the review and revalidation of the OEM apprenticeship in 2022/23. However, the review team also observed and noted some gaps that, if addressed, could enhance the integrity of the programme review and monitoring processes. The information available suggests that the Programme Approval Committee relies on the input from staff and expertise from EAs and SMEs. It is important that the voice of the learners (including satisfaction with their instructor's delivery and outcomes) and other stakeholders has an input to programme reviews. It is also crucial that the current programme monitoring, and review mechanism and processes result in enhanced learning experiences and outcomes for learners.

CMETB acknowledges the need for consistency in applying QA across its evolving and widening scope of activity, in its implementation points for programme review. However, it does not explicitly address how it will ensure that consistency is maintained across multiple centres in monitoring not only the need for updating programmes but also the delivery performance of instructors or how programme outcomes will be used to inform strategic decision making.

### Commendation

- The review team commends CMETB for its continuous updating of programmes for relevance; for the vetting of new proposed and existing programmes; for the identification of

---

<sup>28</sup> CMETB Self-Evaluation report (SER), p 198.

issues that need to be addressed; the incorporation of a risk register, and the involvement of external authenticators as a strength in terms of the integrity of the process.

## **Recommendations**

- The review team recommends that CMETB address how programme delivery and outcomes are monitored across multiple centres, including the collection of feedback from learners/stakeholders and how the methodology is unified between centres/programmes. The review team also recommends that CMETB ensure that the scope of its Programme Approval Committee or its successor is extended to include monitoring of instructors' and learners' feedback in periodic review of programmes so that the process becomes not only comprehensive but also inclusive and truly representative of all voices.

## **Oversight, monitoring & review of relationships with external parties**

CMETB has multiple relationships with external third parties including:

- a. Second providers e.g., Community Groups, Contracted Training Providers, Local Training Initiatives (LTIs) and Specialist Training Providers (STPs)
- b. Collaborating providers e.g., Accounting Technicians Ireland, other ETBs and SOLAS
- c. Third Level Institutes
- d. Regional Partners
- e. Employers

### **a. Second Providers**

CMETB is involved with a complex range of external delivery partners including community groups, contracted trainers, LTIs and STPs and is therefore charged with monitoring the quality of education and training delivered in these settings. All second providers are required to adhere to CMETB's QA policies and procedures.

In their meetings with the review team, community providers cited their good relationship with CMETB as a key to their successful interaction. They commended the ETB's holistic approach, flexibility and agility and said that lifelong learning with hard-to-reach cohorts very often started in the community supported by ETB programmes. Learner supports were made readily available in remote areas and the ETB provided guidance to source funding for learners. The review team found there was strong evidence of flexibility and options were available for alternative assessment and routes to certifications in response to learner needs. CMETB filled a void and was praised for its creative thinkers and people "who made things happen". The review team was concerned that as far as

possible programmes provided should be certified but the ETB said that some programmes were at a very basic level and that attempts were being made to develop a means of measuring distance travelled.

In 2020 there were 411 beneficiaries of training provided through LTIs, STPs and contracted trainers. Some concern was expressed by the ETB regarding the difficulties in securing high quality external trainers. These trainers were always subject to formal monitoring arrangements which were rigorous and intensive. Second Providers interviewed on Day 2 of the main review visit evidenced a close working relationship with the ETB QA department. The Quality Assurance Co-ordinator attended approval panel meetings. They said that they had a high level of contact with the ETB and fed into ETB reviews. CMETB was very learner focused and supportive in helping them “get things right”. They said that CMETB was very collaborative, open to innovative ideas and good at taking feedback. They particularly praised the CMETB’s provision of computers for disadvantaged learners during Covid-19.

## **Recommendations**

- Whilst it is not a requirement of community education, as its core objective is inclusion, the review team recommends that the ETB consider accreditation, or a distance travelled metric.

## **b. Collaborating Bodies**

CMETB collaborates very successfully with a range of other bodies in the delivery of education and training programmes. It is a collaborating provider with Accounting Technicians Ireland (ATI) for the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship. ATI, in their meeting with the review team, said they had a particularly good relationship with CMETB where there was a systematic and evidence-based approach to QA. They also commended the ETB for creating a regional consortium.

CMETB is proactive on a national basis and staff members are involved in ETBI, SOLAS, QQI and other committees working on heightening the role of the ETB, developing programmes and enhancing teaching. CMETB has a close and productive relationship with a number of other ETBs in working on a broad range of initiatives in the region and across the country including cross-border broadband, mobility options and the development of new programmes, traineeships and apprenticeships. Many members of CMETB also sit on external bodies

AONTAS described a collegial and collaborative relationship with good structures and singled out the ETB as placing a particularly strong emphasis on the learner.

External Authenticators play a very important role in monitoring QA in the ETBs. The EAs interviewed said that they came through a rigorous recruitment process and were impressed by the professionalism of CMETB. They received documentation in time and processes and procedures were followed systematically.

The FE colleges had widespread contact with local second level schools through the FE colleges' recruitment processes. A "FET into Schools" programme was also in operation with several second level schools to promote FET with TYO learners.

### **Recommendation**

- The review team recommends that CMETB continue to work on a national level and international level in developing programmes in response to learner, employer and national needs.

### **c. Third Level Institutes**

There is no Third Level institute located in the Cavan Monaghan ETB area, but the SER refers to relationships with Third Level Institutes nationally and internationally. The local relationships with third level institutes are often through the North East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) and there is a memorandum of understanding whereby the FE institutes within the system work to ensure balanced provision of education and to co-operate on the joint delivery of programmes. Learners from the institutes progress through the Higher Education Links scheme and via agreements between the colleges and the institutions to allow for advanced direct entry to second year of Third Level programmes. Learners also progress to EU colleges and through the UCAS system to England and Wales

The review team finds there was a willingness among third level providers to engage with the ETB. They had a good relationship with the institutes and in some cases were prepared to explore the delivery of Year One and Two of degree courses in the Institutes.

### **Recommendations**

- The review team recommends that CMETB work to strengthen its relationship with Third Level Institutes on an ETB wide basis. The review team recommends that CMETB explore opportunities to develop courses allowing learners to stay in the region while completing Years one and two of third level courses.



- The review team recommends that in view of the border location of CMETB further cross-border initiatives with Northern Ireland's third level institutes should be explored.

#### **d. Regional Partners**

CMETB works in co-operation with a variety of local bodies such as the County Councils, Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), North East Regional Skills Forum and Department of Social Protection (DSP) in the development of and delivery of a wide variety of programmes. During the review week, representatives of these bodies praised the ETB for its proactive role in the community, the upskilling of people, the active attention to social inclusion and the quick response to needs, particularly during the Covid-19 period. They instanced the role CMETB played in helping people stay in the region by enabling them to become involved in local economic initiatives.

#### **Recommendation**

- The review team recommends that CMETB explore nationally how to develop programmes to respond to emerging needs whilst being cognisant of the need to adhere to QA. The review team recommends that CMETB explore possibilities for co-projects with partners. There is evidence of other possibilities for co-projects with partners in the region.

#### **e. Employers**

CMETB centrally and through its centres has strong relationships with employers in the region. Employer representatives from manufacturing, hospitality and the healthcare sectors have long established relationships with different personnel within CMETB. Communication with employers is conducted through the Workforce Development Officer and the Skills for Work coordinator and through the wide range of contacts built up by centres in liaising with local employers regarding course provision and also work experience. Employers are involved in the development of programmes and in providing work experience to learners. CMETB is the co-ordinating provider for the very successful Level 6 Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) apprenticeship which was developed in conjunction with employers and in collaboration with Limerick and Clare ETB. There has also been very good collaboration with employers in introducing the new Commis Chef and Hairdressing apprenticeships.

Employers voiced how important flexible and blended learning options were for them.<sup>29</sup> They praised the ETB's reaction to staff layoffs as a result of Covid-19 in 2020 when the ETB put on courses aimed at persons who had lost their jobs. Employers were also very complimentary of the IT upskilling opportunities offered through the Skills to Advance course and were eager that CMETB would provide further upskilling courses for their employees. They also spoke of the valuable role the ETB played in its upskilling of workers within small companies that did not have a HR department. During the main review visit there was praise from industry representatives for CMETB Traineeship programmes which are seeing 80-100% employment.

Employers also complimented the ETB for its responsiveness to their needs. If a QQI award did not fit the requirements the ETB introduced industry specific certifications where needed and efforts were made to deliver courses in a manner that suited the employer. Trainee and Apprenticeship programmes were carefully monitored by CMETB and employer pre-approval includes on-site performance guidelines. Mentor training was provided, and mentors had access to tutors, marking schemes and learning outcomes. The ETB carried out regular site visits which employers saw as being supportive.

Some employers expressed a desire for a quicker response to emerging needs, the offering of micro credentials and rapid certification. Concern was also expressed regarding the availability of specialist tutors for certain courses.

Employers expressed a desire to develop a deeper relationship with CMETB itself, but many were not clear how or with whom this should be.

## **Commendation**

- The review team commends CMETB's proactive approach to reaching out to the community and its very positive relationship with community providers. It also commends CMETB for its high level of activity on a regional and national level. CMETB, through Cavan and Monaghan Institutes, have built up very successful relationships with third level institutes across the region and also nationally and internationally. The review team commends CMETB for its proactive and strong relationships with employers, its uptake of national programmes such as Skills to Advance and its development of traineeships and apprenticeships in response to local industry demands.

---

<sup>29</sup> <http://cavanmonaghan.etb.ie/overview/qualityassurance/qa/>

## **Recommendations**

- The review team recommends that CMETB develop a unified collaboration with employers and ensure that employers have a central contact in the ETB. The ETB should explore the development of a central database to assist in identifying employers who have a relationship with the ETB and new employer partners. The ETB should continue to engage with employers regarding further access for workers to upskilling and should also seek to expand workplace opportunities for learners.
- The review team recommends that the ETB develop a process which allows timely responses in programme provision to meet the needs of employers and the local community.
- The review team recommends that CMETB explore how to maintain a base of suitably qualified teachers and instructors and how to keep them upskilled.





Section

4

Conclusions



## Section 4: Conclusions

### 4.1 Conclusions on Arrangements for Governance & Management of Quality

The review team finds that CMETB has all the documentation in place to ensure adherence to the necessary requirements for the Governance and Management of Quality. It has also fulfilled Departmental and SOLAS requirements regarding forward planning and has produced its Strategy Statement 2017- 2021 and engaged in the strategic dialogue and signed its Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA). CMETB has recently finalised its FET Strategy. A new overall CMETB Strategy is currently under development.

The nationally stipulated structures for the management of QA are all operating effectively in CMETB, and it was evident from the SER and during the review week that CMETB took those responsibilities very seriously with FET staff exhibiting high levels of awareness of the structures and systems. The challenges for CMETB include how to embed the quality culture and how to be flexible and responsive to emerging needs while remaining compliant with QA responsibilities. The review team also suggests that CMETB should work with QQI and endeavour to further streamline future contracts and agreements.

CMETB, through the QA working group, has developed a wide range of documentation regarding QA. These policies and procedures and the recently developed QA platform in SharePoint have helped to create fair and consistent processes for all, while also being an effective way of managing risk. Policies are reviewed centrally and at individual centre level thus ensuring their currency among staff and learners. One of the challenges is ensuring that policies continue to remain relevant while also contributing to the achievement, of equality and consistency for learners.

CMETB is actively involved in programme development and has an active Programme Proposal Committee (PPC) and a Programme Approval Committee (PAC), both with external chairs. A number of staff members are upskilling in Programme Design through the Maynooth Level 9 course. The review team commends the ETB on its response to local, regional and national labour market needs, particularly on its lead in the development of the Level 6 Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) National Apprenticeship, its work on a new CAS Level 6 Award in Audio and Music Programme (AMP) and its involvement in the development of new Broad Standards at NFQ level 1-4. It is also

reassessing existing programmes and one of its challenges will be how to avoid duplication and replace the old programmes with the new.

The college guidance service and the Adult Education guidance services offer support to learners regarding access, transfer and progression. However, learners in the training services do not have a guidance service and the ETB needs to explore how this problem can be solved, within existing resources or otherwise. Learners either self-refer or are referred to courses by external agencies. The ETB publicises its courses through advertisements, social media postings, open days and on its website. Branding is still an issue, and the review team recommends that the ETB work to increase its profile locally and nationally. In accordance with the SOLAS FET Strategy, the ETB provides pathways for learners to progress upwards within the ETB and also provides opportunities to transfer to higher level both through the CAO and with local arrangements with higher level providers. This is another area that needs to be publicised more both internally and externally.

There was strong evidence of a robust formal assessment process and of the integrity of learner results and the EAs and SMEs interviewed during the review week spoke very highly of the professional approach of the ETB and its staff. An Assessment Malpractice Policy addressing abuses of assessment process and procedures, including plagiarism was in place and a number of measures were taken to ensure the authenticity of learner work.

CMETB has made great progress in recent years in the development of data and information systems. This has been done in conjunction with SOLAS and further work has to be carried out to reduce and streamline the number of systems in operation. A strong awareness of the importance of GDPR and of the security of information and data in CMETB is evident in the training provided to staff. The protection of data, however, needs to remain a priority for the ETB. Further development of data management will allow CMETB to better analyse its learner cohort and their destinations thus ensuring the relevance of its course provision. With the ongoing development of National MIS systems, the review team encourage CMETB to, in addition to collecting statistics, set targets for performance indicators and to benchmark the trends across its centres and learner cohorts in order to make trends comparable in line with national comparative indicators and partner ETBs.

CMETB communicates its FET message through its website, social media, advertisements, by open days/evenings and by word of mouth and through the national FETCH website. It also has a number of staff such as the Workforce Development Officer whose work is concerned with local industry and responding to their needs. CMETB currently does not have a mechanism for measuring the impact of its public information and communications and recognises that a greater awareness of the ETB needs

to be created. This is not a unique problem for CMETB and needs to be addressed in conjunction with ETBI and the other ETBs. Internal communication is also important as it was apparent during the main review visit that both staff and learners were often not aware of what the ETB offered outside of their individual centre. The recent appointment of a dedicated Communications Officer is aiming to address some of these issues both internally and externally.

## **4.2 Conclusions on Arrangements for Teaching, Learning & Assessment**

The quality and expertise of the teaching staff is central to the facilitation of high-quality learning. CMETB has a robust recruitment process, and it is evident that it has a team of dedicated and professional teachers. However, it sometimes has difficulty attracting and retaining qualified subject-specific teachers, particularly in areas of technical expertise. In an effort to continue to recruit well qualified staff it should consider broadening the profile of CMETB. CMETB also needs to ensure that all staff are up to date in their areas of expertise and to future plan for the retraining and upskilling of teachers whose skills may become redundant as workplace needs change. Certain upskilling is being addressed and huge progress has been made during the Covid-19 pandemic in developing the IT proficiency of staff. A Professional Learning and Development co-ordinator (PL&D) has also been appointed recently. Cross-centre Communities of Practice are developing, and these will strengthen the quality of teaching content and practice.

CMETB reacted very quickly to the recent Covid-19 crisis and teaching was very quickly adapted to online provision and online learning while adhering to QQI procedures, terms of reference and core guidelines.

During the main review visit it was evident that CMETB has succeeded in providing a conducive learning environment that is safe and inclusive, responding to the diversity of learners and enabling flexible learning pathways. Learners spoke of a positive learning experience and praised the work of their individual teachers and tutors. It is to be noted that, in a survey referenced in the SER, a very high number said that they would recommend CMETB to their friends.

The area of the learner voice was discussed throughout the review week. It is seen as important across CMETB and various measures have been put in place to ensure that the learner voice is heard. A learner advisory network (LAN) and surveys are used to support and encourage learners to provide feedback, and learner councils also exist in the larger centres. Feedback from learners informs planning such as the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2020-2021. It is important that learner



feedback, both positive and negative, is used to improve the quality of the learner experience. However, this area needs further work to ensure consistency so that all learners, whether they be full-time, part-time or in less regular modes of attendance and engagement, have a voice. This voice may be through student councils, class representatives, learner surveys and the annual learner forum.

Facilities vary across centres from very good to in need of improvement with some centres needing to be updated. CMETB is aware of this and is seeking capital investment wherever and whenever possible in order to provide modern fit-for-purpose facilities at all its centres.

CMETB provides a range of supports to learners. This includes literacy and numeracy, English language, digital skills and guidance. During the Covid-19 pandemic laptops and other technical devices were provided on loan to learners to enable them to participate in online learning.

The area of mental and physical well-being is high on the CMETB agenda, particularly due to the Covid-19 pandemic when threats to mental health were brought about by learner isolation. CMETB ensures learners receive information and resources relating to mental health and mindfulness supports, and a wellbeing coordinator is to be appointed. However, while a range of supports were available, not all learners were aware of the assistance on offer, and this is an area which should be addressed by the ETB.

CMETB operates two legacy assessment processes across FET and, in order to ensure the integrity and validity of those processes, the ETB has a range of assessment specific policies and procedures, as specified by QQI. It is important that CMETB, in conjunction with other ETBs, works to create a unified assessment process. During the Covid-19 period CMETB had moved quickly to create alternative assessment processes to ensure that the maximum number of learners could still graduate without compromising the integrity of the awards. When surveyed, a high number of learners were happy with the assessment process. Some learners, however, were on uncertified courses and the review team is of the view that they should be placed on courses where there is certification, or an assessment tool should be developed to measure “distance travelled”. CMETB did inform the team that it is involved in a national effort to address this problem. The issue of RPL was raised in the SER and during a number of the interviews. This is an area which also needs to be addressed both locally and on a national level. The importance of work experience and its assessment was raised directly by the panel of EAs and SMEs during the main review visit. CMETB needs to further stress the importance of relevant and worthwhile work experience. In order to address this issue and also to further its involvement with employers it is recommended that the ETB draw up a database of

employers who already have a relationship with the ETB and widen this by also drawing up a database of those employers who have yet to be involved.

Throughout the interviews learners and staff identified themselves with an individual centre/college and although they acknowledged they knew about CMETB their experiences were limited to their own location and they often knew very little about other campuses and resources within the ETB. CMETB should take measures to ensure that staff and learners see themselves as part of the large overall ETB.

CMETB, particularly through its two FET colleges, has built up very good links with a broad range of Higher Education institutions and these links should be broadened and strengthened across the ETB and across HE institutions North and South.

### **4.3 Conclusions on Arrangements for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review**

It is evident that the organisational culture at CMETB values continuous improvement and enhancement through self-evaluation and monitoring and review activities. These self-evaluation activities take place at both centre and ETB level on a regular basis. The self-evaluation report, drafted using QQI guidelines, provides CMETB with an opportunity for self-reflection on its internal governance systems and highlights any shortcomings/gaps in policies and procedures needed to strengthen accountability and oversight. Improved data collection methods are giving the ETB a greater insight into its operations to allow for informed and evidence-based decision making. CMETB should use this data to analyse trends and ensure that the commitment to ongoing improvement becomes a reality. The voices of staff, learners and employers are heard and responded to at both centre and ETB-wide level but there are challenges in ensuring robust feedback from all stakeholders.

CMETB is aware that the demands of the workplace are continuously changing, and programmes need to be monitored and reviewed to ensure that they are up to date and relevant. The review team was satisfied that CMETB had put the mechanisms in place to ensure that programmes were updated, reviewed and consolidated. The Programme Approval Committee not only approves new programmes but also other existing programmes from outside before they can be used at any of the centres.

CMETB has relationships with a wide range of external partners for the delivery of education and training services and CMETB has put mechanisms in place to ensure that these second providers adhere to CMETB's QA policies and procedures. During the review it was evident that there was a particularly good relationship with community providers and that they worked very closely with the ETB. LTIs, STPs and contracted trainers were also delivering training and the ETB expressed concern regarding the difficulties in securing high quality external trainers in some areas. The review team saw the role of the QA co-ordinator as particularly important in monitoring this provision and were assured that they were closely involved and always attended approval panel meetings.

CMETB also collaborates with a number of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies in the delivery of programmes. These bodies also have oversight of programmes and, during the review, their representatives expressed confidence in CMETB and described very good working relationships. CMETB has relationships with higher education institutions which also provide guidance and inputs in the delivery of programmes which lead to direct or advanced entry to higher level. Once again, their representatives spoke highly of their relationship with CMETB.

CMETB is involved in cooperating with other local bodies and employers and there was evidence that they were very responsive to local needs and saw themselves playing a significant part in supporting the local economy. The review team considered that trying to balance flexibility and the provision of relevant education, training and upskilling with the need to ensure the integrity of programmes was likely to be a future challenge.

## 4.4 Commendations

1. The review team commends CMETB on its organised, systematic and purposefully managed process in the development of its self-evaluation report and provider profile. It demonstrates a thorough reflection in covering all key-areas.
2. The review team commends CMETB on its quality assurance platform. This platform supports cross-centre benchmarking of statistics and analysis. Their engagement with a broad range of key internal and external stakeholders has ensured a comprehensive and more representative consultation process despite challenges posed by the pandemic.
3. The review team commends CMETB's approach to developing strategy and the speed at which the team commenced work on the new strategy.
4. The review team commends CMETB for leading on the national research project on the development of good practice guidelines and a toolkit for the initial and ongoing assessment of the English language competency of learners.
5. The review team commends CMETB's quality management system, procedures, governance and management of Quality Assurance, including the regularity and systematicity of the FET Management and Quality Council and sub-groups, emphasised in the SER, and reflected in the main review visit. CMETB has shaped and defined a strong foundation to support an ongoing quality assurance approach.
6. As a result of the self-evaluation process a number of key challenges and threats to the documentation of policies and procedures at CMETB have been identified. This is a valuable input for continuous QA improvement. The review team commends how CMETB recognises the importance of working towards the implementation of ETB-level QA plans.
7. The review team commends the thorough recruitment process which CMETB has in place, ensuring only candidates with the appropriate qualifications and vetting are progressed. The structured competency-based interview process, as opposed to an unstructured interview format, which follows increases the chance of the best candidate being selected. The team finds that there are good procedures in place for setting up new staff from a HR, payroll and IT perspective and commends CMETB's new FET staff induction programme.
8. The review team commends the strong support provided to FET staff throughout Covid-19 and in the transition from face-to-face to remote working and online delivery of programmes.

9. The review team commends CMETB's collaboration with other ETBs, particularly in the development of the OEM National Apprenticeship as a positive response to industry demand.
10. The review team finds that CMETB has a well-documented QA system to oversee programme development and it commends the use of an independent chair on the Programme Proposal Committee (PPC) and the Programme Approval Committee (PAC). The review team welcomes CMETB's commitment to programme development and commends staff training and engagement.
11. The review team commends how Adult Education (unaccredited programmes) has a rolling intake of learners to keep up numbers and allow flexibility. The review team's engagement with learners indicated that satisfaction regarding access, transfer and progression is high.
12. CMETB's support during the Covid-19 period, including the development of blended and distance learning, is to be commended.
13. The review team commends how CMETB has used the self-evaluation process and report to emphasise relevant and important areas for improvement, which are valuable for planning measurable, specific and time-related activities in response.
14. The review commends CMETB on embracing a whole suite of Microsoft offerings as an effective tool for information sharing/management and reporting. The team especially commends the unique SharePoint site which the QA team had developed as a means of sharing/managing data and information. The review team commends the strong awareness of the importance of the security of information and data in CMETB that is evident in the training provided to staff.
15. The review team commends the excellent relationships that staff at local centres have with employer representatives and that they are known for being responsive, creative and flexible. The review team commends the OEM Apprenticeship as a key success story.
16. The review team finds that CMETB 's report on facilities, while acknowledging difficulties, is commendable. The report indicates CMETB's awareness of the need for new facilities and improvements and identifies potential threats as well as potential solutions.
17. The review team acknowledges the proactive measures taken by CMETB to ensure quality teaching and learning. These are highly commendable as they largely align with relevant QA requirements and evidence CMETB commitment. Video testimonials from case studies also provide evidence of general satisfaction. The review team found evidence that shows CMETB

is committed to self-monitoring and improving the quality of its teaching and learning on an on-going basis. It also aims to provide an inclusive environment by responding to the diversity of learners and by enabling flexible learning pathways.

18. The review team highly commends the integrity of the assessment process and the strong desire to comply with QQI statutory requirements as highlighted in the SER.
19. The review team commends the positive relationship with the External Authenticators (EAs) and the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) evident in the SER and during the review week. This demonstrates the networking ability, accountability and credibility of CMETB, all of which play an integral role in the assessment process and in the learner appeals process.
20. The review team commends CMETB's revision of its governing structures which has resulted in the greater involvement of stakeholders such as learners and staff, through learner surveys, learner forums and staff surveys. This provides much needed balance and further evidences the commitment to embedding continuous improvement in the quality of its organisational culture. Its FET breakfast meetings to inform staff of new developments also allow staff opportunities to engage with FET management on issues.
21. The review team commends CMETB for its continuous updating of programmes for relevance; for the vetting of new proposed and existing programmes; for the identification of issues that need to be addressed, the incorporation of a risk register, and the involvement of external authenticators as a strength in terms of the integrity of the process.
22. The review team commends CMETB's proactive approach to reaching out to the community and its very positive relationship with community providers. It also commends CMETB for its high level of activity on a regional and national level. CMETB, through Cavan and Monaghan Institutes, have built up very successful relationships with Third Level Institutes across the region and also nationally and internationally. The review team commends CMETB for its proactive and strong relationships with employers, its uptake of national programmes such as Skills to Advance and its development of traineeships and apprenticeships in response to local industry demands.

## 4.5 Recommendations

1. The review team recommends that there be consistency when reporting findings in quantitative and qualitative terms. Dissenting voices can potentially reveal perspectives not widely experienced or shared by the majority. Such perspectives could enrich the processes and efforts in the true spirit of equality and inclusion.
2. The review team recommends that CMETB continue in its efforts to work more cohesively by improving internal communications and developing and implementing its strategy in a more cohesive manner. Specifically, the review team recommends that CMETB develop a cohesive communications plan, for internal and external communications to inform and support future strategic planning and implementation. While the ETB centres and services are deeply embedded in the communities they serve, the review team recommends that CMETB take proactive steps to strengthen its profile.
3. The team recommends that the analysis of desired results and targets could be more strongly emphasised for benchmarking trends. This approach will support the monitoring of the achievement of objectives, allowing quick reactions where needed.
4. Whereas the review team acknowledges that CMETB realises the importance of working towards the development and implementation of a centre-level QA plan, the review team recommends that comprehensive support be given to the development and implementation of QA plans at centre-level, enhancing cross-centre co-operation and sharing best practice.
5. The review team recommends that CMETB should pay attention to achieving equality and consistency for all learners across all centres through examining how quality management procedures and documentation leads to comparable equality and consistency for learners. The review team finds, that although CMETB has built up a robust QA system with procedures, rules and regulations determining the management of quality, further attention is needed to ensure a unified approach across all centres.
6. The review team recommends that CMETB continue to engage in the national working group in support of an e-recruitment system to further standardise the recruitment process, enhance the candidate experience and improve efficiency in the time it takes to recruit.



7. The review team recommends that CMETB create the opportunity to address the challenges faced in the areas outlined in the SER in its 'People Strategy' with additional focus on the following areas:
  - As part of a branding/re-branding strategy, CMETB should focus on making CMETB an employer of choice in the region and should develop a social media strategy to reach out to potential candidates.
  - CMETB management should continue to support collaboration and employee engagement through CMETB wide initiatives e.g. the promotion of mental health & wellbeing initiatives and flexible working patterns for learners
  - The QA induction training and CMETB- wide induction training programme should be integrated to enhance awareness around the impact of QA and the importance of a quality culture.
  - CMETB should identify appropriate accreditations for staff to achieve which would strengthen and improve the existing HR policies and procedures and promote external validation of CMETB as professionally valuable. e.g. *Great Place to Work, Keep Well Award, Investors in Diversity Award.*
8. The review team recommends that the PL&D Co-ordinator, operating in conjunction with HR, should complete a CMETB wide Training Needs Analysis and Training Plan which will support the FET College of the future. The review team recommends that CMETB consider expanding PL& D opportunities to include such areas as mentoring, coaching and Learning Portals (LinkedIn learning).
9. The review team recommends that CMETB develop specific Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for tracking programme development as this does not seem to be included in the enhancement categories in the Conclusions Section of the SER. The team suggest these could be included as part of the QA SharePoint as this seems to be a powerful tool for accessing the most up-to-date and relevant information.
10. The review team recommends that the ETB monitor and review the ongoing programmes in light of being fit for purpose and meeting national and regional needs and consider gaps in provision. It is recommended that the ETB builds on the present momentum and works with other ETBs and QQI to further develop policy and programmes using a blended learning approach. The review team recommends that the ETB, in reviewing programmes and

introducing new programmes should consider reducing the number of programmes and see if existing programmes can be updated.

11. The QA platform and database support the analysis of data, performance indicators and trends. The review team recommends that CMETB develop and implement a digital transformation strategy in tandem with work at a national level to further support information collection and dissemination across the whole of CMETB. The review team also recommends that opportunities need to be developed to allow greater access for centres and staff to relevant data and information across CMETB while also adhering to GDPR obligations.
12. The review team recommends that the ETB consider its data protection risks and ensure it is compliant with DP and GDPR regulations.
13. The review team recommends that CMETB develop policies and processes for RPL. The review team also recommends that CMETB liaise with other ETBs and works to develop a tool to measure “distance travelled”.
14. The review team recommends that work placement practices should be further enhanced to improve consistent formative and summative assessment feedback to all learners.
15. The review team recommends that CMETB engage with relevant parties to clarify issues raised and seek to streamline and accelerate procurement procedures.
16. The review team recommends that CMETB increase efforts to ensure that all learners are aware of the supports available and can access them in a timely and straightforward manner. Efforts should also be made to ensure that learners involved in the training services are aware of the guidance service offered by the adult guidance Service (AGS). The review team also recommends that the ETB takes a proactive approach to raising the profile of CMETB among learners.
17. The review team recommends that CMETB address how programme delivery and outcomes are monitored across multiple centres, including the collection of feedback from learners/stakeholders and how the methodology is unified between centres/programmes. The

review team also recommends that CMETB ensure that the scope of its Programme Approval Committee or its successor is extended to include monitoring of instructors' and learners' feedback in periodic review of programmes so that the process becomes not only comprehensive, but also inclusive and truly representative of all voices.

18. Whilst it is not a requirement of community education, as its core objective is inclusion, the review team recommends that the ETB consider accreditation, or a distance travelled metric.
19. The review team recommends that CMETB continue to work on a national level and international level in developing programmes in response to learner, employer and national needs.
20. The review team recommends that CMETB work to strengthen its relationship with Third Level on an ETB wide basis. The review team also recommends that CMETB explore opportunities to develop courses allowing learners to stay in the region while completing Years One and two of Third Level courses.
21. The review team recommends that in view of the border location of CMETB further cross-border initiatives with Northern Ireland Third Level Institutes should be explored.
22. The review team recommends that CMETB explore nationally how to develop programmes to respond to emerging needs whilst being cognisant of the need to adhere to QA. The review team recommends that CMETB explore possibilities for co-projects with partners. There is evidence of other possibilities for co-projects with partners in the region.
23. The review team recommends that CMETB develop a unified collaboration with employers and ensures that employers have a central contact in the ETB. The ETB should explore the development of a central database to assist in identifying employers who have a relationship with the ETB and new employer partners. The ETB should continue to engage with employers regarding further access for workers to upskilling and should seek to expand workplace opportunities for learners.

24. The review team recommends that the ETB develop a process which allows timely responses in programme provision to meet the needs of employers and the local community.
  
25. The review team recommends that CMETB explore how to maintain a base of suitably qualified teachers and instructors and how to keep them upskilled.

## 4.6 Statements on Quality Assurance

The review team is satisfied that the quality assurance procedures of CMETB are effective and are being properly and systematically implemented across the ETB.

The quality assurance procedures adhere to QQI's Quality Assurance Guidelines and are in keeping with QQI's Policy restatement and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training.

The Quality Assurance procedures and processes are effective in encouraging and promoting continual improvements with CMETB,

In its future planning CMETB should consider how to further imbed the system to encourage full ownership of the QA processes by all staff. This QA system, being relatively new, will need to be evaluated and further developed after consultation with staff and learners to ensure that it reflects the needs of the whole ETB and can contribute to a culture of quality enhancement. To ensure CMETB develops Quality Enhancement as a mainstream activity across all campuses future work is needed to ensure consistency in the learner experience and greater collegiate approaches across the ETB to curriculum planning, reviews and developments.

- CMETB has been on a journey since 2013 and this journey has now to look towards the '**FET College of the Future**'. Developments are needed around identity and culture to achieve a unified CMETB.
- The culture within the two regions Cavan and Monaghan and all the centres must evolve to form a collegiate entity.
- **Greater collaboration has been seen since COVID** around staff and learners, this must be a **catalyst to ensure greater cross campus** and subject activity takes place to assist greater alignment. Shared staff developments across campuses should be encouraged.
- **Curriculum Development is well planned, and robust systems** are in place to approve new curricula. This should be in line with national and regional needs and help in current curriculum and further curriculum plans.
- There is a need now to share subject specialisms across all the campuses aligning staff teaching similar subjects and giving them the ability to share good practices: curriculum

developments and planning; Teaching schemes of work; assessment practices and teaching resources.

- **Excellent activities** are in place across all centres within CMETB **which need not be lost** but to be pulled together, to **share good practice; avoid duplication and reinventing**.
- Good Leadership and Management is important to ensure the **culture of change** leads towards the 'FET College of the Future' - Empower staff.



Section

5

ETB Review Response





## Section 5: Response to QCI Inaugural Review Report

CMETB welcomes the report of the QCI appointed expert panel. The 2021 Inaugural Review was a thorough, comprehensive and thought-provoking evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of quality assurance across CMETB FET Services.

In welcoming the report, I also note the valuable engagement and collaborative process that led to its preparation and publication. Preparation for the review enhanced and strengthened collaboration and collegiality across FET Services, Administrative Sections, our student body and with wider and external stakeholders. It afforded both pillars of the organisation a valuable opportunity to work together, learn more about each other's work and identify areas for future co-operation and development. It also highlighted the importance and the relevance of the QA function across all aspects of the organisation.

The report contains many findings, commendations and recommendations, which CMETB accepts. Its observation that: *the review team can say with confidence that CMETB engaged with the review process and report write up with a rigorous self-evaluation methodology that is generally consistent with best practice in research.* is gladly received both in terms of the Review and as an endorsement of CMETB research practices in the context of undertaking future projects.

The commendations highlight clear examples of how CMETB provides a quality learning experience for its learners, including evidence that CMETB is committed to self-monitoring and improving the quality of its teaching, learning and assessment on an on-going basis. CMETB's work to provide an inclusive environment by responding to the diversity of learners and enabling flexible learning pathways is also noted. In particular, commendations of practices during COVID, e.g. strong support provided to FET staff and learners throughout Covid-19 and in the transition from face-to-face to remote working and online delivery of programmes, is a welcome recognition and affirmation of the adaptability and versatility of our FET Services / Centres.

The confirmation that

*CMETB's quality management system, procedures, governance and management of Quality Assurance, including the regularity and systematicity of the QA top-team and sub-groups as emphasized in the SER, was reflected in the main review visit*

provides us with strong reassurance regarding our QA. Equally, the conclusion that *CMETB has shaped and defined a strong foundation to support an ongoing quality assurance approach* allows us to build confidently on work in this area.

Just as the commendations of CMETB's internal systems and processes are welcome, so too are the commendations regarding the excellent relationships that staff have with employer representatives



and community providers. Likewise, the review team's recognition of CMETB's responsiveness, creativity and flexibility, and its continuous programme updating for relevance is well received.

Equally, the recommendations are welcomed and CMETB appreciates the rigour and application applied by the review team in this regard. It is very beneficial for CMETB to receive constructive recommendations that will assist us in the continued development of our FET provision. In particular, a centralised and singular QA system is a priority for CMETB and work in this area continues apace. Likewise, the recommendation that every effort be made to ensure that all learners are aware of the supports available and can access them in a timely and straightforward manner is being actively progressed through the newly appointed Learner Support Officer. In addition, CMETB notes the emphasis on the need to raise the profile of CMETB among learners, and action is ongoing to that end.

The recommendation for further cross centre engagement and sharing of best practice will be progressed through further expansion of communities of practice, working groups and ongoing interaction among FET Services / Centres. In addition, the focus on the need for continued work on a national level and international level in developing programmes in response to student, employer and national needs is being addressed through a multi-faceted approach.

CMETB notes the importance of the development and implementation of a digital transformation strategy in tandem with work at a national level to further support information collection and dissemination across the whole of CMETB. This will build on the significant advances made in TEL and data / reporting in recent years. These areas will continue to be progressed. The in-house PLSS Advisory group and the newly formed TEL Community of Practice will be significant contributors in this regard.

To conclude, the Inaugural Review necessitated CMETB's FET Service to critically review and evaluate its work. In so doing, it also provided us with a welcome opportunity to step back and reflect – a practice we are often too busy to undertake. This reflection provided us with a range of insights and perspectives that perhaps may otherwise not have been observed.

On behalf of CMETB, I wish to sincerely thank the panel for their due diligence and constructive feedback and the engaging and supportive manner in which the review visit was conducted. Thank you also to Quality and Qualifications Ireland for its support throughout the entire Review process. CMETB appreciates the panel's endorsement of our horizon thinking and the recommendations that support the roadmap towards achieving our future goals.

John Kearney

Chief Executive

Linda Pinkster

Director of Further Education and  
Training





Appendices



# Appendix A: Review Terms of Reference

## Terms of Reference for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education & Training Boards

### 1 Background and Context for the Review

1.1.1 QQI established Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for all providers in April 2016, and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in May 2017<sup>30</sup>. These guidelines collectively address the quality assurance responsibilities of ETBs as significant public providers of further education and training. The scope of the guidelines incorporates all education, training and related services of an ETB, leading to QQI awards, other awards recognised in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), or awards of other awarding, regulatory or statutory bodies.

1.1.2 The Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established under the Education and Training Boards Act (2013). They are statutory providers with responsibility for education and training, youth work and other statutory functions, and operate and manage a range of centres administering and providing adult and further education and training (FET). ETBs also administer secondary and primary education through schools and engage in a range of non-accredited provision. These areas are not subject to quality assurance regulation by QQI.

1.1.3 In 2018, all sixteen ETBs completed re-engagement with QQI. Following this process each ETB established its quality assurance (QA) policy and procedures in accordance with section 30 of the Quality and Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012. QQI recognises that those policies and procedures are reflective of the evolving and developmental nature of quality assurance within the ETB sector as it continues to integrate the legacy body processes.

1.1.4 As outlined in QQI's Core QA Guidelines, quality and its assurance are the responsibility of the provider, i.e. an ETB, and review and self-evaluation of quality is a fundamental element of an ETB's quality assurance system. A provider's external quality assurance obligations include a statutory review of quality assurance by QQI. QQI review functions are set out in various sections of

---

<sup>30</sup> Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards (QQI, 2019)

the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) as amended (henceforth 'the 2012 Act'). The reviews relate to QQI's obligation under Section 27(b) of the 2012 Act (to establish procedures for the review by QQI of the effectiveness and implementation of a provider's quality assurance procedures) and to section 34 of the 2012 Act (the external review by QQI of a provider's quality assurance procedures).

1.1.5 An external review of quality assurance has not been previously undertaken for the ETBs, neither through QQI nor former legacy awarding body processes. QQI is cognisant of the ETBs' current organisational context in which the establishment of comprehensive and integrated quality assurance systems is an ongoing process. A primary function of the reviews will thus be to inform the future development of quality assurance and enhancement activities within the organisations. Following the completion of the sixteen review reports, a sectoral report will also be produced identifying systemic observations and findings.

1.1.6 The 2012 Act states that QQI shall consult with SOLAS (the state organisation responsible for funding, co-ordinating and monitoring further education and training in Ireland) in carrying out a review of education and training boards. This will take the form of consultation with SOLAS on the Terms of Reference for the review and the provision of contextual briefing by SOLAS to review teams.

## 2 Purposes

2.1 QQI has specific multi-dimensional purposes for its quality assurance reviews. The Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards outlines six purposes for this review process. Those purposes, and the ways in which they will be achieved and measured, are as follows:

Purpose	Achieved and Measured Through
<b>1. To encourage a quality culture and the enhancement of the learning environment and experience within ETBs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasising the learner and the learning experience in reviews.</li> <li>• Constructively and meaningfully involving staff at all levels of the organisation in the self-evaluation and external evaluation phases of the review.</li> <li>• Providing a source of evidence of areas for improvement and areas for revision of policy and change and basing follow-up upon them.</li> <li>• Exploring innovative and effective practices and procedures.</li> <li>• Providing evidence of quality assurance and quality enhancement within the ETB.</li> </ul>
<b>2. To provide feedback to ETBs about organisation-wide quality and the impact of</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasising the ownership, governance and management of quality assurance at the corporate ETB-level, i.e. how the ETB exercises oversight of quality assurance.</li> <li>• Pitching the review at a comprehensive ETB-wide level.</li> </ul>

<p><b>mission, strategy, governance and management on quality and the overall effectiveness of their quality assurance.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating compliance with legislation, policy and standards.</li> <li>• Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of quality assurance procedures.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. To improve public confidence in the quality of ETB provision by promoting transparency and public awareness.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhering to purposes, criteria and outcomes that are clear and transparent.</li> <li>• Publication of clear timescales and terms of reference for review.</li> <li>• Evaluating, as part of the review, ETB reporting on quality assurance, to ensure that it is transparent and accessible.</li> <li>• Publication of the individual ETB reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences.</li> <li>• Publication of sectoral findings and observations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. To support system-level improvement of the quality of further education and training in the ETBs.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing a sectoral report, with system-level observations and findings.</li> <li>• The identification and dissemination of effective practice to facilitate shared learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. To encourage quality by using evidence-based, objective methods and advice.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the expertise of international, national, learner, industry and other stakeholder peer reviewers who are independent of the ETB.</li> <li>• Ensuring that findings are based on stated evidence.</li> <li>• Facilitating ETBs to identify measures for quality relevant to their own mission and context.</li> <li>• Promoting the identification and dissemination of examples of good practice and innovation</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. To provide an opportunity for ETBs to articulate their stage of development, mission and objectives and demonstrate the quality assurance of their provision, both individually and as a sector.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of self-evaluation reports, conducted with input from ETB learners and wider stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Publication of the reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences.</li> </ul>

### 3 Objectives and Criteria for Review

3.1 The core objective of the external review is **to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of an ETB's quality assurance procedures**. As this is the inaugural review, it will have a particular emphasis on the arrangements established to date to support the operation of the quality assurance system. Recognising that the development and implementation of an ETB-wide quality assurance system and procedural framework is an ongoing process, the review will also have a forward-looking dimension and will explore the ETB's plans and infrastructure to support the ongoing development of these systems. The review will thus examine the following:

#### **Objective 1: Governance and Management of Quality:**

Evaluate the comprehensive oversight arrangements and transparent decision-making structures for the ETB's education and training and related activities within and across all service provision (for example FE colleges, training centres, community-based education services, contracted providers, collaborative partnerships/arrangements).

The governance and quality management systems would be expected to address:

#### **Indicative Matters to be Explored**

##### **a) The ETB's mission and strategy**

- How/do the ETB's quality assurance arrangements contribute to the fulfilment of these?
- Is the learner experience consistent with this mission?

##### **b) Structures and terms of reference for the governance and management of quality assurance**

- Are the arrangements sufficiently comprehensive and robust to ensure strong governance and management of operations (e.g. separation of responsibilities, externality, stakeholder input)?
- Is governance visible and transparent?
- Where multi-level arrangements exist (i.e. where responsibilities are invested in centre managers), is there sufficient clarity, co-ordination, corporate oversight of, and accountability for, these arrangements?

**c) The documentation of quality assurance policy and procedures**

- How effective are the arrangements for the development and approval of policies and procedures?
- Are policies and procedures coherent and comprehensive (do they incorporate all service types and awarding bodies?), robust and fit for purpose?
- Are policies and procedures systematically evaluated?

**d) Staff recruitment, management and development**

- How does the ETB assure itself as to the competence of its staff?
- How are professional standards maintained and enhanced?
- How are staff informed of developments impacting the organisation and how can they input to decision-making?

**e) Programme development, approval and submission for validation**

- What arrangements are in place to ensure alignment of programme development activity with strategic goals and regional needs?
- Are the arrangements for the approval and management of programme development robust, objective and transparent?
- What arrangements are in place to facilitate and oversee a comprehensive programme development process in advance of submission for validation (e.g. the conduct of research, inclusion of external expertise, writing learning outcomes, curricula etc.)?
- Are there structures in place to support collaborative programme development with other ETBs/providers?

**f) Access, transfer and progression**

- How does the ETB quality assure access, transfer and progression systematically across all programmes and services?
- Are there flexible learning pathways, respecting and attending to the diversity of learners?
- Are admissions, progression and recognition policies and processes clear and transparent for learners and implemented on a consistent basis?



**g) Integrity and approval of learner results, including the operation and outcome of internal verification and external authentication processes**

- What governance and oversight processes are in place to ensure the integrity of learner assessment and results?
- How does the ETB ensure that these arrangements provide for consistent decision-making and standards across services and centres?

**h) Information and data management:**

- What arrangements are in place to ensure that data are reliable and secure?
- How are data utilised as part of the quality assurance system?
- What arrangements are in place to ensure the integrity of learner records (including, where relevant, the sharing of learner data with other providers on national apprenticeships)?
- How is compliance with data legislation ensured?

**i) Public information and communications:**

- Is information on the quality assurance system, procedures and activities publicly available and regularly updated?

**Indicative Matters to be Explored**

- What arrangements are in place to ensure that published information in relation to all provision (including by centres) is clear, accurate, up to date and easily accessible?

**Objective 2: Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Evaluate the arrangements to ensure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment within the ETB and a high-quality learning experience for all learners. These will include:

**Indicative Matters to be Explored**

**a) The learning environment**

- How/is the quality of the learning experience monitored?
- How/are modes of delivery and pedagogical methods evaluated to ensure that they meet the needs of learners?
- How is the quality of the learning experience of learners on work placements ensured?

- Is there evidence of enhancement in teaching and learning?

**b) Assessment of learners**

- How is the integrity, consistency and security of assessment instruments, methodologies, procedures and records ensured – including in respect of recognition of prior learning?
- How is the standard of assessment of learners on work placements ensured – particularly where these are undertaken by non-ETB staff?
- Do learners in all settings have a clear understanding of how and why they are assessed and are they given feedback on assessment?

**c) Supports for learners**

- How are support services planned and monitored to ensure that they meet the needs of learners?
- How does the ETB ensure consistency in the availability of appropriate supports to learners across different settings/regions?
- Are learners aware of the existence of supports?

**Objective 3: Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review**

Evaluate the arrangements for the monitoring, review and evaluation of, and reporting on, the ETB's education, training and related services (including through third-party arrangements) and the quality assurance system and procedures underpinning them. It will also reflect on how these processes are utilised to complete the quality cycle through the identification and promotion of effective practice and by addressing areas for improvement. This will include:

**Indicative Matters to be Explored**

**a) Self-evaluation, monitoring and review (including programme and quality review)**

- What are the processes for quality assurance planning, monitoring and reporting?
- Are the processes for self-evaluation, monitoring and review (including the self-evaluation report undertaken for the inaugural review) comprehensive, inclusive and evidence-based?
- Is there evidence of strategic analysis and follow-up of the outcome of internal quality assurance reviews and monitoring (e.g. review reports, external authenticator reports, learner feedback reports etc.)?
- How is quality promoted and enhanced?

**b) Programme monitoring and review**

- How are programme delivery and outcomes monitored across multiple centres (including collection of feedback from learners/stakeholders)?
- Are mechanisms for periodic review of programmes comprehensive, inclusive and robust?
- Is there evidence that the outcome of programme monitoring and review informs programme modification and enhancement?
- Are the outputs of programme monitoring and review considered on a strategic basis by the ETB's governance bodies to inform decision-making?

**c) Oversight, monitoring and review of relationships with external/third parties (in particular, with contracted training providers, community training providers, and other collaborative provision).**

- How does the ETB ensure the suitability of the external parties with which it engages?
- Is the nature of the arrangements with each external party published?
- Is the effectiveness of these arrangements monitored and reviewed through ETB governance?
- Does the ETB assess its impact within the region and local communities?

3.2 In respect of each dimension, the review will:

- i. evaluate the effectiveness of ETB's quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining and improving the quality of further education, training, and related services; and
- ii. identify perceived gaps in the internal quality assurance mechanisms and the appropriateness, sufficiency, prioritisation and timeliness of planned measures to address them in the context of the ETB's current stage of development; and
- iii. explore achievements and innovations in quality assurance and in the enhancement of teaching and learning.

3.3 Following consideration of the matters above, the review will:

- Provide a qualitative statement about the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of the ETB and the extent of their implementation;

- Provide a statement about the extent to which existing quality assurance procedures adhere to QQI's Quality Assurance Guidelines and policies (as listed at 3.4), to include an explicit qualitative statement on the extent to which the procedures are in keeping with QQI's Policy Restatement and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training;<sup>31</sup>
- Provide a qualitative statement on the enhancement of quality and
- Identify effective practice and recommendations for further improvement.

3.4 The implementation and effectiveness of QQI's Core Quality Assurance Guidelines will be considered in the context of the following criteria:

- The ETB's mission and objectives for quality assurance
- QQI's Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards
- QQI's Topic-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes;
- QQI's Topic-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning;
- QQI's Policy Restatement and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training;
- QQI's Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training and
- Relevant European guidelines and practice on quality and quality assurance

---

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/ATP%20Policy%20Restatement%20FINAL%202018.pdf>

## 4 The Review Team

4.1 QQI will appoint a review team to conduct the review. Review teams are composed of peer reviewers who are learners; leaders and staff from comparable providers; and external representatives including employer and civic representatives. The size of the team will depend on the size and complexity of the ETB but in general will comprise five or six persons. A reviewer may participate in more than one ETB review.

4.2 QQI will identify an appropriate team of reviewers for each review who are independent of the ETB with the appropriate skills and experience required to perform their tasks. This will include experts with knowledge and experience of further education and training, quality assurance, teaching and learning, and external review. It will include international representatives and QQI will seek to ensure diversity within the team. The ETB will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed composition of their review team to ensure there are no conflicts of interest. The roles and responsibilities of the review team members are as follows<sup>32</sup>:

### Chairperson

4.3. The chairperson is a full member of the team. Their role is to provide tactical leadership and to ensure that the work of the team is conducted in a professional, impartial and fair manner, and in compliance with the Terms of Reference. The chairperson's functions include:

- Leading the conduct of the review and ensuring that proceedings remain focused.
- Coordinating the work of reviewers.
- Fostering open and respectful exchanges of opinion and ensuring that the views of all participants are valued and considered.
- Facilitating the emergence of evidence-based team decisions (ideally based on consensus).
- Contributing to, and overseeing the production of, the review report within the timeline agreed with QQI, approving amendments or convening additional meetings if required.

### Co-ordinating Reviewer

4.4 The co-ordinating reviewer is a full member of the team. Their role is to capture the team's deliberations and decisions during the proceedings and ensure that they are expressed clearly and

---

<sup>32</sup> Further detail on the conduct of reviewers is outlined in QQI's Code of Conduct for Reviewers and Evaluators.

accurately in the team report. It is vital that the co-ordinating reviewer ensures that sufficient evidence is provided in the report to support the team’s recommendations. The role of the co-ordinating reviewer includes:

- Acting as the liaison between the review team and QQI; and, during the main review visit, between the review team and the ETB review co-ordinator.
- Maintaining records of discussions during the planning and main review visits.
- Co-ordinating the drafting of the review report in consultation with the team members and under the direction of the chairperson within the timeline agreed with QQI.

### All Review Team Members

4.5 The role of all review team members includes:

- Preparing for the review by reading and critically evaluating all written material;
- Investigating and testing claims made in the self-evaluation report and other ETB documents during the main review visit by speaking to a range of staff, learners and stakeholders.
- Contributing to the production of the review report, ensuring that their particular perspective and voice (i.e. learner, industry, stakeholder, international etc.) forms an integral part of the review.
- Following the individual ETB reviews, providing observations to inform the development of the sectoral report.

## 5 The Review Process and Timeline

5.1 The key steps in the review process with indicative timelines are outlined below. Specific dates for each ETB review will be outlined by QQI in accordance with the published review schedule.

Step	Action	Timeframe
<b>Preparation</b>	Preparation of a provider profile by each ETB (e.g. outlining mission; strategic objectives; local context; data on staff profiles; recent developments; key challenges).	6-9 months before first main review visit

Step	Action	Timeframe
	Provision of ETB data by SOLAS (e.g. data on learner profiles; local context; strategic direction).	
	Establishment of review teams and identification of ETBs for review by each review team, selected in accordance with the ETB provider profiles and data and in consultation with ETBs on potential conflicts of interest.	
<b>Self-Evaluation Report (SER)</b>	Preparation and publication by ETBs of individual, inclusive, whole-of-organisation self-evaluations of how effectively they assure the quality of teaching, learning and service activities.	11 weeks before main review visit
<b>Desk Review</b>	Desk review of the self-evaluation reports by the review teams.	Before initial meeting
<b>Initial Meeting</b>	An initial meeting of the review team, including reviewer training, briefing from SOLAS, discussion of preliminary impressions and identification of any additional documentation required.	5 weeks after submission of self-evaluation report 6 weeks before main review visit
<b>Planning Visit</b>	A visit to the ETB by the chair and co-ordinating reviewer of the review team to receive information about the self-evaluation process, discuss the schedule for the main review visit and discuss any additional information requests.	5 weeks after SER 6 weeks before main review visit
<b>Main Review Visit</b>	A visit to the ETB by the review team to receive and consider evidence from ETB staff, learners and stakeholders in respect of the objectives and criteria set out in the Terms of Reference.	11 weeks following receipt of self-evaluation report
	Preparation of draft ETB review report by review team.	6-8 weeks after main review visit



Step	Action	Timeframe
<b>Individual ETB Reports</b>	Draft report sent to ETB by QQI for a check of factual accuracy.	1 week following receipt by QQI
	ETB responds with any factual accuracy corrections	1 week following receipt
	Final report sent to ETB.	1 week following receipt of any factual accuracy corrections
	Response to review submitted by ETB.	2 weeks after receipt of final report
<b>Outcomes</b>	QQI considers findings of individual ETB review reports and organisational responses through governance processes.	Next available meeting of QQI Approvals and Reviews Committee
	ETB review reports are published with organisational response.	
<b>Follow-Up</b>	Preparation of an action plan by ETB.	1 month after QQI decision
	QQI seeks feedback from ETB on experience of review.	6 weeks after decision
	One-year follow-up report by ETB to QQI. This (and any subsequent follow-up) may be integrated into annual reports to QQI.	1 year after main review visit
	Continuous reporting and dialogue on follow-up through annual reporting and dialogue processes.	Continuous

## Appendix B: Main Review Visit Schedule

<b>Date: Monday 1st November</b>				
<b>Theme: TBD (Day 1)</b>				
<b>Time (GMT)</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
09.00-09.30	ETB Review Coordinator(s)/Director of FET	Michael Donohoe Dympna McCarron Dr Linda Pinkster	Review Co-ordinator Director of Quality Assurance Director of Further Education and Training	Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator
09.30-10.00	Private Review Team Meeting	Review Team only (QQI representative will join for some minutes)		
10.00-11.00	<b>1. ETB Chief Executive &amp; SMT</b>  <b>In earlier reviews, the first 15 Minutes have been spent with ETB CE alone with the rest of the SMT then being admitted.</b>	John Kearney Dr Linda Pinkster Berni Power Ann Marie Lacey Dr Fiona McGrath Deirdre Byrne Sinead McKenna David McAdam Dympna McCarron	Chief Executive Director of Further Education and Training Director of Organisational Support and Development Director, Cavan Institute Director, Monaghan Institute Adult Education Officer Training Services Manager Co-ordinator Castleblayney Youthreach and Youthreach representative on the FET Management and Quality Council Director of Quality Assurance	Discussion of mission, strategic plan, roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and enhancement
11:00-11.30	Private Review Team Meeting			
11.30 - 11.45	Review Team Break			

11.45-12.30	<b>2. Self-Evaluation Team</b>	Sharon Cosgrove	Data Reporting Officer - involved in providing key data from PLSS and MIS for the compilation of the report. Sharon was a key member of the core team working on the day-to-day development of the Provider Profile and Self-Evaluation Report.	Discussion of the development of the self-evaluation report
		Seamus Connolly	Communications Officer - involved in the final design, structure and layout of the Self-Evaluation Report. Seamus was a key member of the core team working on the day-to-day development of the Self-Evaluation Report.	
		Louise Clarke	Deputy Director, Cavan Institute - Representative of Cavan Institute ensuring that the report contents were reflective of Cavan Institute's role in overall FET provision at CMETB.	
		Rynagh McNally	Deputy Director, Monaghan Institute - Representative of Monaghan Institute ensuring that the report contents were reflective of Monaghan Institute's role in overall FET provision at CMETB.	
		Carol Kelly	Community Education Facilitator, Monaghan - Representative of Adult Education ensuring that the report contents were reflective of Adult Education's role in overall FET provision at CMETB.	
		Dympna McCarron	Director of Quality Assurance - Key member of the core team overseeing the day-to-day development of key documentation and processes linked to the inaugural review. Dympna also acted as a key link between the team working on the review and senior management, providing regular updates via the FET Management and Quality Council and Quality Assurance Sub-group.	
		Michael Donohoe	Research and Evaluation Facilitator - Responsible for conducting primary and secondary research linked to the development of the Provider Profile and Self-Evaluation Report. Michael was also responsible for drafting these core documents and co-ordinating the various internal and external consultation events that informed the review.	

		Aidan Kinsella	Industry Representative - As an employer, external to CMETB, Aidan provided valuable, impartial insight and feedback into CMETB's role and impact in working with employers locally, regionally and nationally in meeting key skills needs and upskilling/reskilling existing staff. Aidan is also a takes an active role in OEM Apprenticeship governance structures.	
12.30-1pm	Panel Review Team Meeting			
1pm- 2pm	Review Team Lunch/Break			
2pm-2.45pm	<b>3. Parallel sessions with learners, including learners (max 3 groups)</b>			Discussion of learner experience
2pm-2.45pm	Parallel session 1 (L1-4 learners)		<b>A minimum of 6 of the following learners will participate in this session:</b>	
		Cillian Watterson	Learner with Kingscourt Youthreach	
		Shane Loughlin	Learner with Cavan Adult Education Services	
		Mohammad Alasafra	Learner with Cavan Adult Education Services	
		Abdoal Hamid	Learner with Cavan Adult Education Services	
		Martin Ngoyi	Learner with Cavan Adult Education Services	
		Sharon Sheridan	Learner with Monaghan Adult Education Services	
2pm-2.45pm	Parallel session 2 (L5-6 learners)		<b>A minimum of 6 of the following learners will participate in this session</b>	
		Denis Jastrzebski	Learner with Monaghan Institute	
		Eleasha Flood	Learner with Cavan Institute	
		Clara Hewston	Learner with Cavan Institute	
		Henrick Provideo	Learner with Monaghan Institute	
		Sandra Hagen	Learner with Monaghan Institute	
		Edel Kelly	Learner with Adult Education Services	

		Sarah Nwali	Learner with Adult Education Services	
		Nicola Morgan	Learner with Adult Education Services	
		Sylwia Fryzlewicz	Learner with Monaghan Institute	
2.45-3pm	Review Team Break			
3pm-3.45pm	<b>4. Parallel sessions with learners, including learners (max 3 groups)</b>			Discussion of learner experience
3pm-3.45pm	<b>Parallel session 3 (Apprentices &amp; other WB learners)</b>		<b>A minimum of 6 of the following learners will participate in this session:</b>	
		Mark Smith	Commis Chef Apprenticeship learner	
		Paul Callan	OEM Apprenticeship learner	
		Clíodhna Velazquez Mc Donnell	Advance Building Design with 3D CAD Traineeship learner	
		Shauna Lynch	Advance Building Design with 3D CAD Traineeship learner	
		Gustas Norbutas	OEM Apprenticeship learner	
		Chantal Quinn	Commis Chef Apprenticeship learner	
		Tara Henderson	Skills to Advance learner - Level 6 Training and Development	
		Christopher Campbell	Skills to Advance learner - Leadership and Management	
3pm-3.45pm	<b>Parallel session 4 (Past Graduates in HE or employment)</b>	Claire Keenan	Monaghan Institute graduate	
		Liz Mc Caffrey	Monaghan Institute graduate	
		Martin Fox	Monaghan Institute graduate	
		Imani Tutu	FET graduate	
		Brenda Sheridan	FET graduate	
		Alex O'Neil	Cavan Institute graduate	
3.45-4.15pm	Private Review Team Meeting			
4.15pm-4.30pm	Review Team Break			

4.30-5.15pm	<b>5. Parallel sessions with LEARNING PRACTITIONERS (max 3 groups)</b>			Discussion of staff involvement in quality assurance and enhancement
4:30-5:15pm	<b>Parallel session 1 (Unaccredited and L 1-4 learning practitioners)</b>	A minimum of 6 of the following representative tutors will attend. Some tutors will be on stand-by in case of technical difficulties on the day.		
		Nataliya Obajuluwa	Adult Education tutor currently delivering ESOL Beginners, ESOL Elementary, ESOL Level 3, ESOL Bridging, Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking Level 2 and Communications Level 3.	
		Joan McElvaney	Adult Education tutor currently delivering Personal Decision-Making Level 2, Reading and Writing Level 2, Communications and Career Planning Levels 3 and 4. Joan also has experience of delivering a broad range of modules across Levels 2 - 4.	
		Breda Treanor	Adult Education tutor currently delivering unaccredited Beauty Courses. Breda also has wide experience of delivering various modules on the Beauty Award at Level 5.	
		Ciaran Smith	Tutor of unaccredited and Level 4 programmes at Loughan House Prison Education Centre. Ciaran also is involved in the delivery of the Gaisce, The President's Awards programme.	
		Sarah Norton	Sarah delivers QQI Level 3 Art and Design and Painting modules at Kingscourt Youthreach	
		Kathlena Slowey	Kathlena delivers Communications QQI Level 3 and 4 modules at Monaghan Youthreach. Kathlena is also a resource worker within Monaghan Youthreach.	
4:30-5:15pm	<b>Parallel session 2 ( L5-6 Learning Practitioners)</b>	A minimum of 6 of the following representative tutors will attend. Some tutors will be on stand-by in case of technical difficulties on the day.		



		Suzannah O'Neil	Monaghan Institute tutor of Multimedia Levels 5 and 6. Suzannah is also involved in the development of the Level 6 Digital Media programme.	
		Shelagh Niland	Monaghan Institute tutor of Business Level 5 and also QA Co-ordinator in Monaghan Institute	
		Finola Keogh	Cavan Institute tutor of Communications and German. Finola is also Cavan Institute's Director of Lifelong Learning.	
		Ciara Flynn	Cavan Institute tutor of Desktop Multimedia Audio Production, Music Technology, Music for Sound and Picture, Advanced Composing using Technology tutor at Cavan Institute.	
		Sinead Cahill	Adult Education (BTEI) tutor of Healthcare modules at Level 5	
		Elizabeth McPhillips	Adult Education (BTEI) tutor of Level 5 Communications, Business Administration and Information and Administration modules.	
4:30-5:15pm	<b>Parallel session 3 (Apprenticeship &amp; other WBL instructors)</b>	Stephen Carron	Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) Apprenticeship Instructor delivering modules in Electrical and Electronic Technology, OEM Practices, Health and Safety, Mechatronics and Analytics and Problem Solving. Stephen is also the OEM tutor representative on the OEM governance structures.	
		Pauric White	Commis Chef Apprenticeship Instructor delivering a broad range of modules in Scientific Principles and Culinary Technologies, Food and Beverage Service, International Cookery, Culinary Product Development and Innovation and Food Safety.	

		Ita McNulty	OEM and Electrical Apprenticeship Instructor and Skills to Advance tutor. Ita delivers a broad range of modules to include Communications and Team Leadership, Customer Service, Work Experience, Bookkeeping (Manual and Computerised), Train the Trainer, City and Guilds Instructional Leadership and Management modules in Managing and Implementing Change and Managing Remote Workers, City and Guilds Hospitality Management.	
		Michael McGrath	Computer Aided Design tutor on the Advanced Building Technician with 3D CAD Traineeship with Training Services.	
		Ronan Duffy	OEM Apprenticeship Instructor, previously taught on the OEM Traineeship	
		Martin Lynch	Martin is an Electrical Apprenticeship Phase 2 Instructor with CMETB Training Services.	
		Tracey Hourican	Accounting Technician Ireland Apprenticeship Instructor delivering modules to include Taxation and Business Law, Advanced Financial Accounting, Financial Data Management and Management Accounting.	
5.15pm-5.45pm	Panel Review Team Meeting	QQI representative will join to discuss any support needs.		

<b>Date: Tuesday, 2 November 2021</b>				
<b>Theme: TBD (Day 2)</b>				
<b>Time (GMT)</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
09.00-09.30	ETB Review Coordinator	Michael Donohoe Dympna McCarron Dr Linda Pinkster	Review Co-ordinator Director of Quality Assurance Director of Further Education and Training	Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator
9.30-10.00	Private Review Team Meeting			
10.00-10.45				Discussion of mechanisms for learner voice and learner support services
	<b>6. Learner representatives and Learner Support Services : Learner Supports</b>	Ceinwen Fergus	Ceinwen is an Adult Literacy Organiser in Monaghan with responsibility for the co-ordination of literacy and numeracy programmes supports to learners in Co. Monaghan. Ceinwen is also actively engaged with other CMETB Centres/Services in terms of providing literacy and numeracy supports to learners, including the support to apprentices' initiative.	
		Karol Harvey	Karol is the Guidance Counsellor at Monaghan Institute and is responsible for the co-ordination of disability supports to learners attending the institute.	
		Suzanne Smith	Suzanne is an adult education tutor who, as part of her tutoring work, provides support to apprentices requiring additional support with Maths. Suzanne also wrote a Maths Support resource for apprentices which is used across all ETBs.	
		Liam Treanor	Liam is a counsellor who provides counselling supports to Youthreach learners.	

		Karen Fitzpatrick	Karen is a Deputy Director at Cavan Institute and has specific responsibility for the co-ordination of student supports across the institute. Karen also has previous experience as a second-level teacher and principal of Virginia College.	
		Janna Tiarney	Janna Tiarney is the founder and owner of Educoot.org which develops teaching and learning resources for learners in second-level and Further Education. CMETB avails of many of these resources with literacy learners and learners have received them well. Janna has over 30 years' experience in the education sector, including work for a number of years as an adult education tutor and resource worker with Cavan VEC/CMETB. Janna was also heavily involved in the development of QA policies and procedures within Adult Education in Cavan VEC (now CMETB).	
10.45-11.15	Private Review Team Meeting			
11.15-11.30	Review Team Break			
11.30-12.15PM	<b>7. Parallel sessions with FET Coordinators</b>			
11.30-12.15PM	<b>Parallel Session 1: Heads of Centre/FET Coordinators - Unaccredited/level 1-4 provision</b>	Gemma Brady	Gemma is the Community Education Facilitator in County Cavan and has responsibility for the provision of both unaccredited and accredited training and supports to a wide variety of community groups and organisations across County Cavan. Gemma also co-ordinates the BTEI programme at QQI Levels 5 - 6 in County Cavan which offers full awards in Healthcare, Childcare and Business and Administration, for example, as well as a broad range of minor awards at QQI levels 5 and 6. Gemma is a member of the Programme Development and Implementation Sub-group.	Discussion of QA arrangements, responsibilities and implementation

		Deirdre O'Callaghan	Deirdre is an Adult Literacy Organiser in County Cavan and co-ordinates the delivery of a broad range of both unaccredited and accredited literacy and numeracy programmes and supports for learners up to and including QQI Level 4. Deirdre co-ordinates these courses in the Cavan town and west Cavan areas.	
		Laura Brady	Laura is an Adult Literacy Organiser in County Monaghan with specific responsibility for the co-ordination of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes at unaccredited and up to QQI Level 3. Laura has also recently co-ordinated the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme in County Cavan.	
		Michael Murphy	Michael is the co-ordinator in Kingscourt Youthreach, a two-year training programme for unemployed, early-school leavers aged between 15 and 20. Michael is also a member of the QA Working Group and QA Sub-group, representing Youthreach provision across CMETB. Michael is also involved in the PLC Access Programme.	
		Bernadette Duffy	Bernadette is the co-ordinator in Carrickmacross Youthreach, a two-year training programme for unemployed, early-school leavers aged between 15 and 20.	
		Angela Dennehy	Angela is the Supervising Teacher at Loughan House, an open prison in West Cavan. While under the auspices of the Irish Prison Service, the prison's education centre falls under CMETB Quality Assurance agreements.	

11.30-12.15PM	<b>Parallel Session 2 - Heads of Centre/FET Coordinators Level 5-6 provision (including training provision)</b>	Carol Kelly	Carol is the Community Education Facilitator in County Monaghan and has responsibility for the provision of both unaccredited and accredited training and supports to a wide variety of community groups and organisations across County Cavan. Carol also co-ordinates the BTEI programme at QQI Levels 5 - 6 in County Monaghan which offers full awards in Healthcare, Childcare and Business and Administration, for example, as well as a broad range of minor awards at QQI levels 5 and 6. Carol is also a member of the QA Working Group and QA Sub-group.	
		Dr Fiona McGrath	Fiona is the Director of Monaghan Institute, a Post-Leaving Certificate College located on the outskirts of Monaghan town. Fiona is also a member of the FET Management and Quality Council.	
		Ann Marie Lacey	Ann Marie is the Director of Cavan Institute, a Post-Leaving Certificate College located across multiple sites in Cavan town. Ann Marie is also a member of the FET Management and Quality Council.	
		Sinead McKenna	Sinead is the manager of CMETB's Training Services which co-ordinates a range of apprenticeships, traineeships and employer engagement supports and services. Sinead is also a member of the FET Management and Quality Council.	
		Leo Mallen	David is the co-ordinator in Castleblayney Youthreach, a two-year training programme for unemployed, early-school leavers aged between 15 and 20. David is also a member of the FET Management and Quality Council.	
		Michelle Forrester	Michelle is the Director of Tanagh Outdoor Education Centre which provides a wide range of outdoor activities training programmes, including an Outdoor Activity Instructor Traineeship at QQI Level 5.	

12:15-12.45pm	Private Review Team Meeting			
12.45pm-1.45pm	Review Team Lunch/Break			
1.45-2.30pm	<b>8. Second Providers (e.g., Representatives of Training Contractors, LTIs, CTCs)</b>	Philip McManus	Manager of TMTS, a SOLAS approved training organisation providing a wide variety of Construction Skills Certification Scheme courses. TMTS is a contracted training provider to CMETB Training Services.	Discussion of arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement of education and training delivered by second providers
		Jane Lawlor	Jane is assistant co-ordinator and a tutor with the Cavan Genealogy Local Training Initiative (LTI). This LTI provides qualifying learners to work towards full QQI awards in Early Childhood Education and Care Support Level 4, ICT Skills Level 4 and/or Office Skills Level 4.	
		Sandra Anderson	Sandra is the co-ordinator of the Teach na Daoine LTI which provides qualifying learners with the opportunity to complete a Level 3 full award in Science and Engineering.	
		Terry Hyland	Terry Hyland is the Chief Executive of Cavan County Local Development (CCLD). CMETB and CCLD maintain close relationships and collaborate on mutually beneficial training programmes and initiatives via, for example, the Leader Programme. A recent example of this collaboration is the delivery of a Regional Tour Guide Programme QQI Level 6 Special Purpose Award funded by the Leader Programme.	



		Gerard Callan	Gabriel is the Education Support Officer with Monaghan Integrated Development (MID). CMETB and MID maintain close relationships and collaborate on mutually beneficial training programmes and initiatives, via the Social Inclusion and Community Activation (SICAP) and Leader Programmes, for example. A recent example of this collaboration is the delivery of a Regional Tour Guide Programme QQI Level 6 Special Purpose Award funded by the Leader Programme.	
		Alison Hollinshead	Alison works with the National Learning Network as a Programme Development Officer and maintains a strong relationship with CMETB as a second provider.	
2:30-3pm	Private Review Team Meeting			
3:00-3.15pm	Review Team Break			
3.15pm-4pm	<b>9. Parallel sessions with external stakeholders (max 3 groups)</b>			
3.15pm-4pm	<b>Parallel session 1 (Collaborating Providers)</b>	Kevin Bartley	Kevin is the Assistant Training Manager with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board who is a collaborating provider on the OEM Apprenticeship.	Discussion of quality assurance arrangements for collaborative programmes
		Clodagh Beare	Clodagh is the Quality Manager with Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB and was involved in co-ordinating the development of the new QQI national Early Learning and Care Awards at Levels 5 and 6, which CMETB will be rolling out over the next 2 academic years. Clodagh also works closely with CMETB colleagues on national initiatives.	

		Gabriela Airini	Gabriela works with Accounting Technicians Ireland and is heavily involved in the development and delivery of the Accounting Technicians Apprenticeship. CMETB maintains strong relationships with ATI and Gabriela in respect of this apprenticeship.	Discussion of collaboration and engagement with HEIs, including consideration of ATP
		Mallory Higgins	Mallory works with Kerry ETB and is responsible for the co-ordination of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship which CMETB is also a collaborating provider on.	
		Kalianne Farren	AONTAS is the national Adult Learning organisation and works to promote the value and benefits of adult learning. CMETB maintains strong relationships with AONTAS in terms of enhancing and promoting the learner experience and learner voice. Kalianne is a Research Officer working on the Learner Voice Project in AONTAS.	
		Peter Egan	Peter is the Director of Further Education and Training with Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB, an ETB which maintains strong relationships with CMETB on national issues of mutual interest.	
3.15pm-4pm	<b>Parallel session 2 (Higher Education)</b>	Gertie Taggart	Gertie works in Letterkenny Institute of Technology and was the lead person in setting up the Health and Social Care Degree on an outreach basis at Monaghan Institute.	
		Michael Mulvey	Michael is the President of Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)	
		Oliver Hegarty	Oliver is the Head of the Department of Social Science at Technological University of the Shannon, formerly Athlone Institute of Technology.	
		Dr Jerry Bird	Jerry is the Head of the School of Science at Institute of Technology Sligo.	
		Judith Bisset	Judith is the Academic Team Lead for the MOccTH/BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, Scotland.	

3.15pm-4pm	<b>Parallel session 3 (Community Providers &amp; Groups, including representatives of Cooperation Hours)</b>	<b>A minimum of 6 of the following representative groups will be invited to participate in this session</b>		Discussion of ETB engagement with community groups
		Tresa Quigley	Tresa is the co-ordinator with Cavan County Childcare Committee, a group that maintains strong relationships with CMETB's Adult Education Services.	
		Ursula McKenna	Ursula is the co-ordinator of Dochas for Women a Monaghan based organisation that encourages women to become more actively involved in self and community development. CMETB maintains a strong relationship with Dochas by providing ongoing training programmes and supports.	
		Una Coyle	Una is Team Leader of the Monaghan Local Employment Service (LES), a body that liaises with employers, local and national agencies to progress clients into training and employment. CMETB regularly provides training programmes and supports to LES participants.	
		Rosie Mills	Rosie is the co-ordinator of a Community Employment Scheme based in Carrickmacross which works with people who are currently unemployed. Rosie regularly refers participants on her scheme to CMETB for training and upskilling supports.	
		Helena Tighe-Giles	Helena is the Manager of Cavan Autism Hub. CMETB maintains close working relationships with the Autism Hub and both work together on collaborative projects.	
		Anne Malone	Anne is actively involved in community projects in her local community in Co. Monaghan, including the organisation of adult education courses and also previously worked with the Department of Social Protection.	
4:00-4.30pm	Private Review Team Meeting			

4:30-4.45pm	Review Team Lunch/Break			
4.45-5.30pm	<b>10. Professional and Administration Services (finance, HR and Facilities/IT)</b>	Karen McBride	Karen is the Head of Finance for FET and also sits on the Quality Assurance Sub-group.	Discussion of the relationship between the ETB's quality assurance system and its professional functions
		Dr Linda Pinkster	Director of Further Education and Training and Chair of the FET Management and Quality Council.	
		Pauline Grogan	Pauline is the Head of Human Resources and is responsible for the management of all HR related functions across the ETB including the recruitment and contracting of staff across the FET Service.	
		Berni Power	Berni is Director of Organisational Support and Development and is responsible for the management of the various administrative functions across the ETB to include Finance, HR, ICT, Compliance, Land and Buildings, Procurement and Corporate Services.	
		Liam McCarren	Liam is the Head of ICT at CMETB and is responsible for the management of the ICT network and infrastructure across the ETB.	
		Fiona Nugent	Fiona is head of Compliance and is responsible for ensuring that CMETB remains compliant with its legal and statutory obligations, while also ensuring the relevant corporate policies and procedures are in place and kept up to date.	
		Ger Heaphey	Ger is Head of the Corporate Affairs Section of CMETB as well as being the Monaghan Admin Office manager.	
5.30pm-6pm	Private Review Team Meeting			

<b>Date: 3 November 2021</b>				
<b>Theme: TBD (Day 3)</b>				
<b>Time (GMT)</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
09.00-09.30	ETB Review Coordinator	Michael Donohoe Dympna McCarron Dr Linda Pinkster	Review Co-ordinator Director of Quality Assurance Director of Further Education and Training	Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator
9.30-10.00	Private Review Team Meeting			
<b>11. Parallel Sessions: EAs and SMEs</b>				
10:00-10:45	Parallel Session 1: EAs and SMEs	Danny Brennan	Danny is the External Chair of CMETB's Programme Approval Committee and interim Chair of the OEM Apprenticeship Examination Board.	Discussion of role of committee in quality assurance of programme development and approval
		Margaret Scollan	Margaret is the External Chair of CMETB's Programme Proposal Committee	
		Teresa Stack	Teresa is an external evaluator who has been involved in the review of programmes delivered by Monaghan Institute.	
		Tom Corrigan	Tom is a subject matter expert in respect of the Original Equipment Manufacturing Apprenticeship for which CMETB is the co-ordinating provider.	

		Nick Crofts-Smith	Nick is a hospitality, catering and customer Service consultant with City and Guilds and honorary member of the City and Guilds London Institute. Nick was awarded for recognition for services to vocational education, technician training and assessment. Nick also previously worked as a chef and Head of Catering at a UK based college. Nick is an External Quality Assessor (EQA) with City and Guilds for hospitality awards, some of which CMETB are now delivering as part of its Skills to Advance programme.	
10.00-10.45	<b>Parallel Session 2: EAs and SMEs,</b>	Patrick Casey	Patrick is an External Authenticator for the Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) Apprenticeship and has an engineering trades background.	

		Eileen McDermott	Eileen is a teacher of Early Learning and Care QQI Levels 5 and 6 at Sallynoggin College in Dublin. Eileen is also an External Authenticator (EA) and as worked as an EA for CMETB on Early Learning and Care and Social Studies awards. Eileen was also involved in the new national Early Learning and Care awards development group in Dublin and Dún Laoghaire ETB (DDLETB).	
		Margaret Moran	Margaret is an External Authenticator (EA) who works with Cavan Institute as an EA on their professional cookery awards.	
		Paula Breathnach	Paula teaches at Galway Technical Institute while also working as an External Authenticator. Paula has worked as an EA for CMETB on Social Care and Health Science awards.	
		Jamie Webb-Fryer	Jamie is an EQA Consultant, subject chief examiner and exam auditor with City and Guilds on their Hospitality Awards. CMETB is currently delivering the Level 4 Hospitality Award as part of the Skills to Advance programme and Jamie provides QA support to CMETB.	
10.45-11.15	Private Review Team Meeting			



11.15-11.30	Review Team Break			
11.30-12.15	<b>12. Learning Practitioners (cross-section of services and programmes) involved in programme development and review</b>	Brenda Hennessey	Head of School of Creative Practices, Computing and Engineering, Cavan Institute. Brenda is also involved in the development of the new Audio and Music Production (AMP) Award at Cavan Institute. Brenda has also recently completed the Maynooth University Level 9 programme in Programme Design and Validation.	Discussion of staff involvement in <b>programme development &amp; review</b>
		Evin O'Meara	Evin works in Cavan Institute and has a strong background in programme development within the Institute. At present Evin is involved in the development of the new Audio and Music Production (AMP) Award at Cavan Institute. Evin has also recently completed the Maynooth University Level 9 programme in Programme Design and Validation.	
		Stephen Carron	Stephen is a tutor on the OEM Apprenticeship and is very involved in assessment development for this award.	
		Mary Gaffney	Mary is a tutor in Cavan Institute and was the CMETB representative on the new Early Learning and Care QQI National Programme Development Team.	

		Daire O'Reilly	Daire is an audio and music production tutor at Cavan Institute and is, at present, involved in the development of the new Audio and Music Production Programme.
		Dympna McCarron	Dympna is the Director of Quality Assurance with CMETB and is responsible for the management and oversight of programme development and validation processes across CMETB. Dympna was the Programme Manager for development of the OEM apprenticeship and is currently involved in the development of the Audio and Music Programme in conjunction with Cavan Institute. Dympna has also recently completed the Maynooth University Level 9 programme in Programme Design and Validation.
		June Neylon	CMETB's Quality Assurance Officer with responsibility for compliance. June co-ordinates the programme proposal and programme approval processes and was involved in the new national Early Learning and Care programme from a CMETB QA perspective.

		Michael Donohoe	Michael is research and evaluation facilitator and Professional Learning and Development Co-ordinator with CMETB. Michael has been involved at both local and national level in programme development on both unaccredited and accredited English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes. Michael is currently involved in a project with QQI on the development of Broad Standards for language awards at QQI Levels 1 - 4. Michael has also recently completed the Maynooth University Level 9 programme in Programme Design and Validation.	
12.15-12.45	Private Review Team Meeting			
12.45-1.45	Review Team Lunch/Break			
1.45-2.45	<b>13. Employer, regional skills bodies and regional partner representatives</b>			Discussion of the engagement of employers and regional skills bodies in strategic planning of programme delivery and quality assurance and enhancement activities
1.45-2.45	<b>Parallel Session 1: Employer Representatives</b>	Martin McKenna	Martin is the Operations Manager of Combilift based in County Monaghan. Combilift is the largest global manufacturer of multi-directional forklifts and a key leader in long load handling solutions.	

		Alan Fannin	Alan is Senior Vice President, Engineering with Entekra with a background in engineering. Entekra is a design, engineering and manufacturing company that provides fully integrated off-site solutions for both residential and commercial construction using technology that leverages the integration of software, engineering and technology, as well as other modern innovations and developments in construction.	
		Aidan Kinsella	Aidan is the Chief Executive Officer of Dennison Trailers and is also part of the OEM Apprenticeship governance processes. Dennison Trailers builds high quality trailers to include skeletal, curtainsiders, tippers, platforms, machinery carriers and drawbar trailers, as well as a range of specialist trailers.	
		Orla Murphy	Orla is the Human Resources Manager at the Slieve Ruseel Hotel Golf and Country club in Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan. The Slieve Russell is a luxury hotel providing four-star accommodation and a championship golf course, along with state-of-the-art conference facilities and leisure centre.	

		Dermot Carey	Dermot is the Director of Safety and Training at the Construction Industry Federation of Ireland and has responsibility for developing and co-ordinating policies in this area and involves liaising with government and the education sector on issues and providing assistance with safety regulatory compliance.	
		Nikki McGoohan	Nikki was an employer representative on the steering group for the development of the Self-Evaluation Report. Nikki was HR Director of Abcon and as such engaged with CMETB in leadership and management learning. She is now director of Propel 2gether.	
		Caroline Caulfield	Caroline is an accounts administrator with Leonard Steel Limited based in Monaghan. Leonard Steel are bespoke manufacturers of structural steel in Ireland and the UK and has been operating in Monaghan town since 1976.	
		Vicky McDwyer	Vicky is the manager of Esker Lodge Nursing Home, a large facility in Cavan Town with which CMETB maintains strong connections. Esker Lodge employs graduates of CMETB's Healthcare programmes.	

1.45-2.45	<b>Parallel Session 2: Regional Partners</b>	John Donohoe	John is the Chief Officer with Cavan County Council and works in the Community, Enterprise and Tourism area. As the local authority, CMETB maintains strong relationships with the County Council in terms of the economic and social development of County Cavan. The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), which is housed within the County Council, promotes the economic, social and cultural development of County Cavan. CMETB is represented on the LCDC.	
		Marcella Rudden	Marcella is the Head of Enterprise with Cavan Local Enterprise Office (LEO). Cavan LEO provides support and information to individuals seeking to start or grow their business to include, entrepreneurs, early-stage promoters, start-ups and small businesses keen to expand.	
		John McEntegart	John is the Head of Enterprise with Monaghan Local Enterprise Office (LEO). Monaghan LEO provides support and information to individuals seeking to start or grow their business to include, entrepreneurs, early-stage	

			promoters, start-ups and small businesses keen to expand.	
		Sheila Flanagan	Sheila is the Vice President for Academic Affairs at Dundalk Institute of Technology. Sheila is acting as a representative of the North East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) at this panel session.	
		Ray Murphy	Ray is manager of the North East Regional Skills Forum. The Regional Skills Fora were established as part of the Government's National Skills Strategy and provides an opportunity for employers and the education and training system to collaborate to meet the key and emerging skills needs of the regions.	
		Anne Keeley	Anne is the Area Manager at the Department of Social Protection (DSP), a government department that promotes active participation in Irish society. DSP provides income support and employer supports to a broad range of individuals and regularly refers clients to	



			CMETB for education and training supports.	
2.45-3.15	Private Review Team Meeting			
3.15-3.30	Review Team Break			
3.30-4.15	<b>14. ETB Employer Engagement Function</b>	Anna Marie Woods	Anna Marie is the Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM) Level 6 Apprenticeship Programme Manager	
		Eileen Roddy	Eileen is the Workforce Development Officer and is also a member of the Programme Development and Implementation (PDI) Sub-group.	
		Leo Mallen	Leo is the Assistant Training Manager with responsibility for the Contracted Training Provision within CMETB.	
		Charlotte Dunne	Charlotte is the Evening Provision Co-ordinator within Training Services	

		Noelette Dolan	Noelette is the Regional Skills Co-Ordinator for the Cavan, Monaghan, Louth and Meath region and works closely with companies in the region to assess and respond to their training needs. The Skills for Work programme provides training and upskilling options for employees at unaccredited and up to QQI Level 4.	
		Caroline Flanagan	Caroline is an Authorised Officer for apprenticeships delivered within CMETB.	
		Mary Lynch McKenna	Mary works in Cavan Institute and acts as the Institute's industry liaison person.	
		Michelle Baker	Michelle is the Recruitment Officer for CMETB working with Training Services. Michelle works on the advertisement and recruitment of learners for a range of programmes offered through CMETB's Training Services.	
4.15-4.45	Private Review Team Meeting			

<b>Date: 4 November 2021</b>				
<b>Theme: TBD (Day 4)</b>				
<b>Time (GMT)</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Roles</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
08.45-09.30	Private Review Team Meeting			
09.30-10.00	ETB Review Coordinator	Michael Donohoe Dympna McCarron Dr Linda Pinkster	Review Co-ordinator Director of Quality Assurance Director of Further Education and Training	Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator
10.00-10.45	<b>15. Pathways - Information Recruitment and Guidance</b>	Siobhan Mulleary	Siobhan is the Adult Guidance Counsellor based with Adult Education Services in Cavan. Siobhan provides support and advice to adult learners looking to return to education, reskill or progress from FET to Higher Education and/or into employment.	Discussion of arrangements for learner recruitment, access, transfer and progression
		Orla Maguire	Orla works as a Guidance Counsellor in Cavan Institute. Orla provides ongoing support to learners during their time in Cavan Institute and helps them identify progression opportunities. Orla also supports and signposts learners to relevant additional supports with the Institute.	
		Marie Clerkin	Marie is the Adult Guidance Information Officer in Monaghan providing advice and information on courses and fundings options available locally and nationally.	

		Michael Murphy	Michael is the Co-ordinator of Kingscourt Youthreach and is also a member of both the QA Working Group and QA Sub-group representing the 6 Youthreach centres across CMETB. Michael is also involved in the PLC Access Programme for Youthreach learners look to progress to Cavan or Monaghan Institutes.	
		Sinead McKenna	Sinead is the Training Services Manager and is responsible for managing all aspects to training service delivery including the provision of relevant information to learners via the recruitment function.	
		Deirdre Byrne	Deirdre is the Adult Education Officer with responsibility for the day-to-day management of adult education provision in Cavan and Monaghan. Adult Education Services provide a broad range of programmes for adult learners returning to education with a considerable focus on social and active inclusion measures to fore of Deirdre's work.	
10.45-11.15	Private Review Team Meeting			
11.15-11.30	Review Team Break			
11.30-12.15pm	<b>16. Quality Council (or equivalent) Sub-groups (max 3 groups)</b>	Dr Linda Pinkster	Linda is the Director of Further Education and Training and Chair of the FET Management and Quality Council.	Discussion of the approach to, and mechanisms for, quality assurance and enhancement

		Dr Fiona McGrath	Fiona is the Director of Monaghan Institute	
		Ann Marie Lacey	Ann Marie is the Director of Cavan Institute	
		Deirdre Byrne	Deirdre is the Adult Education Officer with responsibility for the day-to-day management of adult education provision in Cavan and Monaghan.	
		Sinead McKenna	Sinead is the Training Services Manager in CMETB.	
		David McAdam	David is Co-ordinator of Castleblayney Youthreach and represents all 6 Youthreach centres on the FET Management and Quality Council.	
		June Neylon	June is the Quality Assurance Officer based within the QA Team.	
		Evin O'Meara	Evin works in Cavan Institute and is also chair of the Programme Development and Implementation Sub-group.	
		Dympna McCarron	Dympna is the Director of Quality Assurance.	
12.15-12.45pm	Private Review Team Meeting			
12.45-1.45pm	Review Team Break			

1.45-2.30pm	<b>17. Quality Council (or equivalent) Sub-groups (max 3 groups)</b>			
1.45-2.30pm	<b>Parallel session 1: Programme Development and Implementation Sub-group</b>	Evin O'Meara	Evin works in Cavan Institute and is also chair of the Programme Development and Implementation (PDI) Sub-group.	Discussion of role of committee in quality assurance of FET Division
		Sabrina McEntee	Sabrina is the co-ordinator of Cavan Youthreach and represents the 6 Youthreach centres on the PDI Sub-group.	
		Gemma Brady	Gemma is currently the Community Education Facilitator in Cavan and represents Adult Education Services on the PDI.	
		Sharon Cosgrove	Sharon is the Data Reporting Officer within the QA Team. Sharon is also a member of the QA Working Group and QA Sub-group.	
		Siobhan Duffy	Siobhan is the Authorised Officer for Apprenticeships and is based within Training Services. Siobhan represents Training Services on the PDI.	
		Siobhan McCarra	Siobhan is the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Officer at CMETB providing training and upskilling supports for staff across the ETB in the area of technology and digital skills development.	
		Rynagh McNally	Rynagh is Deputy Director of Monaghan Institute and represents Monaghan Institute on the PDI.	

		Michael Donohoe	Michael is the Research and Evaluation Facilitator and Professional Learning and Development Co-ordinator and is based within the QA Team.	
1.45-2.30pm	<b>Parallel session 2: QA Sub-Group</b>	Carol Kelly	Carol is the Community Education Facilitator in Monaghan and represents Adult Education on the QA Sub-group.	Discussion of role of committee in quality assurance of FET Division
		Louise Clarke	Louise is a Deputy Director at Cavan Institute and represents Cavan Institute on the QA Sub-group.	
		Karen McBride	Karen is the Head of Finance for Further Education and Training.	
		Mary Fagan	Mary is the Quality Assurance Co-Ordinator with responsibility for the Quality Assurance of Training Services.	
		Michael Murphy	Michael is Co-ordinator of Kingscourt Youthreach and represents the 6 Youthreach centres on the QA Sub-group.	
		June Neylon	June is the Quality Assurance Officer based within the QA Team.	
		Martina Rooney	Martina works in Monaghan Institute and is involved in the development of QA policies and procedures, the new CMETB website and new QA SharePoint site.	
2.30pm-3pm	Private Review Team Meeting			



3:00-3:15PM	<b>EXTRA SESSION: Demo of ETB's QA SharePoint</b>		The Quality Assurance Support Service Team will provide an overview and demonstration of CMETB QA SharePoint site.	
3.15PM-4PM	<b>18. Quality Assurance Support Service Team</b>	Dympna McCarron	Dympna is the Director of Quality Assurance.	Discussion of the operation of the ETB's quality system, including arrangements for monitoring and review of quality
		June Neylon	CMETB's Quality Assurance Officer with responsibility for compliance. June co-ordinates the programme proposal and programme approval processes and was involved in the new national Early Learning and Care programme from a CMETB QA perspective.	
		Sharon Cosgrove	Sharon is the Data Reporting Officer and is responsible for the reporting of key PLSS and MIS data and metrics for FET Services and individual FET Centres in CMETB. Sharon is also a member of the in-house and national PLSS Advisory groups.	
		Mary Fagan	Mary is the Quality Assurance Co-Ordinator with responsibility for the Quality Assurance of Training Services.	
		Colette McBreen	Colette provides administrative supports to the QA Team and assists with assessment preparation.	
		Michael Donohoe	Michael is research and evaluation facilitator and Professional Learning and Development Co-ordinator with CMETB.	
4:00-4.30PM	Private Review Team Meeting			

4.30pm-4.45pm	Review Team Break			
4.45-5.30PM	<b>19. Heads of FET Support Services</b>	Liam McCarren	Liam is the Head of IT at CMETB and is responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of the ETB's IT systems.	
		Siobhan McCarra	Siobhan is the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Officer at CMETB providing training and upskilling supports for staff across the ETB in the area of technology and digital skills development.	
		Seamus Connolly	Seamus is the Communications Officer and provides supports to ETB Services in terms of communication and media relations, website and social media supports.	
		Martina Rooney	Martina works in Monaghan Institute and is involved in website and SharePoint site development and the management of social media platforms.	
		Karen McBride	Karen is the Head of Finance for Further Education and Training.	
		Siobhan Magee	Siobhan works with the Further Education Support Service which provides QA and Professional Learning and Development supports to ETBs, including CMETB.	
5.30pm-6pm	Private Review Team Meeting			

Date: 5 November 2021				
Theme: Wrap-up				
Time (GMT)	Group	Participants	Role	Purpose
9-9.30	20. Free Session			To be used as team needs. For example, meet participants from earlier session again, private session etc.
9.30-10.45am	Private Review Team Meeting	QQI representatives will join team at 10.15 for 15 minutes.		
10.45-11.30	21. Free Session			To be used as team needs. For example, meet participants from earlier session again, private session etc.
11-11.30am	22. QQI & ETB Review Coordinator/FET Director	Michael Donohoe Dympna McCarron Dr Linda Pinkster	Review Co-ordinator Director of QA Director of FET	QQI gathers feedback on the review process (Review Team not in attendance)
11.30-12	Private Review Team Meeting			

12-12.30	<b>23. Oral Feedback: Feedback presented by Review Team Chair. Attended by ETB Chief Executive, SMT, Self- Evaluation Steering Group, Group of Learners</b>	John Kearney	Chief Executive	Oral feedback on initial review findings
		Dr Linda Pinkster	Director of FET	
		Berni Power	Director of OSD	
		Dr Fiona McGrath	Director, Monaghan Institute	
		Ann Marie Lacey	Director, Cavan Institute	
		Deirdre Byrne	Adult Education Officer	
		Sinead McKenna	Training Services Manager	
		Dympna McCarron	Director of QA	
		June Neylon	Quality Assurance Officer	
		Carol Kelly	Community Education Facilitator	
		Louise Clarke	Deputy Director, Cavan Institute	
		Rynagh McNally	Deputy Director, Monaghan Institute	
		Michael Murphy	Youthreach Co-ordinator	
		Sharon Cosgrove	Data Reporting Officer	
		Aidan Kinsella	Industry Representative	
		Nikki McGoohan	Industry Representative	
		Siobhan Mulleary	Adult Guidance Counsellor	
		Pauline Grogan/Ciosa McClave	Human Resources	
		Karen McBride	FET Head of Finance	
		Liam McCarren	Head of IT	
		Siobhan McCarra	TEL Officer	
Seamus Connolly	Communications Officer			
Fiona Nugent	Head of Compliance			
Shane Loughlin	Learner Reps.			
Cillian Watterson	Learner Reps.			
12.30-1	Review Team Break			
1-5.pm	Private Review Team Meeting			Review team discuss report drafting

# Glossary of Terms

## QQI glossary of terms and abbreviations from this report

Term	Definition/Explanation
<b>2012 Act</b>	Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012
<b>AONTAS</b>	Ireland's National Adult Learning Organisation
<b>ATP</b>	Access, Transfer and Progression
<b>BTEI</b>	Back to Education Initiative
<b>CAO</b>	Central Applications Office
<b>CEDEFOP</b>	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Core</b>	Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, developed by QQI for use by all Providers
<b>ECVET</b>	European credit system for vocational education and training
<b>EQAVET</b>	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
<b>Erasmus+</b>	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
<b>ETB</b>	Education and Training Board
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>Fáilte Ireland</b>	Ireland's National Tourism Development Authority
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>Moodle</b>	A free, open-source online learning management system (LMS) that supports learning and training needs
<b>NFQ</b>	National Framework of Qualifications
<b>PLC</b>	Post Leaving Certificate

<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>QQI</b>	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
<b>SOLAS (formerly FÁS)</b>	The National Further Education and Training Authority (responsible for funding, co-ordinating and monitoring FET in Ireland)
<b>SPA</b>	Strategic Performance Agreement (between the ETB & Solas)
<b>TEL</b>	Technology-Enhanced Learning
<b>Youthreach</b>	Service providing early school leavers without and formal qualifications with opportunities for basic education, personal development, vocational training and work experience
<b>VECs</b>	Vocational and Education Committees (later became ETBs)