



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna  
**LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR**  

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**LIMERICK & CLARE**  
Education & Training Board

# Official Languages Scheme 2021 - 2024

October 2021

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# Chapter 1 Introduction and Background

## 1.1 Introduction

The *Official Languages Act 2003* provides for the preparation by public bodies of a language scheme detailing the services which they will provide:

- through the medium of Irish,
- through the medium of English, and
- through the medium of Irish and English, and

the measures to be adopted to ensure that any service not currently provided by the body through the medium of the Irish language will be so provided within an agreed timeframe.

In accordance with section 14(3) of the Act, language schemes remain in force for a period of 3 years, or until a new scheme is confirmed by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, whichever is the later.

## 1.2 Preparation and Content of the Scheme

In the preparation of this scheme, due regard has been given to the Guidelines issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht. In addition, there has been a comprehensive process of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is guided by the principle that the provision of Irish language services should be based on:

- the underlying level of demand for specific services in the Irish language,
- the importance of a proactive approach to the provision of such services, and
- the resources, including human and financial resources, and the capacity of the body concerned to develop or access the necessary language capability.

This scheme complements the principles of Quality Customer Service and our Customer Charter. It has been formulated with the intention of ensuring that all relevant obligations under the *Official Languages Act 2003* by the ETB will be fully addressed on an incremental basis, through this and future schemes.

## 1.3 Commencement Date of the Scheme

This Scheme has been confirmed by the Minister for Heritage, Culture and the Gaeltacht. It commences with effect from the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and shall remain in force for a period of 3 years, or until a new scheme has been confirmed, whichever is the later.

## Chapter 2 Overview of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is a statutory body established by the *Education and Training Boards Act, 2013*. As provided for in the Act, three Vocational Education Committees, Clare VEC, County Limerick VEC and City of Limerick VEC were subsumed into Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and the new corporate entity came into existence on establishment day, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013. The *Further Education and Training Act 2013*, in a further consolidation of education and training in the region, made provision for the SOLAS Training Centres in Limerick and Shannon and its training operations in the region to be subsumed into the ETB on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014.

As specified in the legislation, the primary function of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board in its operational area of County Clare, Limerick City and County Limerick is to:

- establish and maintain recognised schools, centres for education and education or training facilities,
- establish and maintain centres for education,
- establish, maintain, or resource education or training facilities,
- plan, provide, coordinate, and review the provision of education and training, including education and training for the purpose of employment, and services ancillary thereto in,
  - recognised schools or centres for education maintained by it,
  - education or training facilities maintained or resourced by it,
  - children detention schools,
  - prisons, and
  - facilities maintained by other public service bodies.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is funded by the Department of Education in respect of post-primary and related-education provision, and by SOLAS in respect of Further Education and Training provision.

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is responsible for the management and operation of 2 Community National Schools and 18 post-primary schools in Limerick and Clare. The ETB is also co-patron of 4 community schools. In addition to the management of primary and post-primary schools, the ETB also has responsibility for Youth Work Services and the Local Creative Youth Partnership (LCYP).

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's FET Division is responsible for the management and operation of 37 QQI-registered FET Campuses in Limerick and Clare, where it provided a suite of full-time and part-time provision and support services to 22,939 beneficiaries in 2020, in nearly 300 locations. It also has two dedicated training centres in Limerick and Shannon which offers the standard trade apprenticeships, as well as a wide range of education and training opportunities.

The ETB is the lead partner for Music Generation Limerick City and Music Generation Clare.

Its services are provided by a cohort of committed and dedicated staff of approximately 2,500; 85% of whom are engaged in teaching, instruction, or guidance.

## **2 Vision and Objectives**

### **2.1 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.

### **2.2 Main Functions**

By statute and in accordance with directions from the Minister for Education and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science as issued from time to time, the ETB is required to fulfil the following functions:

- establish and maintain recognised schools, centres for education and education or training facilities,
- establish and maintain centres for education,
- establish, maintain, or resource education or training facilities,
- plan, provide, coordinate, and review the provision of education and training, including education and training for the purpose of employment, and services ancillary thereto in,
  - recognised schools or centres for education maintained by it,
  - education or training facilities maintained or resourced by it,
  - children detention schools,
  - prisons, and
  - facilities maintained by other public service bodies.

### **2.3 Key Services**

The ETB, through its network of schools, colleges, training centres, community centres and co-operative arrangements with other partners provides the following services:

- Post-Primary Education
- Second-Chance Education
- Further Education and Training
- Apprenticeship Training
- Community Education
- Adult Guidance Information Services
- Adult Literacy Education
- Adult Learning Support Services
- Youth Club Grants Administration

## 2.4 Customers and Clients

Within its catchment area, the current and prospective customers, and clients of the ETB encompass the following who patronise our schools and centres of education and training:

- Post-Primary Students
- Youthreach and VTOS Students
- Post-Leaving Certificate Students
- Learners engaged in industrial and professional education and training programmes
- Apprentices
- Learners engaged in literacy programmes
- Learners in community-based programmes
- Adult guidance
- ETB staff

## Chapter 3 Details of Services Currently Being Provided in English Only or Bilingually

Details of services currently being provided in English only or bilingually in Irish and English, **including services in Gaeltacht areas.**

<b>Current Provision of Services</b>		
<b>Services (General)</b>	<b>In English only</b>	<b>Bilingually, in English and Irish</b>
School Administration	2 Community National Schools	1 Gaelcholáiste
	18 Post-Primary Schools	2 Aonad
Other Programmes' Administration	Youthreach	
	VTOS	
	ALSS & Guidance	
	Training Centres	
	Adult & Community Education	
	1 Further Education College	
	1 School of Music	
	2 Music Generation	
	2 Outdoor Education Centres	
Head Office Administration	Marshal House, Limerick	
	Ennis Office	
Student Handbooks	18 Post-Primary Schools	1 Gaelcholáiste & 2 Aonad
Advertising/Promotion	Course Brochures	1 Gaelcholáiste & 2 Aonad
<b>Services in Gaeltacht Areas</b>	<b>In English only</b>	<b>Bilingually, in English and Irish</b>
Where relevant, to be compiled by each individual ETB		
Not applicable to Limerick and Clare ETB		

## Chapter 4 Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services

The provisions shaded in grey in the table below are **mandatory requirements** under the *Official Languages Act 2003*.

Means of communication with the public		Commitment	Timeline
<b>Recorded Oral Announcements</b>		<p>The following recorded oral announcements will be in Irish or bilingual:</p> <p>(a) Recorded oral announcements provided on the telephone when the offices of the public body are closed;</p> <p>(b) Recorded oral announcements transmitted by a public address system;</p> <p>(c) Recorded oral announcements created and transmitted by means of a computerised messaging system or a computerised telephone answering system.</p> <p>This provision relates to 'recorded' announcements rather than 'live announcements'.</p> <p>Where a Placenames Order is in force, a public body is required to use the Irish language version of the place name specified in that Order in recorded oral announcements made by it or on its behalf.</p>	Mandatory
<b>Written Communication</b>	Letters and Electronic Mail	All written communication will be responded to in the official language in which it was received.	Mandatory
	Stationery	Headings of stationery, including notepaper, compliment slips, fax cover sheets, file covers, and other folders, labels and envelopes are provided in Irish or bilingually.	Mandatory
<b>Signage</b>	Signage	All signage placed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, or on its behalf, must be in Irish or bilingually, in accordance with the regulations (S.I. No.391/2008).	Mandatory
<b>Publications</b>	Publications	Documents setting out public policy proposals, audited accounts or financial statements, annual reports and strategy statements will be published simultaneously in Irish and English.	Mandatory



	Circulars/Mailshots	Where a public body communicates in writing or by electronic mail with the general public or a class of the general public for the purpose of furnishing information to the public or the class, the body shall ensure that the communication is in the Irish language or in the English and Irish languages.	Mandatory
<b>An Ghaeltacht</b>	Gaeltacht Place names	The official place names of Gaeltacht areas will be used by the public body.	Mandatory

The provisions listed below are actions that Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has implemented and new actions that we propose to implement during the lifetime of this Scheme.

Means of communication with the public		Commitment	Timeline
<b>Oral Communication</b>	<u>Reception</u>	Customers will be greeted firstly in Irish and then in English at schools, FET campuses and administrative offices.	Year 1
	<u>Face to Face/Counter Service</u>	An up-to-date list of staff members who can provide a service through Irish will be made available.	Year 1
	<u>Switchboard</u>	Switchboard staff will give the name of the public body in Irish and English.	Continuous
	<u>Telephone communications with the public</u>	Customers will be informed that a service can be provided through Irish, if requested.	Continuous
	<u>Recorded Oral Announcements</u>	Administration staff will have their pre-recorded personal telephone greetings in bilingual format.	Continuous
	Other	We will state on recruitment adverts that competency in Irish would be desirable.	Continuous
	<u>Information Leaflets/ Brochures</u>	There will be a bilingual or Irish version of commonly used FET brochures.	Continuous
	<u>Application Forms</u>	There will be a bilingual or Irish version of the most commonly used application forms available.	Continuous
	Other	All new application forms will be available in Irish or bilingually. From date of publication.	Continuous
<b>Media</b>	<u>Press Releases</u>	All press releases will be issued bilingually. The objective will be to issue this material simultaneously.	Continuous
	<u>Media Spokespersons</u>	An Irish speaking spokesperson/s will be available for interviews with the Irish language media by prior arrangement initially until a member or members of	Continuous

		staff has/have developed sufficient competency in Irish to deal with the media.	
	<u>Speeches</u>	We will include 10% of Irish content in English speeches. Such content shall include opening and closing greetings in Irish, and references here and there in Irish to the subject matter of any such speeches and/or to the occasion in hand, as a minimum.	Continuous
<b>Information Technology</b>	<u>Email</u>	Standard email messages such as disclaimers will be bilingual.	Continuous
	<u>Websites</u>	The static material on <a href="http://www.lcetb.ie">www.lcetb.ie</a> will be made available bilingually. There will be a navigational link from a page in the English version of the website to the relevant page in the Irish version.  An Irish language page will be available on the staff intranet which will provide basic guidance regarding the provision of Irish language services and the availability of Irish language resources. This will be kept up-to-date and in line with the new scheme. Its availability as a resource will be promoted.  This Irish language page on the staff intranet shall include a bilingual statement from the Chief Executive Officer affirming the ETB's determination to implement the commitments entered into in the ETB's language scheme.	Year 1
	<u>Computer Systems</u>	Any new computer system being installed will be fully capable of handling the Irish language.	From date of Installation
	<u>Interactive Services</u>	Every new online and interactive service will be made available on a bilingual basis.	From date of Installation
	Other	The ETB's website shall include on its homepage a bilingual welcome statement by the CE of said ETB, affirming the ETB's commitment to implementing the commitments promised in its agreed language scheme.	Continuous

		Were the ETB to decide on a tagline at a future date, such tagline shall be bilingual.	
<b>Gaeltacht</b>	<u>Meetings</u>	Not Applicable	

## Chapter 5 Enhancing the Provision of Irish Language Services in Gaeltacht Areas

Enhancing the provision of Irish language services in Gaeltacht areas and ensuring that Irish becomes the working language in offices located in Gaeltacht areas by a certain date.

### Commitments in Gaeltacht Areas

Description of services in Gaeltacht areas	Commitment	Timeline
To be completed by each individual ETB, if applicable.	To be completed by each individual ETB, if applicable.	Implementation date to be determined by XXXETB.
	Not Applicable to Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.	
<a href="#">Irish as the working language in Gaeltacht offices</a>		
Commitment	Timeline	

## Chapter 6 Improving Language Capability

### 6.1 Recruitment

The recruitment of staff with the appropriate level of competence in the Irish language in each area of work of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will be the primary means of optimising the availability of services through Irish. Our recruitment policy, which is subject to the framework of agreed national recruitment procedures, will have regard to the need to improve Irish language capability on an incremental basis.

All new staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme in order to ensure that they are made aware of our commitments under the legislation.

### 6.2 Training and Development

The ETB is committed to making available opportunities for staff to attend appropriately-accredited Irish language training courses, as resources permit. All staff will be advised of facilities/opportunities to improve their competency in Irish.

		Commitment	Timeline
<b>Improving Irish Language Capability</b>	<a href="#">Recruitment</a>	New staff will be provided with an induction pack containing a copy of our agreed scheme.	Continuous
	<a href="#">Training</a>	Opportunities to develop the Irish language competence of staff will be provided. Appropriate arrangements will be made for the provision of Irish language training and proficiency testing, and certification for staff, in order to support staff in maintaining and developing their proficiency in the Irish language, to enhance the capacity of staff to meet their Irish language obligations in the conduct of their duties, and to provide an accredited proficiency testing regime for staff. Staff will be made aware of language resources such as <a href="http://www.focal.ie">www.focal.ie</a> , <a href="http://www.breis.focloir.ie">www.breis.focloir.ie</a> and <a href="http://www.abair.ie">www.abair.ie</a> , as well as WinGléacht, the electronic version of the Ó Dónaill Irish-English dictionary.	Continuous

	<p><a href="#">Participation in language promotion activities</a> <a href="#">/Provision of resources</a></p>	<p>Staff will be aware of the concept of the proactive agreement - proactively offering services in Irish to the public. Access to information on language resources will be facilitated. Appropriate CPD will be offered to ETB administrative staff, with the aim of enhancing their proficiency level in the Irish language.</p> <p>Our internal library will ensure that books and other materials in Irish are available as a resource to staff to improve their competence in the Irish language.</p> <p>We will run Seachtain na Gaeilge each year and will link in with community and national Irish language groups to assist us in providing themed events supports for staff.</p>	Continuous
	<p><b>Other</b></p>	<p>A language rights poster (available from the office of An Coimisinéir Teanga) will be displayed prominently in all ETB administrative offices, all schools and all recognised centres of education.</p> <p>Surveys of staff shall be undertaken to gauge their proficiency levels in the Irish language, whereby they will indicate their proficiency in the language as Fluent, or Very Good, or Good, or Fair, or Weak.</p>	Continuous

### 6.3 Designated Irish Language Posts

The posts listed below have been designated as having an Irish language competency requirement. It is the intention that holders of these posts will have achieved specified accredited standards in the Irish language, commensurate with the responsibilities of the post. When designating these posts, particular consideration has been given to posts located in Gaeltacht areas and to posts located outside Gaeltacht areas but whose customer base consists largely of Gaeltacht and/or Irish language speaking communities.

<b>Title of Post</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Gaeltacht/Irish speaking community served</b>	<b>Indication of standard of Irish required (choose from basic, intermediate or advanced)</b>
<b>To be completed by each individual ETB.</b>			
School Secretary	Ennis Community College	Aonad	Intermediate
Principal, Deputy Principal, Teaching Posts and School Secretary	Gaelcholáiste Luimnigh	Gaelcholáiste	Advanced
School Secretary	Desmond College Newcastle West	Aonad	Intermediate

## Chapter 7 Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis by **the Chief Executive and their Senior Management Team in conjunction with the Corporate Services Department**. The contact person for the scheme will be Denis O'Brien, Corporate Services and ICT Department.

A formal system for monitoring requests for services through Irish will be available and recorded in our Annual Report.

### Summary of Public Consultation Process

Advertisements were placed in the following publications inviting submissions from members of the public:

- Limerick Leader
- The Clare Champion

No submissions were received.



## Chapter 8 Publicising of Agreed Scheme

This scheme will be publicised both internally and externally. A bilingual version of the scheme will be made available on our website and circulated to all staff and appropriate agencies. Other means to publicise the scheme may also be used.

In addition, we will take every opportunity in our day-to-day interaction with customers to promote and publicise the services we provide in Irish through the following means:

- directly informing customers on a proactive basis of the option of conducting business with us through Irish, for example, by the display of notices at reception areas indicating the Irish language services that are available;
- prominently listing these services on our website;
- signifying on selected guidelines, leaflets and application forms that these documents are also available in Irish, unless presented bilingually;
- giving equal prominence to Irish and English language materials.

A copy of the agreed scheme will be forwarded to the Office of An Coimisinéir Teanga.