

QA Review Follow-Up Report

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board

Date: November - 2023



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann



lmetb

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

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 Louth Meath ETB

It is to be submitted by 30/11/23

The follow-up report has been approved by Director of FET and is submitted by Declan McKenna

CONTENTS

PREFACE	2
GUIDELINES ON COMPLETING THE REPORT	4
1.0 Follow-up Report Post-Review	5
2.0 Teaching, Learning & Assessment.....	34
3.0 Self-Evaluation, Monitoring & Review	41
4.0 Update on other additional QA Objectives/actions arising from internal QA planning and monitoring.....	46
5.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies (optional)	47
Case Study Title: Click here to enter text.	48

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.

1.02 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.
<p>1- Strengthen the membership of the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee and its sub-committees through the inclusion of employer and learner representatives.</p>	<p>Finalise creation of Learner Voice Network, its Terms of Reference and learner representation on Communications Sub Committee. (Q1 2023)</p> <p>Continue to review the current membership of the QA governance committees and identify potential external stakeholders who may enhance the work of each committee by bringing an external and impartial perspective. (Ongoing)</p>	<p>LMETB's FET Learner Voice Network was established in Spring 2023. It will have held 4 meetings by end of year 2023. Two learners were invited in our October 2023 meeting to be part of the Communications Sub-Committee.</p> <p>Building on the experience of the Learner/student councils in each of the PLC colleges and the Youth Reach centres, where there are well established mechanisms for the inclusion and representation of the learner voice, within the LMETB Quality Assurance governance structures the ETB will continue to encourage innovative means to enable learner to participate in decision making fora and also for their voice to be heard. Events such as such as learners certificate celebrations or AONTAS organised learner voice events continue to be</p>

productive vehicles for identifying learners who potentially could be nominated onto the corporate level governance structures. Requests to participate on the QAGMC and PDRE governance sub-committees in 2024 are under active consideration by various external stakeholders from the business community. The QAGMC (or FET governance council) will be augmented with additional industry/academic members, in line with requirements under the Post-2016 Apprenticeship structure for the Robotic Automation Apprenticeship, which LMETB will be seeking validation for from QQI in early 2024. Additional governance structures, germane to the apprenticeship will be also added. These will include a National Programme Board and a National Examination Board and will draw on members of the consortium group and other key stakeholders etc. Since their inception all the existing governance structures including, the QAGMC, PDRE, QA sub-committee and Communication sub-committee all have experienced significant changes in membership with workforce changes within LMETB FET provision. This has entailed a learning curve for these new members in terms of the QA governance framework and its function and objectives etc.

LMETB's FET provision continues to engage very productively with industry and community stakeholders. This is documented annually in the Skills to Advance Planning Report which clearly identifies how the ETB engages with various groups and who these groups are. The

		<p>report also contains clear key performance indicators (indicative targets) for employer initiatives in 2023 which demonstrate the active engagement with the sector. The community-based nature of a significant amount of the ETB's provision will also facilitate representation from the community sector onto our governance structures in early 2024,</p>
	<p>Addition of two members from outside of LMETB's FET division to the Communications sub-committee. (Completed)</p>	<p>Completed</p>
	<p>Addition of an employer and a HE representative to the QAGMC. (Q1 2023)</p>	<p>As per above</p>
	<p>An external stakeholder, knowledgeable in quality assurance will be asked to join the QA sub- committee. (Q2 2023)</p>	<p>As per above</p>
<p>2- Consider reviewing the internal ETB structures to create greater</p>	<p>LMETB FET will deliver an Annual FET Support event to include inputs from QA, Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), Professional Learning and Development (PLD), Learning Support and Programme Development.</p>	<p>First FET Support event held in December 2022.</p> <p>A second quality assurance event aimed at FET leaders is being planned for January 2024. The aim of the event is to share internal</p>

<p>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.</p>	<p>(Planned for Q 2022 and then annually thereafter)</p> <p>A FET Support Newsletter will be developed and issued to keep FET centres up to date with developments in QA, TEL, PLD, Learning Support and Programme Development. This newsletter will support the current communication channels (MS Teams and SharePoint) for FET Support functions. (1st Newsletter for Q2 2022 and bi-annually thereafter)</p> <p>Addition of a new AEO to the Senior Management Team with specific responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement measures across the ETB. (Q4 2022)</p>	<p>best practise in Quality Assurance, Teaching Learning and Assessment and TEL. It will showcase activities which the FET support staff have been working on, focus on new LMETB policy developments and associated procedures, share any recent sectoral developments, highlight new TEL areas of potential interest to teaching staff and provide a networking space for FET Leaders to advise on future activities of the support service.</p> <p>LMETB's 1st FET Support Newsletter will be issued in December 2023</p> <p>Done</p>
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	<p>In-person visits to FET centres by FET Support staff will be carried out to increase the visibility of QA, TEL, PLD and Learning Support.</p> <p>(Started in Q4 2022 and to be continued throughout each academic year)</p>	<p>Continuing throughout the year Senior management Team representatives (FET Director/AEOs) alongside members of the Support Team e.g., ELC Co-ordinator, TEL and Learner Support Officer and Senior Administrative staff regularly visit every centres/college to support them in resourcing their local implementation of quality enhancement activities. Schedule of meetings is planned for 2024.</p>
<p>3- Establish a quality assurance office as described in the ETB’s self-evaluation report.</p>	<p>Establishment of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Unit (QAEU) once the recruitment of an AEO with responsibility for QA is appointed. (Q4 2022)</p> <p>Enhancement of the FET Support Service via the appointment of additional coordinators with responsibility for Work- Based Learning, Data Analytics and Communications. (Q4 2023)</p>	<p>Due to the size of LMETB and the diversity of its provision, the overarching QA function needs to be operating at a higher executive level and be integrated within the FET senior management strategic planning and monitoring processes. The appointment of the AEO with responsibility for QA was to facilitate these high-level aims.</p> <p>Departmental sanction has been sought for these posts.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LMETB’s FET QA governance structures currently benefit from enhanced engagement with external stakeholders which ensure that all voices are able to influence quality assurance enhancements. In curriculum development terms there have been many Industry experts (ranging from robotics to security) who have actively supported and contributed to the design of new programmes. The ongoing engagement with Industry networks and partners is formalised in many of the centre's operations including: the AMTCE, all PLC Colleges, and the RSTC, and, then across the organisation via Employer engagement teams, continues to reflect the importance to which the ETB attaches to engaging with external stakeholders. Ongoing efforts are being made to ensure community and employer representatives are invited and encouraged to participate in programme development initiatives, and in the planning and delivery of service provision by participating as board members, for example -. e.g., the AMTCE Board is made up of industry representatives all of which oversee the Governance of the centre.</p>		

These efforts will all serve to further enhance LMETB's capacity to identify emerging needs and to develop services to address them. FET support service personnel also participate in a wide range of external committees maintaining and developing relationships with organisations, which are utilised to inform quality enhancements, e.g., provision for Ukrainians/asylum seekers.

It is intended to have an external review of governance structure, with a focus on ensuring consistency regarding the various terms of reference, the organisational structure and to ensure a group membership that includes all relevant stakeholders. The operational review will also include recruitment of learners to QA Governance, design of relevant induction and provision of ongoing training for all group members. This should enhance the clarity and co-ordination between the governance committees, ultimately leading to an improvement in understanding of the governance system by all staff members.

The staffing structure of the FET Support Service has been enhanced since the QQI Inaugural Review.

- A Programme Development Officer was recruited in July 2022.
- An Early Learning and Care Programme Co-Ordinator was recruited in November 2022, with a focus also on Work Based Learning.
- A new AEO was appointed in January 2023 to oversee the development of an integrated quality assurance framework across the FET service. In February 2023 two temporary AEOs were sanctioned to fill staffing gaps which arose in the Senior Management Team (SMT) over 2022/23 which were filled in late summer 2023.
- A Learner support officer was appointed in April 2023
- A Sanction request was approved for a three-month period for a QA Officer. A further request to the Department/SOLAS to sanction for a two-year post has been made.
- A Training Standards Officer was appointed to Drogheda College in August 2023
- A Training Standards Officer was appointed to the AMTCE in October 2023

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Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

[LMETB FET Learner Voice Network Terms of Reference](#)

1.03 Documentation of QA

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>4. Identify, at the strategic level, a more consistent and integrated approach to quality assurance to create greater parity of experience for learners, staff, employers and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Actions for this recommendation were combined with actions under Recommendations 2,14,25</p>	<p>An action plan has been developed to monitor the progress of QA actions arising from the QQI Inaugural Review (Self Evaluation) which support the development of the new QA system. The areas for action were grouped in accordance with the QQI 11 Core Guidelines.</p> <p>LMETB are also utilising an Excel based tracking system designed to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Inaugural Review which is acting as the focus of LMETB's current Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).</p> <p>A meeting of the QA sub-committee to review progress in the Inaugural Review Action Plan will take place in February 2024.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LMETB considers the documentation of QA as a key tool for providing transparency to internal and external stakeholders on QA matters. A member of the FET Support Team has taken responsibility for documentation control, with details of all policy and procedure documents kept in a database,</p>		

with review due dates etc. A formal schedule for a continual rolling review of existing policies has been established. As a rule, new policies or procedures are reviewed after twelve months and thereafter every three years. There may occasionally be a need to amend/review a document before its review date and where this arises, the Support Team takes the necessary steps to carry out the review.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

**[LMETB Programme Development and Approval Policy and Procedures](#)
Version 1 Sept. 2022**

1.04 Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>5. Identify 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.</p>	<p>Continued support of recently- established Communities of Practice (CoPs).</p> <p>Evaluation of Pilot scheme to inform future expansion to other fields of learning. (Q3 2023)</p>	<p>Early Learning and Care Community of Practice (CoP) was set up in June 2021. Members communicate regularly through MS Team meetings and share resources over the platform. Face-to-Face Training Days have been arranged in 2023 for this CoP. The ELC Co-ordinator and a COP member developed a short ELC E-book as a QA tool to raise the profile of the programme and to enhance communication with key stakeholders. 6 other subject matter CoPs have been established in an online format. A face-to-face information sharing day for these CoPs is planned for 2024. ELC CoPs has been reviewed with members on an ongoing basis.</p>

	<p>Development of a FET Professional Learning and Development Strategy for LMETB, which will ensure that staff will continue to be given opportunities to upskill and engage in teaching and learning related PLD. (Q4 2023)</p>	<p>An Evaluation of the 6 other subject matters CoPs will be carried out in Q2 2024.</p> <p>An outline FET Professional Learning and Development (PLD) strategy for LMETB has been developed taking account of the SOLAS/ETBI National FET PLD strategy 2020-24. Additional survey based and work-shop planning will set out the Vision, goals and actions for PLD in LMETB FET for 2024-28. PLD events are currently emailed to ETB Staff. PLD is planned around national and local themes and in response to feedback from staff, service demands and continual improvement recommendations from management and other internal and external stakeholders. CPD offerings included accredited and non-accredited training.</p>
<p>6. Develop and implement an ETB-wide strategy for the design, monitoring and evaluation of the induction programme offered to all FET staff.</p>	<p>Review existing induction material and create a new suite of induction resources on an appropriate platform and in an appropriate format which allows continuous review and enhancement of material. (Q3 2023)</p>	<p>A desktop review of the current induction assets has been initiated to create additional induction support materials utilising new formats, for example, advisory QA videos to be embedded on the website. FET induction materials are currently updated on an annual basis, reflecting any new or up-dated</p>

	<p>Implement relevant dissemination methodologies across the organisation of induction material and implement ongoing review and evaluation processes to ensure induction remains fit for purpose. (Q3 2023 and ongoing)</p> <p>Build on existing processes for the provision of mentoring to new staff. (Q3 2023 and ongoing)</p>	<p>organisational developments and are available online on Office 365 SharePoint. A standardised FET staff induction checklist has been developed with a view to ETB-wide rollout.</p> <p>Participants are always asked to give feedback after the completion of Induction, and any new formats/assets introduced will also be reviewed on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Case studies have been gathered on current staff mentoring schemes in LMETB and are to be incorporated as part of the updated Induction Pack for FET Staff.</p>
<p>7. Develop and promote an ETB strategy for the professional development and learning of all FET staff.</p>	<p>Development of an LMETB Professional Learning and Development Strategy, based</p>	<p>An outline FET Professional Learning and Development (PLD) strategy for LMETB has been developed taking account of the SOLAS/ETBI</p>

	<p>on national and local priorities and themes. (Q4 2023)</p> <p>Promotion of PLD Strategy via existing staff networks such as QA Newsletter, MS Teams, staff collaboration events etc. (Q1 2024)</p> <p>Continue to consult with FET centres and Senior Management regarding Review and Evaluation of PLD Strategy. (Q1 2024 and ongoing)</p> <p>Continued collaboration with SOLAS, ETBI and National PLD Co- Ordinator's' Network on the development of a national PLD Hub for ETBs. (Q4 2022 and ongoing)</p>	<p>National FET PLD strategy 2020-24. Additional survey based and work-shop planning will set out the Vision, goals and actions for PLD in LMETB FET for 2024-28.</p> <p>The PLD strategy will be available on SharePoint when fully completed in 2024. It will be promoted via the FET Support Services Newsletter in 2024.</p> <p>The normal consultation process will be in place in the further development, review and update of the PLD strategy i.e., consultation with FET Leaders and FET Senior Management involving a Survey Staff before academic year end for PD needs for start of new academic year. A detailed evaluation will be carried out in 2028 when the next strategy is to be developed.</p> <p>Ongoing, in association with ETBI and National PLD Co-ordinator's Network</p>
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Commentary and Reflection

The Inaugural Review has provided LMETB with an opportunity to identify ways in which it could advance its procedures for staff management and development. In 2024, both the further enhancement of the PLD strategy and development of a standardised Induction Process which relates to all FET Staff, will be instrumental in this going forward, the review and evaluation of both these pieces will ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

LMETB FET Staff induction checklist

Early Learning and Care Programme eBook

1.05 Programme Development, Approval & Submission

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
8. Identify when each programme, course and qualification need 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.	* Programme Review in association with ETBs nationally. LMETB will contribute to a sectoral- devised approach to the re-development of QQI CAS awards. (2023 and ongoing)	Two SMEs were nominated from LMETB to assist with a project to develop Integrated Awards Standards for Business Administration, which will guide programme development and validation for awards leading to QQI Qualifications at NFQ levels 5 – 9. The organisation has also sought to be involved in the Health Care awards standards review to provide clear and constructive feedback on the development of QQI healthcare qualifications and provider programmes.

		<p>In 2023 LMETB representatives participated in a QQI organised dialogue with a range of key stakeholders including those involved in implementing CAS standards, on the extent to which the current CAS award standards are fit for purpose and how they might be improved.</p> <p>To ensure that the new standards reflect current and emerging best practice in the discipline, a reference group of national and international subject matter experts, as well as industry representatives, is being established.</p> <p>A Programme Development Officer for LMETB was appointed in July 2022.</p>
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	Process for systematic approach to module review and AIS review is under development. (Q4 2022)	LMETB QA Officer has developed a process for this, supported by a process map. This has been approved by LMETB QAGMC and is fully operational. The approval for the revision of existing and/or development of new Assessment Instrument Specifications (AIS) will be organised by the LMETB Training Standards (TS) Office in the Regional Skills and Training Centre (RSTC). This process may be reviewed at a later date, as an LMETB-wide QA Framework is established.
9. 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.	An external stakeholder from the RSF will be asked to join the PDRE. Relevant external stakeholders may be identified to advise on programme development. (Q1 2023)	LMETB FET Director currently engaged in ongoing recruitment of relevant stakeholders.
10. Review the manageability of the workload and responsibilities assigned to the Programme development, review and evaluation sub-committee.	LMETB will develop a process for consolidating centre-based provision reviews for presentation to the PDRE sub-committee. (Q4 2023)	Programme Development Officer has prepared a centre-based review of provision for submission to LMETB QAGMC for approval.
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>LMETB is committed to providing quality assured programmes for learners in its various FET centres.</p>		

LMETB has quality assurance processes in place to deal with delivery, development and validation requests. The policy will ensure compliance with *QQI Sector Specific Guidelines*, whereby 'An ETB is responsible for the design, development, approval, monitoring and review of all programmes, including programmes leading to QQI awards.'

The LMETB programme development review and evaluation process incorporate the quality assurance underpinning of a programme having to pass through a Programme Development Review and Evaluation Committee (PDRE) for recommendation or otherwise, and, onwards to the Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee (QAGMC) for approval. This ensures that any programmes which is to be forwarded to QQI or any other provider for validation are internally reviewed to ensure there is an inherent sound rationale and justification.

In terms of quality assurance, internal review of the programme, prior to submission to QQI via QHub, is essential and serves to ensure that applications meet a high standard. QQI panel reviews conducted by SMEs as part of the validation process can garner useful and helpful feedback in the development of new programmes.

Until 2022 no new programmes had been developed under the QQI programme validation process by LMETB. Since the review report was published LMETB has successfully validated a QQI 30 credit Level 6 Special Purpose Award Utilising Robotics in Advanced Manufacturing which is due to be rolled out in 2024 with the re-opening of the AMTCE following renovations as well as a QQI 30 Credit Level 5 Special Purpose Award DJ Skills Technician. Two 120 Credit level 6 Major Awards Maintenance Skills Technology (Electrical) and Maintenance Skills Technology (Pneumatics) were also validated by QQI for delivery in 2022.

In 2022 LMETB were invited to collaborate on the development of a new non-CAS level 3 family learning programme. Ten ETBs in total participated in the development of a Level 3 Special Purpose Award in Learning to Support Children in Primary School (25 credit award). LMETB also led the development and validation of two Level 4 10 Credit Security Guarding Skills and Door Security Skills Special Purpose Awards. These have subsequently been made available for differential validation to other ETBs.

LMETB have engaged with SOLAS as part of the Skills to Advance Micro credential initiative to obtain differential validation in a variety of identified key skills areas. To date LMETB have received differential validation to deliver three special purpose awards in the arena of green skills with applications for three more forthcoming. In 2022 LMETB received QQI validation to deliver micro qualifications in not only green skills awards but also awards in Fish Farming Techniques as well as Building Digital Business Skills and Using Robotics for Advanced Manufacturing.

This new LMETB RAA apprenticeship programme development process is the product of collaboration with a range of stakeholders who participated in various ways over the past two years. Stakeholder consultation with industry was conducted from the inception point, enabling enterprises to have a strong voice in the development of the Occupational Profile, curriculum development and programme learning outcomes which are key components to successful validation. Internal and external mock panel reviews of the programme, prior to submission to QQI via QHub, will be essential and will serve to ensure that application is of a high standard and aligned with the needs of the advanced manufacturing industry.

LMETB are also well advanced with a 15 credit L4 Barista Skills Special Purpose award which has benefitted from a range of advisory inputs both internally and from staff from other ETBs, with a view to being submitted to QQI for validation in March 2024.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

Programme-Development-and-Approval-Process-Map.pdf (lmetb.ie)

Process-Map-for-Development-of-Assessments-for-Training-Centres-v1-Final.docx (live.com)

Flowchart Template (lmetb.ie)

LMETB Programme Development and Approval Policy and Procedures

1.06 Access, Transfer and Progression-

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>11. Develop and use a policy for the recognition of prior learning and prior experiential learning.</p>	<p>LMETB is committed to developing a policy for the recognition of prior learning, both experiential and certified. (Q4 2023)</p>	<p>A draft RPL policy along with an RPL Handbook has been developed. These documents have been sent to the QA subcommittee for review and for onwards consideration by the QAGMC.</p> <p>Following the potential recommendation and approval of the policy, a series of briefings will be held for FET centres/colleges to promote the policy and raise awareness of the availability of RPL for learners within LMETB. A pilot RPL programme will be implemented in</p>

	<p>LMETB will look to fund training in RPL in order to build teacher and FET staff capacity in this area. (2023-24)</p>	<p>Dunboyne College and in AMTCE, who both will implement RPL via the Skills to Advance programme. The pilot will be reviewed within one year and amendments will be made where necessary.</p> <p>With a view to enhancing skills, knowledge skills and competencies in the RPL area, but also to facilitate cascading of the training across FET staff teams, in Autumn 2023 10 members of FET staff attended a 6-week in-house RPL training course, which was facilitated by an experienced practitioner. This course provided an introduction and overview of the RPL process, with a particular focus on using RPL for gaining a QQI award. LMETB benefits from a staff members' membership of the National RPL Steering Committee.</p>
<p>12. Identify the inconsistencies in individual centres' approaches to admissions and develop and use an ETB-wide admissions policy.</p>	<p>LMETB will commence a review of admissions practices across its FET provision. (Q1 2023)</p>	<p>The Learner Support Officer was appointed in Feb 2023. Completion of the review of admissions practices across FET provision is targeted for end of Q2 of 2024. It will also</p>

	<p>Review of LMETB FET Admissions Policy and associated Admissions Appeals process. (Q2 2023)</p>	<p>include an overview of other ETB's policies and procedures in this area.</p> <p>Will be completed by Q2 of 2024</p>
<p>13. Use the available quantitative data to review and update existing policies relating to access, transfer and progression.</p>	<p>LMETB will review and update its Access, Transfer and Progression policy (2019). This policy will include a formal application process for internal transfer across FET provision. (Q4 2023).</p>	<p>The Learner Support Officer, AEO and LMETB Adult Educational Guidance service will review the current practices within LMETB. LMETB will align our policies and procedures with the best practices within the wider ETB community to meet the needs of our learners. (Q2 2024)</p> <p>The Review will cover the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting out and clarification of standard application procedures across LMETB provision. • Clarify the status of learner applications. • Outline transfer and progression routes as well as the transfer of credits that apply to all validated programmes.

	<p>Training and support will be provided to FET centres, to ensure consistent implementation of the processes around access, transfer and progression.</p> <p>(Q2 2024)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail a formal internal transfer system, applications for which should be underpinned by an updated policy and procedures. <p>LMETB Adult Guidance service has published a FET Progression Framework which clearly communicates internal and external advancement possibilities for a FET Learner.</p> <p>Additional Training and Support will be implemented after the review and adoption of new policies and procedures</p>
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Commentary and Reflections

In 2023 Dublin City University and LMETB reached an agreement which will see the university support the LMETB and Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE) deliver third level education programmes in Drogheda, as well as supporting the development of stronger links between Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE) including Advanced Entry to DCU programmes. The agreement was developed in response to the recommendations of the Guerin report, which set out an ambition to create a bridge to a Better Future for Drogheda. It will further expand the FET to HE pathways for graduates of DIFE in specific discipline areas and look to pilot several DCU courses which may be hosted and delivered in DIFE. It also identifies the expertise and supports that can be shared between LMETB, DIFE and DCU to support an appropriate mix of skills-related offerings in the region.

Turn to Teaching Collaboration - An exciting development in facilitating new pathways with Maynooth University has been a collaboration with staff and students at Dunboyne College of Further Education (DCFE). Adopting an action research approach, this partnership is focused on supporting the teaching aspirations of a group of students who are studying on the Pre-University Teaching course at DCFE. As part of this pilot initiative, the student group attend classes at Maynooth University's School of Education every Tuesday. When in Maynooth University, the students participate in various teaching related workshops and activities that are focused on developing and supporting their teaching aspirations. These workshops are facilitated by a cross institutional team comprised of teaching staff from Dunboyne College of Further Education, Turn to Teaching, Maynooth Access Programme, and MU's Department of Adult and Community Education.

It is also envisaged that this partnership will help inform the development of future further education pathways into higher education and initial teacher education. This cross-sectoral partnership approach is also aligned with, and responsive to, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and their new policy focus on the development of a unified third-level education system.

Louth Meath ETB Drogheda College of the Future, Drogheda College, Donore Campus: Drogheda College is Ireland's first Further Education and Training (FET) centres specialising in the delivery of electrical apprenticeship programmes. Established by the Louth Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) the innovative Drogheda College Donore FET campus commenced delivery of Electrical Phase 2 and 4 training in September 2023 following significant development efforts from LMETB and SOLAS. LMETB has a long and successful history of providing Electrical Apprenticeship training at its Training Centres in Dundalk. The opening of the hub will allow the college to provide training for over 300 apprentices each year, with three intakes during the year, LMETB is the first ETB to establish an innovative FET centre uniquely dedicated at this time to the delivery of electrical apprenticeship training in Ireland. LMETB Senior Management continues to work with SOLAS staff in exploring opportunities for further expansion of Apprenticeship Training in the catchment area. Additional capacity for electrical apprenticeship is planned also for the AMTCE.

2023 has also seen LMETB successfully apply to MSLETB for approval as a collaborating provider to offer the National Retail Sales Apprenticeship commencing in January 2024. This is the first time the two-year programme will be offered in the Louth and Meath region.

Engagement with post primary schools continues to strengthen with the ongoing implementation of the AMTCE FET Advanced Manufacturing Pathways Schools Project. This pathways project, which is in its third year, forms an intrinsic part of LMETB's vision for training the next generation of students. The project, which is a collaboration between the FET and Schools Directorates in LMETB, is being offered as part of the FET structured Pathways and Transitioning opportunities for students and learners to participate in and experience FET. The aim is to inspire students to consider high-skilled STEM careers, and to broaden teachers' views of the careers on offer. This year the programme has also been extended to post primary schools under Kerry ETB for 2024.

Locally within FET centres, work is continuing to improve the Access, Transfer and Progression processes. Programmes are extensively promoted online, on radio and in person with promotional Fairs held throughout the catchment providing information on the wide range of full, part-time, evening and online education and training opportunities offered by LMETB's FET provision. The events are being advertised on social media to raise awareness of the FET offering and to provide potential learners with relevant programme information supporting them to make the right choice of course.

LMETB continues to build upon its collaborative approach to developing programmes and awards with industry. The AMTCE continues to work closely with employers in developing a leading apprenticeship programme for industries in the advanced manufacturing space. This development followed an intense piece of horizon scanning & research to see what opportunities exist for collaboration with industry and to ensure that there is complete alignment of the apprenticeship programme with upcoming employment opportunities within the sector.

Work will commence in 2024 on a standardised learner induction process alongside the development of standardized support materials.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

FET Progression Framework
LMETB FET Draft RPL Policy

Turn to Teaching's exciting new collaboration with Dunboyne College of Further Education | Maynooth University

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.
<p>14. Speedily develop the single overarching set of policies, procedures and practices for quality assuring all aspects of assessment relating to the ETB's provision.</p>	<p>Standardised Assessment Brief templates and Learner Feedback templates recently disseminated to all FET centres.</p> <p>(Complete)</p> <p>Development of Assessment Bank resource for use across FET provision. This resource will house exemplars of assessment briefs and allied resources.</p> <p>(Starting in Q2 2023 and then on-going)</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>LMETB's TEL officer expanded the FET Awards portal's offering to include the housing of assessment briefs and additional resources per module. It also allows managed/restricted access to documents</p>

	<p>Aligned process for review of module descriptors and Assessment Instrument Specifications to be finalised. (Q4 2022)</p> <p>Development of an overarching learner assessment policy. (Q4 2023)</p>	<p>such as Assessment Instrument Specifications.</p> <p>The QA underpinning for this process is as follows: Assessment Briefs must have gone through the External Authentication process and are then sent by teachers to the person in their FET centre responsible for QA, for onwards distribution to Quality Assurance Office.</p> <p>Promotional efforts are ongoing to encourage the ongoing uploading of exemplars to aid standardisation of assessment materials.</p> <p>Done</p> <p>To be completed in Q1 2024.</p>
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	<p>Consultation on draft Internal Verification and External Authentication guidelines. Presentation of guidelines to governance committees for approval. (Q1 2023)</p> <p>Review of assessment related paperwork used by all FET centres with a view to standardising across FET provision. (Q4 2023)</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed and available on QA Team. Emailed to coordinators to be forwarded to teachers.</p>
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Commentary and Reflections

Standardised assessment brief, learner feedback templates and an IV checklist have been designed and distributed to all FET centres in LMETB. These are currently in use and will continue to be used and will be reviewed when required. To encourage and support FET centres in sharing assessment briefs, work is ongoing on the continuous development and growth of communities of practice across all programmes and centres. Updated Internal Verification and External Authentication guidelines are in use in all centres.

The work of integrating and harmonising assessment-related policies and procedures across all the FET centres and colleges is incremental. When completed the resulting policies and procedures will be included in the Quality Manual on the LMETB website. This should become the primary resource for staff members on all QA requirements. LMETB will continually review and develop its QA documentation systems to ensure that QA policies, procedures and associated materials are readily available and accessible to all personnel delivering LMETB programmes.

2024 will see the embedding of a process to ensure the sharing of recommendations of EA reports across FET centres/colleges. This will aid centre-level quality improvement based on recommendations emerging from RAP meetings to enhance QA-related learning for the organisation. This will enable FET centre staff to benefit from the good practice and areas for improvement identified in other locations and contribute to harmonising practice.

Steps have been taken in 2023 regarding enhancing Academic Integrity whereby a consistent approach to plagiarism detection (and the issues associated with Chat GPT) and actions to be taken can be applied across centres with the rollout of access to Turnitin potentially for all centres from Level 3 upwards.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures
 internal Verification guidelines (lmetb.ie) (Approved 10/02/2023)
 internal Verification guidelines (lmetb.ie) (external) (Approved 10/02/2023)
 LMETB (louthmeathawards.ie): New FET Awards portal site

1.08 Information and Data Management

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>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.</p>	<p>Amalgamate current procedures on collection and use of data in order to develop overarching policy in this area. (Q3 2023)</p>	<p>A PLSS (Programme Learner Support System) Users' Team has been set up as a collaborative platform for disseminating vital data to senior and centre management staff on a consistent basis. A key aspect of this initiative is the monthly distribution of the Management Information System (MIS) report, a comprehensive document that encapsulates PLSS learner and course data. This encompasses critical metrics such as retention rates, outcomes, and certifications, shown by provider and programme category.</p> <p>In addition to our internal PLSS data, the PLSS Users' Team is also used to</p>

disseminate QQI Benchmarking data, which is broken down by FET centre. This data provides a comprehensive overview of the grade distribution of the centre's courses against national distributions. This comparative analysis enables us to benchmark our performance against broader standards.

The use of the Tableau data visualization tool has enhanced our data analysis capabilities. This tool empowers us to extract and scrutinize PLSS data and also:

- Systematically track, evaluate, and assess the outcomes of our Further Education and Training (FET) programmes.
- Highlight areas of concern, including instances of high early-leaver numbers or learners not receiving certification.
- Monitor progress towards Strategic Performance Agreement targets, allowing us to derive actionable

	<p>Harmonise learner feedback gathering instruments to allow improved data analysis through the development and design of an annual Learner Experience survey. (Q2 2023)</p>	<p>insights, such as the strategic expansion of Green Skills courses.</p> <p>FET Annual Learner Experience Survey carried out in Spring 2023.</p>
	<p>Development of a Learner Feedback procedure informed by consultation with learners. (Q2 2023)</p>	<p>The implementation of an overarching ETB -wide learner survey which will have a set of consistent topics and incorporate additional questions on a specific thematic area will be initiated in Q2 of 2024 and repeated thereafter annually. This action will be in addition to our centre-based formalised Learner feedback mechanisms which are in place in every centre which also inform our delivery, Teaching and Learning strategies and planning annually.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections</p> <p>Tableau Software is being utilised to provide faster insights to monthly Data Reports. Sanction is being sought for the recruitment of a Data Reporting Officer. The role will endeavour to improve understanding of types of data collected, why it is collected and improve the quality of data collection from the PLSS system. The aim is to assist future planning by developing a clear plan and robust policy on the collection and use of data as part of the new integrated QA system.</p>		

The FET Annual Learner Experience Survey was reviewed in conjunction with the AONTAS Learner Survey. An overview of the survey results are to be distributed to the QA subcommittee. Key issues identified in the survey are actively being addressed including support focused on the Academic Process (e-learning course). The QA team in conjunction with the FET coordinators will develop a template calendar for learner assessments.

The results were analysed and compared with the AONTAS Survey. Concerns around Survey fatigue have been raised. A plan to arrange a schedule of surveys in in process. Harmonisation of surveys will be addressed.

[Link to Updated Policy & Procedures](#)

1.09 Public Information and Communication

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
16. Completes the development work on the FET learners' handbook.	Learner Handbook to be developed and published to ensure that learners in all settings have information relevant to their learning experience in FET and will have a clear understanding of assessment processes and Quality Assurance arrangements across the organisation. (Q2 2023)	A Learner Handbook has been developed and is published on the website.
	Develop dedicated FET Learner Information Section on the LMETB website which will contain the Learner Handbook	A dedicated LMETB-wide FET Learner Information Section on the LMETB website has been added to the organisation's website: FET Learner information website page

	<p>and related information. This section will be continually reviewed and developed. (Q3 2023 and ongoing)</p>	<p>This is designed to augment and amplify the information on learner supports on the existing centre and PLC College based websites already available.</p>
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Commentary and Reflections

LMETB is committed to the provision of effective communication systems and information for all stakeholders. It recognises the importance of providing information to prospective and current learners, the general public and other stakeholders.

A need for a specific Learner assessment handbook has been identified. Development work on the handbook to commence in Q2 of 2024 by the QA Officer, Learner Support Officer and Programme Development Officer.

LMETB FET Communications Sub-Committee has developed a 2-year work plan for 2024-25. Specific actions have been identified which will contribute to LMETB's Public Information and Communications goals, including:

- Production of an annual LMETB FET newsletter for public circulation
- Formalising the process of collecting and publicising learner stories
- Development of public profile of FET staff and services on website
- Project in marketing and visual identity for branding FET in LMETB
- Focused communications and messaging for hard-to-reach students

LMETB FET Communications Office has recently developed a Communications and Publicity Handbook for FET Staff in LMETB. This handbook gives guidance on the processes in developing communications materials, and it will be continually updated.

To raise awareness of LMETB FET provision amongst employers, the Enterprise Engagement team delivered presentations to various organizations across the catchment area.

We have designed an online FET enquiry system for the public, which is available on our LMETB website. We have also developed a Learner Complaint Procedure which encourages informal conciliation and:

- Is fair and efficient
- Treats complaints with appropriate seriousness, sympathy and confidentiality
- Facilitates early resolution
- Allows LMETB or the particular programme to benefit from the experience

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

LMETB FET Learner Information Guide

FET Learner information website page

LMETB FET Learner Charter

LMETB FET Learner Contract

LMETB FET Enquiry Form

LMETB FET Learner Complaint Procedure

2.0 Teaching, Learning & Assessment

2.02 Assessment of Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>17. Prioritise 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.</p>	<p>Establishment of further mechanisms and protocols for sharing best practice among staff across the FET Service to support staff development and further enhance the student experience. (Q4 2023 and ongoing)</p>	<p>6 subject matter CoPs have been established since the Inaugural Review in an online format. These CoPs have been interacting online and a face-to-face information sharing day for these CoPs is planned for 2024 to focus on future plans for sharing best practice and assessment review.</p> <p>A process to incorporate these CoP structures into managing assessment review updates is under currently under consideration with a view to rollout in 2024. It is intended that this process will bring together teachers, tutors and instructors from the COPs across LMETB FET provision to review and update current assessment documents. External subject</p>

	<p>Strengthening the mentoring schemes currently in place e.g. TEL mentor scheme, and to explore opportunities for new mentoring schemes throughout FET provision. (Q3 2023 and ongoing)</p> <p>Develop cross- organisational staff seminars, workshops and communities of practice to stay abreast of developments in teaching and learning. (Q4 2022 and ongoing)</p>	<p>matter experts including External Authenticators may be involved in supporting this process.</p> <p>Plans are in place to further augment the ‘digital champion’ mentoring approach. These are teaching staff who champion the appropriate use of, and support their peers, with using technology to enhance learning. Since Covid this mentoring approach have proven very effective in cascading learning in the FET centres. They are the staff members which the TEL Officer primarily links to, and, on which the centre co-ordinator relies upon to promote CPD in teaching and learning in this area.</p> <p>LMETB’s PLD and TEL Offices have continued to offer and promote workshops and opportunities that support teaching and learning e.g. UDL Digital Badge in Teaching and Learning, Dyslexia Course for FET Educators, TEL Courses in National</p>
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		College of Ireland and SETU Literacy Development modules.
18. Develops and use a more consistent approach to informing learners of what is expected from assignments.	Develop dedicated FET Learner Information Section on the LMETB website which will contain the Learner Handbook and related information. This section will be continually reviewed and developed. (Q3 2023 and ongoing)	LMETB Learner Support Officer developed a <u>Learner Information Handbook</u> and is available on the <u>LMETB FET Learner Support page</u> . An <u>e-learning course</u> has been developed to strengthen the learners understanding of the Academic process (Academic Integrity, Referencing and Academic Writing) and is available on the above
19. Develop and use a standardised learner handbook across all FET centres in order to strengthen consistency in relation to assessment.	Learner Handbook to be developed and published to ensure that learners in all settings have information relevant to their learning experience in FET and will have a clear understanding of assessment processes and Quality Assurance arrangements across the organisation. (Q2 2023)	Development work on a specific Learner Assessment Handbook to commence in Q2 of 2024 by the QA Officer, Learner Support Officer and Programme Development Officer. This will augment the information available in the general Learner information handbook produced in 2023.

<p>20. Review how quality assurance arrangements are applied to all forms of work experience.</p>	<p>LMETB will review and revise its a Work Experience Policy to ensure that a robust framework for the coordination, oversight, assessment, and documentation of work placements is in place. The review of the policy will include providing guidelines for assessing work-based learning competencies as well as a template for a written agreement setting out the obligations of LMETB and the employer which is regularly monitored and reviewed. (Q4 2023)</p>	<p>LMETB FET has developed a draft Work Based Learning Policy is currently out for FET Leader consultation and due for consideration by the Governance structures in Q1 2024. This will enhance our existing Work Experience Policy.</p>
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Commentary and Reflections

The enhancement of the awards portal to house assignment brief exemplars is a good example of developing a structured best practice sharing approach for instructors and teachers to help ensure a greater level of consistency across programme delivery and improve the learner experience.

LMETB's FET Service developed a strategic approach to the use of blended learning by engaging H2 Learning to facilitate a research and consultation process that focused on articulating a range of options for blended learning. A series of focused conversations held with key stakeholders have informed the development of a Blended Learning Framework. The framework will support and guide the ETB's strategic approach to blended learning. The framework anticipates that the majority of FET courses and programmes across the ETB will be supported by the use of technology enhanced learning approaches. Furthermore, the framework will also enable the ETB to plan, design and accredit flexible forms of blended learning that comply with QQI Guidelines. The LMETB Blended Learning Policy Framework will be reviewed and further developed to reflect "2QQI's new *“statutory guidelines for Providers of Blended and fully online programmes”*, and policy direction from QQI.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

[LMETB-Blended-Learning-Policy.pdf](#)
[LMETB-Blended-Learning-Guidelines-.pdf](#)
[LMETB-FET-Learner-Handbook-Apr-23.pdf](#)

2.03 Supports for Learners

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
21. 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.	A review of current learner supports will be carried out with a view to creating a systematic approach to supporting learners across FET programmes. (Q2 2023)	Learner Support Officer has completed a review of learner supports and working on standardising processes and procedures. A Learner Needs Assessment form has been designed and will be rolled out in Q1 2024
22. Implement the SOLAS Guidance on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to support the diverse needs of learners.	Develop system to monitor and evaluate learner supports provision, including via consultation with learners. (Q4 2023)	Work has commenced on the development of a Learner Support SharePoint page for FET staff. Feedback from learners will be requested via surveys.
	Continue to facilitate the national UDL Digital Badge and offer ETBI UDL Training to FET staff. (Ongoing)	January 2023 – 23 LMETB FET staff received their Digital Badges in Universal Design for Learning.
	Organisation of annual UDL showcasing event to share best practice across FET. (Q2 2023 and ongoing)	First showcasing event held in May 2023. Recipients of the UDL Badge shared their experiences of UDL in the classroom. Presentations included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ UDL Plus One Approach for Assessment using TEL ◦ ePortfolios as an Assessment Tool with English Language Learners

		◦ Book Creator with Level 5 Healthcare class
	In-person visits to FET centres by FET Support staff to raise awareness of UDL (Q4 2022 and ongoing)	Ongoing as part of TEL centre visits. Follow up training scheduled as necessary.

Commentary and Reflections

The provision of Learner support is central to LMETB programme provision. The appointment of a dedicated Learner Support Officer has had a significant impact on the learner journey and works as a key part of the FET support Team in increasing the availability of and awareness of learner supports across FET provision.

LMETB FET services offer structured integrated learner supports comprising of literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and guidance for specific cohorts of learners. These supports can be offered as an additionality in specific provisions and are promoted as part of all FET delivery throughout the learners' journey e.g. Adult Learning Service provides ongoing learner support to a range of other provision in the form of targeted support for Literacy, Numeracy and Digital supports to learners where required in the PLC colleges (O'Fiaich Institute of Further Education), the Regional Skills and Training Centre (craft-based apprenticeships) and more recently extended to the new Drogheda College (Electrical craft Apprentices).

Development work has commenced on integrating sensory supports within the learning environment in our Adult Learning Service provision in Drogheda. This pilot is envisioned to be implemented across our centres.

The FET Annual Learner Experience survey, the AONTAS forum and a survey specifically designed for the learners registered with learner support will be used to monitor and evaluate the learner supports provision.

Input from the Learner Voice Network (LVN) is invited to review and address learner needs.

22 FET staff are enrolled on the UDL and UD beyond the classroom course for 2023/24.

A FET Learner Virtual Support Hub has been created. The Hub hosts a range of support resources, training material and wellbeing guides.

Rolling out of an LMETB student ISIC card.

The FET Learner Support Officer is developing a working partnership with MyMing.org (counselling provision) to provide equal access to mental health and counselling supports for all FET learners.

Disability training and resources are currently in development to enhance FET staff's understanding of the diverse FET learner cohort.

A Critical Incident Management Plan was approved in 2023.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

[LMETB FET Learner Charter](#)

[LMETB FET Learner Contract](#)

[LMETB FET Learner Support page](#)

[LMETB FET Learner Virtual Hub](#)

[LMETB FET Critical Incident Mgmt Protocol \(CIMP\)](#)

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.
<p>23. Identify a small number of quality assurance priorities for each year and identify who will lead on ensuring their implementation.</p>	<p>Formulation of the Action Plan with monitoring of implementation of actions. (On-going)</p>	<p>QA priorities for 2023 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner Supports • Programme Review, Approval and Development • Public Information and Communication • Teaching, Learning and Assessment <p>QA priorities for 2024 will include were Learner Supports, Programme Review, Approval and Development, Public Information and Communication and standardised self–evaluation process.</p>
<p>Commentary and Reflections Each FET Centre and PLC college already undertakes a self-evaluation process at various levels, with the Youth Reach programmes’ model being cited by the Inaugural review team as an exemplar for action. It is acknowledged at an ETB-wide level that the introduction of a more consistent and comprehensive evaluation of programme delivery and learner experience to support the continued improvement of the quality of teaching and learning is required. A more systematic way of ensuring how feedback is consistently collected requires the greater application, analysis and interpretation of the FET-wide learner satisfaction survey that would elicit feedback relating to course content, delivery and assessment. Relevant reports will be elicited at a strategic and centre operational level to inform QA enhancements and future planning.</p>		

Therefore, a more formalised approach to self-evaluation will be introduced in 2024 as a QA priority, which will include the introduction of a continuous and systematic self-monitoring and evaluation process across the FET provision to support organisational learning and the development and implementation of QA enhancement plans at centre-level. These plans will include a standardised approach to self-evaluation across the FET centres and colleges, which will facilitate the systematic collection of feedback from learners, staff and external stakeholders, its' distillation, interpretation and recommendation for action and reporting to the governance structures. A Quality Reporting template or self- evaluation monitoring form is in the course of being devised and implemented for Q2 2024.

To assist with organisational learning and review, key performance indicators supported by data from PLSS are monitored by the Senior Management Team in the context of the Strategic Performance Agreements, which were agreed with SOLAS in December 2022. A Tableau dashboard created by SOLAS supports LMETB in monitoring our performance against each of the target areas and also benchmarks the organisation's performance against the other 15 ETBs.

[Link to Updated Policy & Procedures](#)

3.02 Programme Monitoring & Review

Recommendation (as recorded in the review report)	Planned Actions	Update - Note progress/changes made to P&P, timeline.
<p>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</p>	<p>LMETB will develop a policy and consistent process around centre-based programme reviews in FET centres. (Q3 2023)</p> <p>LMETB will develop a policy and consistent process around themed systematic programmatic review across FET provision. (Q3 2024)</p>	<p>LMETB is in the process of developing an ETB specific approach to our Programme Review process. This will be informed by development at a sectoral level.</p> <p>LMETB is in the process of developing a Programme Review process. This policy will marry the centre led operational work</p>

changes have been made to programmes.		with a broader strategic approach to programme monitoring and review.
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Commentary and Reflections

Feedback mechanisms are in place to support the review of current LMETB programmes and inform the planning of future programmes. LMETB’s FET Service are open to deeper engagement with external stakeholders to ensure that all eligible voices can shape and influence quality enhancements. The SMT and FET Leaders are committed to developing relationships with external organisations, which can be utilised to inform quality enhancements.

Programmatic review is recognised by LMETB FET services as an important part of the quality assurance system. It is a process designed to ensure that a programme continues to be fit for purpose over a fixed period. It is an opportunity to reconsider all aspects of the programme, its outcomes, its delivery processes, and its assessment methodologies. It is an area in which LMETB will require greater QA resources to strategically implement in order to harvest the undoubted benefits which would accrue from undertaking the exercise on a more structured basis.

The annual LMETB FET Review & Planning Meeting continues to take place each year and is themed around key and emerging needs in line with the priorities of the National and LMETB FET strategies. This event brings all FET staff together to evaluate and provide feedback on specific thematic areas in line with these national and local strategies.

The rollout of the Strategic Employer Engagement Database (SEED): Seed is a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system developed initially by MSLETB and funded through the SOLAS “Innovation through collaboration fund” for the FET sector. It is intended to provide a unifying approach, on a single platform, across all our employer engagements, tracking and recording the process from start to finish. Currently operational for the Skills to Advance employer engagement team, this is currently being extended to AMTCE-linked employers. The modules to facilitate the engagement of employers who support work experience for PLC Colleges are also being scoped out and planned for.

This CRM package will eventually facilitate engagements strategically with all local and national employers to provide targeted interventions and the creation of a ‘needs’ database from employers to ensure industry needs are being addressed by LMETB’s provision. This will have a strategic knock-on in terms of the programme review process.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

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.
25. Develop and use a single set of quality assurance policies, procedures and practices across all the ETB's provision, including contracted (second) providers.	Bi-monthly meetings between the QA Office and the Training Standards Office to be scheduled. (Q4 2022)	The QA office and Training Standard Officers from the RSTC, AMTCE and Drogheda College meet Bi-monthly
	LMETB will finalise guidelines on engaging with external training providers. (Q1 2023)	<p>The AEO has prepared a draft policy in conjunction with two other ETBs and following a staff consultation process this will be considered by the QA subcommittee and QAGMC.</p> <p>LMETB engages with other parties on an ongoing basis to ensure that the needs of learners and local employers are met in the context of achieving strategic objectives in facilitating employment outcomes, progression from FET to HE, meeting social inclusion, lifelong learning objectives, and targeting key skills. This draft policy supports these goals by setting out how the ETB will engage and collaborate with its</p>

partners with regard to delivery and assessment of provision. Collaborative provision is the term used to describe the relationship between the ETB and the other party. For the purpose of this policy, collaborative provision means two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the delivery and assessment of a programme.

Commentary and Reflections

The work of integrating and harmonising assessment-related policies and procedures across all the FET Centres /Colleges into a quality framework is incremental. When completed the resulting policies and procedures will be included in the Quality Manual (**Revised Policies and Procedures**) section of the LMETB website. This should become the primary resource for staff members on all QA requirements. LMETB will continually review and develop its QA systems to ensure that QA policies, procedures and associated materials are readily available and accessible to all personnel delivering LMETB programmes. It is envisaged that by Q2 2027 that a fully integrated set of QA policies and procedures will underpin FET provision in LMETB.

The LMETB board approved three new QA documents for the apprentice programmes: SOLAS QA Manual Complete 2023, SOLAS Craft Apprenticeship Assessment Rules 2023 and QAP Handbook RAA Apprenticeships on the 15/11/23. These documents have been reviewed and aligned to existing LMETB QA policies and procedures.

Link to Updated Policy & Procedures

SOLAS Craft Apprenticeship Assessment Rules 2023
QAP Handbook RAA Apprenticeships

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. These should relate to objectives not already discussed in the progress report.	QA Objectives	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress.	Link to updated/new Policy
1	The dual purpose of this policy is to provide a framework, enabling teaching staff and FET Management, to maintain satisfactory standards in work and conduct, while providing Learners' access to a procedure whereby alleged failures to comply with standards may be fairly and sensitively addressed.	Version 1 - Procedure reviewed, changes made and approved by the QAGMC 11/9/23	LMETB FET Disciplinary Policy for Further Education and Training FET Learners
2	This policy outlines the procedure for repeat assessments (henceforth 'repeats') in the ELC programmes is conducted in LMETB. Included in the policy is: • an outline of the grounds for repeats and resubmissions within LMETB • the procedure to be followed	Click here to enter text.	LMETB-Early-Learning-and-Care-ELC-Repeats-Policy.pdf
3	Minimum % Mark for Submission to QQI Policy- To define a procedure to set a minimum mark below which a QQI module	Commencement Date: September 2022 Date of next review: 2024	LMETB Minimum % Mark for Submission to QQI Policy

will not be submitted for certification on the QQI Business System (QBS)		
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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 Title:

Pilot Virtual Reality Learning Support Development Project for Literacy Learners within LMETB Adult Learning Service.

Introduction

LMETB submitted and received approval from the SOLAS Pilot ALL Strategy Collaboration & Innovation Fund. The funding received was used to purchase virtual reality (VR) headsets and software licenses for the development of real-life based scenario content in Adult Learning Services (ALS). The use of VR technology was chosen because it supports learners with intellectual disability and those learning English as a second language. It also caters to learners' preferences for multi-sensory modalities when learning, and VR provides a safe and reassuring environment for digital literacy development. The scenarios developed for the VR technology include situations such as visiting the doctor, filling out forms, and shopping, with a special emphasis on preparing for work and personal effectiveness. The ALS and Quality Assurance Office collaborated on this project. The Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) staff are supporting the programme to maximise software capability and ensure functionality for all tutors and staff members.

For more information click [here](#)

Description of issue

The reasons for piloting a project using VR were chiefly that the technologies are inherently suitable for a variety of literacy learners such as:

- Learners with intellectual disability
- ESOL
- Mainstream literacy provision
- Skills for Work provision

The use of virtual reality headsets in adult literacy classes creates a realistic, immersive learning environment that can significantly enhance learning outcomes, at the same time as improving learners' digital literacy. Literacy learners favour multi-sensory modalities when learning and retain 90% of information learned through experience rather than the read/write/listen methodologies currently employed in classrooms. The skills, knowledge and competency in this Innovative technology within the AMTCE staff enables the Literacy Service to both maximise the use of such technologies and enables and supports curricula and resource development.

From a digital perspective the VR experience will encourage digital literacy for all our learners helping them interact with digital devices in a confident manner, within a safe and reassuring environment. The impact of this pilot on the development of teaching staff will be far reaching as a pool of VR expertise can be shared throughout LMETB FET.

In respect of learning outcomes (LOs) on certain QQI accredited modules: the ALS and the LMETB Quality Assurance department mapped learning outcomes which lend themselves to a VR learning environment to give a rounded educational experience rather than one solely relying on paper-based submissions or basic role play.

Actions

The project was delivered in three phases:

- Phase one: this involved the purchase of equipment & related license software according to LMETB procurement policies and the spend was within the 2022 timeframe. The AMTCE assisted with maximising the software capability and make the devices fully functional for all tutors and staff members. Timeframe 6 weeks.
- Phase Two: Identifying and training staff and learners on the use of the VR equipment.
- Parallel to this was the design aspect of the project which focused on refining the initial project goals into a more limited number of achievable objectives. This included mapping of learning outcomes in selected Level 1 - 4 components, for example, ordering in a restaurant, shopping, going to the library, doctor, or dentist. Whilst the potential list is extensive for immersive learning opportunities in ESOL, the modules selected for this pilot programme had a special emphasis on preparation for work and personal effectiveness.
- Phase three is the delivery, feedback, and evaluation of the pilot.

This is a fully inclusive and collaborative design process between ALS staff, QA staff and learners, and guided with the technical support of the AMTCE staff.

Key Outcomes/Impacts

ESOL: ESOL learners benefit from virtual worlds, including parent teacher meetings, doctors' appointments, daily banking, the scenarios are limitless. All parts of the learning encourage confidence and self-awareness in different situations. The use of VR enhances the learning time, speed, and retention for the groups in terms of spoken English. They can use the headsets outside class time (under supervision) to increase time learning English.

Disability: Adult Literacy Learners benefit from the scenarios also depending on their individual need, e.g., looking after their finances or helping children with homework or filling in application forms to apply for jobs. The use of VR enhances retention for the group in terms of general knowledge and skills.

It also allows for individual specific interest projects to be managed in classes, an option that was not available to the learners in typical group learning.

Key Learnings

The project was collaborative and innovative- working with the Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE), FET staff, the local community centre, Ukrainians, and local volunteers as well as the local community, doctor, library, and school.

In future, we will be able to support VTOS and BTEI learners in the LMETB FET plan and the ALL strategy as among the most marginalised learners. They will benefit most from the use of this type of technology.

Qualitative surveys, teacher and student evaluations were conducted via in-person and online interviews, as well as learner group workshops to reflect on the use of and benefits accruing from this innovative technology use with both staff and learners.

Twenty headsets were purchased; therefore, in the pilot project twenty people benefited from this new method of teaching and learning. This is the equivalent of three literacy classes. We will subsequently cascade and increase numbers as we further embed the resources within the provision.

We will benefit from the cost savings over the next 5 years as headsets can be reused and the software needed to run the devices is a one-time purchase with unlimited tours.

Volunteers can be trained in this technique at no cost to be able to deliver highly effective and specific material to learners. It could also speed up the tutor training in ESOL where there is currently, and for the foreseeable future, an extremely high demand.