Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING

OUR PURPOSE

BUILDING SKILLS

FOSTERING INCLUSION

CREATING PATHWAYS

OUR PRIORITIES

5 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS

1 LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH

2 STAFFING

4 FET INFRASTRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE

3 FET CURRICULUM

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
2022-2025

Introduction

We are pleased to present the new Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board FET Division Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025, which will be delivered through our multi-campus College of Further Education and Training.

This planning process has benefited from a rich local, national and European policy context, and reflects the ETB's new *Strategy Statement 2022 - 2026*, as well as *Future FET: Transforming Learning*, the national SOLAS FET Strategy for the period 2020 – 2024, and European priorities outlined in *Europe 2030*. It also reflects the recommendations from a recent and comprehensive evaluation of our quality assurance processes, as part of the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance for ETBs. These were key markers for discussions during the planning process.

The previous FET Strategic Framework 2015-2020 had set out our ambitions as a newly-amalgamated organisation. A progress review highlighted achievements that went beyond expectations. Staff commitment has to be acknowledged as one of our proudest achievements, often in extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the impact of key trends and shifts that will shape the education and training sector and the way we work. It is increasingly clear that the

FET sector is central to building the resilience and growth of individuals, communities and the economy. Our relevance will hinge on our capacity to adapt to new groups, respond to changing demands so as to address global social and economic challenges, and drive the transition to a green and digital economy. We must seize opportunities to show digital and environmental leadership, and contribute to the development of a future-focused workforce.

In this new Strategic Framework, we have identified key areas of consolidation, as well as areas of transformation, to ensure we can respond locally to demands for new skills and contribute to the advancement and implementation of the national FET priorities: *Building Skills, Fostering Inclusion and Creating Pathways*. We are committed to contributing to these national priorities, and have adopted them as the pillars of our Framework. They form the core of our FET mission as the state education and training authority for the Limerick and Clare region.

We have also identified key enabling strategies, which give us a roadmap to deliver the results we want to achieve over the next 5 years: *Learner-Centred Approach; Staffing and FET Capability; FET Curriculum; Infrastructure and Performance; Partnerships for Transitions*.

Our main focus is to build on the excellence of FET, by integrating key foundational elements - such as technology, curriculum, quality assurance, and unique interventions - such as learner supports, inclusive designs and engagement strategies. Ultimately, we want to offer learners the best education and training opportunities so they can experience the transformative culture of lifelong learning and thrive in their lives, academic and career pursuits.

We welcome this new ETB FET Strategic Framework 2022 - 2025, and take this opportunity to thank staff and learners who contributed their views throughout this process.

George O'Callaghan
Chief Executive

Paul Patton
Director of Further Education & Training

Our Vision

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board plays a leading role in the provision of high-quality lifelong education, training and enterprise skills needs. We achieve this by providing caring, effective, innovative, flexible and inclusive pathways for all our students and learners, which are reflective of the diverse needs of our community.

Our Core Values

- Accountability
- Quality
- Learner Focus
- Partnership
- Equality
- Empowerment
- Continuous Improvement

> We commit to facilitate the empowerment of the community we serve through inclusive, respectful, supportive and holistic education and training.

> We commit to the highest standards of governance, ethical behaviour, integrity and accountability.

> We commit to the delivery of accessible high-quality services, and to working in a progressive, innovative, sustainable and creative manner.

> We commit to focus and respect the student/learner in the design, delivery and evaluation of our programmes and services.

> We commit to work in a spirit of partnership, mutual respect, openness and transparency.

> We commit to equality of opportunity and respect the rights, dignity and diversity of all our stakeholders.

> We recognise and support the central role of our staff team, and are committed to a culture of continuous professional development and wellbeing.

> We commit to adapt and respond to the ever-changing social and employment needs of our communities.

Our Purpose

Building Skills

This is about:

> Providing quality-assured, relevant, responsive and future-focused FET curriculum

> Embedding core, transversal, employability and green skills into all FET provision

> Focusing on the professional development of all FET staff

> Offering modern and up-to-date FET teaching and learning environments

> Committing to digital transformation

> Building a skills ecosystem through strategic partnerships

> Building learners' social, personal and resilience skills so they can thrive in their personal and professional lives

Expected Outcomes

✔ Our FET provision stays clearly aligned with key skills needs of the region and industry sector requirements.

✔ We are a valued strategic partner for regional community and workforce development initiatives that aim to address skills gaps, changing demographics and economic needs.

✔ Our professional development environment offers FET staff a range of resources, time, space and strong partnerships that enhance their skills and wellbeing.

✔ Our provision is consolidated into a new multi-campus 'College of the Future' at the heart of communities.

✔ A fit-for-purpose network of accessible, environmentally-sound College of FET campuses provides access to rooms and resources for specific skills development.

✔ Designated campuses as 'FET Centres of Excellence' offering specialist provision are available in Limerick and Clare.

✔ We have enhanced our knowledge and practices as an organisation to be more environmentally friendly, and integrate green skills in our provision to equip FET learners with skills and competences to live and work in a more sustainable world.

✔ There are enhanced opportunities for individual small traders/SMEs to take on apprenticeships.

✔ Outstanding blended-learning experiences are available for learners.
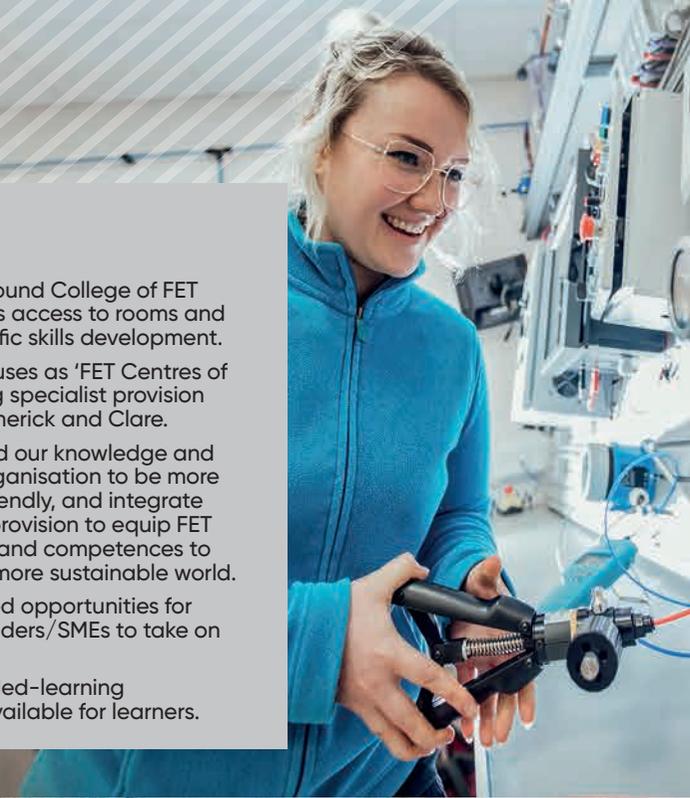
Fostering Inclusion

This is about:

> Widening access to FET for new groups of learners

> Fostering an ongoing organisational commitment to strengthen our inclusive practices and policies

> Valuing and recognising learning in all its forms and for all its purposes

> Committing to inclusive and intentionally diverse learning and working environments

> Providing consistent wrap-around learner supports throughout the learner journey

> Capturing the Learner Voice

> Championing digital inclusion

Expected Outcomes

✔ An organisation that learners recognise as being flexible, with inclusive teaching and learning practices, and integrated prior life and work assessment processes.

✔ A diverse organisation that attracts learners and staff from different backgrounds and abilities.

✔ A welcoming learning environment and a rich and engaging learning experience that benefit learners and staff.

✔ Our FET curriculum is informed by Universal Design for Learning principles and approaches, and technology is used to enable and support inclusion.

✔ A wide range of consistent learner supports is available to all FET learners.

✔ A wider range of learners from under-represented groups can access and fully participate in FET.

✔ A centrally-coordinated system of capturing and responding to learner and staff feedback is in place.

✔ Key stakeholders are represented in governance structures.

Creating Pathways

This is about:

> Simplifying FET pathways

> Promoting FET as a valuable option

> Connecting FET learning with career and other meaningful outcomes for learners

> Supporting learners to make informed choices

> Playing a key role in the Tertiary Education landscape to create seamless transitions for learners

Expected Outcomes

✔ FET is the go-to place for quality learning in Limerick and Clare, offering a pathway for everyone.

✔ There is a clear visual roadmap for realistic progression pathways into, within and from FET.

✔ We have strong connections with employers and key stakeholders for the benefit of those entering the workforce and workers that need to either upskill or reskill.

✔ Effective on-boarding and guidance processes are in place to support learners to make informed choices and plan their next steps regardless of their point of entry into FET.

✔ An integrated FET 'College of the Future' offers clear entry points and natural progression pathways for learners.

✔ Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is recognised as a key player in the tertiary education system.

✔ International opportunities are available for our learners and staff.

Priorities and Implementation Mapping

In order to deliver on our purpose around Building Skills, Fostering Inclusion and Creating Pathways, we have identified five key enabling priorities, which will be delivered through our multi-campus College of Further Education and Training.

1) **Learner-Centred approach**
2) **Staffing**
3) **FET Curriculum**
4) **FET infrastructure and Performance**
5) **Partnerships for Seamless Transitions.**

We have then mapped out our implementation process for each of these priorities. Each FET provision and support service will be able to demonstrate how its work contributes to these organisational priorities through a single monitoring framework that will support both action planning and ongoing tracking of progress.

OUR PRIORITIES

1 LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH
2 STAFFING
3 FET CURRICULUM
4 FET INFRASTRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE
5 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS

PRIORITY 1

LEARNER-CENTRED APPROACH

This is about recognising that each learner is unique and bring their own circumstances, strengths, needs, skills, past experiences and aspirations when they join FET. Our priority is to do right by all our learners. Placing learners at the centre of everything we do means listening to their perspectives to enhance the teaching and learning environments and outcomes, respond to their needs, and empower them to fulfil their potential.

Implementation Mapping

1.1 **Simplify FET pathways,** and work collaboratively with key stakeholders to find solutions to address barriers to learner access and progression.

1.2 Improve learners' participation and transitions through **integrated, consistent wrap-around assessments and supports** throughout their learning journey.

1.3 **Raise awareness on the availability of quality information and guidance supports for all FET learners,** to ensure they are in the right place, and make informed choices on their learning journey.

1.4 Enhance our **learner-centred approach to communication and marketing,** with locally-focused marketing campaigns, and improved learner interface with the FET website.

1.5 **Adopt universal design for learning (UDL)** as a key approach to all teaching and learning activities.

1.6 **Embed digital skills** across all FET provision, and champion digital inclusion in Limerick and Clare.

1.7 Continue to **develop mechanisms to recognise prior learning** and certify experiential learning.

1.8 Develop consistent and effective mechanisms to **capture the learner voice.** Use it to inform decision-making at Centre/College campus level, and FET management level.

1.9 **Commit to inclusive and intentionally diverse learning and working environments,** where wellbeing and mental health are promoted, and the achievements of learners are celebrated.

STAFFING

This is about enhancing our staffing infrastructure to reflect the changing needs of our learners, our sector and the world of work. This is also about providing space for FET learning practitioners to build on their expertise and learn new skills to enhance the teaching and learning experience, and to implement our strategic priorities.

Implementation Mapping

2.1 **Provide a safe and welcoming work environment,** where staff thrive and their wellbeing is valued.

2.2 **Maintain the quality and rich diversity of FET staff** through effective recruitment, induction and retention strategies.

2.3 **Consolidate our integrated and collaborative model of professional learning and development (PDL)** and invest in all our staff to grow and upskill in key areas (UDL, technologies, public sector duty, quality assurance, etc.) to continuously improve the quality and delivery of teaching and learning, administration and ancillary services in FET.

2.4 Continue to **promote a self-managed learning approach to professional learning and development,** using innovative ways of delivering training, identifying professional development needs, and removing barriers to engagement.

2.5 **Continue to support staff to upskill around technology-enhanced learning,** the design and delivery of online and blended learning and the use of technology to support all aspects of their work.

2.6 **Collaborate with industry partners to agree new ways of building on staff expertise** and maintaining relevant up-to-date skills in rapidly changing work environments.

2.7 **Explore the area of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** to identify and certify the range of staff skills and competences.

2.8 **Promote staff voice** through clear and transparent internal consultation and communication mechanisms.

2.9 Identify new ways to **acknowledge, value and celebrate the commitment, expertise and best practice of all FET staff.**

FET CURRICULUM

This is about strengthening our capacity to review and develop our FET provision, to ensure it is quality-assured, relevant and responds to the needs of individuals and communities, and addresses industry skill gaps in the region.

Implementation Mapping

3.1 **Embed core, transversal and employability skills into all FET provision.**

3.2 **Embed sustainability practices into all FET activities,** and develop specific curriculum to address skill needs for the transition to a green economy.

3.3 **Align legacy curriculum and quality assurance systems** across the FET Division.

3.4 Adopt a collaborative approach with other ETBs to enhance the effectiveness and value for money of **programme review processes.**

3.5 **Work in partnership with ETBs, employers and other education partners** to understand labour market needs and develop new curriculum through co-creation and co-delivery models.

3.6 Maximise the use of integrated campuses to **promote FET collaborative initiatives and curriculum development.**

3.7 **Expand our apprenticeship offerings,** paying particular attention to widening female participation.

3.8 **Design a blended-learning strategy** to develop, manage and monitor quality-assured blended/online delivery.

PRIORITY 4

FET INFRASTRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE

This is about ensuring FET facilities provide the best learning and working environments that reflect quality and industry standards, and promote innovation and sustainability. This is also about developing an outcomes-based approach to measuring our performance that leads to accountability, informed and effective decision-making, and enhanced quality assurance processes.

Implementation Mapping

4.1 Further enhance FET learning and working environments, **building a fit-for-purpose network of accessible, environmentally-sound College of FET campuses**, using a universal design approach.

4.2 Support the **ongoing digital transformation of the FET Division**, enhancing ICT infrastructure, and building our capacity to use new technologies to enhance teaching and learning, and professional and support services.

4.3 Develop the FET **'College of the Future' concept**[1] in Limerick and Clare, placing FET provision and support services at the heart of communities.

4.4 **Develop specialist 'FET Centres of Excellence'** that reflect our unique capabilities (staff expertise, facilities and teaching and learning) and the Mid-West specific industry clusters.

4.5 Further **develop FET data and information management systems** to monitor performance of all FET provision and support services, certifications and learner data.

4.6 Work in partnership with other ETBs to **develop new ways of measuring soft learning outcomes**, using various distance-travelled tools that reflect the diversity of learners.

4.7 Implement recommendations agreed during the QQI Institutional Review of Quality Assurance to **enhance our quality assurance practices and processes**.

4.8 **Develop and implement a FET Monitoring and Evaluation Framework** to promote a consistent approach to stakeholder consultation, and establish clear mechanisms to monitor performance and highlight achievements of targets and strategic priorities.

PRIORITY 5

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS

This is about creating partnerships that work to provide access, seamless transitions and progression opportunities for FET learners. It is also about working with community, industry and education partners to create a 'skills ecosystem' that supports the regional, sustainable economic and social development in the Mid-West.

Implementation Mapping

5.1 Continue to **strategically engage with employers and industry fora** to identify and address skills gaps in the region.

5.2 Develop our capability to **engage with Higher Education Institutions and post-primary partners** around key curriculum development initiatives, and to facilitate transitions from post-primary to tertiary education.

5.3 **Build on our unique local partnership models** with community groups to engage new learners and promote a culture of lifelong learning.

5.4 **Maximise the opportunities offered by integrated FET Campuses to promote internal partnerships and collaboration**, and facilitate seamless transitions for learners.

5.5 Explore the **development of an international strategy** to create links with European partners, in order to inform organisational development and expand upskilling opportunities for learning practitioners, managers, and learners.

Monitoring Our Progress

This Strategic Framework is an umbrella document that provides clear direction for all FET provision and support services. In turn, action plans will be developed and mapped back to the FET Division priorities so progress can be monitored.

A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework will use evidence-based approaches to monitor progress in the implementation of this Strategic Framework. It will include measurable qualitative and quantitative benchmarks and indicators to monitor our contribution to national FET targets, the implementation of recommendations of the Institutional Review of Quality Assurance, and the achievements of all FET provision and support services. At the core of our monitoring process will be a focus on capturing the voice of our learners and staff to inform future planning and decision-making.

We will also share our progress with our partners and stakeholders through reporting and best-practice sharing mechanisms.