QA Review Follow-Up Report

Galway and Roscommon   Education and Training Board

Date: November - 2023

QQI
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

PREFACE

Following publication of the review report, and one year after submission of its QA review action plan, each ETB submits a **follow-up report** to QQI on progress against the plan, and how it is addressing the outcomes of the review. The report should identify the range of strategic and logistical developments and decisions that have occurred within the ETB since the publication of the review report and address each of the key findings and recommendations that the reviewers presented. Significant milestones should also be included, as well as any reflections and learnings from the inaugural review process.

Each follow-up report is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the ETBs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders.

The follow-up report is part of the inaugural review process. Subsequent reporting will be through QQI's annual reporting and dialogue processes.

This is the follow-up report for Galway and Roscommon Education Training Board (GRETB)

It is to be submitted by the 13th November 2023

The follow-up report has been approved by GRETB Quality Council and is submitted by Sinead Morgan

CONTENTS

GUIDELINES ON COMPLETING THE REPORT

The **Follow-up Report** provides a detailed update on developments since the inaugural review, incorporating the **Action Plan** previously submitted. It will include links to any policies that have been amended or introduced since the **Self-Evaluation and Review Report**. It is the responsibility of each ETB to ensure before submission that all links within the report are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available.

The **Follow-up Report** identifies **key developments, plans and/or decisions arising from the Review Report findings** that have occurred in the year since publication. The report should include progress in relation to specific recommendations, if any, on each topic. To assist you in responding, the template provides tables aligned with the review report's themes and topics. Where no recommendation has been received, **please delete the table. Please note** any changes to policies and procedures during the reporting period and, if applicable, include links to updated policies. QA developments/enhancements undertaken, not directly addressing the review report recommendations, may also be included.

Particular attention is asked to be given to noting any impact arising from the actions, this includes:

- the key areas of focus prioritised for action and any specific changes arising as well as links to any associated outputs (e.g., procedures, reports etc.)
- reflections on the **Inaugural Review** and **Follow-Up Report** process, barriers or challenges arising in implementation of the review recommendations and actions identified within the **Action Plan**.

The ETB is recommended to include some **reflections and learnings** from the review process in commentary.

1.0 Follow-up Report Post-Review

Include links to policies and procedures that have **not been already included or have been amended** since the ETB's Self-Evaluation Report as part of the review process.

Please add or delete rows in the tables below, as required.

1.01 ETB Mission and Strategy

Link to Current strategy / documents

Strategy Document 2022 - 2026

Service Plan 2022

Self-Evaluation Report 2021

1.02 Structures & Terms of Reference for Governance of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team noted the lack of learner representation on GRETB's governance groups. It is recommended that the ETB examine ways of including the learner voice throughout the 20 organisation and that formal means of ensuring learner representation on executive boards and	Review of membership and TORs of all QA Governance groups to ensure broad-based representation is in place, including learner representation based on the QA Governance Handbook.	Review of Governance groups has taken place, TOR's have been updated having consulted the members. A staff member has been appointed to represent the views

committees be explored with other ETBs and the relevant government departments		of learners gathered from the Regional Learning Events.
Click here to enter text.	Develop a learner representative structure based on the above review and define the required operational and governance arrangements needed to support the structure.	A staff member has been appointed to represent the views of learners gathered from the Regional Learning Events with a view to developing Regional Learning Forums. Feedback from Learner Forums is a point on the agenda for the QA Quality Council and QA Steering groups at each meeting.
	Develop a process to continuously evaluate the whole QA Governance.	QA Governance groups were reviewed with TOR's updated from member feedback in January 2023. Governance will be reviewed annually with membership on each board reviewed bi-annually.
	Develop a training guide for all representatives on governance groups.	Training guide has been prepared and presented to all members of the Governance groups.

Commentary and Reflections
Learners' views are represented at QA governance groups by updates from a QA staff member at each meeting who consults with Learners. GRETB intends to establish a GRETB Learner Forum in incremental stages. The first stage in this process is Regional Learning Events. GRETB booked five events known as, "The Learner Experience". The events have gathered learners from our five regions across Galway and Roscommon. The learners had the opportunity to participate in group activities and provide feedback to GRETB about their experiences to date. It provided them with the opportunity to relay any concerns/improvements that learners felt could be made within GRETB's service. These open and transparent learner experience events will further develop into five Regional Forums to take place in the first quarter of 2024. It is planned that these will develop into one GRETB Learner Forum dependent on learner feedback. These Regional Learner Forums will be the learners' voice and play a key role in GRETB's development into the future. The ultimate goal is to have learners represented at all governance groups.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

1.03 Documentation of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that all QA documentation be digitised in accordance with GDPR best practice. It should be centralised and made available to staff in accordance with a hierarchy of access depending on role	Development of QA Section of GRETB Intranet with validated programmes updated and a tracking of dates for programme validation.	QA section with a repository for all documents is available to all staff as a resource within SharePoint. This now includes an Educator Hub, a Policy and Procedures Library and all other relevant QA resources.
Click here to enter text.	Identification a priority list of policies for review and development	Complete and available within QA Further Education and Training Support Unit (FETSU), Steering and FET SMT Team sites.
Click here to enter text.	QA policies and procedures developed, reviewed, and updated and published centrally	Underway and ongoing.
Commentary and Reflections GRETB continuously updates its QA documentation system to ensure relevance and currency. Staff are routinely informed by QA on updates to policies, procedures, and all associated documentation. All materials are accessible through the updated QA SharePoint. QA redesigned the in-house SharePoint to ensure availability of a wide variety of materials to Centre Managers and Practitioners. Examples include video tutorials,		

interactive training, eBooks, policies, and procedures etc. The feedback to date from staff members who were provided with a demonstration of the site, prior to its publication, has been positive.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GRETB-Assessments-in-Early-Learning-and-Care-Programmes-February-2023.pdf

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GRETB-Polasai-maidir-le-Measunuithe-i-gClair-Churam-agus-Foghlaim-na-Luath-Oige-February-2023.pdf

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GRETBs-Professional-Practice-Placements-in-Early-Learning-and-Care-Programme-February-2023.pdf

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GRETBs-Polasai-maidir-le-Socruchain-Cleachtais-Ghairmiuil-ar-February-2023.pdf

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GRETB-QA-Policy-Statement-February-2023.pdf

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GRETB-Raiteas-Polasai-GRETB-maidir-le-Dearbhu-Cailiochta-February-2023.pdf

1.04 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that, based on COVID-19 experiences, the ETB continue to use the digital environment to support and extend PL&D. This should be extended to include apprenticeship tutors in profession linked PL&D activities.	FET section of GRETB's Intranet to be continuously updated and become the 'go to space' for all FET Support and Development resources and opportunities for all staff.	Ongoing updating of resources to the QA SharePoint.

		Complete a GRETB wide Training Needs Analysis and Training Plan which will support all practitioners.	GRETB appointed a PL&D Coordinator in September 2023. PL&D priorities include the drafting of PL&D Policy, supporting SMT in development, and implementation of the PL&D Strategic Plan.
		Complete a PL&D Policy to support all practitioners, in line with strategic goals and TNA identified needs.	
		QA Briefing to all practitioners on assessment requirements by QA department twice annually.	GRETB have undertaken briefings with practitioners biannually on preparing for assessment, feedback to learners, and academic integrity. External Authenticators are briefed prior to each certification run. Briefings are offered by QA on request and have previously included briefings to Evening Training Managers, Instructors and Employer Services.
		QA Briefings and Documentation to support practitioners in preparing for Assessment available digitally.	Ongoing briefings based on Centre requests occur. Supporting documentation is available digitally on QA SharePoint.
The review team recommends that the ETB, in addressing the changing needs in programmes, explore the skill sets of existing teaching, instructing and tutor staff, to identify subject matter expertise that they may have, and which could be utilised. In addressing the difficulties of recruiting teaching staff, particularly in Gaeltacht and rural areas,		Train the trainer programmes for specific skills areas; available to FET graduates as progression option.	Train the trainer programmes are available to current and past learners in centres throughout GRETB. GRETB is happy to facilitate PL&D in this area. Train the Trainer programmes available as an evening course option targeted towards

pathways should be explored to encourage recently qualified learners to upskill and become FET practitioners		crafts people who wish to become craft apprenticeship Instructors, commencing January 2024.
	Establish and maintain database of skills and expertise of existing practitioner staff.	Tutor panel/Adult Educator panel recruitment is currently live. The panel has been updated to reflect the specialisms tutors have.
	HR to work with FET Management to develop enhanced processes for promoting advertised vacancies.	Hire Lab is now being utilised to streamline the process of recruitment and social media is used more to promote vacancies.
	Create and maintain substitute panels with ongoing recruitment to ensure short term vacancies can be filled promptly.	The Tutor Panel/Adult Educator panel is currently recruiting, advertisement is on GRETB website, and the panel is updated regularly. In addition, GRETB is currently exploring a FET sub panel to fulfil short term vacancies.
	Continue supporting external PL&D courses for practitioners.	GRETB actively promote and encourage Professional Development of staff. A PL&D funding application process is in place for staff to apply for external opportunities annually.

Commentary and Reflections

GRETB is committed to the development of these areas to support and enhance learner and staff development. The newly appointed PL&D Coordinator will enable GRETB to achieve PL&D goals through policy and strategic planning. Offerings of CPD have included Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health First Aid, Plain English, First Aid, UDL, Academic Integrity, Health & Safety, Cybersecurity, Wriggle Connect and other relevant CPD.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

Click here to enter text.

1.05 Programme Development, Approval & Submission

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that the ETB continue to work on new programme development to address the changing needs of industry, society and learners.	Collaboration with SOLAS, ETBI in developing QQI Micro credentials.	GRETB are now offering: • PG25493 SPA 5S21997 Level 5 Resource Efficiency for a Sustainable Workplace 5 Credits • PG 25532 SPA 6S22103 Level 6 Certificate in The Circular Economy in the Workplace 5 Credits • PG 25052 SPA 5S21869 Level 5 Certificate in Building Digital Business Skills 10 Credits

		- PG25121 SPA 5F21873 Level 5 Certificate in Social Media for Digital Marketing 5 Credits. - PG25121 5F21871 Certificate in Digital Business Solutions. 5 Credits - PGG24997 SPA 4S21809 Level 4 Environmental Sustainability Awareness 5 Credits. - PG24998 SPA 5S21793 Level 5 Environmental Sustainability in the Workplace 5 Credits **GRETB developed:** - PG24705. 5S21795 Level 5 Special Purpose Certificate in Fish Farm Techniques 15 Credits. - PG24708 5F21801Certificate in Introduction to Biosecurity 5 Credits - PG24707. 5F21799 Certificate in Fish Handling and Sea Lice Screening 5 Credits

		• PG24706,5F21797 Certificate in Nutrition and Feed Distribution at Fish Farms 5 Credits
Click here to enter text.	Engaging and collaborating with QNet to establish a sectoral coherent plan for Programme planning and review.	GRETB continue to actively engage with QNet, participating in QNet working groups.
	Collaborating with Enterprise Unit within GRETB to create programmes suitable for industry.	GRETB Employer Services are offering a range of programmes to meet the needs of employers and enhance the skills-set of employees. The range of courses to be offered include the recently validated QQI Microcredentials and Pitman courses.
	GRETB will continue to work with other awarding bodies to expand the programme offering in response to learner needs.	GRETB are collaborating actively with other awarding bodies. Examples of this include Tertiary Degrees/Apprenticeships/FDQ/City & Guilds/Lantra
	Consultation with Coordinators in centres locally to identify current gaps in programme validation. Create, develop, and obtain QQI Validation to deliver these programmes	GRETB are actively engaged with centres to identify any programme validation and assist with programme approvals and validations.

	Collaborating with other ETBs to enable new post 2016 apprenticeships to be rolled out in GRETB.	GRETB are ongoing collaborating providers in a number of 2016+ apprenticeships (Auctioneering & Property Services, Software Developer Associate) and are actively engaged in registering employers and apprentices on an ongoing basis. There is a proposal to restart delivery of the 2016+ commis chef apprenticeship, which is progressing and expected to commence in 2024

Commentary and Reflections

We are currently offering six micro-credential courses across a broad range of subjects, and this is increasing. GRETB also works with other ETB's, QQI, and other stakeholders to offer programmes of mutual interest. We have successfully achieved differential validation for programmes in collaboration with colleagues from ETB's. Tertiary degrees have been at the forefront of GRETB's programme development, through collaboration with other ETB's and Higher Education partners. We have co-aligned to offer our students excellent courses that will develop their skills as they advance along the pathway from further to higher education. Nursing Studies is one example of a Tertiary Degree pathway now offered.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

Click here to enter text.

1.06 Access, Transfer and Progression

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
GRETB has stated its commitment "to ensure that a Recognition of Prior Learning Service is available to learners" and to the development of a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (SER, 46). The review team recommends that the ETB continue with the development of this service to allow for its early introduction across centres.	Completion of GRETB policy for RPL (Recognised Prior Learning).	GRETB were without a RPL co-ordinator for the 2022/23 academic year. Appointment of staff member with RPL Responsibilities (Sept 23) will support SMT to move draft RPL policy/procedure to approval phase. A working group completed a draft RPL Procedure which will be updated with the commencement of the PLD Coordinator with RPL Responsibilities
	Completion of guidelines and resources for all roles within the RPL process.	The guidelines, resources and process will be established once RPL Policy has been approved.
	Identification of subject matter mentors and assessors.	EOI to be distributed to existing Practitioners.
	Training of mentors and assessors.	RPL National Badge, FESS Training. Two GRETB staff members have completed RPL course in conjunction with LCETB and have compiled resources to

		assist. Three additional staff members achieved National forum badge in RPL.
	Testing of policy and process through piloting of real-life cases.	An RPL case study was completed with QA documentation developed to support.
The review team recommends that the ETB work in conjunction with SOLAS and other bodies to develop a system of tracking graduates, to explore use of IT in graduate tracking and in line with European examples.	GRETB will continue to work with SOLAS to explore the addition of a tracking module to the existing MIS and ask for appropriate resources implement this system.	PLSS is currently the system utilised and GRETB will continue to liaise with SOLAS regarding graduate tracking.
	GRETB will engage with SOLAS on any national developments to identify best practice for tracking graduates using existing CSO Data.	GRETB will continue to liaise with the QN and DFET Forums regarding updates on CSO Data.

Commentary and Reflections

GRETB is committed to ensure that a Recognition of Prior Learning Service is available to learners. GRETB has recently appointed a PL&D Coordinator with RPL Responsibilities in Autumn 2023.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

Click here to enter text.

1.07 Integrity and Approval of Learner Results

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that the ETB review the changes to the IV and EA processes that have been implemented as a result of Covid-19 with a view to making them standard thus reducing the paper-heavy trail and making the IV process more streamlined and time efficient. The ETB should also continue to recruit EAs to ensure subject matter experts are available across all centres and programmes.	GRETB IV and EA Sampling Strategy to apply to all GRETB courses in GRETB except for Craft Apprenticeships.	GRETB IV and EA Sampling Strategy applied to all GRETB courses except for Craft Apprenticeships. These are obliged to follow SOLAS Craft Apprenticeship Assessment Guidelines. Revision of RAP related documentation and processes complete.
	Continuation of membership on QA Network EA Working Group. with the intention of promoting ETBI EA Directory. Advise working group of shortages in specific subjects for EAs.	QA Staff members are committed to QA Network and continue to actively promote EA Directory amongst staff.
	Creation of Fair and Consistent Assessment Policy and associated procedures to ensure consistency throughout centres including RAP and EA.	Drafts completed and awaiting approval through the policy approval process. Fair and Consistent Assessment Policy • Appendix Two: Procedure for Compassionate Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances • Appendix Three: Procedure for Appeals: Results and Process

		- Appendix Four: Procedure for Examinations: Planning, Conducting and Concluding - Appendix Five: Procedure for Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment - Appendix Six: Procedure for Secure Storage of Assessment Materials and Learner Evidence - Appendix Seven: Procedure for Assessment Deadlines: Short Term Extensions - Appendix Eight: Learner Procedure for Providing Feedback to Learners - Appendix Nine: Procedure for Internal Verification and External Authentication - Appendix Ten: GRETB Results Approval Process (RAP) Procedure
Click here to enter text.	Briefings/training to centres based on Assessment Process with the aim of ensuring consistency with standards and processes throughout GRETB.	GRETB QA Department are committed to giving live briefings to centres twice per year on the assessment process. Individual centres are also given support through centre based tailored briefings as needed. GRETB QA are also building on a bank of resources which are stored centrally in SharePoint and available to staff to support the assessment process. This work is an

		ongoing process as required by new developments in the sector e.g., Academic Integrity/AI. The GRETB QA department provided EA briefings in 2022 & 2023. This provided a valuable mechanism to communicate GRETB processes and procedures to all EAs.

Commentary and Reflections

GRETB have continued to provide training and support to staff members on the significance of academic integrity and have made resources available to practitioners on same. QA continue to support centres through resources and briefings in preparing for assessment.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

1.08 Information and Data Management

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The basic foundation of information and data management in GRETB is adequately organised and in compliance with GDPR. The review team recommends that GRETB continue to address the issue of staff shortages in the IT department. All data management systems should be checked to ensure they meet GDPR	Continue to engage with relevant government departments re staffing allocations to support IT across the organisation.	GRETB are committed to the recruitment of IT staff to support all operations.

guidelines, including Multi-Factor Authentication, where required		
	Multifactor security for login to be implemented.	Multifactor security has been implemented. The Data Processing Policy has been updated. See link below.

Commentary and Reflections
GRETB recognises the insufficient staff resources in IT and, along with colleagues in ETBs, has engaged and will continue to engage with government departments and key stakeholders.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
GRETB Data Processing Policy and additional documents are available on our website.
https://gretb.ie/corporate/data-protection/

GRETB have recently noted an updated CCTV policy document, however there was an issue with the translation of this document and a query has been sent to ETBI. We await a response from them before we circulate or upload to the website.

https://gretb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Data-Processing-Policy.pdf

1.09 Public Information and Communication

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that GRETB further examine the issue of communications to ensure that members of the public and prospective learners are	Enterprise Strategy & Communications Unit established. Communications audit to be completed.	Incomplete and currently in progress due to a change in Senior Management with responsibility for this area. Adult Education

aware of the extent of the services it offers. It is recommended that GRETB continue with the work already underway to develop a shared sectoral identity and communication strategy as outlined in the SER (p 57)		Officer appointed in June 23. Communications and Marketing Support role created; individual appointed in July 23. Both collaborating to complete this by first quarter in 2024.
Click here to enter text.	FET Communications Day to introduce external marketing agency.	Communications Day has taken place in 2023.
	Development of FET Communications Strategy.	Currently in Draft mode to be completed in first quarter of 2024
	GRETB Branding Guidelines and roll out of regular awareness building campaigns.	Completed and draft being submitted to Senior Management Team for approval.
	GRETB will develop a range of digital assets, which will be promoted on existing digital platforms and social media channels to communicate a sense of place and personality for GRETB which differentiates what it has to offer from other organisations.	GRETB working in conjunction with SOLAS created a mobile application and VR platform to support a new programme developed under the Innovation Collaboration fund – Aquafarm. This is the only one of its kind in the country. A Communications and Marketing Support officer responsible for GRETB official – website, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn has been appointed. A training schedule is currently being created to provide support in-centre to staff across the regions.

Commentary and Reflections

GRETB supports the recommendation for an integrated communications strategy to strengthen its profile across all stakeholder groups. An audit of GRETB website has taken place and we await recommendations.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

Click here to enter text.

2.0 Teaching, Learning & Assessment

2.01 The Learning Environment

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that GRETB continue to develop and implement a consistent approach to blended learning and delivery which would be available to learners across all centre locations. It is recommended that the momentum and the effective internal practice that was begun as a response to Covid-19 be continued and that GRETB liaise with other ETBs to address regulatory and other issues which might arise.	Engaging a blended learning expert to enable a framework for all delivery methodologies based on good practice and national developments.	This has been completed with a Framework for 4 Modes of Delivery being proposed for GRETB Learners. Feedback has been provided to QQI on the QQI Draft Guidelines for Digital Education document. GRETB has received QQI's final Statutory Guidelines on Blended and Fully Online programmes V3. These will be reviewed by SMT and the framework modified accordingly as necessary. Actions arising will require resourcing.

		TEL continue to support centres in incorporating technology into the delivery and assessment for learners.
Click here to enter text.	Continuous professional development to facilitate upskilling of staff to build digital capacity and competence in blended learning instructional strategies.	Staff have undertaken UDL workshops designed through TEL and delivered by GRETB staff UDL facilitators. 67 staff have completed in house courses and received a GRETB digital badge. The Conversational Learning project has been piloted and a case study is included with this document. Staff continue to be supported by TEL in blended learning instructional strategies
	Continue stakeholder consultation to inform ETB strategy and action plan.	GRETB has very recently received the Statutory Guidelines on Blended and Fully Online programmes V3 in October 2023 and will consult with our stakeholders to deliver.

Commentary and Reflections

 GRETB GRETB has recently received QQI's final Statutory Guidelines on Blended and Fully Online Programmes, having given feedback on draft guidelines in May (**QQI draft QA guidelines for digital education.pdf**). Now these final guidelines are distributed by QQI, GRETB will review our framework and modes of delivery to ensure alignment with the final guidelines when published.

Please review 'Case Study Three' in section five

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

2.02 Assessment of Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Commentary and Reflections
Click here to enter text.
We have developed a Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners' policy with associated procedures as outlined previously.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

Currently awaiting approval from GRETB Board of management.

2.03 Supports for Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team observed very good practice at the majority of centre locations and recommends that GRETB streamline methods to take this best practice and implement it at smaller and rural locations.	Centrally devised Learner Survey, analysis of data to identify areas for continuous improvement.	A Pilot survey has been completed but due to staff shortages, QA was unable to roll this out across the region. Currently, we are focusing on the Learner Events as a source of feedback. Learners have been surveyed at these events, with learner regional forums to be created and further feedback sought through these forums.
	Certification benchmarking Analysis from QQI.	Ongoing
	Development of QA Policies and Procedures at GRETB level.	Ongoing

	EA Annual Reports to highlight good practice and identify areas for development going forward.	Complete for June 2023 period. Summary reports for each RAP period to be created for QA Steering Group .
	Support the development of Communities of Practice.	We look forward to supporting CoP's when staff resources become available.

Commentary and Reflections

Our goal is to ensure that, as far is reasonably possible, all learners are provided with the supports required to allow full engagement to benefit from the educational opportunities available while participating in a course offered by Galway Roscommon Education and Training Board. A Learner Support and Inclusion Unit is now in place. The unit is supporting learners in a variety of ways including Laptop Loan Scheme, Access to counselling, administering a learner assistance fund, reasonable accommodations for Learning including conducting Learning Needs Assessments with learners and other testing including dyslexia screening and WRATS from 2024.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

3.0 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review

3.01 Self-Evaluation Monitoring & Review

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

The review team emphasises the necessity of using KPIs to review, monitor and evaluate the quality of the educational process. Consequently, the review team recommends the development and maintenance of a system of metrics based on KPIs to measure and analyse the progression of the training and education provided. In this way, achievements can be recognised, and any shortcomings addressed.	Develop a FET Monitoring and Evaluation matrix with key indicators of progress.	Under consideration on completion of the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
	Continue to develop and maintain focus on self-evaluation with a view to continuous improvement of service.	Ongoing
Click here to enter text.	Develop a Monitoring and Evaluation policy based on all FET Monitoring and evaluation activities.	This is planned to commence in the first quarter of 2024 subject to staff resources.

Commentary and Reflections
GRETB are committed to developing a FET Monitoring and Evaluation policy. The utilisation of Tableau to analyse data has increased the capacity within the GRETB to use data and data analytics software to monitor key indicators of progress and support the future development of GRETB

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

3.02 Programme Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that GRETB continue to focus on the needs of external stakeholders and employers. This would involve linking "graduate tracking" to the programme monitoring and review process to check if the educational needs of the learners have been sufficiently met as they enter employment or continued education and to ascertain why some of them might drop out of programmes completely	Liaise with SOLAS and acquire progression of learner details from CSO.	GRETB continue to liaise with SOLAS and ETBI. SOLAS have responsibility for updating PLSS management system from which progression details are recorded.
	Systematic Programme Monitoring and Review of courses to be implemented.	Formal Systematic Programme Monitoring and Review of courses will be implemented subject to staff resources being in place. Within some centres, midterm evaluation reports, end of course evaluations and learner feedback is captured in addition to feedback forms. Feedback from Guidance and Learner Support assists in the review of programmes.
Click here to enter text.	Putting into practice a GRETB learner forum will enable qualitative data on learner experiences to be explored and continuous improvement to be ensured.	This process has commenced with the planned Learner Events.

Commentary and Reflections

GRETB recognises the importance of establishing a system for self-evaluating, monitoring and review of QA processes and FET Programmes. GRETB will be engaging with QNet and QQI in a sectoral approach to programme review. Ongoing evaluation occurs internally in the form of midterm reports, end of course evaluations. Additional feedback mechanisms include feedback from Guidance and Learner Support.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

Click here to enter text.

3.03 Oversight, monitoring & review of relationships with external parties

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
The review team recommends that GRETB further develop its procedures for engaging in external stakeholder relationships	Enterprise, Strategy & Communications unit to increase GRETB's representation on key stakeholder groups in the region.	Click here to enter text.

	GRETB will work to identify stakeholders & champions for various areas of learning, including identifying current and prospective stakeholders and champions within various sectors.	The AEO (Adult Education Officer) with responsibility for Enterprise & Engagement has joined the Western Region Skills forum to build on links with Sales, Engineering, MedTech and ICT sectors. She represents GRETB on the Net Zero Cities steering group. GRETB is working with Bia Innovator, food innovation and incubation centre for the West of Ireland on a range of programmes. The AEO with responsibility for Pathways is a member of this steering group.
Click here to enter text.	GRETB will host a dedicated, and regular programme for engaging stakeholders through informal and formal events through the Enterprise, Strategy and Communications function.	GRETB hosts an annual business breakfast where employers across the two regions are invited to attend.
	GRETB will engage a new tool to record details of stakeholder engagement across the organisation. In relation to Enterprise Engagement across GRETB, this will be recorded through Project SEED a Client	The SEED project is due to be implemented in January 2024.

	Relationship Management (CRM) project currently in development.	

Commentary and Reflections

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
Click here to enter text.

4.0 Update on other additional QA Objectives/actions arising from internal QA planning and monitoring

Guide:

An update should be provided on any objectives/planned actions for the year **not already addressed in the follow-up report.**

The table is designed to assist in this process and should include headline information only.

No.	QA Objectives These should relate to objectives not already discussed in the progress report.	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress.	Link to updated/new Policy
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

5.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies (optional)

Guide:

You are invited to provide up to 3 x **short case studies**, 1-2 pages, as part of your ETB's Follow-up Report demonstrating QA enhancements and impacts arising from the review process and implementation of the review report recommendations. **You are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other providers and would benefit from wider dissemination**. Note: Submission of case studies are not mandatory to the follow-up report. However, please know that any submitted case studies will be published on QQI's website in full unabridged format.

Guideline for Case Study

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

⇒ Be between half a page and two pages in length

⇒ Limited to 2-2500 words

⇒ Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue

⇒ Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters

⇒ Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis

⇒ Include links to any sources cited

⇒ Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning

Case Study 1 Title: GRETB Learner Regional Experience Events

Introduction

The Learner Regional Events were established to encourage learners to provide feedback to GRETB on their learning experiences. The premise was to establish five regional events that would encourage learners throughout GRETB to meet informally with a view to sharing their experiences of GRETB services. Each event intended to provide every individual with the opportunity to hear from other learners, and to communicate their views on being a GRETB learner, critique the services offered, and make suggestions on improvements that GRETB could respond to. The events also provided an opportunity to share the impact of being an adult learner, their learning journey within GRETB, and how this experience will inevitably shape their future. Following the events, 112 learners expressed an interest in participating in a Learner Forum. It is hoped that in the long-term, that learners, representative of each provision, will participate in Regional Learner Forums to capture their voice on an ongoing basis.

Description of issue

While GRETB has always recognised the importance of the inclusion of the learner voice and actively welcomes learner participation, no formal process to capture this has been in place to date.

Action

Following consultation with Centre Managers and Stakeholders, GRETB decided to establish Regional Learner Events across five geographical locations within Galway and Roscommon to engage with the diverse learner groups engaging with all education and training services offered within FET. The events were planned and designed to provide learners with the opportunity to interact with each other in an inclusive and fun orientated environment. Hotels with appropriate facilities and refreshments were booked. Transport to and from the events was provided. Learners with additional needs, including special dietary requirements were catered for. Activities were carefully selected to engage learners and included participation from Galway Community Circus and a facilitator from Galway Youth Theatre. The Learner Experience events took place the week of October 16th through October 20th, 2023. The five events travelled to Tuam (North Galway), Clifden (West Galway), Galway City, Roscommon Town and Loughrea (East Galway).

Following consultation with stakeholders, five questions for learners at the events were identified. These were presented to learners to ensure inclusion for all, in a variety of formats, including: facilitation (GCC & Facilitator Galway Youth Theatre), Mentimeter and paper based. Data was collected electronically and via paper. In total 937 responses to the 5 questions were recorded. This is reflective of a total of 198 attendees overall.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

Preliminary findings from the feedback generated to date indicates:

- GRETB learners are predominantly positive about their experiences to date.
- Learners believe in sharing their opinions and making their learning experience as positive as possible.
- Broadband and internet connection is a concern for most.
- Learners would like more course offerings, including online and blended delivery.
- The need for Learner supports including Learner Assistance Fund, Career guidance & Counselling are mentioned frequently.
- IT Support and digital skills training would be welcome.
- 112 of the 198 learners are interested in joining the five Learner Forums.

Planned outcomes:

- All data generated from the learner events is currently being collated and a report has been generated to QA Steering. A more detailed comprehensive report will be published and circulated.
- Feedback on the findings will be distributed to learners through a variety of means.
- GRETB will liaise with the learners and establish forums that best suit their schedules and create an environment that they feel comfortable contributing in.
- The forums will have members that represent each level of courses/provision within GRETB.
- We aim to have the Regional Forums established by February 2024.

Key Learnings

GRETB take pride in our partnership with our learners. GRETB appreciates the level of participation and feedback provided by this diverse group through these events.

The Key Learnings from the five events are:

- Each of the five regions bring their own unique issues, supporting the need for five independent Regional Forums.
- To facilitate meaningful participation and to support inclusion, a maximum of 50 learners is recommended at each event with the provision of facilities for those with neurodiverse and additional needs.
- Broadband quality is a key issue irrespective of region.
- GRETB could improve its social media presence, particularly in relation to advertising courses, and making learners aware of the supports available to them.
- Learners want more courses, extra class time, and to continue their positive learning journey within GRETB.

It is intended to conduct a 'Lessons Learned' review post the event within QA to inform future event planning.

Case Study 2 Title: GRETB QA SharePoint Site

Introduction

QA have recently engaged in an upgrade of a dedicated QA SharePoint Site. Following research and collaboration with the external design team, a template suitable for staff and QA needs was selected and developed.

Description of issue

Prior to the establishment of this resource, GRETB FET relied on Moodle for the provision of educator resources and updates for staff. These mediums provided challenges as not all staff found them readily accessible or easy to navigate. In addition, other documentation relevant and required by staff, was stored on a SharePoint site, further complicating ease of access. Staff had highlighted this at briefings and other communications.

Action

The QA Team created one easily accessible Resource Hub for all staff members.

- QA connected with Centres to ascertain feedback on Moodle resources.
  - Centre Managers indicated one location on SharePoint would make resources more accessible.
- QA engaged Data Analytics to identify usage by practitioners.
- QA conducted research and consulted with other ETB's QA departments.
- QA created a template following a brainstorming exercise with FETSU team.
- QA consulted with an external design team.
- QA has now developed the site for publication and will continue to update as required. Additional software has been added so that materials can be displayed and accessed in a user-friendly manner.

The front facing design of the site is illustrated below.

GRETB Quality Assurance Portal

| Policies & Procedures | Calendar | QA Information | Educator Hub |
| Programme Information | Programme & Module Descriptors | QA Activities | News |

Key Outcomes/Impacts

The updated SharePoint site is now published, and the primary outcome is expected to be an easily accessible resource for all staff.

To that end, early feedback from some staff, given a short demonstration of the new site, has been very positive.

Key Learnings

The importance of:

- having resources in an accessible manner.
- a single location with ease of access and navigation.
- maximising internal resources to facilitate staff support and development.
- facilitating the provision of resources via a variety of digital formats.
- promoting inclusivity.
- UDL friendly.

Case Study 3: GRETB's Conversational Learning Project

Introduction

The GRETB Conversational Learning project is a ground-breaking initiative designed to offer flexible learning solutions to support a diverse range of learners within the Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB). The project utilises Conversational Learning, an educational approach that involves learners engaging with short, 3 to 5-minute units of learning. These units are grouped into brief courses that are aligned with specific learning objectives and curricula across various GRETB programs. Learners access these courses through a dedicated app that presents the learning material as engaging and interactive conversations, complete with quizzes and knowledge checks related to the course content.

Targeted Cohorts

Initially, this project focused on two specific groups for pilot testing: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Trades Apprenticeships. Over time, the project expanded its scope to include GRETB Youth Advocacy services, tailoring flexible courses to meet the needs of learners in this category.

Collaborative Design and Instructional Process

One of the significant achievements of this project is the establishment of a collaborative model for creating course content. This collaboration involves the Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) team, subject matter experts (GRETB Practitioners), and app developers working together to create effective learning experiences.

Content Creation and Development of Sharable Resources

GRETB practitioners played an active role in developing user-friendly content that aligns with specific learning objectives and curricula. These resources are easily accessible, support classroom activities, and are seamlessly integrated into the syllabus. All content is stored in a content library, making it easy to update and reuse as standalone resources or incorporate into other platforms.

Integration of AI

The project enthusiastically adopted advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) by incorporating AI-driven personal learning assistants and an AI-powered question bank into the learning experience. The content includes AI avatars that engage learners through short conversations and repeated phrases, similar to popular platforms like WhatsApp, Duolingo, and TikTok Reels.

Description of issue

The project addressed specific challenges that had been identified within the target cohorts:

ESOL*:*
- Lack of ESOL tutors available to address the demand for ESOL classes**.**
- Lack of standardised ESOL resources aligned to GRETB A1 curricula**.**
- Lack of relevant conversational material from an Irish context
- Geographical dispersion of ESOL learners in Galway and Roscommon and access to GRETB centres (flexible learning opportunities)
- Efficient way to share resources with learners**.**

Apprenticeships*:*
- Learner supports for apprenticeship students**.**
- Extra support in Maths for trades
- High rates of failure in phase 2 exams (maths identified as a problem area)
- Lack of easily accessible resources aligned to the Irish apprenticeship syllabus**.**
- Flexible access to support resources on the job

Youth Advocacy: Leveraging educational reels, the project will aim to promote interaction and engagement for harder-to-reach learner groups, promoting engagement with the service.

Action

The project commenced by identifying two initial cohorts for pilot testing: English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Trades Apprenticeships. The project development followed the ADDIE model of instructional design:

Phase 1
- During lockdown, TEL worked with GRETB practitioners to develop e-Tivities and engage in storyboarding for instructional design.

- Two TEL champions who completed this training were identified and invited to participate in a collaborative design process for ESOL and

  Apprenticeships.

- Content experts were identified for each of the pilot cohorts.
- Initial training on the specific design platform and ongoing weekly project meetings with TEL.
- Decisions were made regarding the overall course areas to be developed: ESOL focused on social interactions and community interactions aligned with A1 curricula, while Apprenticeships focused on key mathematical formulas in various trades.

Phase 2

- ESOL scripts were developed by ESOL practitioners, with 4-minute interactions carefully scaffolded for ESOL learners and reviewed for suitability and language level.
- The software Mural was used to develop an initial storyboard presented to app developers, and AI avatars were created to represent different characters in each interaction.
- Interactions were staged in various locations using photos of centres/locations as scene backdrops.
- For Apprenticeships, bespoke animations were created using MS PowerPoint and Adobe Photoshop, focusing on specific mathematical formulas.
- A series of 60-second videos were developed demonstrating formulas for 5 different trades, along with other videos exploring key theories.

Phase 3

- Courses were rolled out to apprenticeship classes in GRETB TC Galway city and ESOL classes in Co. Galway.
- Learners could access and download the app via a QR code, and a 5-digit code sent to GRETB emails.
- Feedback from learners, especially apprentices, indicated a desire for short maths revision courses on key maths formulas, leading to the design of these courses for phase 2 apprentices.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

The Conversational Learning project has yielded several key outcomes and benefits:

- **Increased Student Engagement:** Learner analytics indicate engagement beyond traditional class hours, even on weekends.

- **Improved Learning Outcomes:** Learners who engage with Conversational Learning consistently exhibit enhanced understanding of specific topics.

- **Personalized Learning Paths:** Students appreciate the tailored learning experience focused on short, digestible learning elements.

- **Flexible Learning Opportunities:** Learners can access material via an app on smartphones, making it possible to study during commutes.

- **Learner Analytics:** Guided lessons help learners identify areas of difficulty, building autonomy. Practitioners can identify common areas of difficulty.

- **Accessibility:** Conversational Learning is available 24/7, ensuring learners have support when needed. The AI question bank provides immediate answers to learner's questions based on the material uploaded by practitioners. We have had 262 users complete courses (up to October 2023) the usage has risen very steadily as instructors and learners are becoming more familiar with the app and how to use it effectively. Analytics indicate that 94% of learners feel more confident in the topic after completing the short courses.

- **Collaborative Design/Instructional Design:** The project has successfully involved various stakeholders in content creation and has established a resource library.

Key Learnings

- The project's journey yielded valuable insights:

- **Co-Creation/Co-Design**: Collaborative content creation involving practitioners, instructional designers, and developers is crucial, with regular catch-ups to maintain a shared vision.

- **Instructional Design:** Designing a course prototype for testing allows for quick adjustments before the course is fully developed.

- **Blended Learning**: Embracing blended learning and flipped classroom models enhances engagement and understanding.

- **Community of Practice**: Developing a community of practice is essential for collaboration and maintaining content quality.

- **Consistent Sets of Resources:** Establishing a library of high-quality, consistent learning resources is a crucial ongoing project, particularly for ESOL and Apprenticeship programs.

Conversational Learning demonstrates an innovative approach to flexible learning, addressing specific challenges and fostering improved outcomes and engagement. Through collaborative design, advanced technology integration, and personalised learning experiences, the project has highlighted the potential to reshape traditional learning paradigms leveraging the best of innovative technology developments to enhance learning.