FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING SERVICE

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
2015-2020

lcetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Luimnigh agus an Chláir

*Limerick and Clare
Education and Training Board*

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present the LCETB Further Education and Training Service Strategic Framework 2015-2020, which will chart the path for our programmes and services over the next five years. It is the product of a consultative process, which gave multiple opportunities to learners, managers, staff, employers and community partners in Limerick and Clare to have a say in our future direction. It is steeped in the belief that further education and training changes lives and equips people with the attitudes and skills they need to be successful in their personal and professional lives. This strategy also emphasises the role the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board will play in the cultural, social and economic development of our region.

Recognising that learning is a lifelong pursuit, the design concept for this strategy is based on the journey that a learner can undertake when engaging with Further Education and Training. It uses the structure of an underground transport system to reflect the priorities of the Framework, with stations/stops where the learner can transfer, arrive/depart or continue their learning journey. This design is about connectivity - the learner is connected to FET through LCETB, and the FET Service is in turn connected to the community and employers by providing routes to learners.

This Strategy is built around key guiding principles of respect/equality, quality/professionalism, integration, responsiveness, support and collaboration. As an umbrella framework, it will promote a shared vision across our service and guide our FET centres, colleges, programmes and services in the development of integrated implementation plans for their full-time and part-time provision. It sets out four service-wide strategic priorities, which are in line with the LCETB Corporate Plan and the SOLAS Strategy 2014-2019: 1) *Access and Progression* 2) *Quality Teaching & Learning, 3) Stakeholder Engagement* and *4) Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership.*

For each strategic priority, key outcomes have been identified as measures of success and will include the wider benefits of lifelong learning, as our sector must strike a balance between the delivery of sustainable economic and social outcomes. These outcomes will be monitored and analysed through a structured FET Service Evaluation Framework, which will report progress on a regular basis. Achieving the outcomes outlined in this strategy will require commitment and collaboration among LCETB staff, learners, managers, administrators and all our key partners.

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OUR 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.

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FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING SERVICE

Access & 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.

What We'll Do...

1. Develop a **LCETB FET PR/Marketing Strategy** to facilitate advertising, branding and learner recruitment.

2. Develop an integrated **FET Service educational and careers guidance strategy**.

3. Agree **learner enrolment strategies** at FET level, including clear referral protocols, to ensure appropriate learner placement and enhance participation and retention on programmes.

4. **Recognise learners' prior learning,** in line with national guidelines, to facilitate access to FET programmes.

5. Develop a strategy to **embed core literacies** (i.e. literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, interpersonal skills, digital literacy, etc.) **in all our provision.**

6. Provide a **range of learner supports** (e.g. referrals to other agencies, disability supports, placements, etc.), to help address barriers to participation, retention and progression.

7. **Map out the wide range of learners' progression options** within LCETB programmes.

8. Develop LCETB FET-wide **learner progression tracking** systems, including the use of relevant learner management information systems.

Quality Teaching & Learning

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

What We'll Do…

1. Develop an **evidence-based CPD strategy** for the FET service, informed by latest research on teaching, learning and assessment, stakeholder feedback and skills audits to update staff subject and educational expertise, and enable them to better support learners' individual needs.

2. Promote a **culture of innovation and reflective practice**, by fostering teamwork, supporting communities of practice and networks, creating opportunities for all staff to exchange ideas and share best practice.

3. Strategically **use existing, new and emerging technologies** to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

4. Promote **curriculum and programme development approaches** that enable us to tailor our provision to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities, and prioritise key regional and national skills areas.

5. Continue to **celebrate learner and staff excellence and achievements** to highlight the positive impact of our work.

6. Document the **wide range of outcomes and benefits** from individuals, communities and employers' participation in FET programmes.

7. Use findings from organisational learning to inform improvement plans, **influence policy and advocate** for appropriate structures and resources for the FET sector at local and national level.

8. Ensure LCETB FET learners have access to **welcoming, safe and fit-for-purpose learning environments.**

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.

What We'll Do...

1 Develop and implement tailor-made and inclusive **consultation mechanisms for our stakeholders** (learners, staff, community partners, employers, etc.)

2 Ensure consultation feedback is used to inform planning, and contribute to **continuous improvement** of our programmes and services.

3 Build on existing linkages to develop an **Employer Engagement Strategy** that ensures our provision responds to key regional and national skills demand, and equips learners to participate successfully in the workforce.

4 Set up **effective partnerships** with community groups, other agencies including education providers, to share information, agree protocols, and encourage joined-up planning and delivery of local programmes and services.

5 Engage in meaningful **dialogue with awarding bodies**, including QQI to enhance FET learners' opportunities.

6 Ensure the **FET Service is represented on local, regional and national fora** to promote the strategic advancement of FET for social inclusion and economic development.

Effectiveness & Accountability in Governance & Leadership

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

What We'll Do...

1. Develop an **internal communications strategy** that clarifies FET organisational structures, roles and responsibilities, and sets out effective communication and decision-making processes within the FET service and with the LCETB Administrative pillars and the Schools Division.

2. Develop transparent **operational planning procedures for budget & financial management.**

3. Ensure **all key personnel are involved in planning for the introduction of new management and administrative systems, procedures and practices** (e.g. CPD, implementation timeframes, roles and responsibilities, etc.)

4. **Enhance planning and operational management capacity** at all levels of the organisation, through CPD, self-managed teams and devolved decision making where appropriate.

5. Develop and use fit-for-purpose FET management information systems to ensure **up-to-date, relevant and accurate data** is available at local and regional levels for returns to national bodies (e.g. SOLAS, DES, etc.), and to inform planning.

6. Develop and implement a structured **LCETB FET Quality Assurance system** that demonstrates our commitment to quality standards and continuous improvement.

7. Develop an **outcome-based evaluation framework for the LCETB FET Service,** including effective monitoring and reporting systems for returns to national bodies and to inform planning.

The final element of this LCETB FET Strategy is the development of a **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**.

For each strategic priority, key outcomes have been identified during the consultation process, clarifying expectations of what we want to achieve as a FET service in the next 5 years.

Some of the outcomes identified include:

→ Increased learner retention and progression rates.

→ Evidence of change of practice/innovation in Teaching & Learning and use of technologies.

→ Flexible curriculum development process, responsive to local skills demand.

→ New connections with employers and staff and learners' increased exposure to the world of work.

→ Evidence of effective inter-agency collaboration with DSP, HSE, LCDC, SOLAS, QQI, etc.

→ Enhanced communication within the FET Service and with the LCETB Administrative Pillars.

→ LCETB FET Service Quality Assurance system is implemented and evaluated across the Service.

→ Enhanced recognition of a clearly defined LCETB FET brand.

→ Evidence of clear and robust data used for planning and organisational learning.

For each outcome, measurable performance indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, will be developed and monitored on an ongoing basis to help us define, measure and monitor progress towards our strategic priorities. From an initial baseline assessment, data will be systematically collected to ensure the results of our work match the strategic intentions we set ourselves for the next five years. Findings will be shared widely with our key stakeholders to highlight what works and to contribute to the development of the FET sector for the benefit of learners.