# QQI Review Report 2022

## Inaugural Review

## of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

QQI REVIEW

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# 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 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 an internationally accepted and recognised approach which includes:

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

This virtual review of the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board was completed by an independent review team in line with the Terms of Reference in Appendix A. This is the report of the

findings of the review team. Throughout the report, references to FET centres should be understood to include the colleges, centres, settings and organisations providing aspects of further education and training.

# The Review Team

The 2022 inaugural review of the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board was conducted by six reviewers selected by QQI. The review team attended virtual briefing and training sessions with QQI staff on 24 and 26 January 2022. A virtual planning visit to the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board took place on 1 February 2022. The main review was conducted using Microsoft Teams between 21 and 25 March 2021.

## Chair

Elizabeth Shackels is currently Head of Quality and Performance at South West College. In addition to her college responsibilities, she works as an Education and Training Associate Assessor to undertake College and private Training Providers' inspections. Elizabeth has also worked as a QAA reviewer and undertaken higher education reviews across the United Kingdom. She is passionate about education and promoting progression opportunities for young people.

## Coordinating Reviewer

Keith Brumfitt has worked as an international consultant for the European Commission, its agencies and contractors for fifteen years. This includes providing expert advice to the ECVET and EQAVET networks; and supporting the European Network of Experts on graduate tracking in vocational and higher education. He is currently evaluating the French Centres of Vocational Excellence and is a Board member of an international body awarding vocational and higher education qualifications.

Before working as a consultant, Keith was a senior manager in three national agencies in the UK - he was the Director of a Sector Skills Body; a National Manager in the government's agency for teacher training, and the Principal Advisor for Vocational Qualifications in the government's qualifications regulator. He has also taught in universities, vocational colleges, a young offenders' centre and secondary schools.

## Learner Representative

Anna Jakobek is a passionate, committed individual who wishes to inspire people to continue their education. She has worked hard over the past few months with many impressive accomplishments which include being part of the Washington Ireland Program, interviews for Echo, RedFM and 96FM,

Vice Chairperson of the Learners' Voices Group and Student Representative at Mayfield Training Centre. She is a student at Cork College of Commerce and continues to work hard to make access to education easier for everyone.

## Peer Expert

Dr Franz Gramlinger studied Law and Business Education at the Johannes Kepler University of Linz in Austria where he was awarded his PhD in social and economic sciences in 1997. After almost 10 years as a researcher and teacher at the University of Linz he accepted a Fulbright grant to the City University of New York (CUNY) in 2000 after which he worked in the University of Hamburg in Germany until 2004. From 2004-2007 he was seconded to Cedefop (the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) in Greece as an expert for e-skills and lifelong learning.

In October 2007 he returned to Austria to develop the Austrian Reference Point for quality assurance in VET in close cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education. The reference point is a department in the Austrian Agency for Education and Internationalisation (where Franz is head of the department for quality and transparency) and was renamed in 2021 as the Reference Point for Quality Assurance in General and Vocational Education and Training.

## Peer Expert

Ann Heelan works as a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) consultant. She has been the CEO of AHEAD for 20 years - leading the higher and FET sectors on the design of teaching and learning based on UDL principles. Originally a teacher in HE and FET she has advised professionals on inclusive curriculum planning and assessment. Ann has written many guidelines on inclusion, identifying needs and all aspects of inclusive policy and practice. Ann led the move to UDL in HE and FET by working with the HEA and SOLAS, and by showing institutions and individuals how small changes can lead to huge improvements in all learners' experiences.

A skilled facilitator, Ann set up Professional Learning Networks for Inclusive Practice in FET to support professionals to share information, solve difficulties and become more confident UDL practitioners who can respond to questions on the complex nature of diversity and inclusion. Ann co-wrote the SOLAS Guidelines *UDL for FET Practitioners* in 2020 alongside articles on Inclusive Study abroad for EAIE and guidelines for AHEAD.

## Industry Representative

Nikki McGoohan's professional background includes working with a wide range of small and medium sized enterprises. For over 14 years as a partner in ProTemp Nikki provided a range of business services including financial and general administration, mentoring for business owners and assisting them in their dealings with employees and financial institutions including banks and accountancy firms. Nikki has also worked in areas such as banking and insurance, and with a start-up nanotechnology company.

Nikki spent six years in a manufacturing company's management team with responsibility for human resources/health and safety. Since July 2020 Nikki has been the Director of Propel 2Gether Limited which provides business mentoring services, executive and personal coaching and training. Nikki works part-time for Cavan and Monaghan ETB delivering courses such as human resource management, business management and project management as part of their evening provision.

Section

1

# Introduction and Context

# Section 1: Introduction and Context

1. The Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) is one of sixteen ETBs established in 2013 by the Education and Training Boards Act. LMETB was formed through the merger of the Vocational Education Committees from County Louth and County Meath. On 1 July 2014, a former FÁS training centre[1] in County Louth became part of LMETB's responsibilities. LMETB has a statutory responsibility to provide, support, coordinate, administer and assess learners on a wide range of education services and programmes. This is achieved through co-operation with other institutions, and by providing support to other organisations to deliver education and training programmes that cannot be met by the ETB's education services.

2. The Louth and Meath Education and Training Board is the largest comprehensive education and training provider in the Louth and Meath region. It provides a range of services from primary to post-primary and further education and training (FET). It is one of the largest ETBs in the country, employing over 2,400 staff and providing education and training for over 13,000 students at the primary and post-primary levels, and approximately 20,000 learners participate in FET[2]. The ETB has three directorates: organisation support and development; schools; and further education and training. The FET directorate is organised as shown in figure 1. In 2021 711 ETB staff worked directly on FET programmes and services.

[1] Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FAS) was a state agency with responsibility for assisting individual who were seeking employment.
[2] Page 50 of the ETB's provider profile. Of these learners 4,331 completed non-accredited programmes in 2020, 5,088 in 2019, and 5,733 in 2018.

Figure 1 - LMETB's management structure for further education and training[3]

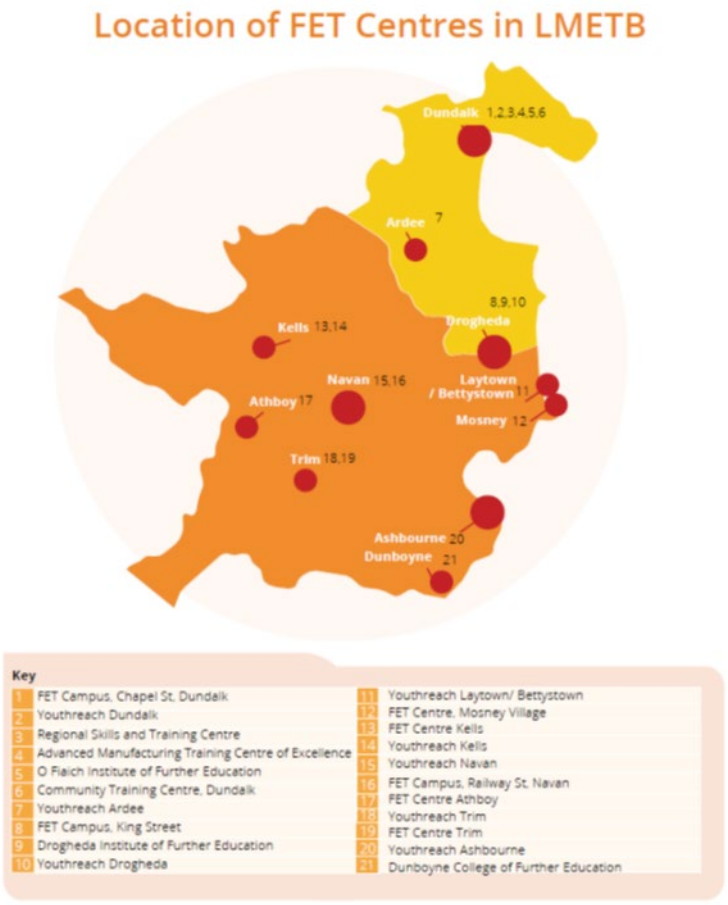
3. The ETB's further education and training programmes and services include a wide range of full-time and part-time provision for learners over the age of sixteen in a variety of centres and outreach locations across the counties of Louth and Meath. These centres (figure 2) include:

    - three post-leaving certificate (PLC) colleges;
    - one Regional Skills and Training Centre;
    - one Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence;

[3] Taken from page 23 of the Provider Profile.

- one Community Training Centre;
- eight Youthreach centres;
- seven multi-use FET campuses/centres offering a range of programmes and services.

Figure 2 - the locations of the FET centres:




4. The ETB also provides services and programmes in community-based locations throughout the two counties. Community training provision is provided through nine Local Training Initiatives, one Community Training Centre and one Specialist Training Provider. LMETB's Community Education Service supports new and existing community groups and organisations to establish community-based education programmes. The service prioritises individuals and groups who experience educational/social disadvantage or social exclusion.

Figure 3 - Community Training Provision in LMETB[4]

| | |
|---|---|
| **Local Training Initiatives** | **Drogheda Co. Louth:**<br>· Focus Your Future<br>· Education Skills Learning Opportunities programme (ESLO)<br>· Drogheda United F.C. Diploma in Business Administration<br><br>**Dundalk, Co. Louth:**<br>· Job Focus<br>· Muirhevnamor LTI<br>· Football Association of Ireland (FAI) Player Development and Education Programme<br>· Create Project<br><br>**Co. Meath:**<br>· Meath Opportunities for Training (MOT), Trim<br>· Fast Track to IT: Pre-Tech Apprenticeship, Dunshaughlin |
| **Community Training Centre** | Dundalk Community Training Centre |
| **Specialist Training Providers** | National Learning Network, Dundalk<br>National Learning Network, Navan |

5. Louth and Meath ETB's mission statement is a *commitment to excellence and innovation in the education of young people and adults through the provision of dynamic services delivered by professional staff.* The ETB aims to be the leading provider of quality education and services for people in both counties. It aims to achieve this through the management and delivery of a diverse range of accessible, progressive, and responsive programmes.

6. The ETB's self-evaluation report (SER) notes the mission statement is supported by a set of core values and principles which were developed in consultation with stakeholder groups. These are set out below:

    - EXCELLENCE - all stakeholders are afforded the highest standards of service provision;

[4] Taken from Appendix 4 (page 225) in the ETB's self-evaluation report.

- INNOVATION staff and learners are encouraged to be progressive, creative, and dynamic in their teaching and learning practices. Staff and learners are encouraged to explore the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning;
- LEARNER CENTRED - programmes and services are delivered in response to the needs of the learners in counties Louth and Meath;
- SUPPORTING TRANSITION - transfer, transition and guidance programmes, and support are provided to all learners to ensure they make the right choices regarding career pathways and choices, and that they transition successfully from one phase of their education journey to another;
- LEARNING - a lifelong learning perspective is promoted among staff and learners;
- EQUALITY - all learners are provided with access to education and support that maximises learning opportunities and helps them to reach their potential;
- INCLUSION - all learners, particularly those groups who may have experienced exclusion or isolation, are enabled to participate effectively in education;
- HOLISTIC - programmes and services cultivate the moral, emotional, physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions of the learner;
- RESPONSIVENESS - an awareness of national and local requirements forms the basis for provision;
- WELLBEING - programmes and services strive to develop learners' self -confidence and promote learner wellbeing;
- FAIRNESS - all policies, procedures and practices are just and reasonable;
- INTEGRITY - staff, learners and stakeholders are encouraged to act honestly, ethically and transparently. The highest standards in confidentiality, where applicable, are promoted;
- PARTNERSHIP and COLLABORATION - programmes and services are developed and delivered in conjunction with key stakeholder groups and organisations;
- VALUE FOR MONEY - the work of the ETB is conducted in an efficient and transparent manner with due regard for public accountability.

7. The ETB is governed by a statutory board with twenty-one members whose role is described in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. The Board meets a minimum of six times per year and has responsibility for promoting the success of the ETB through the direction and control of the ETB's activities. For each meeting, the Director of FET prepares a report on FET activities including any items relating to quality assurance.

8. In November 2021, the Board approved a Strategy Statement for 2022-26. This Statement includes five strategic goals (figure 4[5]) which replace the seven strategic goals in the 2017-21 Strategy Statement. Twenty five of the 26 actions in the 2022-26 Strategy Statement are described as needing to be achieved at some time between 2022-26 (action 5.1[6] is to be achieved in 2022). It was not clear to the review team which actions were seen as higher or lower priorities[7].

Figure 4 - the 2022-26 strategic goals

9. The ETB receives funding from SOLAS for the FET programmes and services described in Figure 5. The ETB also receives funding for its Youth Service through the Department of Children, Equality, Diversity Inclusion and Youth. Its Peace IV programme is funded though the European Regional Development Fund and the Irish and UK governments. The Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence is part-funded by Enterprise Ireland.

[5] Taken from page 17 of the ETB's self-evaluation report.
[6] Action 5.1. is to develop a sustainability policy consistent with the UN targets and Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2021.
[7] ETBs are required by law to prepare annual Service Plans setting out the services they propose to provide and an estimate of income and expenditure. LMETB complies with this requirement.

Figure 5 - FET programmes and services funded by SOLAS

- Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) Colleges
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Youthreach
- Community Training Centre
- Local Training Initiatives
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- Specialist Training Providers
- Specific Skills Training
- Bridging and Foundation Courses
- Community Education Service
- Back to Education Initiative
- Adult Learning Service
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Skills for Work
- Skills to Advance
- Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence
- Evening Courses
- FET Co-operation Hours
- Quality Assurance Office
- Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service
- Technology Enhanced Learning Office
- Professional Learning and Development/ Communications Office

10. Since 2018 SOLAS has developed performance agreements with each ETB. The 2018-2020 agreement between the ETB and SOLAS included FET programme developments[8], improvements in teaching and learning, the extended use of an innovative online assessment tool for learners, increased opportunities for apprentices etc. This agreement with SOLAS refers to quality improvement rather than quality assurance. A key strategic priority for the ETB's FET Directorate is the development of an FET strategy which aligns with national priorities outlined in SOLAS's National FET Strategy 2020-24 and local priorities identified at the FET annual planning workshops[9].

11. The provider profile completed by the ETB includes approximately 30 key performance indicators[10] (KPIs) linked to eight goals for the FET Directorate. The review team noted that none of these KPIs included quantitative data or targets. These KPIs emphasise progress rather than numerical indicators e.g., 'greater completion rate in FET programmes,' 'greater certification in FET programmes,' greater placement rates of FET graduates,' 'on-going development and expansion of Skills to Advance programme' etc. The review team saw this as a missed opportunity to establish quantitative performance targets for the FET programmes and services.

[8] Page 16, https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/d46f375d4e/14717_solas_etb_louth_meath_web.pdf
[9] Page 16 of the Provider Profile submitted by the ETB.
[10] See pages 16-18.

12. The ETB's self-evaluation report notes there has been progress towards the creation of an integrated quality assurance governance system since 2018. This includes the development of a governance architecture based on a Quality Assurance Management Committee as the main oversight body responsible for quality assurance. This management committee has three sub-committees (figure 6) covering:

    - communications;
    - programme development, review and evaluation;
    - quality assurance which includes
        a) policy and assessment procedures related matters;
        b) teaching and learning issues.

Figure 6: the governance structure of quality assurance in the ETB

| | Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee (QAGMC) | Quality Assurance Sub-Committee | Programme Development, Review and Evaluation (PDRE) Sub-Committee | Communications Sub-Committee |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Function | Strategic direction, governance, and oversight of all aspects of FET provision across LMETB. | Overview of quality assurance and teaching and learning processes. Reports directly to the QAGMC | Overview of new programme development and review of existing programmes Reports directly to the QAGMC | Overview of dissemination of information to learners and public. Input into the development of a clear communication strategy for FET in LMETB. Reports directly to the QAGMC. |

13. Membership of these sub-committees includes staff from various FET centres and support services. The communications sub-committee has membership from across the organisational pillars in LMETB. This facilitates communication across FET provision and increases the visibility and importance of quality assurance at a centre level. The review team met members of the main committee and sub-committee and noted the processes which are used for new or revised quality assurance related policies. This work to strengthen the governance of quality assurance acknowledges that the ETB (established in 2013) inherited five separate quality assurance related policies and procedures. Work to harmonise these processes and create a common, integrated quality assurance framework in FET began in 2018.

Section

# 2

# Self-evaluation Methodology

# Section 2: Self-Evaluation Methodology

14. Following the publication of QQI guidelines[11] and Terms of Reference for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in ETBs (December 2019), and extensive discussions between representatives from the sector and QQI on the direction and management of the review process, the ETB established a five-person Inaugural Review Working Group[12] and a 12 person Steering Committee to oversee, manage and direct the review process. The review team confirmed neither of these groups included staff or learner representatives or external stakeholders. The inaugural review working group met regularly to plan and prepare the provider profile and self-evaluation report and completed a desk review of the quality assurance procedures in April 2021. 14. The draft self-evaluation report was approved and agreed by the Steering Committee.

15. Communication across the ETB was an important aspect of the review and self-evaluation process. This led to:

    - the creation of a staff quality assurance site within Microsoft Teams for FET staff to share information and collaborate;
    - the development of an information sheet on the inaugural review for circulation in centres and with staff;
    - including the inaugural review as an agenda item for meetings at centre and at FET Leader/PLC Principal level;
    - email correspondence from FET senior managers and the inaugural review working group.

16. To support the production of the self-evaluation report, the ETB used surveys with follow-up focus groups to augment areas where there were 'gaps' in the survey responses. These consultations took account of the views of stakeholders including staff, learners, employers and external partners. All FET staff were invited to participate in the self-evaluation process by providing feedback and comment on the effectiveness of the ETB's quality improvement/quality assurance systems. A total of 202 staff responded. During the March meeting, the review team was informed that the response rate from teaching staff was approximately 20%. The response rate from FET

[11] Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards (QQI, 2019)
[12] Page 10 of the self-evaluation report

managers and leaders was approximately 80%. Ten employers and 22 external partner organisations responded to the ETB's survey[13]. The planned programme of consultation was disrupted by the government's restrictions associated with Covid-19 and this led the ETB to complete most of its consultation using on-line instruments.

17. To collect the views of FET learners, the ETB asked AONTAS[14] to organise two virtual meetings for 63 learners and an online survey which was completed by 330 learners. This consultation focused on the participants' views of the ETB and their experiences of learning during the imposition of government restrictions due to Covid-19. The review panel was not presented with specific information or data on the learners' views on the quality assurance processes used by the ETB.

18. The review team noted that the self-evaluation report relied on these survey responses for many conclusions and actions. In this context, there remains a question as to whether the responses were suitably representative, and whether the ETB could be confident about each of its conclusions and proposed follow-up actions.

19. The review team noted that the majority of the information in the 228-page self-evaluation report was descriptive rather than analytical. This made it difficult to identify key quality assurance themes and common issues which affected all, or most parts, of the ETB's further education and training provision. The self-evaluation report identifies 46 actions which the ETB plans to implement. The ETB has allocated responsibility and a timeline for each of these actions and these plans were shared with the review team. It was not clear to the review team whether some, or many, of these actions were high priorities.

20. Throughout the review team's virtual visit in March 2022 all members of staff from the ETB, second providers and contractors, employers and learners fully engaged with the process and responded to all requests for information. Those interviewed were open and responsive to the questions and observations of the review team.

[13] Page 8 of the self-evaluation report.
[14] The National Further Education and Training Learner Forum (AONTAS) is a national learner voice project. https://www.lmetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/LMETBFinalAONTASreport.pdf

Section

3

# Quality Assurance & Enhancement

# Section 3: Quality Assurance & Enhancement

## Objective 1: Governance and Management of Quality

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

21. The self-evaluation report noted the ETB is developing an integrated quality assurance governance system to ensure the consistent and ongoing maintenance of quality. Since 2018 the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee has been the main body responsible for quality assurance relating to the design, development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of FET provision. New and revised policies are considered and reviewed by the quality assurance sub-committee which makes recommendations to the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee. All quality assurance policies are noted by the LMETB Board.

22. The introduction of government restrictions arising from Covid-19 required the ETB to respond quickly and amend many of its quality assurance procedures e.g., in relation to learning and teaching, the provision of work experience and support to learners. The Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee was responsive to the guidance issued by QQI, adapted its procedures to meet the government's restrictions, and ensured ETB programmes and services continued in a timely and managed way.

23. Some progress has been made on introducing ETB-wide approaches to quality assurance. However, as noted in the self-evaluation report[15], the recognition and understanding of quality assurance governance structures needs to improve; a learner handbook for all FET provision, needs to be developed to support learners' understanding of how assessment is quality assured and governed; new staff need more information in relation to quality assurance as part of their

[15] Page 33 of the self-evaluation report.

induction programme; and there is a need to reduce jargon and technical language associated with quality assurance.

24. The ETB's self-evaluation process highlighted that FET centres use different approaches to develop and implement policies and procedures. These inconsistencies extend to many areas of FET provision e.g., the availability of induction for new staff; the availability of a standardised learner handbook; FET centres' monitoring and review of work-based learning and placements; and the assessment arrangements for learners[16]. The self-evaluation report also noted there are many good examples of quality assurance organised by 'some', 'many' or 'most' FET centres - there are fewer examples of ETB-wide quality assurance processes.

25. The review team commented on the amount of work assigned to the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee and its sub-committees e.g., the recently established *Programme development, review and evaluation* sub-committee will need to review a very significant number of FET programmes to ensure their continuing relevance to learners, employers and other stakeholders.

26. The Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee's sub-committee on communications has organised a wide range of activities to promote an ETB brand, keep staff informed of quality assurance issues, revise the ETB's website, gain feedback from staff on quality assurance issues, promote the ETB to external stakeholders etc. The ETB has made considerable progress in strengthening communications associated with quality assurance - however the self-evaluation report notes that communication around new and revised policies and procedures could be improved. The quality assurance section of the FET's Microsoft Team site was an effective new development in 2021. There is agreement that the QA SharePoint site is not as user friendly and not all staff have access.

[16] Page 70 of the self-evaluation report.

**Commendations**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the eight Youthreach centres organised cross-centre meetings to agree a common set of assessment activities and discuss their practice;
- every Youthreach learner had an individual assessment plan which described their programme and identified their support;
- the wide range of activities and the proactive approach being taken by the communications sub-committee to strengthen a culture of quality which should be part of everyone's responsibilities.

**Recommendations**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- strengthens the membership of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee and its sub-committees through the inclusion of employer and learner representatives;
- considers reviewing the internal ETB structures to create greater visibility for quality assurance. The review team recommends that the ETB should promote consistency across centres, establish standardised processes, and develop a common understanding of quality assurance;
- establish a quality assurance office as described in the ETB's self-evaluation report.

## Documentation of Quality Assurance

27. The ETB's and the FET Directorate's policies and procedures are available on LMETB's website. The locally devised module and programme documents are available to staff on a dedicated FET Awards Portal on the website. Access to this portal is managed by the quality assurance office.

Quality assurance policies, procedures, guidelines and templates are available on the quality assurance section of the Microsoft Team and the SharePoint sites.

28. Since the start of the re-engagement process with QQI in 2018, the ETB has focused on harmonising the approaches used by different FET centres in order to create a common, integrated quality assurance framework with the same policies and procedures across all FET provision. With the appointment of a quality assurance officer in 2021, the focus has been on revising policies and procedures where the FET centres identified the greatest need e.g., assessment and associated activities. The *Results Approval Panel Policy and Procedures* was the first FET policy and procedure to be fully integrated across the entire FET provision.

29. The ETB has a schedule for revising and developing quality assurance policies e.g., the next area to be considered will be internal verification and external authentication. This work will be overseen by the quality assurance sub-committee of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee which was established in Autumn 2021.

30. The review team noted the comment in the self-evaluation report that *'the compilation of this report has been beneficial in establishing the varied approaches to the development and implementation of policies and procedures in FET centres, and in establishing that reviews are periodic and taking place on an ad hoc basis*.' The review team considered it important for the FET team to understand the extent of these differences and move quickly to creating a more uniform and consistent approach to the quality assurance of provision. This review team observation reflects the comment in the self-evaluation report that '*while review dates are built into policies, a cross FET provision formal review cycle for existing policies and procedures has not been developed*.'

**Commendations**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- assigning responsibility for the harmonisation of quality assurance documentation to the sub-committee of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee;

- recognising that a formal review cycle of quality assurance policies and procedures needs to be established.

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- identifies, at the strategic level, a more consistent and integrated approach to quality assurance in order to create greater parity of experience for learners, staff, employers and other stakeholders.

## Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

31. The ETB has a standardised approach to the recruitment of staff. This is set out in figure 7.

Figure 7 - the ETB's standardised recruitment and selection process

| | |
|---|---|
| Vacancy | Arising from a new post, a vacant existing post or substitute/cover/ temporary post |
| Job Description | Describes the purpose, scope, key activities, expected outputs and standards for the job |
| Person Specification/ Selection Criteria | Drawn up on the basis of job description outlining the qualifications, skills, experiences and competencies required for successful performance of the role |
| Advertising the post | LMETB advertises in the national and local press, social media and on www.etbjobs.ie |
| Application Pack | Includes application form, job advertisement, job description, person specification and selection criteria |
| Shortlisting | A shortlisting board will assess all applicants against agreed selection criteria based on information provided in application documentation, and will identify candidates for interview |
| Selection Board | Established for each post in order to assess the merit of each applicant and make recommendations for appointment of an applicant |
| Interview | Selection Board will ask all applicants the same core questions to ensure fair and consistent approach. Supplementary questions may be asked if required. |
| Recommendation | Selection Board reviews marks of all applicants and completes a Selection Board Report |
| Referee Reports | 2 written referees are required from the recommended candidate post-interview |
| Offering Appointment | Made only by the HR Department on a provisional basis subject to a number of conditions being satisfied |

32. Once appointed, some FET staff receive induction. There are no ETB-wide induction arrangements for teaching staff as responsibility for induction is at centre level. Induction may be formal or informal, involve support from a mentor (or not), and take place at different times of the year. It was not clear to the review team whether any records of induction were kept, whether induction was used to identify learning needs, or whether mentors were trained to undertake their role. Since 2020 the ETB has organised a standardised induction programme for administrative

staff and those in a leadership role. The ETB's self-evaluation report highlights the need to strengthen all aspects of induction.

33. The ETB does not have an organisation strategy for professional development and learning to support the quality of FET provision. The ETB, and individual centres, offer continuing professional development for teaching and administrative staff. Information on professional development is available on the FET Microsoft Team site[17]. The ETB's self-evaluation reports identified the need to produce an ETB strategy for the professional development and learning of all FET staff.

34. A great deal of successful development has taken place in relation to Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) - this has included team teaching, greater collaboration on tasks, support from a more TEL-confident tutor etc.

35. The review team noted that the ETB did not have a system for monitoring or recording the impact of professional development offered to staff. The review team discussed with ETB staff the different ways in which the quality of learning and teaching could be monitored. At the time of the review meeting, there were no processes in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of classroom teaching and students' learning.

**Commendations**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the opportunities provided by the Enhancement Learning and Development Team for staff to continue their professional development through attending bespoke workshops and other initiatives such as the TEL TALKS. This support encourages staff to meet in practice-led focus groups in order to share and discuss good practice;

- the staff mentorship process which has the potential to promote high quality teaching and learning and encourage opportunities for staff to share good practice;

- the speed and breadth of the ETB's response to the government restrictions associated with Covid.

[17] Staff are also informed of development opportunities through regular staff meetings, emails from managers and ETB staff.

**Recommendations**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- identifies effective mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in order to support improvements in the quality of all provision. Such mechanisms could include appraisal, performance procedures, communities of practice networks and other initiatives aligned with continuing professional development;

- develops and implements an ETB-wide strategy for the design, monitoring and evaluation of the induction programme offered to all FET staff;

- develops and promotes an ETB strategy for the professional development and learning of all FET staff.

## Programme Development, Approval and Submission for Validation

36. Responsibility for programme development is held by the Programme Development Review and Evaluation sub-committee of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee. At the time of the review meeting, the sub-committee had been established for six months and had met on three occasions. Members of the Programme Development, Review and Evaluation sub-committee stated that the ETB offered 166 QQI accredited programmes. Many programmes had not been reviewed for more than ten years and continued to be offered to learners using their original design[18]. The review team noted the sub-committee's responsibilities covered all programmes, courses and qualifications designed by QQI, other awarding bodies, and community groups. The self-evaluation report noted that the ETB does not currently have an agreed policy and procedures for programme development and approval - this is due to be established in 2022.

37. The review team noted the *Programme development, review and evaluation* sub-committee had a significant amount of work. The review team discussed whether the remit and objectives of the sub-committee could be fulfilled in a timely and manageable fashion. ETB staff members received

[18] Some of these programmes were original designed by FETAC - a national agency that preceded the establishment of QQI

no time allocation for their work on the sub-committee. The review team noted there were no learner or employer representatives on the sub-committee.

38. The ETB's response to government restrictions associated with Covid-19 led to many modules, programmes and qualifications being adjusted. As such some of the provision offered to learners may not meet the original specifications and course descriptions. As the ETB expects on-line and blended learning to continue, there is a need to ensure these revised approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are quality assured and align with the ETB's emerging policies and procedures.

**Commendation**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the allocation of responsibility for programme development and approval to a sub-committee which is part of the governance arrangements for quality assurance.

**Recommendations**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- identifies when each programme, course and qualification needs to be revised or reviewed[19]. This information should be used to establish an agreed schedule of work to ensure every part of provision is up-to-date and meets the needs of learners and employers;

- ensures the *Programme development, review and evaluation* sub-committee includes representatives from all areas of the ETB's FET provision including employers, learners and other stakeholders;

- reviews the manageability of the workload and responsibilities assigned to the *Programme development, review and evaluation* sub-committee.

## Access, Transfer and Progression

39. The ETB has an access, transfer and progression policy in place[20]. The policy includes the collection of annual statistics on student progression, pass/failure/withdrawal rates, and the numbers of students in each award classification. The review team was not presented with this data, and review team discussions with the ETB indicated this information was collected for external organisations (e.g., through SOLAS' programme learner support system - PLSS). It was not clear how, and whether, these annual statistics were used to update the access, transfer and progression policy.

40. The ETB does not have a 'graduate tracking' system for monitoring and evaluating learners' progression and satisfaction on completing an FET programme. Learner progression status on completing a FET programme is recorded on PLSS. Some FET learners' progression into employment or further training is tracked by individual centres using questionnaires and through correspondence with course tutors.

[19] Page 58 of the self-evaluation report notes that the FET team does not have in place a systematic process for module review at a local level. A process needs to be developed to update content and assessment.
[20] The review team was presented with the 2019 version which was due to be reviewed and revised in 2021. The 2019 policy states that the ETB is in the process of developing a policy to recognise prior learning.

41. The ETB's provision includes many part-time, flexible and on-line courses which are offered in different centres and locations across Louth and Meath. This ensures local provision and opportunities for potential learners throughout the two counties. During the review team's meetings, many examples of progression to higher level programmes and other educational establishments were highlighted. The review team's meetings with learners confirmed they were aware of opportunities for progression and transfer, and the possibility of 1-2-1 advice on careers, further study and employment options.

42. The ETB has an admissions policy in place. This policy notes *that the effectiveness and efficiency of the policy and procedures will be analysed by reference to completion data, learner feedback, information gathered during the admissions stage and FARR/PLSS data*[21]. The review team was not presented with an evaluation of the policy's effectiveness though they noted that the self-evaluation report includes a comment (page 64) that the ETB is examining the development of an overarching and common admissions policy to ensure greater consistency in admission decisions.

43. The age profile of the ETB's learners (figure 8[22] shows 62% of learners in 2020 were over 25) highlights the importance of recognising prior learning and experience. The ETB recognises prior certified learning. There are no established processes to recognise prior learning or prior experiential learning. It was not clear to the review team how the ETB ensured consistency in the use of prior certified learning and quality assured decisions relating to credit, achievement or exemptions.

[21] 2018 version of the FET admission policy - page 2. This was the latest version of the policy presented to the review team. FARR - funding allocation requests and reporting - is a SOLAS data collection system.
[22] Page 53 of the provider profile.

Figure 8 - number of FET learners in the ETB[23]

| Age Range | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15 - 24 | 5,364 | 6,022 | 6,253 |
| 25 - 44 | 5,450 | 5,506 | 5,770 |
| 45 - 64 | 3,714 | 3,857 | 3,899 |
| Over 64 | 1,609 | 976 | 679 |
| Grand Total | 16,137 | 16,361 | 16,601 |

**Commendation**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the learners' accurate and thorough understanding of how they could use their qualifications and learning in the ETB.

**Recommendations**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- develop and use a policy for the recognition of prior learning and prior experiential learning;

- identify the inconsistencies in individual centres' approaches to admissions and develop and use an ETB-wide admissions policy;

[23] This data is taken from PLSS. It does not include learners who are taking an apprenticeship, who are self-financed or completing an adult educational guidance programme.

- use the available quantitative data to review and update existing policies relating to access, transfer and progression.

## Integrity and Approval of Learner Results

44. The ETB provides guidance (this documentation is available on the FET's Microsoft Team and SharePoint sites) to each FET centre on the:

    - preparation of assessment briefs and instruments;
    - provision of assessment related information to learners;
    - conduct and consistency of assessment, assessment appeals and record keeping.

45. The ETB's quality assurance processes include internal and external authentication procedures and the convening of a results approval panel. There is a standardised approach for all FET centres though the self-evaluation report notes that *there are slight procedural differences*[24]*.* The ETB has begun the process of increasing consistency in its assessment and reporting processes (in 2021 the Results Approval Panel Policy and Procedures was the first of these new policies) and intends to create a single overarching set of policies, procedures and practices for all the ETB's provision. These will include quality assurance arrangements for qualifications offered by QQI and other awarding bodies. The review team would encourage speedy progress on this aspect of quality assurance as it is central to creating trust and confidence for learners, employers and partner organisations.

46. The review panel noted that the ETB's results approval panels only consider QQI awards (approximately 90% of all the ETB's certified provision). It was not clear how the assessments and results from other awarding bodies and programmes are quality assured, and the extent to which the ETB is confident that it has used the processes described by other awarding bodies.

[24] Page 67 of the self-evaluation report

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- speedily develops the single overarching set of policies, procedures and practices for quality assuring all aspects of assessment relating to the ETB's provision.

## Information and Data Management

47. The review team acknowledges that the ETB collects an extensive amount of data - mainly for external purposes (e.g., for awarding bodies, to ensure compliance with legislation, for the apprenticeship client services system and for the funding organisation, SOLAS). These data collection systems are based on compliance with GDPR requirements and staff are aware of the need to respect the confidentiality of personal data.

48. The review team noted that the ETB did not appear to use information on teaching and learning to monitor and improve the quality of provision.

49. It was not clear to the review team how data was used to monitor and evaluate the quality of FET provision and how it was used to improve practice. The review team noted that a planned customer management system would increase the *ETB's ability to analyse data collected in order to provide insightful information about learner demographics.*

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- reviews how data is used to inform quality assurance. The review team recommends that greater emphasis should be placed on the collection and use of internal data to ensure high quality outcomes as opposed to the current focus on data for external stakeholders.

## Public Information and Communication

50. The ETB has a strong and clear public presence through its recently updated website (https://www.lmetb.ie/), its dedicated FET web pages and social media accounts. The ETB's corporate branding is used to publicise key messages, newsletters and information for partner organisations, staff and potential learners. In addition to the main ETB website, some FET centres have their own website and the majority have a presence on at least one social media platform. Individual centres are responsible for maintaining and updating the content of their marketing and communications.

51. The review team noted the range of ways that the ETB, and individual centres, liaised and kept in touch with a range of employers. There were many examples of the ETB's responsiveness to employers' interests and needs.

**Commendations**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the coherence and consistency of the revised ETB corporate website;
- the development of a marketing/communications plan;
- the development of the communications sub-committee of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee with responsibility for developing communications and marketing across FET provision.

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- completes the development work on the FET learners' handbook.

## Objective 2: Teaching, Learning & Assessment

### The Learning Environment

52. The ETB's self-evaluation report included a description of the available facilities and centres. The review team's March 2022 visit was virtual and therefore the team was unable to comment on the ETB's physical learning environment.

53. The review team noted the speed with which provision moved on-line in response to the government's restrictions relating to Covid-19. Support from the IT section of LMETB along with input from the technology enhanced learning team enabled this transition.

54. The ETB uses a variety of measures to monitor learners' experiences on their programmes. These include:

    - learner evaluation forms midway and on completion of courses/programmes;
    - tutor/staff evaluations;
    - external stakeholder/employer evaluations;
    - ongoing feedback from learners, including formal or informal feedback;
    - supervisor feedback on work experience;
    - testimonials;
    - feedback from internal verifiers and external authenticators.

55. This data is reviewed in staff meetings in individual FET centres and feedback is given to teachers on a 1:1 basis[25]. The review team noted that this feedback had the potential to support improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. However, it was not clear how individual members of staff were expected to respond to this feedback, and whether these responses were monitored or evaluated. During the review team's meetings with the ETB, learners were positive about their tutors, their openness to discussion, and the support they provided.

[25] Page 95 of the self-evaluation report

## Assessment of Learners

56. The quality assurance of the assessment of learners is an essential requirement of all education and training provision. The ETB's processes use the internal verifier and external authenticator system; staff training and development; and the development of a shared understanding of what is expected from individual tutors. The review team welcomed the development of a system in some centres to peer review assessment activities to ensure clarity of instruction to learners and the maintenance of standards.

57. Some FET centres produce a learner handbook which includes guidance on the development of assessment material, course content, assessment requirements and an assessment calendar. The review team welcomed the inclusion of advice on Technology Enhanced Learning and references to Universal Design for Learning. It was not clear to the review team whether there was any monitoring or evaluation of the use of these learner handbooks in relation to assessment. The self-evaluation report noted that in 2021 some external authenticator reports commented on the need for centres to redesign assessment briefs to ensure the instructions are clear for learners and include a transparent way for learners to produce evidence to show their achievement of learning outcomes.

58. Opportunities for work experience (including placements, apprenticeships, work-based training, work-based assessment etc.) are an important aspect of all FET provision. The ETB uses a range of approaches for securing work experience for its FET learners including participation in national apprenticeship programmes, learners' self-selection of an employer, and ETB guided placements. For non-apprenticeship programmes, the majority of FET learners are expected to find their own work placement. This has the advantage of supporting learners' development of skills, competences and behaviours associated with job application. However, it was not clear to the review team how the learners' selection and experiences on each of these work placements was quality assured. The self-evaluation report noted the ETB needs to review its monitoring of work placements to ensure consistency of site visits and employer communication across the various FET centres.

**Commendation**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the use of peer review in the development of assignments.

**Recommendations**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- prioritises support for learning and teaching. At a local level there is evidence that the quality of learning and teaching is good. The review team recommends that, at a strategic level, the ETB identifies mechanisms to support a more consistent approach across all its provision;
- develops and uses a more consistent approach to informing learners of what is expected from assignments;
- develops and uses a standardised learner handbook across all FET centres in order to strengthen consistency in relation to assessment;
- reviews how quality assurance arrangements are applied to all forms of work experience.

## Support for Learners

59. The ETB offers a range of support[26] to learners across its programmes. These differ by type of provision and can be unique to each learner. When applying to the ETB learners are encouraged to disclose whether they have additional needs or disabilities. This helps the ETB to provide relevant support or make reasonable accommodations to provision. When a disclosure is made, a member of staff meets the learner to discuss the nature of the support which is required. FET learners are encouraged to approach relevant staff if any programme related concerns arise. The FET guidance and teaching staff are often the first point of contact for learners who choose to highlight their need for support.

60. The support provided during the government restrictions due to Covid enabled learners' remote learning and their ability to adapt to an online learning environment. Staff were available, attentive and responsive to learners' needs during these periods of remote learning and this supported learners' mental health and wellbeing. The demands on staff for support during periods of remote learning are significant and as more programmes move towards or incorporate blended learning,

[26] The available support includes reasonable accommodation to needs; disability support; literacy and numeracy support; financial support; adult educational guidance; access to ICT devices; supported study; wellbeing support; and funded counselling Services for some programmes.

the self-evaluation report notes there is a need for a more formalised approach to providing support.

61. It was not clear how the ETB monitored and quality assured each area of support. It was not clear to the review team what data was used to inform any evaluation of the effectiveness and availability of support. However, the review team was able to imply some processes were in place as the self-evaluation report commented on the need for a more consistent implementation of the revised Reasonable Accommodations Procedure throughout FET in order for all learners to benefit from the same support.

**Recommendations**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- makes explicit how the quality of each support service is monitored and evaluated in order to provide a more formalised and consistent approach in each FET centre;

- implements the SOLAS Guidance on Universal Design for Learning to support the diverse needs of learners.

# Objective 3: Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Review

## Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Review

62. This inaugural review builds on earlier work on quality assurance completed by the ETB (the 2017 self-evaluation report and the 2018, 2019 and 2020 quality improvement plans). The 2017 analysis led to the production of the Executive's 2017 self-evaluation report with quality assurance actions included in the 2022 ETB provider profile. The review team noted that the last two quality improvement plans (included in the papers presented to the review team) were discussed by the ETB's Quality Assurance Governance Management. The most recent Quality Improvement Plan[27] looked at the following eleven areas of quality:

- governance and management of quality;
- documented approach to quality assurance;
- programmes of education and training;
- staff recruitment, management and development
- teaching and learning;
- assessment of learners;
- supports for learners;
- information and data management;
- public information and communication;
- other parties involved in education and training;
- self -evaluation and monitoring.

63. For each of these eleven areas the ETB reported on 'priorities for the year': 'main achievements for the year,' 'barriers and challenges during the year,' 'priorities for the next year.' Many of the issues identified by the review team have already been recognised as they are included in the ETB's priorities for 2020/21 e.g., page 35 highlights the following priorities for self-evaluation and monitoring (figure 9).

[27] https://www.lmetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/QIP2020-LMETB.pdf

Figure 9: example of the ETB's priorities for self-evaluation and monitoring in 2020/21

- Strategies to respond to learner programme feedback need to be developed in a systematic manner, standardise procedures and feed data gathered into programme reviews with clear reporting lines to be being devised. This may be through completed standard surveys on course content, delivery and management. It would be helpful to illustrate diagrammatically how the various sources (e.g., questionnaires, the student-staff liaison) feed into programme review and remedial actions where required.
- Development of effective consultation processes which involve staff, learners and stakeholders in programme development/review with recognition of centre-based posts of responsibility for internal and external engagement to establish continuous information and feedback loops.
- Developing a systematic approach to internal review, self-evaluation and monitoring across the organisation.
- Develop report formats for course/programme development which includes data from various sources for example, student feedback, PLSS data, EA reports, IV reports, teaching evaluations etc. These will be synthesised to review the performance of courses so improvements can be put into place.
- LMETB aim to implement a uniform system for capturing learner feedback in Q4 2020. A single evaluation template form for use across FET Provision will come into effect in that quarter.
- An evaluation template based on 14 questions (with a range of rating and descriptive type response options), will be piloted using Microsoft Forms. A Learner Feedback Report will provide data relating on overall satisfaction levels, teaching and learning facilities and practices, and engagement in learner support activities. The evaluation template will provide Centres/Colleges with a mechanism to roll out learner satisfaction surveys. Data capture of this nature will form the basis of a wider analysis of learner's experience of teaching, learning and assessment. A standardised procedure will be implemented by colleges/centres which will result in the collation of learner feedback by college/centres and the compilation of a college/centre report on emerging themes and trends. This information will feed forward into programme review.
- The processes for Self -Evaluation, Monitoring and Review in LMETB need further development to ensure a co-ordinated and coherent system of quality assurance providing useful information to the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee (QAGMC) and to the Senior Management Team (SMT). The indicators of effectiveness for each of the policies and procedures within the QA document need to be clarified; how frequently are they evaluated; the mechanisms for carrying out this evaluation and review; and the processes for implementation of any recommended changes to practice.
- There is a need to document: how data is captured and analysed; how is it reported on and to

whom; how learner engagement is measured, and how information on actions taken in response to learner feedback is circulated.

- There is a requirement to ensure all sub-committees report in a timely fashion to the QAGMC , which is the governance unit with organisational level oversight and decision making, to ensure connectivity is maintained.
- The QAGMC is charged with approving new programmes/modifications (prior to submission for validation to QQI or amendments to legacy programmes permitted under validation agreements), and therefore requires all pertinent information before arriving at any conclusions.
- The programme review sub-committee was formed to manage, monitor and review programmes on a regular basis, with programme FET centre co-ordinators feeding into this and the programme review Committee is also charged with more in-depth programme evaluations in accordance with a clear schedule.
- Preparation for the external review by QQI: In order to prepare for the statutory review, LMETB needs to embark on a process of self-evaluating the implementation of quality assurance procedures. The close consideration of quality processes; both planned and operational will be a key area of focus in 2020/21. These will involve establishing a review steering group to identify and document what is working and how the implementation of quality processes can be improved. The establishment of the review steering group, which will take the project lead on the process of self-evaluating the implementation of quality assurance procedures. The group will scope out and shape the way in which over the course of the year, LMETB will engage with stakeholders, compile information from evaluative discussions and synthesis the outcomes of the evaluation process.

64. Each Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) contains a large number of actions, as illustrated by figure 9, which lists one year's actions for one of eleven quality areas. The review team was unclear about who would take responsibility for each action, when each action would be completed, and how progress would be monitored and reported. The review team thought it would be beneficial to identify a small number of the most important priorities for each year.

65. Central to the current review of quality assurance has been the consultation and reflective engagement with learners, staff, employers and stakeholders. These consultations helped to produce the self-evaluation report and the provider profile. However, the review team noted that

the response rates to some of these surveys was low - particularly in relation to collecting the views of the 1,500 employers[28] who work with the ETB.

66. The work for this inaugural review sits alongside the routine self-evaluation and monitoring activities undertaken by the ETB (e.g., the reports from internal verifiers and external authenticators; reports from the results approval panels; the amalgamated annual Centre Evaluation and Improvement Planning document from the Youthreach centres; reports from awarding bodies and the learners' forum).

67. The self-evaluation report included a large number of recommendations and actions for the ETB. These indicate the serious way in which the ETB approached this QQI process and the value of allocating time and resources to reflect on how well things are working. The review panel noted and welcomed the proposed annual centre-led self-evaluation process which would be supported by the ETB's quality assurance office. This creates a further opportunity to monitor and review relevant data, identify good practice and areas for development in each centre and across all of the FET provision on an annual basis.

68. The review team notes the significant amount of quantitative data collected by the ETB as part of its routine operations. The self-evaluation report did not describe how this data was used to monitor the quality of provision and what actions were undertaken as a result of the analysis of this data. As described in paragraph 11, the ETB's key performance indicators in the provider profile are descriptive rather than quantitative in nature.

[28] Discussions during the review meeting suggested up to 1,500 employers work with the ETB in any one year.

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- identifies a small number of quality assurance priorities for each year and identifies who will lead on ensuring their implementation.

## Programme Monitoring & Review

69. The ETB's approach has largely focused on centre-based monitoring and review. FET Leaders are responsible for the ongoing monitoring, regular review, and periodic evaluation of the provision in their centre. This enables both the centre programmes and delivery methods to remain appropriate and strengthen the learning environment. There are no documented processes to capture information on a consistent basis[29].

70. The problem of out-of-date programmes and modules was identified in the staff feedback used to support this review. There were concerns from staff and employers that the content of some modules was no longer relevant.[30]

71. With responsibility for programme monitoring and review located at the centre level, it is not clear whether each centre uses the same approach; works to similar timescales; and makes similar conclusions on the need for change. When the same programme or module is offered by different centres, it could be possible for learners' experiences to differ (e.g., in relation to content and assessment) across the ETB's centres. As one respondent to the staff survey for the self-evaluation report noted: '*We are in competition with each other when advertising courses…. maybe we need to look more at how not to duplicate courses in some geographical areas and how we can improve our offerings to the public….to create a more coordinated offering. Working together as a FET service as opposed to looking at the individual services.*'[31]

[29] FET leaders can report these developments to the senior management team with responsibility for FET in the ETB.
[30] Page 143 of the self-evaluation report.
[31] Page 144 of the self-evaluation report.

**Commendations**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the thoroughness of the annual Quality Improvement Plan;
- Youthreach's robust approach to quality assurance. At the centre of this provision is an emphasis on reflective practice which encourages a cohesive, structured, learner-focused programme.

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- establish and use a consistent approach to recording when programme and module reviews need to be completed, whether they have been completed on schedule, and what changes have been made to programmes.

## Oversight, Monitoring & Review of Relationships with External Parties

The ETB works in partnership with stakeholders in the Louth and Meath region and at national level. The FET provision involves work with a variety of employers, community and voluntary groups.

72. Contracted training through 'second providers' is offered on behalf of the ETB based on formal Framework Agreements. This provision contributes to the ETB's ability to respond to training needs as the contracted training providers can offer a range of flexible and responsive programmes when the ETB does not have the necessary staff or expertise. The ETB's Contracted Training team arranges these contracts, monitors and evaluates the contracted training companies' effectiveness in relation to the operation of their contracts. Responsibility for quality assurance and the content of these programmes rests with the ETB, and all the students are registered as ETB learners. These second providers, when delivering training on behalf of the ETB, use one of the legacy quality assurance policies and procedures. The self-evaluation report notes that these arrangements are gradually being replaced as the ETB moves towards an

integrated quality assurance framework in which uniform FET quality assurance policies and procedures will be applied.

73. The ETB, through collaboration with a wide range of community and voluntary organisations, is able to respond to the social, economic, and educational needs of local communities.

74. The ETB works in partnership with a wide range of employers to identify and develop training programmes which support the development of employees' skills and the socio-economic development of the region. This is achieved primarily through the Skills to Advance and Skills for Work programmes, and the development of apprenticeships and traineeships. The provision of courses and programmes can be on a part-time basis, and through evening or day-time provision. Training can be delivered by contracted private training providers, contracted community-based providers or directly by ETB staff.

75. During the review meeting, the ETB and some of its partner employers/companies highlighted the range of ways in which the FET services and provision have responded to the needs of industry and the wider community. These quality assured examples were diverse and illustrated flexibility on behalf of the ETB.

**Commendations**

The review panel commends the ETB on the following areas of quality assurance:

- the innovative community provision which provides tailored programmes based on personal development. These programmes have been designed to build confidence and provide participants with pathways to education, training and/or employment;

- the examples of agile, responsive employer engagement. Effective relationship building and communication have led to the development of bespoke programmes, such as micro-credentials. These programmes meet a diverse range of employer needs including support in a post pandemic environment.

**Recommendation**

The review panel recommends the ETB:

- develop and use a single set of quality assurance policies, procedures and practices across all the ETB's provision, including contracted (second) providers.

Section

# 4

# Conclusions

# Section 4: Conclusions

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

76. The review team welcomes and supports the creation of an ETB-wide governance arrangement for quality assurance. This Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee and its sub-committees have the potential to bring a much stronger, more consistent ETB-wide approach to the quality assurance of all aspects of FET. The review team acknowledged that the development of standardised, system-wide quality assurance processes and policies had begun but would encourage the ETB to move more quickly particularly in areas of assessment, learner experiences, staff management and performance, induction and the use of data to improve the quality of provision.

77. The ETB is collecting extensive amounts of data for external purposes. It was not clear to the review team how this data was used by the internal teams to improve the quality of provision. The review team would invite the ETB to review how best to use a limited amount of quantitative data to set targets, monitor and review performance against these targets, and take action to meet or exceed the agreed targets at both centre and ETB level.

78. The quality of provision is significantly dependent on the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning is a central aspect of monitoring the quality of provision. The self-evaluation report, and the review team's discussions with the ETB, highlighted that there are currently no arrangements in place to record, monitor or evaluate the effectiveness of individuals' teaching.

## 4.2 Conclusions on Arrangements for Teaching, Learning and Assessment

79. Individual centres are confident in the application of the national system for accrediting bodies for monitoring the quality of learners' experiences (e.g., internal verifier, external authenticator, results approval panel meetings etc.). The review panel noted that the self-evaluation report

acknowledges that the approach used by individual centres differs. These differences contribute to the importance of developing a standardised learner handbook for all FET provision in the ETB.

80. The provision of learner support is broad and provides opportunities for learners to achieve their full potential. However, the availability of this support varies between centres, and this may lead to some learners failing to achieve the most they can.

81. Alongside the quality of teaching and learning, the content of programmes and modules is an important aspect of quality to ensure learners achieve the skills and competences required by employers and other training/educational institutions. When programmes are out-of-date there is a significant risk that learners will not acquire these skills and competences. Maintaining a system-wide approach to the updating (and monitoring of these updates) is an important aspect of quality assurance.

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

82. The review team recognised that the ETB has evaluated the quality of its provision through the production of annual Quality Improvement Plans. These have been thorough and have identified changes which are needed to support quality improvement. The review team would encourage the ETB to identify fewer improvement actions and monitor the impact of their implementation on the quality of provision. Sometimes the Quality Improvement Plans include too many actions for them to be successfully introduced within the following year.

83. A central aspect of the quality assurance process is changing practice based on data and evidence of how well the current arrangements are working. The ETB has a vast amount of evidence on the effectiveness of some aspects of provision, but it appears to have had more difficulty using this information to change practice.

## 4.4 Commendations

84. The review team commends the ETB for its work on:

1. the eight Youthreach centres organised cross-centre meetings to agree a common set of assessment activities and discuss their practice;
2. every Youthreach learner had an individual assessment plan which described their programme and identified their support;
3. the wide range of activities and the proactive approach being taken by the communications sub-committee to strengthen a culture of quality which should be part of everyone's responsibilities.
4. assigning responsibility for the harmonisation of quality assurance documentation to the sub-committee of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee;
5. recognising that a formal review cycle of quality assurance policies and procedures needs to be established.
6. the opportunities provided by the Enhancement Learning and Development Team for staff to continue their professional development through attending bespoke workshops and other initiatives such as the TEL TALKS. This support encourages staff to meet in practice-led focus groups in order to share and discuss good practice.
7. the staff mentorship process which has the potential to promote high quality teaching and learning and encourage opportunities for staff to share good practice.
8. the speed and breadth of the ETB's response to the government restrictions associated with Covid-19.
9. the allocation of responsibility for programme development and approval to a sub-committee which is part of the governance arrangements for quality assurance.
10. the learners' accurate and thorough understanding of how they could use their qualifications and learning in the ETB.
11. the coherence and consistency of the revised ETB corporate website.
12. the development of a marketing/communications plan.
13. the development of the communications sub-committee of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee with responsibility for developing communications and marketing across FET provision.
14. the use of peer review in the development of assignments.

15. the thoroughness of the annual Quality Improvement Plans.

16. Youthreach's robust approach to quality assurance. At the centre of this provision is an emphasis on reflective practice which encourages a cohesive, structured, learner-focused programme.

17. the innovative community provision which provides tailored programmes based on personal development. These programmes have been designed to build confidence and provide participants with pathways to education, training and/or employment.

18. the examples of agile, responsive employer engagement. Effective relationship building and communication have led to the development of bespoke programmes, such as micro-credentials. These programmes meet a diverse range of employer needs including support in a post pandemic environment.

## 4.5 Recommendations

85. The review team recommends, based on their analysis of the self-evaluation report, the provider profile and interviews during the review meeting, that the ETB completes further work to:

    1. strengthen the membership of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee and its sub-committees through the inclusion of employer and learner representatives.
    2. considers reviewing the internal ETB structures to create greater visibility for quality assurance. The review team recommends that the ETB should promote consistency across centres, establish standardised processes, and develop a common understanding of quality assurance.
    3. establish  a quality assurance office as described in the ETB's self-evaluation report.
    4. identifies, at the strategic level, a more consistent and integrated approach to quality assurance in order to create greater parity of experience for learners, staff, employers and other stakeholders.
    5. identifies effective mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in order to support improvements in the quality of all provision. Such mechanisms could include appraisal, performance procedures, communities of practice networks and other initiatives aligned with continuing professional development.
    6. develops and implements an ETB-wide strategy for the design, monitoring and evaluation of the induction programme offered to all FET staff.
    7. develops and promotes an ETB strategy for the professional development and learning of all FET staff.
    8. identifies when each programme, course and qualification needs to be revised or reviewed . This information should be used to establish an agreed schedule of work to ensure every part of provision is up-to-date and meets the needs of learners and employers.
    9. ensures the Programme development, review and evaluation sub-committee includes representatives from all areas of the ETB's FET provision including employers, learners and other stakeholders.
    10. reviews the manageability of the workload and responsibilities assigned to the Programme development, review and evaluation sub-committee.
    11. develop and use a policy for the recognition of prior learning and prior experiential learning.
    12. identify the inconsistencies in individual centres' approaches to admissions and develop and use an ETB-wide admissions policy.

13. use the available quantitative data to review and update existing policies relating to access, transfer and progression.
14. speedily develops the single overarching set of policies, procedures and practices for quality assuring all aspects of assessment relating to the ETB's provision.
15. reviews how data is used to inform quality assurance. The review team recommends that greater emphasis should be placed on the collection and use of internal data to ensure high quality outcomes as opposed to the current focus on data for external stakeholders.
16. completes the development work on the FET learners' handbook.
17. prioritises support for learning and teaching. At a local level there is evidence that the quality of learning and teaching is good. The review team recommends that, at a strategic level, the ETB identifies mechanisms to support a more consistent approach across all its provision.
18. develops and uses a more consistent approach to informing learners of what is expected from assignments.
19. develops and uses a standardised learner handbook across all FET centres in order to strengthen consistency in relation to assessment.
20. reviews how quality assurance arrangements are applied to all forms of work experience.
21. makes explicit how the quality of each support service is monitored and evaluated in order to provide a more formalised and consistent approach in each FET centre.
22. implements the SOLAS Guidance on Universal Design for Learning to support the diverse needs of learners.
23. identifies a small number of quality assurance priorities for each year and identifies who will lead on ensuring their implementation.
24. establish and use a consistent approach to recording when programme and module reviews need to be completed, whether they have been completed on schedule, and what changes have been made to programmes.
25. develop and use a single set of quality assurance policies, procedures and practices across all the ETB's provision, including contracted (second) providers.

## 4.6 Statements on Quality Assurance

86. The review team considered the ETB's quality assurance procedures to be effective even though they are heavily based on the activities of individual centres. The team recognised progress had been made in identifying further actions to improve the ETB-wide quality assurance systems. The panel encouraged the ETB to go much further in its use of quantitative data (e.g., key performance indicators, targets, benchmarks etc.) to further strengthen the quality assurance of all aspects of provision.

87. The review team confirmed that the policies, processes and procedures used by the ETB are in line with the QQI's Quality Assurance Guidelines and policies including the 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 review team welcomed the ETB's newly formed quality assurance governance processes as this provides a further opportunity to strengthen the ETB-wide policies and procedures.

88. The review team noted that the ETB's Quality Improvement Plans, self-evaluation report and provider profile include a significant amount of work in relation to quality assurance. The review team welcomed these developments as a way to strengthen the quality assurance culture and improve the quality of provision across the ETB.

Section

5

# ETB Review Response

# Section 5: ETB Review Response

LMETB warmly welcomes the report prepared by the Expert Panel as part of the Quality and Qualification Ireland (QQI) Inaugural Statutory External Review which was carried out in March 2022. LMETB found both the self-evaluation undertaken by our staff, learners and external stakeholders, and the review visit itself to be very worthwhile exercises, which will ultimately pay clear dividends for the organisation going forward. Engagement in the review process, as well as the week-long panel visit provided LMETB with an invaluable opportunity to critically reflect on how the organisation quality assures its Further Education and Training (FET) provision. The learning from the review process will drive and further refine the implementation of LMETB's Quality Improvement Plan and represents a positive developmental step in LMTB's quality journey.

The report contains findings, commendations, and recommendations, which LMETB accepts. In particular we appreciate that the review team considered the ETB's quality assurance procedures to be effective, a finding underscored by the team's confirmation that the policies, processes and procedures used by the ETB are in line with QQI's Core Quality Assurance Guidelines. The review team noted that the ETB's Quality Improvement Plans, Self-Evaluation Report and Provider Profile include a significant amount of work in relation to quality assurance and welcomed these developments as a way to strengthen the quality assurance culture and improve the quality of provision across the ETB.

We are pleased to highlight the review panels' commendations regarding:

- LMETB's responsive practices during the COVID pandemic.
- The collaborations with a wide range of community and voluntary organisations, enabling the ETB to respond to the social, economic, and educational needs of local communities, providing tailored programmes based on personal development, designed to build confidence, and provide participants with pathways to education, training and/or employment.
- The range of ways in which the FET services and provision have responded to the needs of industry and the wider community ensuring that these quality assured examples were diverse and illustrated flexibility on behalf of the ETB. The panel recognised noted examples of agile, responsive employer engagement, effective relationship building and communication leading to the development of bespoke programmes, such as micro-credentials.
- The thoroughness of the annual Quality Improvement Plan.

- The successful development that has taken place in relation to Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL).
- The opportunities provided to staff to continue their professional development.
- Youthreach's robust approach to quality assurance and its emphasis on reflective practice which encourages cohesive, structured, learner-focused programmes.
- The allocation of responsibility for programme development and approval to a sub-committee which is part of the governance arrangements for quality assurance.
- The range of LMETB's provision which includes many part-time, flexible and on-line courses offered in different centres and locations across Louth and Meath. This ensures local provision and opportunities for potential learners throughout the two counties, including progression to higher level programmes and leads to the availability of one-to-one advice on careers, further study and employment options.

LMETB sincerely thanks the panel for their acknowledgement and the affirmation of the areas of good practice identified and evidenced within LMETB.

Regarding the Panels' recommendations, LMETB believes it is very helpful for the organisation to receive constructive observations such as those expressed in the report which will assist us in the continued development of our FET provision. Future development and implementation of quality assurance processes will be predicated on taking account of strategic advice such as the need to:

- Identify a small number of the most important quality assurance priorities for each year, noting who will lead on ensuring their implementation.
- Speedily develop a single overarching set of policies, procedures and practices for quality assuring all aspects of assessment in the ETB's FET provision.
- Identify, at the strategic level, a more consistent and integrated approach to quality assurance in order to create greater parity of experience for learners, staff, employers and other stakeholders.
- Consider reviewing the internal ETB structures to create greater visibility for quality assurance. The review team recommends that the ETB should promote consistency across centres, establish standardised processes, and develop a common understanding of quality assurance.
- Review how data is used to inform quality assurance.
- Identify effective mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in order to support improvements in the quality of all provision.

- Develop and promote an ETB strategy for the professional development and learning of all FET staff
- Ensure the Programme Development, Review and Evaluation sub-committee includes representatives from all areas of the ETB's FET provision including employers, learners and other stakeholders.
- Make explicit how the quality of each support service is monitored and evaluated in order to provide a more formalised and consistent approach in each FET centre.

LMETB is very much committed to a culture of quality and quality enhancement. Through the work of the Quality Office, the QAGMC and its various sub-committees we are determined to strengthen and further enhance our quality culture by continuing to develop and refine relevant systems, policies and procedures. The Inaugural Review necessitated LMETB's FET Service to review and evaluate its work. In so doing, it also provided us with a welcome opportunity to reflect – a practice not regularly afforded the time and commitment required due to the vicissitudes of working in a busy FET environment.

On behalf of LMETB, we wish to sincerely thank the panel for their constructive approach, their valuable feedback, and the engaging and supportive manner in which the review visit was conducted resulting in their insightful report. Specifically, LMETB would like to thank, the Chair and Coordinating Reviewer, for their earlier engagements and their constructive and collegial approach demonstrated throughout. Thanks also to QQI for its active engagement and support throughout the entire review process.

Finally, we also sincerely thank all our FET staff, learners, and external stakeholders for their genuine commitment, reflection and help in promoting a culture of quality within LMETB.

Martin O'Brien

LMETB Chief Executive

Sadie Ward McDermott

Director of Further Education and Training

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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Lú agus na Mí
Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

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Oiliúna Lú agus na Mí
Louth and Meath Education
and Training Board
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 20171F32. 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.

[32] Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards (QQI, 2019)

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 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 |
|---|---|
| **1. To encourage a quality culture and the enhancement of the learning environment and experience within ETBs** | • Emphasising the learner and the learning experience in reviews.<br>• Constructively and meaningfully involving staff at all levels of the organisation in the self-evaluation and external evaluation. phases of the review.<br>• Providing a source of evidence of areas for improvement and areas for revision of policy and change and basing follow-up upon them.<br>• Exploring innovative and effective practices and procedures.<br>• Providing evidence of quality assurance and quality enhancement within the ETB. |
| **2. To provide feedback to ETBs about organisation-wide quality and the impact of mission, strategy, governance and management on quality and the overall effectiveness of their quality assurance.** | • Emphasising the ownership, governance and management of quality assurance at the corporate ETB-level, i.e., how the ETB exercises oversight of quality assurance.<br>• Pitching the review at a comprehensive ETB-wide level.<br>• Evaluating compliance with legislation, policy and standards.<br>• Evaluating the impact and effectiveness of quality assurance procedures. |
| **3. To improve public confidence in the quality of ETB provision by promoting transparency and public awareness.** | • Adhering to purposes, criteria and outcomes that are clear and transparent.<br>• Publication of clear timescales and terms of reference for review.<br>• Evaluating, as part of the review, ETB reporting on quality assurance, to ensure that it is transparent and accessible.<br>• Publication of the individual ETB reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences.<br>• Publication of sectoral findings and observations. |
| **4. To support system-level improvement of the quality of further education and training in the ETBs.** | • Publishing a sectoral report, with system-level observations and findings.<br>• The identification and dissemination of effective practice to facilitate shared learning. |
| **5. To encourage quality by using evidence-based, objective methods and advice.** | • Using the expertise of international, national, learner, industry and other stakeholder peer reviewers who are independent of the ETB.<br>• Ensuring that findings are based on stated evidence.<br>• Facilitating ETBs to identify measures for quality relevant to their own mission and context.<br>• Promoting the identification and dissemination of examples of good practice and innovation |
| **6. To provide an opportunity for ETBs to** | • Publication of self-evaluation reports, conducted with input from ETB learners and wider stakeholder groups. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **articulate their stage of development, mission and objectives and demonstrate the quality assurance of their provision, both individually and as a sector.** | • Publication of the reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences. |

# 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:

- 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

- 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
- 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;2F[33]
- 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

# 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

[33] https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/ATP%20Policy%20Restatement%20FINAL%202018.pdf

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 follows3F[34]:

### 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 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.

[34] Further detail on the conduct of reviewers is outlined in QQI's Code of Conduct for Reviewers and Evaluators.

- 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 |
|---|---|---|
| **Preparation** | 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 |
| | 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. | |

| Step | Action | Timeframe |
|---|---|---|
| **Self-Evaluation Report (SER)** | 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 |
| **Desk Review** | Desk review of the self-evaluation reports by the review teams. | Before initial meeting |
| **Initial Meeting** | 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<br>6 weeks before main review visit |
| **Planning Visit** | 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<br>6 weeks before main review visit |
| **Main Review Visit** | 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 |
| **Individual ETB Reports** | Preparation of draft ETB review report by review team. | 6-8 weeks after main review visit |
| | 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 |

| Step | Action | Timeframe |
|---|---|---|
| | 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 |
| **Outcomes** | 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. | |
| Follow-Up | 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

| Date: 21/03/22 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Time (GMT)** | **Group** | **Participants** | **Roles** | **Purpose** |
| **09.00-09.30** | **ETB Review Coordinator(s)/Director of FET** | **A. Cahill**<br>**(Sinead Fearon)**<br>**(Claire O'Boyle)**<br><br>**K. Harvey** | **QA Officer**<br>**(PLD/Communications Officer)**<br>**(TEL Officer)**<br><br>**Adult Education Officer** | **Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator** |
| **09.30-10.00** | **Private Review Team Meeting** | Review Team only (QQI representative will join for some minutes) | | |
| 10.00-10.15 | **1a. ETB Chief Executive** | M. O'Brien | Chief Executive | Discussion of mission, strategic plan, roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and enhancement |
| 10.15-11.00 | ***1b. ETB Chief Executive & SMT*** | M. O'Brien<br>S. McDermott<br>K. Harvey<br>A. Sheridan<br>A. Magee | Chief Executive<br>Director of Further Education and Training<br>Adult Education Officer<br>Adult Education Officer<br>Area Training Manager | |
| **11:00-11.30am** | **Private Review Team Meeting** | | | |
| 11.30 - 11.45 | Review Team Break | | | |

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| 11.45-12.30 | **2. Self-Evaluation Team** | S. McDermott | Director of Further Education and Training | Discussion of the development of the self-evaluation report |
| | | K. Harvey | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | A. Sheridan | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | S. Fearon | PLD/Communications Officer | |
| | | C. O'Boyle | Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Officer | |
| | | A. Cahill | Quality Assurance (QA) Officer | |
| **12.30-13.00** | **Panel Review Team Meeting** | | | |
| 13.00-14.00 | Review Team Lunch | | | |
| 14.00-14.45 | **3. Quality Council** | S. McDermott | Director of FET | Discussion of the approach to, and mechanisms for, quality assurance and enhancement |
| | | A Sheridan | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | K. Harvey | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | D. McDonnell | PLC Principal | |
| | | V. Branigan | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| | | A. Cahill | QA Officer | |
| 14.45-15.00 | Private Review Team Meeting /Break | | | |
| 15.00-15.45 | **4. Quality Council (or equivalent) Sub-groups** | | | |
| | **Parallel session 1: Programme Governance Sub-Group** | | **Programme Development, Review and Evaluation (PDRE) Sub-Committee** | Discussion of role of committee in quality assurance of FET Division |
| | | S. Williams | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | I. Togher | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | P. Falls | Community Training | |
| | | A. Fallon | Adult Guidance Co-ordinator/Counsellor | |

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| | | J. Breen | Community Education Facilitator | |
| | | A. Cahill | QA Officer | |
| | **Parallel session 2: Quality Assurance Sub-Group** | | **Quality Assurance Sub-Committee** | Discussion of role of committee in quality assurance of FET Division |
| | | M. McConville | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| | | B. Cooney | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | T. O'Grady | Training Standards Officer | |
| | | W. Carty | PLC Assistant Principal | |
| | | C. O'Boyle | TEL Officer | |
| | | K. Harvey | Adult Education Officer | |
| | **Parallel session 3: Communications Sub-Group** | | **Communications Sub-Committee** | Discussion of role of committee in quality assurance of FET Division |
| | | C. Fox | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | S. Dunne | Adult Guidance Co-ordinator/ Counsellor | |
| | | K. Byrne | Adult Literacy Organiser | |
| | | L. Ennis | Employment Engagement Officer | |
| | | S. Fearon | PLD/Communications Officer | |
| | | A. Sheridan | Adult Education Officer | |
| 15.45-16.30 | Private Review Team Meeting/Break | | | |
| 16.30-17.15 | **5. Quality Assurance Support Services** | A. Cahill | QA Officer | Discussion of the operation of the ETB's quality system, including arrangements for monitoring and review of quality |
| | | K. Harvey | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | T. O'Grady | Training Standards Officer | |
| | | I. Togher | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | V. Branigan | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| 17.15-17.45 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |

| Date: 22/03/22 | | | | |
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| **(Day 2)** | | | | |
| **Time (GMT)** | **Group** | **Participants** | **Roles** | **Purpose** |
| **09.00-09.30** | **ETB Review Coordinator** | **Angela Cahill**<br>**(Sinead Fearon)**<br>**(Claire O'Boyle)**<br>**Kelvin Harvey** | **QA Officer**<br>**PLD/Communications Officer**<br>**TEL Officer**<br>**Adult Education Officer** | **Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator** |
| 9.30-10.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 10.00-10.45 | **6 and 7. Parallel sessions with learners** | Learners will be added in the next few weeks | | Discussion of learner experience |
| | **Parallel session 1 - full time / part time / minority groups / learners with learning needs** | J. Abat | PLC Learner | |
| | | A. Coyle | PLC Learner | |
| | | C. Harrington | Youthreach learner | |
| | | M. Gillen | PLC Learner | |
| | | D. O Kelly | BTEI learner | |
| | | L. Russell | Youthreach Learner | |
| | **Parallel session 2 with learners (HE learners / graduates / apprentices)** | H. Dowdall | Past PLC learner | |
| | | C. Duffy | Past PLC learner | |

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| | | P. Ryan | Past PLC learner | |
| | | S. Clarke | Phase 6 Apprentice | |
| | | G. Lattimore | Past learner with Skills to Advance | |
| | | A. Donnellan | Past BTEI learner | |
| 10.45-11.15 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 11.15-11.30 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 11.30-12.15 | **8. Parallel sessions with LEARNING PRACTITIONERS - FT/PT/Community** | | | Discussion of staff involvement in quality assurance and enhancement |
| | **Parallel session 1 Full Time** | F. Monahan | PLC learning practitioner | |
| | | K. Varley | PLC learning practitioner | |
| | | J. Nolan | PLC learning practitioner | |
| | | E. Galvin | Youthreach resource person | |
| | | C. Langford | VTOS learning practitioner | |
| | | D. Carry | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| | **Parallel session 2 Part time** | K. Morgan | Skills to Advance Learning Practitioner | |
| | | H. Kenealy | Adult Literacy Organiser | |
| | | D. Carr | Adult Learning Practitioner | |
| | | T. Short | BTEI learning practitioner | |
| | | C. Gethings | BTEI learning practitioner | |
| | | L. McLoughlin | BTEI learning practitioner | |
| | **Parallel session 3 Community** | S. Casserly | Community Education learning practitioner | |
| | | F. Thornton | Community Education learning practitioner | |
| | | S. Clavin | Community Education learning practitioner | |

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| | | L. McKevitt | Local Training Initiative (LTI) Co-ordinator | |
| | | L. Lenihan | National Learning Network Learning Practitioner | |
| | | R. Mc Guinness | Apprenticeship Instructor | |
| 12.15-12.45 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 12.45-13.45 | Review Team Lunch/Break | | | |
| 13.45-14.30 | **9. Learning Supports** | T. Harford | Student Council representative from PLC | Discussion of learner supports in place, include mechanisms for learner voice |
| | | D. McGill | Student Council Representative from Youthreach | |
| | | E. Cloak | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | D. Carry | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| | | C. O'Boyle | TEL Officer | |
| | | A. Fallon | Adult Guidance Coordinator/ Counsellor | |
| | | K. Cawley | PLC Guidance Counsellor | |
| 14.30-15.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 15.00-15.15 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 15.15-16.00 | **10. Pathways - Information, Recruitment and Guidance** | S. Dunne | Adult Guidance Coordinator/Counsellor | |
| | | D. Leonard | PLC Principal | |
| | | M. O'Reilly | PLC Guidance Counsellor | |
| | | D. Ball | PLC Guidance Counsellor | |
| | | A. Fallon | Adult Guidance Coordinator/ Counsellor | |
| | | E. Coyne | Adult Guidance Information Officer | |
| 16.00-16.15 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 16.15-17.00 | **11. Parallel sessions with FET Coordinators** | | | Discussion of QA arrangements, |

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| | | | | responsibilities and implementation |
| | **Parallel Session 1: Heads of Centre/FET Coordinators - Unaccredited/level 1-3 provision** | K. Byrne | Adult Literacy Organiser | |
| | | A. Fowler | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| | | J. Breen | Community Education Facilitator | |
| | | E. Quinn | Community Education Facilitator | |
| | | P. Sludds | Head of QA, NLN | |
| | | S. Maher | Youthreach Coordinator | |
| | **Parallel Session 2 - Heads of Centre/FET Coordinators Level 4-6 provision (including training provision)** | E. Cloak | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | M. Reilly | VTOS Coordinator | |
| | | S. Duffy | BTEI Coordinator | |
| | | S.Williams | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | P. Rosbotham | Assistant Manager, Training Services | |
| | | J. McEneaney | PLC Assistant Principal | |
| 17.00-17.30 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |

| Date: 23/03/22 | | | | |
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| **(Day 3)** | | | | |
| **Time (GMT)** | **Group** | **Participants** | **Roles** | **Purpose** |
| **09.00-09.30** | **ETB Review Coordinator** | **Angela Cahill**<br>**(Sinead Fearon)**<br>**(Claire O'Boyle)**<br><br>**Kelvin Harvey** | **QA Officer**<br>**(PLD/Communications Officer**<br>**TEL Officer)**<br><br>**Adult Education Officer** | **Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator** |
| 9.30-10.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 10.00-10.45 | **12. Professional and Administration Services (Finance, HR and Facilities/IT)** | R. Duffy | LMETB Head of Finance | Discussion of the relationship between the ETB's quality assurance system and its professional functions |
| | | I. Brehony | LMETB Head of Human Resources | |
| | | B. Murphy | LMETB Director of Organisational Support and Development | |
| | | N. Callaghan | LMETB Head of ICT | |
| | | F. Smith | LMETB Head of Corporate Affairs | |
| | | C. O'Boyle | TEL Officer | |
| 10.45-11.15 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 11.15-11.30 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 11.30-12.15 | | C. Fox | PLC Deputy Principal | |

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| | **13. Learning Practitioners (cross-section of services and programmes) involved in programme development and review** | | | Discussion of staff involvement in programme development & review |
| | | S. Williams | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | V. Branigan | Project Manager, Advanced Manufacturing Skills | |
| | | O. Morrissey | Director of Adult Education and Part-time provision in PLC | |
| | | D. Leonard | PLC Principal | |
| | | A. Kelly | Head of Engineering, Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) | |
| 12.15-12.45 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 12.45-13.45 | Review Team Lunch | | | |
| 13.45-14.30 | **14. FE Heads of learning support Services** | C. O'Boyle | TEL Officer | |
| | | S. Fearon | PLD/Communications Officer | |
| | | A. Fallon | PLSS Support/Adult Guidance Coordinator/Counsellor | |
| | | A. Cahill | QA Officer | |
| | | K. Harvey | Adult Education Officer | |
| 14.30-15.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 15.00-15.15 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 15.15-16.00 | **15. Training Contractors - LTI / CTC** | D. Brown | General Manager, Community Training Centre | Discussion of arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement of education and training delivered by second providers |
| | | D. O'Broin | LTI Coordinator | |
| | | G. Peers | LTI Co-ordinator | |
| | | H. Macken | Representation from Rutledge - Contracted Trainer | |
| | | D. Harrison | Representation from Oiliúna - Contracted Trainer | |
| | | T. O'Grady | Training Standards Officer | |

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| 16.00-16.30 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 16.30-16.45 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 16.45-17.30 | **16. Parallel sessions with external stakeholders** | | | |
| | **Parallel session 1 - External Stakeholders** | L. MacAvin | Assistant Manager, SOLAS | Discussion of quality assurance arrangements for collaborative programmes/Discussion of collaboration and engagement with HEIs, including consideration of ATP |
| | | S. Kiely | National Hairdressing Apprenticeship Programme Coordinator. LCETB | |
| | | E. Sheerin | Maynooth University Access Programme | |
| | | A. Finn | Director of Academic Affairs and Programme Development, FIT | |
| | | S. Flanagan | Vice President for Academic Affairs, DKIT | |
| | **Parallel session 2 (Community Providers & Groups, including representatives of Cooperation Hours)** | R. Hambakachere | Integration Support Worker, Cultúr | Discussion of ETB engagement with community groups |
| | | M. Moran | Communiy Employment Supervisor, Meath Travellers' Workshop | |
| | | T. O'Donoghue | LTI Co-ordinator, Job Focus Dundalk | |
| | | K. Grenham | Community Development Worker, East Coast Family Resource Centre | |
| | | M. Gaughran | Louth Women's Network member | |
| | | C. O'Mahony | Cox's Demesne Youth and Community Project , Dundalk | |
| 17.30-18.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |

**Date: 24/03/22**

| (Day 4) | | | | |
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| **Time (GMT)** | **Group** | **Participants** | **Roles** | **Purpose** |
| **09.00-09.30** | **ETB Review Coordinator** | **Angela Cahill**<br>**(Sinead Fearon)**<br>**(Claire O'Boyle)**<br><br>**Kelvin Harvey** | **QA Officer**<br>**(PLD/Communications Officer**<br>**TEL Officer)**<br><br>**Adult Education Officer** | **Meeting with ETB Review Coordinator** |
| 9.30-10.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | Roles here defined by QQI | |
| 10.00-10.45 | **17. Planning for Industry Skills Needs** | B. Cooney | Kuka Robotics Representative | Discussion of industry focused programme development |
| | | M. McGrath | Director, AMTCE | |
| | | M. Magee | Dromone Engineering Representative | |
| | | A. Finn | Director of Academic Affairs and Programme Development, FIT | |
| | | A. McDaid | Employment Engagement Officer | |
| | | J. Reynolds | Amazon representative | |
| 10.45-11.15 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 11.15-11.30 | Review Team Break | | | |
| 11.30-12.15 | **19. Employer regional skills** | H. Martin | Panasonic representative | Discussion of the engagement of employers and regional skills bodies in strategic planning of programme |
| | | S. Colley Doyle | Trim Castle Hotel representative | |
| | | N. Dolan | Skills for Work Regional Co-ordinator | |
| | | A. Smyth | Authorised Officer, Apprenticeship Services | |

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| | | S. Keogh | Mid-East Regional Skills Forum Manager | delivery and quality assurance and enhancement activities |
| | | C. Fox | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | A. Sheridan | Adult Education Officer | |
| 12.15-12.45 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 12.45-13.45 | Review Team Lunch | | | |
| 13.45-14.30 | **19. Employer Engagement Function** | A. Gallagher | Employer Engagement Officer | Discussion of the ETB's approach to, and experience of, employer engagement in responding to local skills needs and quality assuring provision |
| | | L. Ennis | Employer Engagement Officer | |
| | | A. McDaid | Employer Engagement Officer | |
| | | C. Fox | PLC Deputy Principal | |
| | | O. Morrissey | Director of Adult Education and Part-time provision in PLC | |
| | | A. Sheridan | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | B. Brennan | Authorised Officer, Apprenticeship Services | |
| 14.30-15.00 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |

| Date: 25/03/22 | | | | |
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| **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. |
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| 11-11.30am | 22. QQI & ETB Review Coordinator/FET Director | Marie Gould<br>Orlaith O'Loughlin | Head of TEMRU Quality Manager, TEMRU | QQI gathers feedback on the review process (Review Team not in attendance) |

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| 11.30-12 | Private Review Team Meeting | | | |
| 11.40-11.55 | 23. Initial feedback to CE | ETB Chief Executive<br><br>Review Team<br><br>QQI representative(s) | M O'Brien<br><br>Elizabeth Shackels<br><br>Marie Gould Orlaith O'Loughlin Sabine Epitalon | Initial feedback is given by the Review Team to the ETB Chief Executive, in advance of the Oral Feedback |
| 12-12.30 | 24. Oral Feedback: Feedback presented by Review Team Chair. Attended by ETB Chief Executive, SMT, Self-Evaluation Steering Group, Group of Learners | M. O Brien | Chief Executive | Oral feedback on initial review findings |
| | | S. McDermott | Director of FET | |
| | | K. Harvey | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | A. Sheridan | Adult Education Officer | |
| | | B. Murphy | Director of OSD | |
| | | I. Brehony | Head of HR | |
| | | F. Smith | Head of Corporate Affairs | |
| | | D. Mc Donnell | PLC Principal | |
| | | A. Magee | Area Training Manager | |
| | | P. Rosbotham | Assistant Manager, Training Services | |
| | | V. Branigan | Youthreach Co-ordinator | |
| | | A. Cahill | QA Officer | |
| | | S. Fearon | PLD/Communications Officer | |

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

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