



Prepared for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance by QQI



Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
FET Division
Provider Profile

October 2020

Prepared for the
Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance
by
Quality and Qualifications Ireland



1. BACKGROUND

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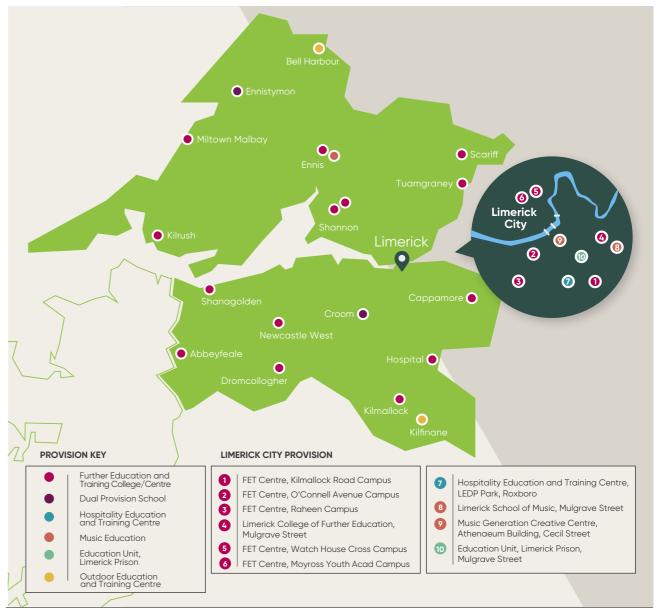
Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is the state education and training authority for the Limerick and Clare region. It is one of 16 statutory regional education authorities established by the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. It was established following the amalgamation of 3 Vocational

Education Committees which provided post-primary, adult and community education in Limerick City, County Limerick and County Clare since 1902. Established on 1st July 2013, it also assumed responsibility from SOLAS of 2 former FÁS Training Centres in Limerick and Clare on 1st July 2014.



The FET Division is responsible for the management and operations of 37 QQI-registered FET centres in Limerick and Clare, where it provides a suite of full-time and part-time provision and support services. It should be noted that there are multiple FET campuses¹ in Limerick and Clare and that the

FET Division works in approximately 300 community-based locations. In County Clare, the FET Centres are feeders to our new Colleges of FET in Ennis and Shannon. The map below provides a profile of FET College/ Centre locations throughout Limerick and Clare.



¹ There are 28 FET campuses in Limerick and Clare, which includes 37 QQI registered centres.

2. MISSION, VALUES, STRATEGIC FOCUS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS





Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Strategy Statement 2017 - 2021 charts the path for our education and training provision, youth work and other statutory functions.

Vision Statement

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board plays a leading role in the provision of high quality education and training in Limerick and Clare. The authority achieves this by transforming the lives of our students, our learners, our communities and the social and economic prosperity of the region through responding to student/ learner, community and enterprise needs.

Strategic Goals

■ Strategic Goal 1: High Quality **Student and Learner Experiences**

To provide comprehensive highquality education, training and lifelong learning opportunities to address the personal, social, economic and employability needs of people in our community.

Strategic Goal 2: Staff Support and Organisational Development

To provide a supportive, collaborative, safe and healthy working environment for all staff, through the provision of relevant responsive supports, appropriate policies and procedures

which are underpinned by a culture of continuous professional development.

■ Strategic Goal 3: Good Governance

To provide a governance and support framework that facilitates the effective and efficient delivery of all education and training services.

■ Strategic Goal 4: Partnership

To provide relevant responses and supports as required by the Department of Education and Skills, other Government departments and agencies and to develop effective partnerships which respond to the evolving education and training needs of the region.

The Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Strategic Framework 2015-2020 was developed in line with the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Strategy Statement, and the SOLAS Strategy 2014-2019. It is built around key guiding principles of respect/ equality, quality/professionalism, integration, responsiveness, support and collaboration. As an umbrella framework, it promotes a shared vision across our service and guides our FET Colleges, Centres and Support Services in the development of integrated implementation plans for their full-time and part-time provision.

Vision for the Future

Quality Further Education and Training will inspire people to realise their personal and professional potential and contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of the region.

Our Core Purpose

We provide relevant and innovative Further Education and Training opportunities that address the needs and aspirations of our learners, local communities and employers.

Strategic Priority 1 - Access and Progression

This is about supporting learners to access and sustain participation in education and training and to progress in key aspects of their lives, including personal development, further education and/or employment.

■ Strategic Priority 2 - Quality Teaching and Learning

This is about promoting a culture of continuous improvement and organisational learning in the FET Division, so that staff, learners, employers and communities have confidence in the quality and relevance of FET in Limerick and Clare.

Strategic Priority 3 - Stakeholder Engagement

This is about communicating with

learners, staff, community partners, employers, other agencies and education providers and using feedback to enhance the quality and relevance of our work.

■ Strategic Priority 4 - Effectiveness and Accountability in Governance and Leadership

This is about ensuring that the quality of our education and training provision is supported by ETB management and administration systems that meet the highest standards of accountability, transparency and compliance.

A FET Monitoring and Evaluation
Framework is in place since
2016, highlighting agreed key
outcomes and measurable
performance indicators. It uses a
range of participatory tools and
methodologies from management
to centre level to help us measure
and monitor progress towards our
strategic priorities. Some key tools
include Steering Group Detailed
Implementation Plans, FET Annual
Reports, FET Mid-Term Review Report,
SOLAS Review Report, etc.

Following the launch of the FET Strategic Framework in 2015, a number of FET action plans/ frameworks were developed to further develop and action the strategic commitments contained in the framework:

- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Language, Literacy and Numeracy Strategic Framework.
- FET Integrated Guidance Strategic Framework (2016-2020)
- FET TEL Action Plan (2017-2020)
- FET Enterprise Engagement
 Framework (2017-2020)
- <u>FET Professional Development</u> Action Plan (2019-2021)
- FET Active Inclusion Support Service Framework.

FET-wide Implementation Teams, comprising FET managers and learning practitioners lead and monitor progress on key actions.

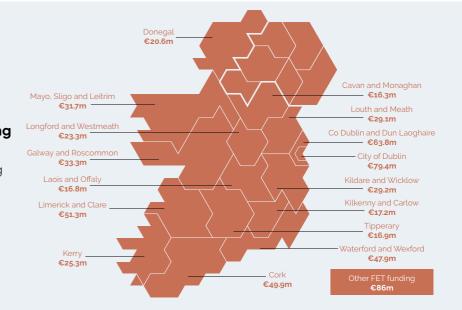
Progress is reported to the FET Steering Group, and to the ETB SMT through the Director of FET.

In addition, 2018 marked a significant milestone in the reform of the FET sector, towards a more strategic and integrated FET system. A national framework was agreed for a new process of strategic dialogue to inform the development of three-year Strategic Performance Agreements (SPA) with SOLAS. The agreement between SOLAS and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board set out the context, strategic priorities and the authority's contribution to the achievement of key national FET sector targets over 2018-2020. It also articulated Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's commitment to supporting the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant to FET provision and identified the key risks and challenges which must be mitigated and addressed in order to ensure successful delivery of this agreement.



Future Ready Learning

Strategic Performance Agreements: Developing the Further Education and Training System 2018 - 2020



3. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

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'Good governance within an ETB, is a shared responsibility which requires leadership, collaboration and ethical conduct by Board Members, senior executive management and all staff and stakeholders together.'2

In compliance with legislation, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board consists of 21 members in total.

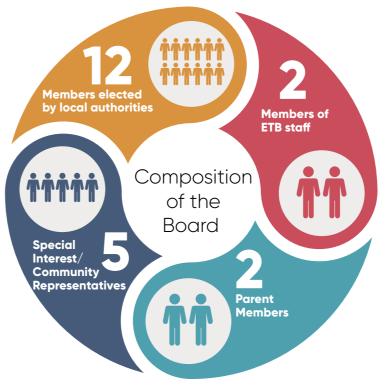
The reserved functions of the Board are stated in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. Local Boards of Management report to the ETB.

As per QQI's Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the ETBs, QA procedures for governance and

management will ... take account of the overall corporate responsibility of the ETB, vested in the Chief Executive and supported by the senior management team of the ETB (2017:5). The Chief Executive (CE) and the Director of FET are ultimately responsible for the oversight of FET and its Quality Assurance policies and procedures.

The following committees are in place to support the Board in its functions:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Finance Committee
- Schools Boards of Management
- FET Steering Group
- Youth Work Committee



² Governance Training Programme, ETBI Handbook: Implementing the Code - the Role of an ETB Director, January 2020.

The executive functions of the authority are related to service provision in education and training, corporate and operational matters. The work of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is structured across three separate but interlinked divisions: Organisation Support and Development, Schools and Further Education and Training, with the Director of each division reporting to the Chief Executive.

The Organisation Support and Development Division has responsibility for five departments, operating at two locations, Limerick (the authority's Head Office) and Ennis.

The Schools Division is responsible for the management and operation of eighteen Post-Primary Schools and three Community National Schools in Limerick and Clare.



The FET Division is responsible for the management and operations of 37 QQI-registered FET Centres in Limerick and Clare, where it provides a suite of full-time and part-time provision and support services. It should be noted that there are multiple FET Colleges/ Centres in Limerick and Clare and that the FET Division works in approximately 300 communitybased locations.

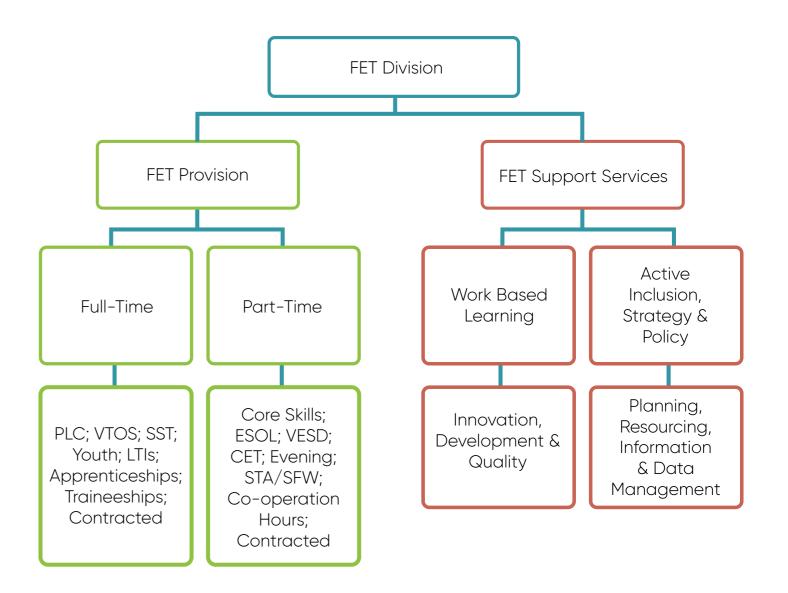
The Director of FET works closely with both the Director of Schools and the Director of Organisation Support and Development to deliver on the four goals outlined in the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Strategy Statement.



The executive governance and oversight structure of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is illustrated in the diagram below.

Chief Executive George O'Callaghan Director of **Director of Organisation Director of Schools Further Education Support & Development** Donncha Ó Treasaigh and Training Shelagh Graham Paul Patton Primary & Assistant Principal Post-Primary **FET Managers** Officers Principals Head Office Functions: Finance, Human Youth Work FE Principals Resources, Capital & Procurement, Corporate Services & ICT Further Education Administration School Teams and Training Teams Teams

The FET Division Management Structure is as follows:





Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is committed to quality assurance and enhancements of all its provision and support services, in order to improve the learner and learning practitioners' experience across the FET Division.

Quality is a core value in all the authority's strategies and action plans. The FET Division Strategic Framework explicitly recognises the need to 'develop and implement a structured ETB FET Quality Assurance system that demonstrates our commitment to quality standards and continuous improvement.' Our approach to quality encompasses all levels of the FET Division, from individual staff members to key QA quality-related roles, Support Service and governance structures.

In 2018, the QQI PAEC (Programmes and Awards Executive Committee) approved the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Division QA procedures, in line with QQI 2014 policy 'Re-engagement with QQI, Overarching Policy for All Providers'. Re-engagement for each provider is a one-off occurrence which establishes its QA procedures with QQI in accordance with Section 30 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance

(Education and Training) Act 2012.

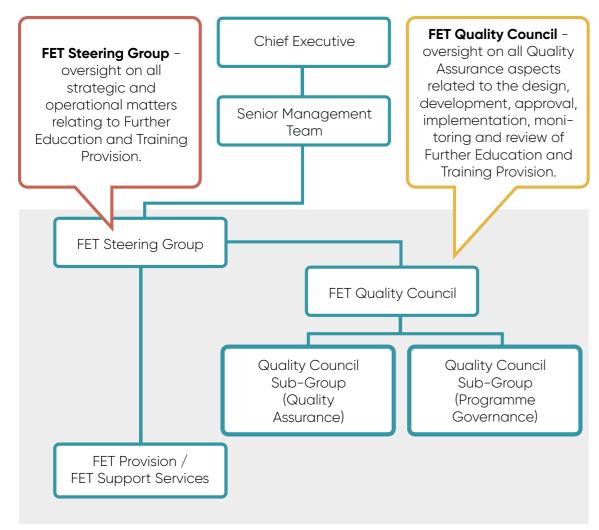
As outlined in QQI's Core QA Guidelines, the primary responsibility for the quality assurance of ETB provision lies with the ETB and it is therefore responsible for operating, monitoring and reviewing its quality assurance arrangements on an ongoing basis, through a comprehensive annual Operational Planning and monitoring process linked to annual Quality Improvement reports.

The FET Division seeks to promote a culture of continuous improvement, complying with national statutory quality requirements via key external standards, such as the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines, and the EQAVET Building Blocks. The quality cycle includes an external dimension in the form of monitoring and periodic review by QQI, and regular reviews of implementation of the Strategic Performance Agreements (SPA) with SOLAS.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's policies and procedures, both corporate and FET-specific are all documented and accessible on MS SharePoint sites, with many also publicly available online.

Governance of Quality Assurance

The Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Governance structures were formalised following the 2018 Executive Self-evaluation process with QQI. The framework structure for QA governance structures within ETBs is an output from a shared Quality Assurance Enhancement project, supported by ETBI. This framework was adapted for implementation in the context of local structures and requirements.



Further Education and Training Division

The role of the **Quality Council** is to "Oversee all Quality Assurance aspects related to the design, development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of the Further Education and Training provision offered by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. It protects, maintains and develops the standard of Education and Training programmes and related activities. In doing so, the Further Education and Training Quality Council is ensuring, as far as possible, that all learners receive an equivalent experience. The first meeting of the Quality Council took place on the 25th February 2019.

The Quality Council Sub-Group (Quality Assurance) has responsibility for the development, oversight, planning, co-ordination, and improvement of quality assurance policies, procedures and processes.

The Quality Council Sub-Group (Programme Governance) has responsibility for the oversight, planning, co-ordination, development and quality of all of the programmes of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.

Table 1 on the next page shows each group's Terms of Reference, with specific responsibilities in the areas of Policies and Procedures, Programme Responsibilities, Monitoring and Review responsibilities, Assessment responsibilities, Apprenticeship responsibilities. These sub-groups, with working groups at an operational layer below, ensure separation of responsibilities from those that develop (working groups), those that analyse and recommend for approval (sub-groups), and those that approve (Quality Council).

FET Quality Council

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

Approving policies and procedures as recommended by QA Sub-Group.

Programme Responsibilities

Approving programme documentation prior to submitting to QQI for validation, as recommended by Programme Governance Sub-Group.

Monitoring and Review Responsibilities

Approving programme and organisational review documentation prior to submission to QQI.

Assessment Responsibilities

Ratifying External Authenticators, noting assessment reports, ratifying assessment results.

Apprenticeship Responsibilities

Reporting from apprenticeship Consortium Steering Group(s), National Programme Board(s) and National Examinations Board(s).

Quality Assurance Sub-Group

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

- Approving schedule for review, amendment and development of QA policies and procedures.
- Reviewing draft QA policies and procedures.
- Recommending QA policies and procedures to Quality Council.
- Recommending revisions to policies and procedures to Quality Council for approval.

Monitoring and Review Responsibilities

- Approving schedule for quality reviews.
- Making recommendations to Quality Council for the approval of programme and quality review documentation and outcomes that is required to be submitted to the awarding body.
- Receiving reports from follow-up actions to quality reviews and reporting to Quality Council.
- Receiving reports on issues arising through monitoring process and reporting to Quality Council.
- Escalating identified areas of risk to the FET Quality Council.

Programme Governance Sub-Group

Programme Responsibilities

- Reviewing proposals for development of new programmes.
- Approving appointment of programme development group to draft programme documentation.
- Reviewing and commenting on draft programme documentation.
- Recommending programme validation documentation to Quality Council for approval.
- Reviewing proposals for the provision of newly validated or existing programmes.
- Making recommendations to Quality Council for appropriate structures to support new or existing programmes.
- Approving modified programme documentation submitted by Programme Development Group.

Assessment Responsibilities

- Agreeing External Authenticators.
- Receiving reports of assessment
- Receiving and considering quantitative and qualitative analysis reports from Results Approval Panels and making recommendations to Quality Council on teaching, learning and assessment.
- Reviewing analysis of Internal Verification and External Authentication reports.
- Questioning effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment strategies being implemented by validated programmes.
- Receiving reports from National Programme Boards.

Externality is provided through:

- External Authenticators for assessment certification authentication
- Appeals Examiners for results appeals
- External Subject Matter Experts for curriculum review
- Independent Results Approval Panel membership to approve provision results.
- Summary of results, trends and risks from provision certification reports to Quality Council
- Employer-led Consortium Steering Group for National Hairdressing Apprenticeship

Management of Quality Assurance

The governance and management of QA is a multi-layered process in the FET Division, complying with the QQI Sector Specific guidelines for the ETB Sector. It includes:

Teaching and Learning - Centre Level:

Tutor/teacher/instructor and learner, with communication, instruction, teaching, assessment briefs, marking schemes,

- assessment, feedback, portfolio preparation and submission, etc.
- Centre QA Management Level: Selection, Recruitment, Induction, Assessment planning, portfolio receipt, QBS entry, Internal Verification management, External Authentication co-ordination, Results Approval Panel, Learner results notification, Appeals, staff allocation and development, self-
- Cross-Centre QA Functions: Programme development, Communities of Practice, central appeals, common EA panel, CPD schedule, Self-Evaluation process, Monitoring and self-improvement, etc.

evaluation

- Quality Assurance Support Service:
 - Develops, implements, manages, supports all cross-centre and centre level QA activities, monitoring, reviewing and improving quality of service and provision.
- FET Quality Council and FET Steering Group:

Corporate planning, oversight, governance. Considers ETB quality provision, reviewing, monitoring, self-evaluation, certification, risk factors, critical indicators.

Table 1 Terms of reference of QA governance structures

4. APPROACH TO QUALITY

In 2016, the FET Division established a Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS) to develop, implement and monitor an effective, integrated Quality Assurance system for all Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training provision. The QASS team now comprises five staff including a Quality Assurance Officer, and four Quality Assurance Support Officers, who provide regional QA support to FET colleges, centres, and schools. The QASS also provides development and management support for FET cross-centre Quality Assurance processes. An annual Quality Improvement Plan is submitted for approval to QQI, with listed priorities for policy and procedure development.

All FET Co-ordinators report directly to the FET Manager in charge of all full-time and part-time FET provision. FET Managers and Co-ordinators are supported in their QA responsibility, by centre staff with specific QA roles, including liaising with the QA Support Service and the co-ordination of assessment-related activities in their FET Centre. In standalone FET Colleges, responsibility for quality resides with senior management, supported by the deputy principal. In dual-provision schools, consisting of a co-located further education centre and school, the further education element is managed by a PLC co-ordinator, who reports to senior management.

With respect to Training provision, FET Managers are supported by Assistant Managers. Day-to-day responsibility for assessments and monitoring lies with the Training Standards Office. There are three Training Standard Officers in Raheen and Shannon campuses. The TSO, while operating under the FET QA

Agreement, is in place to facilitate the appropriate running of apprenticeship, traineeship, SST and evening provision. Training provision operates the Transitional Quality Assurance System in respect of Craft Apprenticeship, which remains under the direct remit of SOLAS. In 2019, all other provision came under the updated FET QA System in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. In addition, all contracted trainers who deliver courses under the contracted training framework do so under the Transitional Quality Assurance System (TQAS), and are monitored on a monthly basis. All results are submitted to QQI through training provision campuses in Raheen and Shannon, following processes of IV/EA/ RAP. Information and recommendations gathered from Assessment Supervisor and Assessor Reports, Internal Verification Report of the Conduct of the Assessment Process, Peer Review of Assessment Results and Certification Audit Checklists are also considered.

5. REGIONAL PROFILE



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The total population of the Limerick and Clare region is 313,802 (Census 2016). County Limerick's total population is 195,175, of which 94,192 people live in Limerick City and suburban areas while County Clare has a population of 118,627. Limerick is the third most populous urban area in the state, and the fourth most populous City on the island of Ireland.

Changing population patterns have mostly affected the Limerick metropolitan area, with a significant population increase in parts of the City Centre. In contrast, the largest population decline was observed in regeneration areas. In terms of age profile, the national trend of younger urban centres and ageing rural areas is mirrored in Limerick and Clare (+26% over 65 in County Clare). The age dependency ratio, which shows the ratio of people aged under 14 and over 65 to people of working age (aged 15-64) has also increased in line with national figures.

Employment

In terms of employment, in Q4 2019, the Mid-West region³ accounted for 9.1% of employment in Ireland, and had an unemployment rate of 4.9% - down from 19.5% in Q1 2012. However, Ireland's unemployment rate is now predicted to surge, from 4.8% in February 2020 to

18% in the second quarter, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the "single largest challenge to the Irish economy since the financial crisis". According to the March 2020 ESRI Quarterly report, Ireland's economy could contract by at least 7.1%. This is a significant reversal on trends forecasted prior to the outbreak, when it was predicted the economy would grow by 4% this year. The Mid-West Region in particular had benefited from a number of job announcements in recent years and could be significantly impacted by an economic downturn.

In addition, the Limerick and Clare region has 21 of the 79 Electoral Divisions (EDs) (27%) in the country classified as unemployment blackspots (see Table 1). Limerick City is the worst affected area nationally with a total of 17 unemployment blackspots, 8 of which are in the top 10 most affected blackspots **nationally.** These statistics reflect the challenges faced by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in terms of addressing the needs of its target groups. In addition, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, with both urban and rural areas, is very aware that underemployment is prevalent in rural locations of the Limerick and Clare region.

Rural disadvantage can be associated with limited employment opportunities, lack of transport and other services, high dependency levels and isolation. This presents a real challenge in terms of upskilling and for occupation-specific skill development in the region.

County	Unemployment Blackspots	Average Unemployment %	County Unemployment Rate % (@ April 2016)
Limerick (incl. City)	18	35.7	14.4
Clare	3	29.2	12.4

Table 1 Unemployment Blackspots, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Area (CSO Census 2016)

Learner Profile

The percentage of persons aged 15+ with 3rd level education was 38.5% in Limerick City and County and 40.9% in County Clare, compared to 42% at national level. The percentage of persons 15+ with no formal or primary only education was 14.3% in Limerick City and County and 12.1% in County Clare. Analysis, however, of data at electoral division level in regeneration areas and neighbouring communities, shows that the proportion of the population who left school with just a primary education is considerably higher than the national average. In Limerick City alone, 18 EDs have a higher rate than 20%, and 9 EDs have an early school leaving rate in excess of 30%.

The CSO Census 2016 has recorded higher rates of unemployment, lower rates of educational attainment, higher rates of unskilled/low skilled workers, higher lone parent rates, higher age dependency rates and decreasing populations in those areas. In Q4 2019, 48% of those employed in the Mid-West region had a Leaving Cert or lower, compared to 36% nationally. This paradox for the Mid-West as the fastest growing region in the country, and yet one with almost one-third of the country's unemployment blackspots must be addressed and calls for partnership and targeted interventions. To this end, the FET Division has targeted funding and interventions in these areas under its Active Inclusion Support Service.

³ The Mid-West Region is a NUTS Level III statistical region of Ireland. The region comprises the counties of Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary. Limerick City is the economic centre of the region.

5. REGIONAL PROFILE 5. REGIONAL PROFILE

Enterprise Base

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Limerick and Clare region constituted one of the finest environments for the creation of jobs. In the last two years, the Mid-West region benefited from 17 FDI announcements outperforming the rest of the country. The main employment sector in Limerick and Clare remains the services sector, followed by commerce and trade and manufacturing industries. In 2016, small and medium enterprises represented 92% of active enterprises in the Mid-West, accounting for 36% of persons in employment in the business economy. The Regional Skills Forum has identified the current strengths and future growth prospects in the regional economy in bio-technology, medical technology, ICT, aerospace, tourism, agri-business and logistics. The forum has also identified skills clusters in Hospitality, Engineering, Film and ICT. These employer-led skills clusters identify current and future skills needs with the support of education and training providers.

SECTOR	NO. EMPLOYED IN ETB REGION
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	14,426
Building and construction	9,579
Manufacturing industries	28,850
Commerce and trade	38,430
Transport and communications	12,596
Public administration	9,624
Professional services	44,957
Other	31,706
Total	190,168

NUTS 3 - Mid-West CSO Census 2016 - Persons at work by industry

It is not yet known what impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the enterprise base of the Mid-West region. However, we know that 'in terms of sectors, those employed in the accommodation & food, wholesale & retail and construction sectors have been hardest hit to date. How each of these sectors recovers over the long-term will depend on government interventions, the length and severity of the restrictions, and the overall economic outlook at both national and international levels. '4



⁴ Impact of COVID 19 on Ireland's labour market, May 2020, Skills and Labour Market Research Unit, SOLAS

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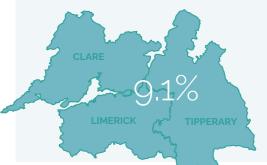


Regional Profile - Q4 2019

The Mid-West accounts for 9.1% of employment in Ireland (215,800 persons)



40% of workers in the Mid-West were in industry (14.8%), wholesale & retail (13.2%) or health & social work (12.8%)





The highest 5 year growth rate in employment was recorded in public admin & defence (58%) with an additional 4,400 persons employed, followed by administrative activities (49%) and construction (40%)



Professionals (41,500) accounted for the largest share (19,3%) of occupations, followed by skilled trades (40,100) and elementary occupations (23,700) with a share of 18.6% & 11% respectively

Sector focus – Industry

Vacancies

& food (15%).



14.8%

Employment



Industry accounted for 14.8% of all employment in the Mid-West region. This is higher than the national level

Work permits



The Mid-West accounted for 5.9% of all work permits in

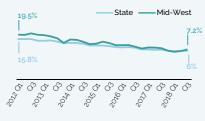
Unemployment

17% of all Jobsireland.ie vacancies

industry, followed by accomodation

for the Mid-West region were in

Unemployment rate



4.9% (11,100 persons)

The unemployment rate in Q4 2019 was 4.9%, down from

19.5% in Q1 2012; the UE rate

was above the national average for most of this time period.



employed had a Leaving Cert or below compared to 36% nationally

48% of those



58% of those unemployed in the Mid-West

Companies with recent job announcements in the Mid-West region



H&MV



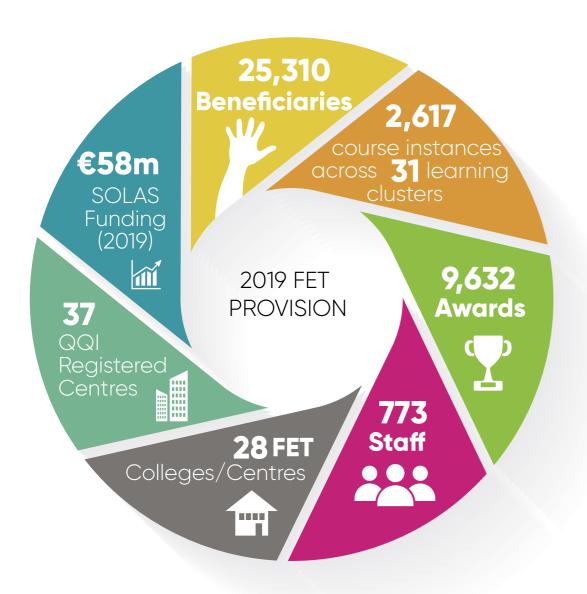


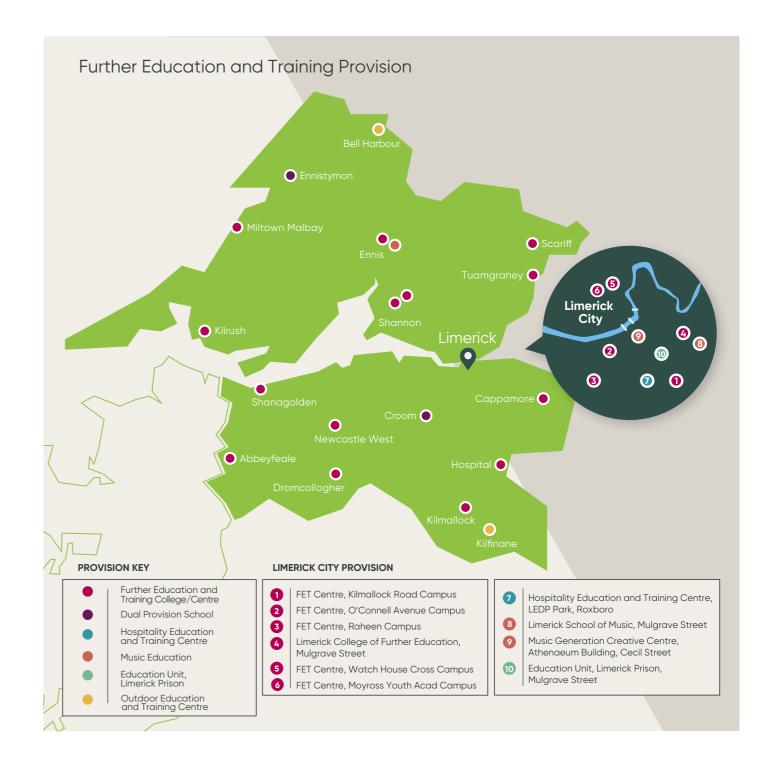
www.regionalskills.ie/Regions/MidWest www.solas.ie

Source: CSO Labour Force Survey

6. PROVISION **PROFILE**







a) Full-time and Part-time Provision

The table below shows the number of FET beneficiaries in 2019, by type of full-time and part-time provision, to include all apprenticeships beneficiaries (see full list of FET Colleges/Centres by type of provision).

PROVISION TYPE	F/T	% FET	P/T	% FET
	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries
Core Skills			4,202	16%
ESOL			1,362	5%
Vocational and Employability Skills Development (BTEI & SWF)	17	0%	3,249	13%
Community Education & Training (incl. LTIs, STPs, Co-operation Hours)	611	3%	7,009	28%
Evening Training			1,661	7%
PLC	2,419	10%		
Skills to Advance			595	2%
Specific Skills Training	516	2%		
VTOS Core	853	3%		
Youth Education & Training	570	2%		
Traineeships				
Traineeship Training	428	2%		
Traineeship Employed	70	0%		
Apprenticeships				
Phases (2,4,6)	1,456	6%		
Phase 7	227	1%		
2016+ Apprenticeship	65	0%		
	7,232	29 %	18,078	71 %

The FET Division provides a range of hospitality-related education and training programmes at its Hospitality Education and Training Centre, Roxboro, Limerick. This centre was the first in the country to receive the coveted European 'Excellence Framework for Quality Management' award in 2020, and has continued to receive the highest accolades in its field. In October 2019, an instructor and apprentice from the Hospitality Education and Training Centre won

the 2019 SME (European Alliance for Apprenticeships) Training and Apprenticeship Award in Helsinki. The VET Excellence Awards highlight best practice and recognise excellence in Vocational Education and Training (VET) all over Europe.

The Division is also responsible for the management of **Outdoor Education** and Training and Music Education provision across the region.



b) Contracted/External Provision with which the ETB is Engaged

Contracted Training refers to the structure, procurement and management of Training or Education provision outsourced to contractors by the ETB. It is a flexible, innovative and responsive tool to facilitate the delivery of provision based on the labour market landscape in the region as well as the specific needs of learners.

Co-operation with Other Institutions, grants (teaching hours) are allocated to a number of social inclusion projects targeting Disability projects, Lone Parents; Minority Groups; Socially Economic Disadvantaged Groups; those distant from the Labour Market; Mental Health Associations, etc. Some of the larger provision includes Limerick Youth Service; Limerick Prison Education Centre; Justice Workshop; Provision for Schools with Special Educational Needs.

Name of Centre	Provision Type	F/T	% F/T	P/T	% P/T	Total
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	Specific Skills Training	19	3.5%	0	0%	19
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	Specific Skills Training	23	4.3%	0	0%	23
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	Specific Skills Training	58	10.7%	0	0%	58
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	Traineeship Training	22	4.1%	0	0%	22
FET Centre, Raheen Campus	Traineeship Training	23	4.3%	0	0%	23
FET Centre, Shannon Campus	Specific Skills Training	155	28.7%	0	0%	155
FET Centre, Shannon Campus	Traineeship Training	241	44.5%	0	0%	241
Co-op Hours - Cecil St	FET Co-operation Hours	0	0%	333	37.17%	333
Co-op Hours – Céim ar Chéim	FET Co-operation Hours	0	0%	273	30.47%	273
Co-op Hours – Centre for the Unemployed	FET Co-operation Hours	0	0%	34	3.79%	34
Co-op Hours – Clare Immigrant Support Centre	FET Co-operation Hours	0	0%	100	11.16%	100
Co-op Hours – LSSC Ltd.	FET Co-operation Hours	0	0%	156	17.41%	156
Total		541	100%	896	100%	1,437

c) Support Services

Underpinning the FET Division, a range of FET support services have been put in place to develop areas of strategic importance for the FET Division, and ensure strategic commitments around learner supports, active inclusion, technology enhanced learning, professional development, employer engagement and planning, monitoring and evaluation are resourced and developed.

REFERENCE **DESCRIPTION ACTIVE INCLUSION SUPPORT SERVICE** ■ FET Active The FET Active Inclusion Support Service was established in 2018. Headed by a FET Manager, Inclusion who sits on the FET Steering Group, it comprises Support Service two active inclusion support officers, one guidance Framework counsellor and three adult educators. Its main objective is to contribute to breaking the cycle of disadvantage that can prevent some individuals from fulfilling their full potential and to foster an ongoing organisational commitment to strengthen our inclusive practices and policies. Taking a universal design for learning approach, pilot projects are being devised in consultation with a range of agencies and groups including SICAP and the local Partnership Companies, the DEASP, LCCC -Limerick Regeneration, Higher Education Institutions, Mental Health Services, Disability Services, Local Employers, local Community groups. Pilot projects focus on: Outreach and Access ■ Transitions: develop a FET Division wide approach to supporting learner transitions. ■ Employability Skills courses (e.g. Built environment, Level 3) will target those in unemployment blackspots as well as the longterm unemployed with a view to preparing them for the workplace and/or for progression to further education and training

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION
PLANNING, RESOURC	ING, INFORMATION AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE
	A FET Operations Manager supports the implementation of the FET Planning and Funding system (FARR/PLSS) across the FET Division, and monitors progress on targets agreed in the SPA with SOLAS.
ENTERPRISE ENGAG	EMENT SUPPORT SERVICE
■ FET Enterprise Engagement Framework (2017-20)	The FET Enterprise Engagement Support Service (EESS) was set up in 2017 to build up connectedness across the FET Division on Enterprise Engagement, and provide a centralised point of contact to broker the range of FET provision and services to employers. Headed by a FET Manager, who sits on the FET Steering Group, the EESS facilitates on-going dialogue with employers, employees, skills fora, in responding to identified skills and training needs in the region.
INFORMATION, REC	RUITMENT AND GUIDANCE SUPPORT SERVICE
FET Integrated Guidance Strategic Framework (2016-2020)	The FET Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service (IRGSS) covers a range of individual and group activities delivered at the pre-entry, entry, on-going, pre-exit, exit and post-exit stages of the learner's journey: Information-Giving; Educational and Career Guidance; Career Management Skills; Competence Assessment; Raising awareness about labour-market trends and opportunities; Teaching of Decision-Making skills; Supports to sustain learner participation, retention, and progression; Advocacy; Counselling;

REFERENCE/SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
	Information, Recruitment and Guidance supports are delivered through a number of mechanisms including one-to-one guidance, group guidance, drop-in and online information query services, Information Hub and self-access resources in Learning Hubs, Noticeboards in FET Colleges/Centres and in Communities and using Social Media with a dedicated FET Information, Recruitment and Guidance Facebook Page. Services are free, impartial and confidential and networked.
INNOVATION, DEVEL	OPMENT AND QUALITY SUPPORT SERVICE
QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPPORT SERVICE 2019 Self-Evaluation Report to QQI	Set up in 2016, the FET Quality Assurance Support Service (QASS) is based in Ennis, Co. Clare. Headed by a FET Manager, who sits on the FET Steering Group, it comprises of a QA Development Officer, four QA Support Officers and two QA Administrators to provide development and management support for cross-centre FET Quality Assurance processes, as well as cascade training across the FET Division on relevant QA matters. The QASS also liaises with QQI re. annual planning and reporting requirements on QA Improvement plans.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SERVICE FET Professional Development Action Plan 2019-2021	The FET Professional Development Support Service is headed by the Professional Development Officer and seeks to build on the commitment, expertise and the professionalism of FET staff and develop a strong learning culture within the organisation. The PDSS also co-ordinates the FET Division European Projects, and Staff Professional Development Mobility opportunities. In 2019, a total of 127 training events were organised centrally with an attendance of 1,669 staff.

REFERENCE/SERVICE **DESCRIPTION TECHNOLOGY** The FET TEL Support Service is headed by the FET TEL **ENHANCED** Officer, who leads a team of a TEL Support Officer, a **LEARNING** Learning Hub Support Officer and a Blended Learning SUPPORT SERVICE Support Officer. It seeks to support FET provision and services ■ FET Technology to effectively use existing, new and emerging Enhanced technologies to deliver the highest quality learning Learning (TEL) opportunities to all our learners. It focuses on four key Action Plan (2017 areas: -2020). Staff and Learners' digital capacity TEL Infrastructure 3. Internal resource sharing and collaboration External partnerships PLANNING. A Planning and Evaluation Officer promotes a culture **MONITORING AND** of integrated planning across the FET Division and supports the design and implementation of cross-**EVALUATION** service monitoring, reporting and evaluation tools (e.g. ■ FET Monitoring FET Annual Reports, FET Service Plans, etc.). Some key and Evaluation roles include: Framework. - Developing the capacity of the FET staff around the Programme Cycle Management - from Planning, to Implementation, and Monitoring and Evaluation of programme activities, through facilitation work, development of tools and resources, using consultative and participatory approaches. - Supporting strategic planning at all levels of the Organisation – whole organisation, Programmes and Projects, etc. - Conducting environmental scanning - synthesising information and policy developments for dissemination in various formats across the organisation, and externally.

d) ETB Provision by NFQ Level

The table below shows the number of FET beneficiaries achieving QQI certification in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board since 2017. In 2019, QQI delivered 9,632 awards to ETB FET learners.

NFQ LEVEL	BENEFICIARIES 2017	BENEFICIARIES 2018	BENEFICIARIES 2019
LEVEL 1	126	98	80
LEVEL 2	276	201	285
LEVEL 3	930	943	894
LEVEL 4	1,023	799	870
LEVEL 5	4,060	3,924	3,516
LEVEL 6	571	719	755
Total	6,986	6,684	6,400

QBS data

Skills

e) ETB Provision by Field of Learning

There were 2,617 course instances in 2019 across 31 Skills Clusters. The table below shows the number of FET beneficiaries by Skills Cluster⁵, and highlights the strong focus on transversal skills development within the general learning and core personal categories, while also showing strengths of provision in areas such as business, health, engineering, the built environment and ICT. The table below shows the ETB's FET provision by Skills Clusters 2017-2019.

Skills Cluster	2017 Beneficiaries	2018 Beneficiaries	2019 Beneficiaries
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	138	150	147
Animal Science	93	113	127
Arts & Crafts	340	287	300
Built Environment	206	379	577
Business, Administration	1,148	1,049	1,052
Core ICT	520	447	410
Core Personal	5,920	6,965	7,226
Engineering	28	26	64
Engineering (Electrical)	26	633	915
Engineering (IT)	0	25	32
Engineering (Mechanical)	378	653	733
Engineering (Transport)	75	429	541
Entrepreneurship	46	30	43
Financial Services	103	92	105

Cluster	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries
Food and Beverage	195	275	355
General Learning	5,471	7,397	7,583
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	411	430	410
Health, Family other Social Services	2,204	2,190	2,519
Information Technology	200	208	241
Management	1	49	73
Manufacturing	39	46	98
Media Graphics Communications	303	316	321
Research and Education- Training	29	45	67
Sales & Marketing	129	168	225
Science and Technology	40	42	31
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	211	144	203
Skills Sampling	322	315	219
Sport and Leisure	334	258	212
Tourism	76	98	119
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	419	243	282
Web Development & Design	135	90	80
Total	19,540	23,592	25,310

2017

2018

2019

⁵ Includes Apprenticeships and co-operation hours.

6. PROVISION PROFILE

F) Other Awarding Bodies

The table below shows non-QQI course data (including licensing bodies e.g. RSA). Please note some 2015 and 2016 courses were added to include the courses that finished in 2017.

AWARDING BODY	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
	Courses	Courses	Courses	Courses	Courses
ADOBE	1	2	2		5
Approved EN Certifying Body	1	33	29	38	101
ATI	4	4	4	4	16
British Horse Society	1	1		2	4
Cambridge English Language Assessment		2	3	4	9
CIBTAC	1	2	3	2	8
CIDESCO				1	1
City & Guilds	3	15	18	62	98
CompTIA	1	1	1	1	4
Department of Education & Skills	34	38	38	34	144
Dept of Transport, Tourism & Sport			1	3	4
EASA	1	2	5	6	16
EHAI (Environmental Health Association Ireland)		2	1	2	5
ICS SKILLS	3	19	12	12	46
ISA (Irish Sailing Association)			1	1	2
ITEC	2	4	4	7	17
MICROSOFT		2	1	2	5
PHECC			5	5	10
RSA (Road Safety Authority)	1	20	16	16	53
RTITB		25	8		33
Grand Total	53	172	152	202	581



7. LEARNER PROFILE

All data contained in this report has been extracted from PLSS.

a) Gender Profile

LEARNER GENDER	2017	2018	2019
Female	12,028	13,488	15,148
Male	7,512	7,689	8,770
Other/not specified			
Total	19,540	21,177	23,918*

^{*}Gender data are not available on PLSS for apprenticeship provision and FET Co-operation hours.

b) Age Profile

LEARNER GENDER	2017	2018	2019
0-14	11	16	23
15-24	4,824	8,501	8,669
25-44	6,568	6,714	7,373
45-64	5,690	5,534	6,137
>64	2,447	2,827	3,108
Total	19,540	23,592	25,310

c) Nationality Profile

REGION	2017	2018	2019
Ireland	n/a	13,297	15,370
GB	n/a	463	564
Europe	n/a	1,491	1,805
Africa	n/a	810	824
Asia	n/a	997	981
North America	n/a	70	92
Oceania	n/a	6	4
South America	n/a	157	205
Unknown	n/a	3,776	3,212



8. STAFFING PROFILE 8. STAFFING PROFILE:

There are 774 FET staff employed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in its FET Division, of which 611 are learning practitioners (teachers, tutors, resource workers or instructors). Provision Co-ordinators oversee activities across different FET provision, while functions and officer responsibilities have been built up around key areas of FET development (Technology Enhanced Learning; Professional Development; Research, Planning and Evaluation; Quality Assurance; Enterprise Engagement, Active Inclusion, and Information, Recruitment and Guidance).

a) Staffing Overview

Staff Resources	Comment	Number
Director of FET		1
FET Managers – Strategy & Development		4
FET Manager – Operations		1
Principal	One stand-alone PLC College.	1
	Three dual provision (Post-Primary & PLC)	3
Manager	Training Services	2
Assistant Manager	Training Services	4
Provision Co-ordinators		26
Quality Assurance Officer		1
QA Support Officer		4
Professional Development Officer	plus European Projects	1
Research, Planning & Evaluation Officer		1
Learning & Technology Officer		1
TEL Support Officer		1
Learning Hub Support Officer		2
Blended Learning Support Officer		1

Staff Resources	Comment	Number
AISS Adult Educator		8
AISS Administrator		1
Information, Recruitment & Guidance	Career Guidance	5
	Information Officer	3
	Course Recruitment Officer	2
	Advocates	3
Learning Practitioners (includes full- time and part-time)	Teachers	166
	Tutors	286
	Resource Persons	51
	Resource Workers	16
	Instructors	92
Senior Training Advisor		3
Community Officer		2
Contracted Training Officer		2
Apprenticeship Training Advisors		5
Training Standards Officer		3
Purchasing Officer		2
Psychotherapist		3
Administration		40
General Assistants		7
Caretakers		19
TOTAL		773

8. STAFFING PROFILE

ii) Teacher / Learner Ratio

General guidance on learner/teacher ratios is provided by some FET provision operational guidelines:

- **Vocational & Employee Skills Development:** Level 3/4 = 1:7/12; Level 5 = 1:10/14
- Core Skills: 6:1 for group classes; and 1:1
- Hospitality Education and Training Centre: 1:10
- **PLC:** 1 : 19

However, this can vary as some provision on offer can sometimes restrict numbers e.g. Horsemanship 1:10; Nursing/Healthcare 1:15, etc.

- **VTOS:** 1 : 10
- Youthreach: 1:5/10



One of the authority's strategic priorities is to work in partnership with key stakeholders in the Limerick and Clare region, and at national level. To this end, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division is involved in an extensive network of partners both at national and regional levels, and collaborates with a range of public bodies, as well as voluntary and community organisations.

a) National Agencies

- **SOLAS**: Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has a significant engagement with SOLAS - the state organisation with responsibility for funding, planning and coordinating Further Education and Training. The relationship is articulated in its Strategic Performance Agreements (SPA).
- **QQI**: In 2018, the QQI PAEC (Programmes and Awards Executive Committee) approved the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Division QA procedures, in line with QQI 2014 policy "Re-engagement with QQI, Overarching Policy for All Providers". The agreed reengagement process required each ETB to develop an Executive Self Evaluation Report (ESER) addressing QQI's Core Statutory QA (Quality Assurance) guidelines and other QA guidelines as appropriate; and a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

■ Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP):

An inter-agency framework was signed between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and the Department of Social Protection (DEASP) in 2016, and a protocol was also signed with the Local Employment Office (LEO). The Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board DEASP Action Group allows greater collaboration with DEASP through quarterly strategic meetings, as well as PLSS briefings with DEASP Case Officers in Limerick and Clare. This has helped identify DEASP priority cohorts, in particular the Long-Term Unemployed (LTU), and the appropriate responses required by local FET provision and services. The ETB's FET Division also delivers provision in partnership with local SICAP providers. These partnerships and ensuing referrals have led to the introduction of new taraeted provision.

■ **ETBI**: Education and Training Boards Ireland is the national representative association for Ireland's sixteen Education and Training Boards - providing a range of co-ordination and professional supports and facilitating collaboration between ETBs.

ETBI coordinates a number of groups, which assist ETBs to develop policy and enhance practice:

- o Chief Executives Forum
- o Directors Forum
- o Directors of FET QA Strategy Group
- o Quality Network
- o New Apprenticeship Development Group
- NALA/AONTAS: The FET Division works closely with national agencies that promote the learner's voice, and build capacity around literacy and numeracy issues, as well as support the ETB sector through specific national initiatives. In 2020, the FET Division worked closely with AONTAS to capture FET learners' feedback on the quality of their learning experience, as part of the consultation for the institutional review of QA.

Regional Partners

Enterprise Engagement

The FET Division pursues its strategic commitment around enterprise engagement through its active participation in the **Mid-West Regional Skills Forum** to identify skills needs in the Mid-West and offer innovative and effective education and training solutions to meet those needs. Regional intelligence is also gathered through Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's

representation on the local Chambers of Commerce, Local Community **Development Committees (LCDC)** in

Limerick and Clare, and continued partnerships with Turas Nua, HSE, IBEC, Probation Service and Limerick Prison, Employability Clare, Jobpaths, Sports Partnerships, etc. They all contribute to a more accurate analysis of local labour-market demands, and inform the supply of FET responses, while at national level, SOLAS SLMRU provides key statistical data about skills needs and labour market trends.

In addition, the sectoral approach to skills development in the Mid-West includes an innovative approach through **skills clusters** (i.e. Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for Film, Limerick for Hospitality, etc.) This facilitates the sharing of regional labour market intelligence, and allows industry needs to be matched to education providers.

The FET Division also holds regular meetings with the IDA in relation to training supports options available to potential client/s considering relocating within the Mid-West region.

In 2017, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum also developed an innovative **STEM Alliance** pilot project, the first of its kind in Ireland, involving over 30 companies across Limerick and Clare and 19 post-primary schools. This industry-led project aims to encourage young people to become engaged and interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is also a partner in the Mid-West Regional COVID-19 **Employment Response Steering** Committee, which engages with industry leaders across a number of sectors to devise a short, medium and long-term response to the challenges faced by the Mid-West region. This upskilling initiative has initially worked with a team of industry leaders across Retail and Hospitality to upskill hundreds of employees currently out of work. Courses have been identified and in some cases modified to meet industry skill needs reflecting the values of collaboration and partnership within the region. The long-term ambition is to deliver a strategy to develop a world class

Smart Region, and to be the most digitally connected peripheral region in EU, with the lowest possible carbon footprint.

Inter-Agency Groups

- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is represented on a number of inter-agency groups targeting the needs of priority cohorts including the Inter-Agency group for Traveller and Roma communities in County Clare, an inter-agency traveller specific working group, inter-agency refugee resettlement group, the older people's alliance and SICAP providers, including partnerships agencies, PAUL Partnership (Limerick City), Ballyhoura Development (East Limerick), West Limerick Resources (West Limerick) and Clare Local Development Company (Clare). Local community networks; SMART Limerick; Agefriendly Strategy in Limerick and Clare; Limerick Digital Roadmap; Limerick Community Education Network; Clare Lifelong Learning Network etc.;
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is also the lead agency on a number of objectives in both the Limerick and Clare Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs) 2016 – 2021.

Education Partners

- A Memorandum of Understanding is in place between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and Mary immaculate College, Limerick, to facilitate the quality assurance and certification of a Level 4 Certificate in General Learning and Personal Development (CGLPD). This supports the inclusion and education of young adults with intellectual disabilities allowing them the opportunity to participate within a higher learning environment. The programme offers the learners the Level 4 QQI Major Award in General Learning, 4M2010, which is completed over two years in Mary Immaculate College using an integrated approach to teaching and learning.
- Training Board has representation on the governing bodies of Limerick Institute of Technology, Institute of Technology Tralee and Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, and continues to develop progression links to various Higher Education institutions through memoranda of understanding e.g. Universities (UL; MIC); Institutes of Technology (Limerick; Tralee; Waterford; Galway-Mayo etc.).

- The Director of FET is the
 Chairperson of the Local
 Community Development
 Committee (LCDC) in County
 Clare. He is also Chairperson
 of Music Generation Limerick
 City. He also sits on Innovate
 Limerick, a local group promoting
 innovative projects and associated
 employment opportunities both in
 Limerick City and County.
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division chairs the Learning Limerick Steering Group, a multi-sectoral partnership group committed to advancing Limerick as a Learning **Region**. As a recipient of the UNESCO Learning City Award in 2017, Limerick has enhanced its collaborative efforts to increase overall education levels in Limerick, reduce the region's high long-term unemployment, and improve living conditions. Current membership is representative of Local Government, Higher Education, Further Education and Training, Local Development, Community Education, Youth Work, Social Welfare, Childcare, Migrant Integration and Limerick Chamber Skillnet (Learning Limerick Strategic Plan 2018 - 2022: Helping to Grow Limerick as a Learning Region).

9. COLLABORATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

c) Other Partnerships/Networks

- Limerick Community Education
 Network (LCEN) has facilitated the
 growth of community-based adult
 education in Limerick City, through
 its member groups, over the last 25
 years.
 - In 2019, recognising our common history as providers of further education and training in Limerick City, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and the seven LCEN members signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, relinquishing their existing provider status with QQI and becoming Further Education and Training Centres of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. This changeover has been approved by the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Council and QQI, and came into effect from 1st September 2019.
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is involved in many European partnerships, through Erasmus+ for staff and learner mobility projects.
- Extensive collaboration exists between ETBs nationally.
 For instance, memoranda of agreement with collaborating providers are established with

- collaborating providers through Quality Assurance Procedures for new National Apprenticeship Programmes (e.g. Kerry ETB; etc.). In 2019, the **new National** Apprenticeship in Hairdressing (Level 6) was developed by a Consortium Steering Group (CSG) with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board as 'coordinating provider'. 15 ETBs signed formal Memoranda of Agreement to become Collaborating Providers of the National Hairdressing Apprenticeship. Industry experts represented the Hairdressing Council, Irish Hairdressers Federation and Synergy Hair Group and there was great collaboration between other ETB colleagues.
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division maintains a number of agreements in the form of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with local partner organisations. There is a national agreement to collaborate with second providers for CTCs and LTIs. SLAs have been drafted. which include built-in business planning and monitoring processes. In order to ensure proper corporate governance is in place, operating procedures associated with 'Cooperation with Other Institutions' are in place, including an annual Evaluation and Monitoring form for each 'Grantee'.



Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
FET Division
Provider Profile

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