



cetb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Chorcaí
*Cork Education and
Training Board*

Strategy Statement

2017 – 2021

A pathway for every learner



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Oiliúna Chorcaí
*Cork Education and
Training Board*

A pathway for every learner

The Cork Board is responsible for:

- 24 post-primary schools & colleges
- 2 Community National Schools
- Co-patron of 12 Community Schools
- The Cork ETB School of Music
- Music Generation Cork City
- Cork Training Centre
- Cork College of Commerce
- St. John's Central College
- Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa
- Mallow College of Further Education
- 8 FE Units in our post-primary schools and colleges
- Youthreach, projects for disadvantaged youth
- Young People's Facilities & Services Funds
- Grants for youth initiatives

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Message from the **Cathaoirleach of Cork Education and Training Board**



It is with great pleasure that I introduce Cork Education and Training Board (Cork ETB) Strategy Statement 2017-2021. This is a significant publication in that it is the first Strategy Statement of our new organisation and also presents a roadmap for the next 5 years.

This Strategy is developed to enable the organisation to grow and develop its educational and training provision whilst remaining responsive to the needs of all our stakeholders in a manner that ensures focus remains firmly on the learner.

I would like to thank everyone who took time to contribute to the development of the Strategy Statement and to wish staff and learners every success as we work together to deliver on the aims, priorities and actions set out in our roadmap.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'P. Murphy'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Cllr. Patrick Gerard Murphy

Cathaoirleach, Cork Education and Training Board

Foreword by the Chief Executive

Cork ETB was established in July 2013 when the former City and County VEC's were merged. In January 2014 Cork ETB took responsibility for the work formerly undertaken by FAS. In the first years of its existence the concentration was on a smooth transition of functions and continuity of services. I am extremely grateful to the staff of the former organisations, learners, teachers, trainers and tutors for making the establishment of the services a seamless process

The development of this first Strategy Statement has afforded us the opportunity to take stock and to define our vision, guiding principles and values in order to set out our aims and priorities.

We have consulted both internally and externally. We have also taken into account the strategy documents of numerous stakeholders, especially the DES and /SOLAS to ensure that our aims and priorities are aligned.

Progress towards each priority and action as set out under our aims will be measured at school and centre level. The implementation process will be one of collaboration through various networks and groupings with an emphasis on our guiding principles and values. It is these principles and values, identified by our learners and staff through consultation, which enable everyone to contribute and shape the delivery of our strategic plan.



Mr. Timothy Owens

Chief Executive



Profile of Cork Education and Training Board

Cork Education and Training Board (hereinafter referred to as Cork ETB) was established under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013 and is responsible and accountable for the proper direction and control of its functions in the Cork City and Cork County Councils' local authority areas.

The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 was passed in May 2013 to take effect from 1st July 2013. The Act provided for the dissolution of Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and for the establishment of the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) through a process involving the merger of some of the 33 existing VECs. Following the amalgamation of former County and City of Cork VECs, Cork Education and Training Board (Cork ETB) was established with responsibility for the delivery of primary, post primary and further education in line with their predecessor VECs.

The Further Education and Training Act 2013 was signed into law in July 2013. The Act established SOLAS (The Further Education and Training Authority) with responsibility for the planning, funding and co-ordination of the Further Education and Training services provided locally by ETBs. The Act also provided for the transfer of the former FÁS Training functions and staff to the newly formed ETBs.

Cork ETB is the only statutory body in Cork with the responsibility to provide education and training across a broad range of services. The services provided bring challenges to the organisation when combined with the number of learners

and the diversity of what the expectations of learners are. The number of learners and participants engaged in Cork ETB education, training and activities in 2017 were:

Primary Students	113
Post Primary Students	10,916
Further Education (PLC) Students	4,832
Apprenticeship Training	1,154
Blended Training	178
Community Training Centres	178
Local Training Initiatives	612
Specialist Training Providers	447
Specific Skills Training	1418
Traineeship Training	229
Youthreach	866
Adult Literacy Groups	4,653
BTEI Groups	2,339
ESOL	1,289
Evening Training	1,042
ITABE	772
Libraries Training	205
Skills for Work	145
Community Education	5,749
TOTAL	37,137

Source of Data: All data has been sourced from SOLAS FARR return with the exception of the Primary, Post Primary and Further Education Students which is sourced from returns to the DES. The reference year for all data is 2016.

Cork ETB's target clients are:

- Learners in our schools, colleges, training centres and community settings
- Applicants under the various learner support schemes administered directly by Cork ETB
- Youth Service Providers
- Community Education and Training Groups
- Voluntary Community Organisations
- Communities throughout the County

160

Community Education Centres

4 Further
Education
Colleges

7,947
Part-time FET
Participants

10,916
Post-Primary
Students

30
Youth Projects

4,353
Adult Literacy
Participants

5,749
Community
Education
Participants

7,529
Full-time FET
Participants

30 Schools
&
Colleges

Biopharma
Training Facility

Community
National
Schools

Lead Partner
Music
Generation
Cork

Co-Trustee of
12
Community
Schools

3
Ghaelcholaíste

2
Scoil
Ghaeltachta

3,500
Staff

932
Trainees

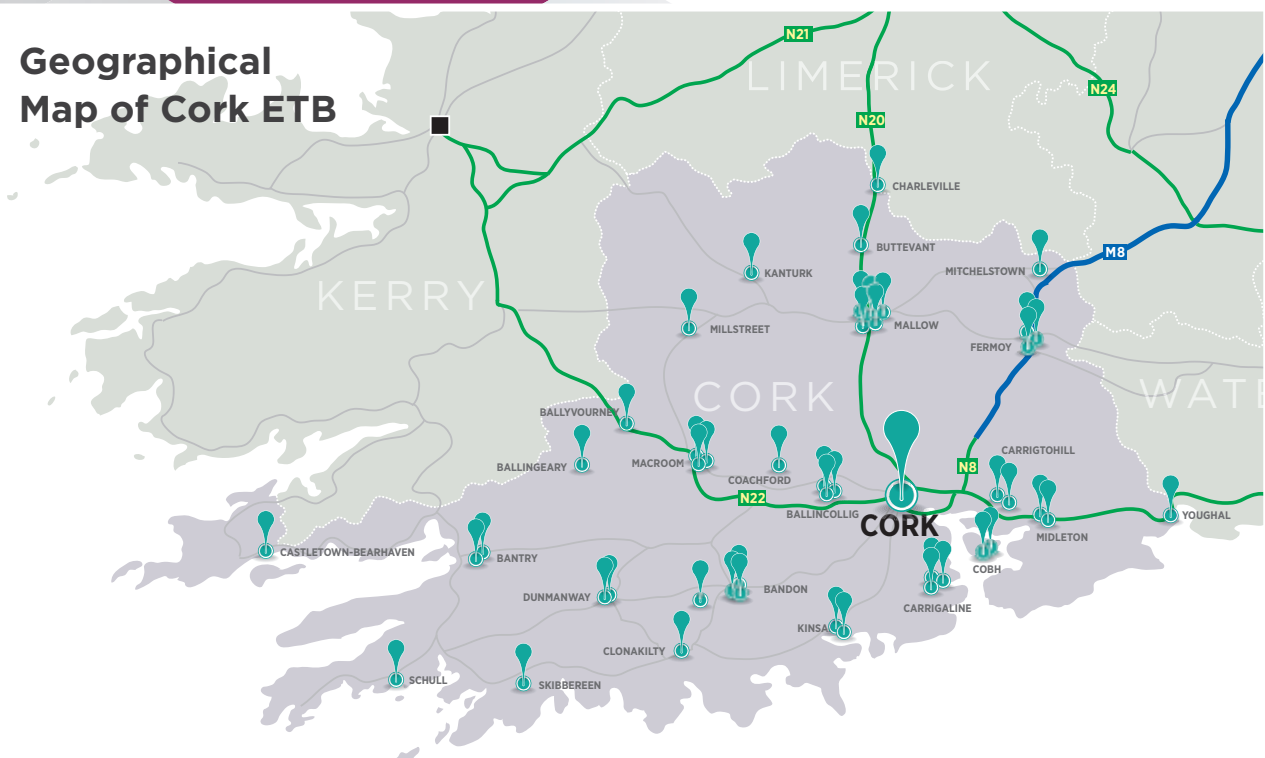
447
Apprentices



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*AS PUBLISHED ON 1ST JULY 2017

Geographical Map of Cork ETB



Primary Education, Post Primary Education, Further Education and Training

The aim of our schools, colleges, training centres and our community based programmes is to provide a positive and vibrant learning environment in which our learners will be supported and challenged to reach their full potential. We are community orientated and equality based with a focus on the provision of excellent teaching and learning.

The attainment of academic achievement through excellent teaching and learning is at the core of what our schools and colleges do. However, we strive for this in an environment that is supportive and nourishing of all aspects of the learner's personal development. The celebration of individual achievement is central to this development.

Cork ETB delivers a range of supports to our education services including financial, human resource, building, ICT, governance support as well as educational planning support.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Our Community National Schools are founded on the principles of equality, excellence and inclusivity. They are publicly owned and community centred. They are multi-denominational, cherishing and nurturing those of all religious beliefs and none. We offer the full primary school programme delivered in a child centred and holistic way. We are innovative and strongly support the introduction of new elements of the curriculum such as STEM and the new language initiative. We promote a culture of growth and development in which students are

encouraged to give full expression to all their talents and gifts. We offer a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to support this holistic development.

Cork ETB is patron of two Community National Schools (CNS). When the schools were first established, the Minister for Education and Skills was the patron but on 1st September 2016, in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of the Education Act, 1998, the patronage was transferred to Cork Education and Training Board.

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) has established a Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity Process to address the 2016 Programme for Government commitment to increase the number of multi-denominational and non-denominational schools with a view to reaching 400 by 2030.

ETBs, as statutory authorities, have responsibilities under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 to plan, provide, co-ordinate and review the provision of education in their functional areas. On this basis, the Identification Phase of the Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity Process, will be managed by the relevant Education and Training Board (ETB) and be based on parental demand.

POST PRIMARY EDUCATION

Our schools and colleges offer a comprehensive curricular experience, based on delivery of a full range of





The aim of our schools, colleges, training centres and our community based programmes is to provide a positive and vibrant learning environment in which our learners will be supported and challenged to reach their full potential.

subjects, including languages, the humanities, arts, technologies and science, with subjects offered at different levels in both junior and senior cycles to allow students achieve at their level of ability and capability. Students are actively encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life including extra-curricular activities.

Programmes offered in our schools and colleges include -

- Junior Certificate
- Junior Certificate Schools Programme
- Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied Programme
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Cork ETB is patron to twenty-four post primary schools and colleges. Twelve of these colleges are designated community colleges. The local catholic diocese is a trustee partner in these community colleges. Cork ETB is also co-patron with a diocese or religious order of twelve community schools in Cork. We have two Gaeltacht schools, two Gaelcholáistí and four schools with Aonaid Ián-Ghaeilge. The Aonad Ián-Ghaeilge in Coláiste Choilm has an enrolment of 350 students making it larger than a significant number of post primary schools in the country.

In addition, Cork ETB provides a number of educational settings of a post primary nature to support the provision of post primary education to students who are not in the main stream provision.

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Further Education and Training (FET) is the provision of education and training services to a wide range of beneficiaries. The services provided range from full-time courses of varying duration, to shorter part-time course options designed to meet a specific learner need, linked either to skills acquisition for employment, or the possibility of progression to further studies.

Cork ETB provides a range of Further Education and Training services, both full-time and part-time, in a variety of centres and settings across the region. Full-time provision includes:

- Post Leaving Certificate courses
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Specific Skills Training
- Youthreach
- Community Training Centres
- Local Training Initiatives
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

The courses offered are designed to meet the employment and future progression requirements of a diverse cohort of learners.

Part-time FET programmes are delivered in a variety of settings and locations under a number of funding headings with specific target learner audiences:

- Back to Education Initiative
- Adult Literacy

- Adult and Community Education
- Skills Training
- Night/Evening courses
- Skills for Work

The diversity of programmes and target populations for these programmes requires Cork ETB to continuously monitor and review its delivery, engage actively with local employers and communities, to consult and be advised by employers, as well as industry groups, and other government departments and agencies, while being advised by, and taking direction from, national policy.

COLLEGES OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Cork ETB has four stand-alone Colleges of Further Education (PLC Colleges)

- Cork College of Commerce
- St. John's College
- Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa
- Mallow College of Further Education

In addition, a PLC delivery is provided for in units attached to eight post primary schools located in:

- Kinsale
- Midleton
- Macroom
- Dunmanway
- Knocknaheeny
- Mitchelstown
- Bantry
- Cobh

Operational funding for the PLC provision is provided through the Further Education and Training budget allocation issued through SOLAS, with the staffing allocation administered through the Department of Education and Skills.

The colleges systematically review course provision, to ensure that they meet the needs of learners and are relevant to the world of work. Significant opportunities have been developed by Cork ETB and the PLC colleges to facilitate learners who wish to continue their studies and progress onto commensurate or cognate programmes in Higher Education settings, both in Ireland and abroad.

Some of the PLC colleges and centres deliver an extensive range of night courses that provide for certified professional upskilling for the world of

work, along with personal development courses which may also be certified.

TRAINING CENTRES

Cork ETB operates two training centres, Cork Training Centre in Bishopstown, Cork, which is the largest ETB training centre in the country, and the specialist BioPharma training centre in Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

Cork Training Centre provides facilities and accommodation for apprenticeships, training, traineeships, specialist skills training, amongst others, and co-ordinates and manages the training provision across the region, including training delivered by Specialist Training Providers, Community Training Centres and Local Training Initiatives, under the guidance of the Area Training Manager and the training management team. Cork Training Centre also administers apprenticeship training (off-the-job) phases delivered by Cork Institute of Technology (CIT).

The Carrigaline BioPharma training facility was established in 2007 to provide specialist programmes designed in conjunction with the pharmaceutical companies located in the Cork region.



Close relationships and engagement with industry and local businesses ensure that training programme development and delivery are designed to meet existing and emerging requirements, both for new entrants/employees into these industries and businesses, or employees already in place who require reskilling/retraining.

YOUTHREACH CENTRES

Cork ETB operates twelve Youthreach Centres across the region in:

- Bandon
- Bantry
- Ballincollig
- Macroom
- Youghal
- Mallow
- Fermoy
- The Glen (Cork City)
- Mahon (Cork City)
- Knocknaheeny (Cork City)
- Dean Street (Cork City)
- Cork Learning Support Services (CLSS) (Cork City)

Youthreach is a programme designated by the Department of Education and Skills to provide education, training and work experience programmes for early school leavers aged 16 – 20, and is funded

under the FET budget by SOLAS. The programmes offered in Youthreach are focused equally on academic, vocational and soft skills development in order to provide young people with opportunities to identify options within adult life, while also providing them with opportunities to acquire certification at Levels 3 and 4 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Youthreach operates on a full-time, year-round basis and has a continuous intake policy.

ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROVISION

Cork ETB's Adult and Community Education service encompasses the Adult Literacy Service, Community Education service, Skills for Work, BTEI and VTOS (core) programmes. Cork ETB's Adult and Community Education services are managed and co-ordinated on a sub-regional basis, with four planning and delivery areas aligned to the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) areas, Cork North, Cork South, Cork West and Cork City.

While the majority of the courses offered under these programmes are part-time, they are structured in a manner



which facilitates access, transfer and progression onto full-time programmes, if the participants so desire. They offer a mixture of accredited/certified programmes, generally at Levels 2 to 4 of the NFQ, with some unaccredited capacity development programmes aimed at learners who have not completed formal education.

Adult and Community Education courses are delivered in a variety of local settings. Some delivery occurs in partnership with local community organisations, including Family Resource Centres, Community Partnerships, Local Development Companies, Active Retired Groups, etc., all of which allow Cork ETB to deliver programmes that meet the needs and requirements of learners in their local communities.

Cork ETB's Adult Guidance Service provides an important assistance and advisory service for participants on Adult and Community Education Programmes, from the provision of pre-entry guidance to the identification and signposting of progression and further development links for learners completing programmes.

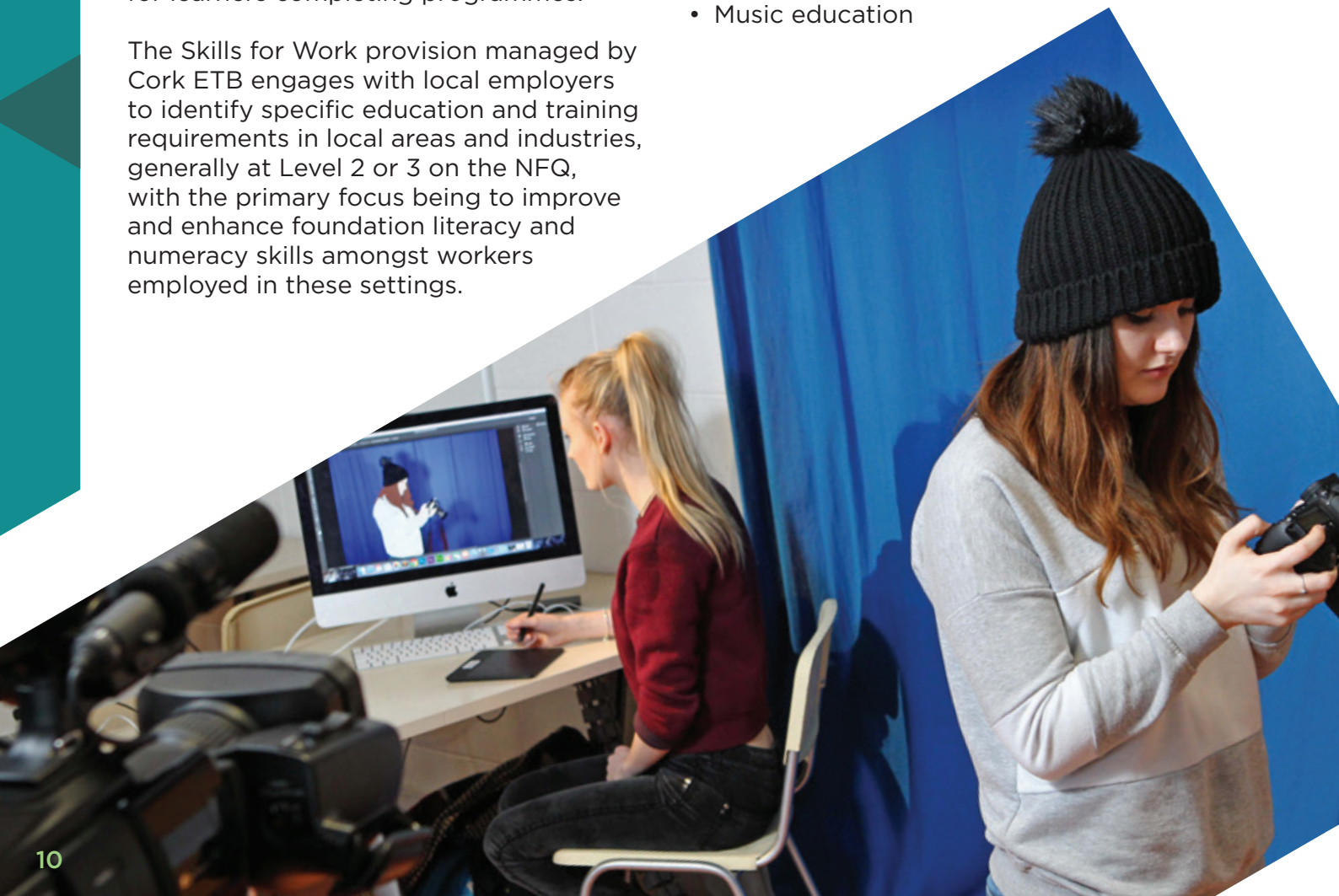
The Skills for Work provision managed by Cork ETB engages with local employers to identify specific education and training requirements in local areas and industries, generally at Level 2 or 3 on the NFQ, with the primary focus being to improve and enhance foundation literacy and numeracy skills amongst workers employed in these settings.

Cork ETB, along with being a founder, is the key driver of the internationally recognised and awarded Life Long Learning Festival held in Cork City and County each year. This festival is one of the opportunities where the full range of services provided by Cork ETB are available and showcased to the public.

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Cork ETB, through the Co-operation with other Institutions scheme, provides support through tuition hours to a wide variety of programmes and agencies to deliver education and training courses. The main categories of services supported and delivered through this mechanism include:

- Prison Education
- Post-release education services
- Probation services
- Literacy and numeracy supports for Community Training Centres
- Youth services
- Special care, high support and residential care units
- Special Education services
- Music education



YOUTH SERVICES

Under the Education and Training Board Act, ETBs have been given the responsibility to;

“Support the provision, co-ordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in its functional area and provide such information as may be requested by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in relation to such support.”

(Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Section 10 (1) (j))

Cork ETB, through a number of funded Youth Service providers, delivers a range of youth services to young people across the region under a variety of Youth programmes funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. With an annual Youth funding allocation of in excess of €2.5 million, Cork ETB's Youth Service aims to provide youth engagement activities outside of the formal education setting to encourage and support young people to become active within their communities, as citizens, role models and peer leaders.

Cork ETB engages with a number of Youth organisations to deliver Youth Services on its behalf, including:

- YMCA
- Foróige
- Youthwork Ireland Cork
- Cobh Youth Services
- Cork Simon
- Meitheal Mara
- Good Shepherd Services
- Churchfield Trust.

Cork ETB has responsibility for administering funding of over €2.5million to over 35 youth projects and services across Cork City and County.

Their work and delivery are supported and monitored by Cork ETB's Youth Officer and is overseen by a Cork ETB sub-committee which is responsible for strategic planning and monitoring.

Organisational Support

GOVERNANCE

Cork ETB is governed by a Board comprising of twenty-one members representing Cork City and County Councils, staff, parents of children who are registered students who have not yet reached 18 years of age, business community and management of schools.

The Board is responsible for the compliance with all statutory obligations applicable to the ETB and for promoting the success of the ETB through good governance. The Board is supported by several Boards of Management in Cork ETB schools, colleges and education centres. It is also supported by independent Finance and Audit Committees.

EXECUTIVE SUPPORT

The Organisation is underpinned by a network, spanning all non-teaching activities to support, enable and assist front line staff to focus on the experience, achievements and well-being of our learners. The hub of the administration support is located in the Board's Head Office at 21 Lavitt's Quay, Cork. This administrative network provides a range of services to the various strands of the organisation across six main functional areas:

- Human Resources
- Corporate Services
- Legal and Compliance
- Capital and Procurement
- Finance
- ICT

Within these areas there is a range of expertise covering all aspects of administrative support. A significant level of corporate knowledge has been developed and accrued over time relevant to the services provided, including the legislative and regulatory framework under which ETBs operate.

Guiding Principles

Vision, Mission, Strategic Themes

In developing strategic themes, Cork ETB gave particular cognisance to the vision and mission of the organisation which was developed through a consultative process with our staff and stakeholders. Our strategic themes are to further develop our vision and mission statements for the organisation. All aspects of our strategy are underpinned by the guiding principles and values that have been identified by staff and stakeholders as being an integral part of what it means to be a part of Cork ETB and, also what Cork ETB is to stand for.

Vision

Cork ETB is a driving force of education and training in Cork, providing high quality services which are innovative, responsive and inclusive. Through Cork ETB there is a pathway for every learner.

Mission

Cork ETB plans, provides, supports and co-ordinates education, training and youth services in Cork which are recognised internationally as a model of excellence.

Strategic Themes

Our Learners
Our People
Our Services
Our Organisation

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Prioritising the needs of learners
- Delivering a high quality service
- Acting with professional integrity
- Doing the right thing
- Treating people with dignity and respect
- Being fair, open and accountable
- Ensuring value for money
- Operating to the highest ethical, professional, moral and legal standards.

Cork ETB will always act in the best interests of learners. The following principles and values underpin our strategic thinking, planning, decision making and our everyday actions.

VALUES



What our Values Mean

	Brave	Committed	Positive	Leading	Innovative	Caring
WHAT IT MEANS	We put our learners' needs first and are not afraid to make the hard decisions required to deliver the best possible service.	We have a clear vision and purpose with which we are fully engaged and on which we are determined to deliver.	We are optimistic and confident about our opportunities and challenges and believe we can make a positive difference to the lives of the people we serve.	We expect our people to be leaders – to have a clear vision, take the initiative, and to inspire and motivate learners and colleagues through their example.	We are focused on constant improvement and being at the forefront of change and innovation in education and training.	We adopt an inclusive and respectful approach to our learners and staff and strive to ensure that each person using our services reaches his/her potential.
WE EXPECT OUR PEOPLE TO:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the right call • Push the boundaries to get the best outcome • Be tenacious in pursuit of improvements for learners • Support good decisions and change bad ones • Be happy to explain our decisions • Stand up for what we believe in • Advocate for learners and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hard • Go the extra mile • Put learners' needs first • Be persistent • Be loyal to the organisation • Support colleagues • Work as a team member • Be co-operative • Have a strong work ethic • Be focused on getting results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be optimistic • Respond positively • Be proactive • Look for opportunity and act on it • Embrace change • Deal with issues promptly • Be part of the solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a vision • Step up to the challenge • Communicate • Motivate • Encourage • Aspire • Build trust • Tell the truth • Act as a role model • Be results-oriented • Drive innovation • Influence • Collaborate • Demonstrate personal integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try new approaches • Be creative • Drive change • Be flexible • Seek to improve • Find solutions for problems • Support new ideas • Contribute positively to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with learners and colleagues • Be genuine • Be understanding • Be empathetic • Acknowledge effort • Encourage inclusivity and diversity • Be sensitive • Look out for colleagues • Listen • Treat people well • Ask for feedback • Support those who need it

Our Strategic Themes, Priorities and Actions

Approach to developing the strategy

Our Strategy Statement is the result of a consultation process which commenced in March 2017. Consultation consisted of meetings involving managers, staff, Boards of Management and learners. External stakeholders were also consulted and feedback was requested on the draft proposals. An online survey was also made available to all parties and was a key element of the process to ensure that a broad view was obtained in respect of identifying and refining the priorities and the actions for achieving our strategic priorities.

Strategic Themes

Our strategic plan contains four primary pillars:

1. Our Learners
2. Our People
3. Our Services
- 4 Our Organisation





1. OUR LEARNERS

Our aim is to provide a high quality learning experience for every learner.

In providing a high quality experience for every learner, cognisance has been taken of the national context within which we operate as well as the strategic plans of relevant stakeholders, in particular those of the Department of Education and Skills and SOLAS.

Cork ETB recognises that providing a high quality experience for every learner depends on the quality of relationships at the point of delivery to the learner. Fundamental to this is the quality of

teaching and learning in all our schools, colleges and centres for education and training. It also depends on our ability to implement national initiatives, provide appropriate learning programmes and develop technology as a learning tool.

Cork ETB prides itself on its commitment to providing a pathway for every learner through working collaboratively with learners, communities, employers and local business to provide innovative and creative learning opportunities.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	DATE
1.1 To provide a positive and holistic learning centred experience for every learner	• We will work to promote and foster the personal development of all our learners to enhance their wellbeing as members of our learning communities	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will engage actively in the current reform programme as outlined in the DES Action Plan 2016-2019, which seeks to nurture and develop the critical skills, knowledge and competencies of all learners	Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will engage actively with SOLAS and other partners, to implement the strategic priorities as contained in the Further Education and Strategy 2014-2019 to develop the skills, knowledge and competencies of our learners	Director of FET	2017 - 2021
	• We will implement DES and SOLAS guidelines and policies in relation to teaching and learning at all levels to encourage and foster a culture of lifelong learning for our learners	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will actively work to improve results in formal school assessments and state examinations through the promotion of good learning and teaching	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will seek to actively engage our learners in both how and what they learn by promoting the use of student feedback as an integral part of; a) our School Self-Evaluation process and b) the assessment procedures and processes within Further Education and Training Programmes	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will aim to provide our learners with life skills to meet their needs as active learners and citizens by encouraging participation in various ETB Boards, Committees and representative groups	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will encourage our learners to participate in various ETB boards, committees and representative groups	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will expand direct and indirect support services over the lifetime of the strategic plan to support our learners	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will, in accordance with the DES and SOLAS priorities, improve the learning experience and learning outcomes for learners impacted by disadvantage at all stages of their learning journey	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will target supports for all our learners with special education needs, and other vulnerabilities, to support their participation and progression within education and training	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will identify and develop appropriate supports and opportunities for our learners who have been identified as exceptionally talented	Principals, FET Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021



our learners

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	DATE
1.2 Provide excellent teaching, training and learning for all	• We will focus on the development of quality teaching and learning as the core activity of Cork ETB	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will promote the use of the School Self-Evaluation model as a method of school/college improvement	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will promote, review and, where appropriate, implement the recommendations of Mór Thuairisc/WSE-MLL and School Inspection reports	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will, through internal and external review processes developed as part of our integrated Quality Assurance system for FET, and in accordance with QQI requirements, identify good practice and areas for improvement and support all centres to implement targeted improvement and development plans	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will utilise national and international research to identify and engage with best practice in building strong communities of learning, and engage with national and international projects and initiatives to contribute positively to such communities	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will actively identify and promote the range of pathways for learning available to every learner who wishes to avail of our services	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
1.3 Positive learning environments with suitable resources	• We will continue to identify improvements to Cork ETB buildings and facilities and will develop these in line with learner and programme requirements while seeking and making available the necessary funding	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will proactively engage and negotiate with DES and SOLAS to endeavour that all necessary resources, both budgetary and staffing, are available to Cork ETB	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
1.4 Commitment to technology-enhanced learning to support independent and collaborative learning	• We will continue to review and invest in our ICT infrastructure	Directors, IT Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will develop specific strategies to build the capacity of our schools and colleges in the use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool	Principals, IT Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will develop and commence implementation of an ICT Strategic Plan for all our Centres. This will take account of National ICT Strategies for Education and Training, including the Technology Enhanced Learning strategy for Further Education and Training	Directors, IT Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will further explore and develop opportunities made possible through the utilisation of ICT capabilities, on how to provide accessible educational opportunities for remote and hard to reach groups/categories of individuals	Directors, IT Manager	2017 - 2021

2. OUR PEOPLE

Our aim is to recruit, engage and develop high quality professionals across all our services.

Cork ETB is an organisation that embraces diversity and challenge. Our learners and our staff are at the centre of the organisation. Meeting their needs is our first priority. The culture of the organisation, as embodied in our guiding principles and values, is only possible through the engagement and commitment of our existing staff and our ability to recruit talented people.

The diversity of the service provision means that there is a range of roles within the organisation. This requires targeted initiatives in the areas of recruitment, staff development and positive workplace environments to ensure that the organisation retains high calibre staff,

develop the skills of staff while at the same time developing highly effective leaders.

We recognise establishing Cork ETB as a provider of choice for learners in Cork is only possible through positive engagement with staff who believe in the principles and values of the organisation.

our people



PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	DATE
2.1 To attract and recruit the best people for the organisation	• We will, through active planning, identify the roles required within the organisation and develop targeted recruitment campaigns, with particular focus on roles where a supply skills deficit has been identified	Directors, Principals, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will engage proactively with DES, SOLAS and with higher education providers, to identify and develop appropriate responses to address supply skills deficits in particular roles which we advertise	Directors, Principals, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will continue to review and develop our recruitment processes and practices to ensure they are flexible and attuned to the needs of the organisation	Director of OSD, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will further develop our short-term staff cover systems to ensure the right people are available when required for the continued delivery of our services	Director of OSD, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
2.2 To support the professional development of our people	• We will foster a culture of professional development and support for all staff through the targeted provision of appropriate learning and development initiatives to improve and develop their knowledge and capabilities	Directors, Principals, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will actively promote and enable our staff to participate in CPD programmes delivered through the DES Professional Development Service for Teachers	Director of Schools	2017 - 2021
	• We will actively promote and participate in the National SOLAS CPD Strategy to enhance the skills and knowledge of our staff delivering in FET	Director of FET	2017 - 2021
	• We will nurture leadership capacity by supporting staff to avail of learning, development and mentoring programmes and to engage in leadership roles within their school/centre and across Cork ETB where appropriate	Directors, Principals, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• Develop, within available resources, a model of support which allows for the release of staff to partake of relevant and appropriate CPD opportunities	Directors, Principals, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• Enable staff to get involved with national bodies in the development and implementation of national policy initiatives and support their involvement	Directors, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• Develop opportunities for staff to avail of work placement opportunities for staff to avail of in Industry / business and other training / learning settings	Directors, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
2.3 To provide a positive, professional and supportive work environment for all staff	• We will promote and support a culture where mutual respect and regard for the individual underpins all actions and decision making	Directors Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 - 2021
	• We will support our Leaders in promoting positive staff relations through the provision of information, training and ongoing advice on key management and leadership skills	Directors, HR Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will ensure all staff have access to an Employment Assistance Programme	Director of OSD, HR Manager	End 2017
	• We will develop an intranet system for all staff to ensure access to information by all staff	Director of OSD, IT Manager, Intranet working group	2018
	• We will further explore and develop opportunities made possible through the utilisation of ICT capabilities, on how to provide opportunities for the creation of professional communities amongst staff in an effort to assist them to support each other in the delivery of education and training	Director of FET, Director of Schools, IT Manager	2017 - 2021
	• We will target specific initiatives to promote staff wellbeing and encourage the positive engagement of our staff throughout the organisation	Directors, HR Manager	2017 - 2021



our services

3. OUR SERVICES

Our aim is to deliver high quality, appropriate and relevant education and training programmes in a variety of environments and settings across primary, post primary, further education and training where high quality teaching and learning are at the centre of all activities, with a focus on access, transfer and progression.

Cork ETB provides a range of services spanning Community National Schools, Post Primary, Further Education and Training as well as administrative support. A full range of our services and programmes are outlined in pages 6 to 11.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	DATE
3.1 Seek to develop and promote the Community National School model of primary education	• We will develop our existing CNS schools as models of best practice	Director of Schools, Principals	2017 – 2021
	• We will engage fully and proactively in the DES primary school diversification process	Director of Schools, Director of OSD	2017 – 2021
	• We will seek opportunities to increase the number of Community National Schools under the aegis of Cork ETB	CE, Director of Schools	2017 – 2021
3.2 Implement and develop new initiatives in the primary school curriculum	• We will deliver a full and rich learning experience, fully in line with the national curriculum	Principals	2017 – 2021
	• We will continue to develop programmes that support the wellbeing and holistic development of each child	Director of Schools, Principals	2017 – 2021
	• We will continue to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy	Principals	2017 – 2021
	• We will promote the new STEM in our CNS schools	Principals	2017 – 2021
	• We will implement the new language curriculum in full	Principals	2017 – 2021
	• We will seek to be early adoptors of the new National Digital Literacy Strategy at primary level	Director of Schools, Principals	2017 – 2021
3.3 Implement and develop the new Junior Cycle at post primary level	• We will implement the new Junior Cycle programme and will engage fully in all national CPD. We will also seek to develop best practice through the sharing of best practice among our family of schools	Director of Schools, Principals	2017 – 2021
3.4 Specific Curricular Development	• We will continue to engage proactively with new curricular options such as the new Computer Science subject at Leaving Certificate	Principals	2017 – 2021
3.5 FET Programme Review and Development	• We will review education and training programmes using evidence based planning processes and taking cognisance of the feedback from learners and other stakeholders	Director of FET, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
	• We will undertake regular stakeholder consultation and develop delivery of flexible FET courses by reference to the National SOLAS FET Strategy 2014-2019, SOLAS FET Planning Parameters and the SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017-2019	Director of FET	2017 – 2021
	• We will develop and implement an integrated FET planning process that ensures that the needs of local communities, learners and employers are identified and responded to in an appropriate and timely manner in line with the requirement and priorities of the FET Strategy	Director of FET, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
3.6 Develop and promote the provision of youth services	• We will provide innovative, responsive and inclusive services which will be supported through Cork ETB's Youth Committee	Director of FET, Youth Officers	2017 – 2021
	• We will develop the role of Cork ETB as the agent for Youth Services operating in collaboration and consultation with the Department of Youth and Child Affairs	Director of FET, Youth Officers	2017 – 2021
	• We will support the provision, development and assessment of youth work services in Cork through the provision of appropriate targeted resources	Director of FET, Youth Officers	2017 – 2021
3.7 To enhance social and economic cohesion in our learners' communities through the provision of relevant knowledge and skills for lifelong learning, personal development, progression and employment	• We will develop new and enhance existing progression schemes for all learners, both within Cork ETB and with providers of education and training at all levels in Cork and elsewhere as appropriate	Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 – 2021
	• We will encourage high levels of participation, achievement and accreditation by learners through the provision of courses that enhance their opportunities for personal development, progression and employment	Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
	• We will actively assist learners in the process of returning to learning by ensuring courses and appropriate supports are provided which support and encourage learner participation	Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
	• We will facilitate the roll-out and development of education and training supports through the provision of online services, including Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) and other ICT based systems	Director of FET, Director of Schools, Director of OSD, IT Manager	2017 – 2021
	• We will promote, develop and manage the Apprenticeship and Traineeship programmes to ensure training meets industry needs	Director of FET, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
	• We will work with Local Authorities, Higher Institutions of Education and Community Partners to promote and expand lifelong learning	CE, Director of FET, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021

our organisation

4. OUR ORGANISATION

Our aim is to enhance the profile of the organisation through the delivery of effective and efficient services to support our education and training provision.

Cork ETB is committed to the continuous review and monitoring of its structures, governance and infrastructure. We aim to foster a culture of improvement in order to have an organisation which operates effectively and efficiently in the delivery of its services.

There are several elements that will be focused on over the lifetime of the statement, in particular new school builds, regulatory compliance, accountability, Scéim na dTeangacha Gaeilge Oifigiúla,

marketing, communication and strategic partnerships.

The enhancement of the organisation's ability to drive efficiencies will be driven by the staff who are central to the delivery of services. However, it will also be driven by serving, supporting and partnering with a range of stakeholders in order to enhance the profile of the organisation.

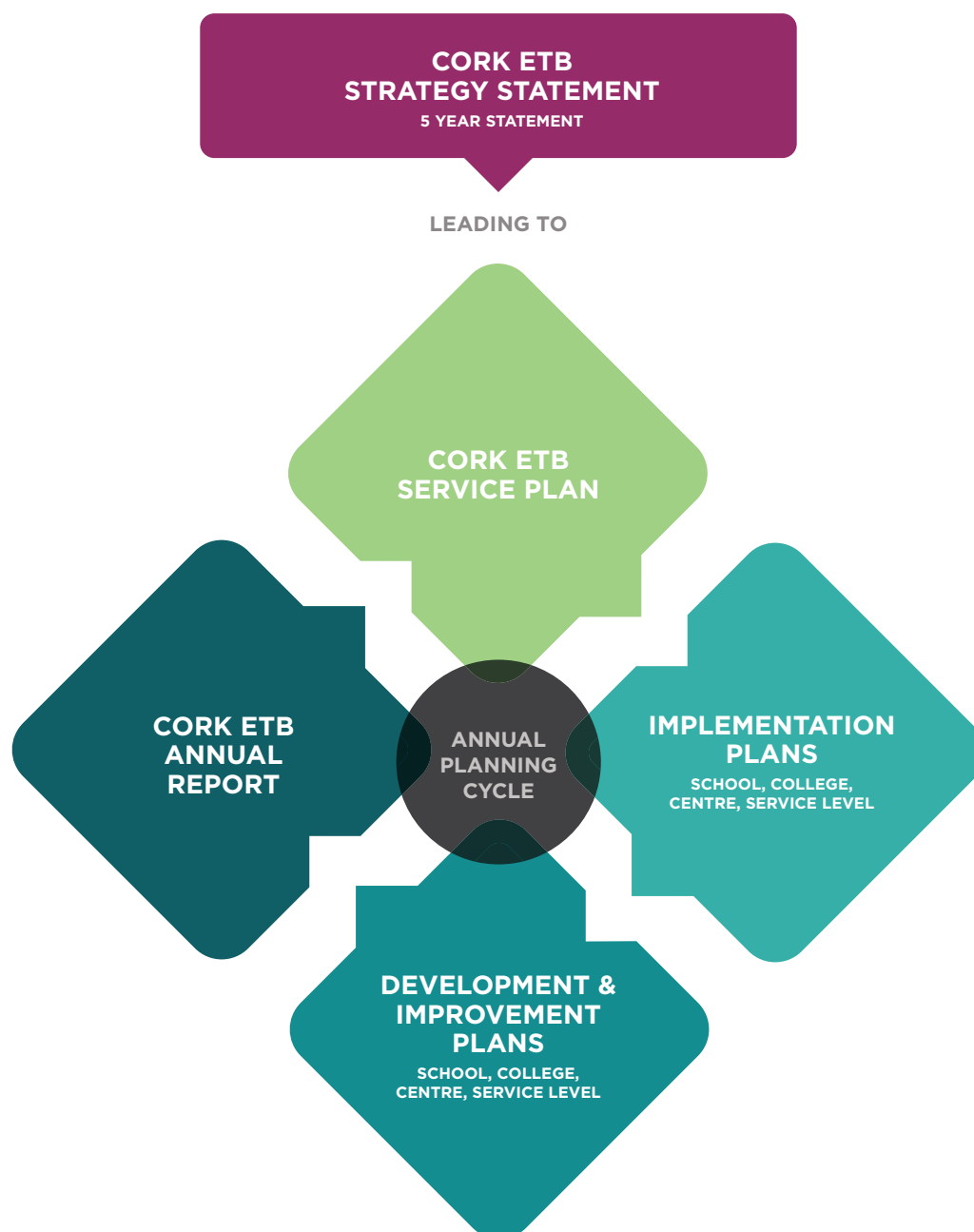
PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	DATE
4.1 To ensure an appropriate infrastructure is developed to make the best use of available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To bring approved new school building and school extension projects to completion by the earliest dates possible, major projects include: Coláiste an Chraoibhín, Fermoy St. Colman's Community College, Midleton Carrigaline Education Campus Clonakilty Community College Davis College, Mallow Scoil Chlíodhna, CNS, Carrigtwohill Carrigtwohill Community College 	CE, Director of OSD, Capital Manager	2017 – 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To pursue approval for further major capital projects identified as part of the Government's 2016 to 2021 Major Capital Investment in School Building Plan, such projects include: Carrignafoy Community College, Cobh Coachford College Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig Coláiste Ghobnatan, Baile Mhuirne 	CE, Director of OSD, Capital Manager	2017 – 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to identify priorities for new buildings, extensions and/or improvements to existing buildings and to proactively seek the necessary resources to deliver same 	CE, Directors	2017 – 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to review ICT systems to ensure that they are appropriate, fit for purpose, secure and deliver efficiencies for all users 	Director of OSD, IT Manager	2017 – 2021

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	LEAD	DATE
4.2 To continue to develop an organisational structure which supports Cork ETB services	• Continue to develop and enhance governance structures across the organisation in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs and in accordance with best ethical standards	CE, Director of OSD, Director of FET, Director of Schools	2017 – 2021
	• Continue to review Cork ETB structures to ensure that services are delivered in a cost efficient, effective and compliant manner	Director of OSD	2017 – 2021
	• Continue to review and develop good governance structures and processes in line with the identified requirements from our Executive Self Evaluation and in preparation for Statutory Review in Further Education and Training	Director of OSD, Director of FET	2017 – 2021
	• Undertake a review of our self-financing services to ensure that they are structured in a manner which will enable continued viability and compliance with regulatory obligations	Director of OSD, Director of FET	2017 – 2021
4.3 Support ethical governance to ensure accountability and value for money	• We will continue to develop and monitor our processes to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements	Director of OSD, Director of FET	2017 – 2021
	• We will regularly review Cork ETB's expenditure to identify procurement opportunities to ensure value for money across the organisation	Director of OSD	2017 – 2021
	• We will continue to develop, communicate and monitor implementation of Cork ETB's Procurement Policy and Procedures to all entities within the remit of Cork ETB	Director of OSD, Capital & Procurement Manager	2017 – 2021
	• We will make the necessary arrangements to ensure compliance with our data protection obligations including General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	Director of OSD, Legal & Compliance Manager	2018
	• Enhance management accounting and financial reporting systems to support improved decision making in Education and Training Services	Director of OSD, Director of FET	2017 – 2021
	• We will continue to improve efficiencies so as to ensure value for money in the management of all Cork ETB properties, in keeping with the Government's Property Asset Management Delivery Plan	Director of OSD, Legal & Compliance Manager	2017 – 2021
4.4 To develop a strong recognisable Cork ETB Brand	• Develop and implement a co-ordinated marketing and branding campaign to raise awareness of Cork ETB as an organisation and all the services it provides and delivers	Director of OSD, Director of FET, Corporate Services Manager	2017 – 2021
	• We will recognise and celebrate the achievements of our learners and staff as a means of supporting and fostering a culture of excellence	Director of FET, Director of Schools, Director of OSD, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
4.5 Develop and enhance internal and external communication systems	• We will develop a fit for purpose Customer Charter which will establish good practices and procedures and facilitate feedback	Director of OSD, Corporate Services Manager	2018
	• Commitments given in Scéim na dTeangacha Gaeilge Oifigiúla will be delivered within the lifetime of the current scheme	Director of OSD, Corporate Services Manager	2017 – 2021
	• We will support schools / colleges in the implementation of the DES Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022	Director of Schools	2017 – 2021
	• We will ensure that all staff have a corporate email account for effective communication, security protection and access to ICT systems	Director of OSD, IT Manager	2018
	• We will positively and proactively utilise social media for the promotion of Cork ETB and its services	Director of OSD, Corporate Services Manager, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021
	• We will develop and implement an effective and comprehensive communication strategy over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan	Director of OSD, Corporate Services Manager	2017 – 2021
4.6 Strategic networking and partnerships with key stakeholders	• We will ensure that Cork ETB is represented on relevant Boards, Bodies and Fora related to the provision of education and training	CE, Directors	2017 – 2021
	• We will continue to develop relationships with our stakeholders based on mutual respect and shared professionalism in the best interests of our learners	CE, Directors, Principals, Managers, AEOs	2017 – 2021

Implementation

The aims, priorities and actions outlined in the strategy statement will form the basis for implementation plans for each strand of the organisation. Actions from the implementation plans will form part of the annual service plan. While the

organisation is fully committed to the five-year Strategy, it's implementation is subject to the availability of resources. The figure below shows the relationship between the overarching strategy and the actions for each part of the organisation.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CIT	Cork Institute of Technology
CNS	Community National Schools
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DES	Department of Education and Skills
ETB	Education and Training Board
FET	Further Education and Training
ICT	Information Communications Technology
ITABE	Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education
LCDC	Local Community Development Committee
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
SOLAS	Seirbhísí Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VLEs	Virtual Learning environments
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WSE-MLL	Whole School Evaluation of Management, Leadership and Learning

APPENDIX 1

Education and Training Boards – A Sectoral Overview

INTRODUCTION

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are Ireland's sixteen statutory regional education authorities. They were established by the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 (ETBs Act 2013) and replaced the Vocational Education Committees (VECs) (and their predecessors) which have been providing formal technical and vocational education in Ireland since 1902.

Following the commencement of the ETBs Act 2013 and the transfer of the former FÁS training centres to ETBs, also in 2013, ETBs became statutorily responsible for the provision of state-funded Further Education and Training (FET) in Ireland. Across the country, ETBs deliver a range of programmes and courses at Levels 5 and 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), as well as traineeships and apprenticeships.

In addition to the FET provision, ETBs deliver a wide range of services across many educational levels throughout Ireland. They operate 278 second-level schools, Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) colleges, vocational training centres, and over 500 education centres. ETBs are trustees of 92 Community Colleges. They also manage a growing number of multi-denominational primary-level Community National Schools (www.cns.ie). ETBs

are involved in Youth Work, Youthreach programmes, Prison education, Back to Education Initiatives, Vocational Training Opportunities Schemes (VTOS), workplace learning programmes, outdoor education and training, adult and community education, and other educational programmes. There are ETB-run schools, colleges and centres in every corner of Ireland.

VISION FOR THE ETB SECTOR

The sixteen Education and Training Boards play a major role in the rapidly-changing world of Irish public-sector education and training. Within the coming years, ETBs will be the leading providers of high quality, locally responsive, inclusive and innovative public sector education and training in their areas.

MISSION

Education and Training Boards offer education and training programmes that enable learners to achieve their full potential. They aim to achieve excellent outcomes for learners at all stages of lifelong learning, and so enhance social and economic cohesion in the communities they serve.

ETBs are supported in this mission by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), which is a central resource for the ETB sector, providing, procuring and co-ordinating a range of support services which are most appropriately and efficiently delivered at national level. It is a shared repository of best practice providing research, development and specialist expertise for the sector.

VALUES OF THE ETB SECTOR

The core values describe enduring, collective beliefs that underpin the work of ETBs and ETBI:

- ETBs work collectively with ETBI to promote the development of a coherent unified education and training sector
- ETBs provide high-quality, locally responsive public sector education and training services in their areas, aimed at achieving national policy objectives and

strategic targets

- ETBs promote an inclusive ethos of learning, underpinned by excellence and innovation
- ETBs operate in an environment of partnership, trust, integrity and respect, which guide and inform all aspects of their work
- ETBs' working relationships with their staff, Boards and other stakeholders are based on fairness, transparency and professionalism
- ETBs foster a sense of shared responsibility for the successful performance of their executive and reserved functions, in the interests of achieving the very best outcomes for all learners
- ETBs promote a culture of collaboration and collegiality between the professionals working in ETBs and the members of boards, based on common shared values and commitment to quality in education and training
- ETBs seek to build on the strong legacy of vocational education established over the past 80 years.

The National Context

ESTABLISHMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS (ETBS)

The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 established ETBs as statutory bodies operating under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills, providing education and training locally in accordance with government policy and strategy, while having the flexibility to cater for local education and training needs. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges, community national schools and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes.

Under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) was established as an association to collectively represent education and training boards and promote their interests.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SOLAS

Under the Further Education and Training Act 2013, SOLAS was established as a statutory agency of the Department of Education and Skills, with responsibility for funding, co-ordinating and monitoring Further Education and Training (FET) provision and ensuring that it is responsive to the needs of learners and the requirements of a changing economy. ETBs now have a new set of interactions with SOLAS, with three main aspects:

- Planning and development of FET
- Administration and support of FET
- Governance and funding of FET.

In 2014, SOLAS published the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 - 2019 setting out five strategic goals for ETBs:

- Skills for the Economy
- Active Inclusion
- Quality provision
- Integrated Planning and Funding
- Enhanced Standing of FET.

The Strategy requires ETBs and SOLAS, as the main statutory authorities delivering FET in Ireland, to engage with learners to:

- Ensure that programmes and courses are learner-focussed
- Ensure that learners are equipped with the relevant knowledge so they can make informed choices about their participation in FET (role of Guidance)
- Ensure that all courses and programmes have easily accessible progression options that provide for the needs of all learners.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QQI

QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) was established as a state agency under the Quality Assurance and Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 2012. QQI is responsible for making awards and setting standards for awards in the National Framework of Qualifications. QQI also validates education and training programmes and in the Further Education and Training sector including those provided by Education and Training Boards.

In the area of quality assurance, QQI is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of quality assurance in further and higher education providers in Ireland, including ETBs.

THE NATIONAL SKILLS STRATEGY 2015

The six chief objectives of the Government's National Skills Strategy 2015, published in January 2016, set a large number of challenges for the ETBs.

The very first of those objectives:

Education and training providers will place a stronger focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society and the economy.

places a particular onus on ETBs to develop new programmes, including new apprenticeships and traineeships. The other objectives require deeper engagement with employers, deeper engagement with learners, increased focus on active inclusion, continual enhancement and evaluation of teaching and learning, and making effective use of technology to improve the relevance and attractiveness of educational provision. ETBs have responsibility for a large proportion of the hundreds of actions set out in the strategy to realise those objectives.

THE ACTION PLAN FOR EDUCATION 2016-2019¹

The central vision of the Action Plan for Education 2015-2019, published by the Department of Education and Skills in September 2016, is that the Irish Education and Training System should become the best in Europe over the next decade. The Plan sets challenges for stakeholders in education and training through a series of high-level goals and objectives, as well as hundreds of targets and indicators aimed at achieving those goals and objectives. The goals include:

- Improving the learning experience and the success of learners
- Improving the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage or learners with special educational needs
- Helping those delivering education services to continually improve
- Building stronger bridges between education and the wider community

- Improving national planning and support services

Again, ETBs have responsibility for a large proportion of the hundreds of targets and deliverables in the Action Plan.

A Programme for a Partnership Government², the Programme for Government document was agreed between the Fine Gael Party, the Independent Alliance and Independent TDs in May 2016. Under the Programme, the Department of Education and Skills has a range of commitments, which are reflected in the actions outlined in the Action Plan for Education 2016-2019.

A number of key national education and training strategies are driving the planning and implementation of significant changes by the Department across the continuum of education. The Department's "whole-of-system" approach enables the integration of these strategies and the monitoring of their progress as they each contribute towards the Department's vision for education and training. These include:

- National Skills Strategy 2025
- National Strategy on Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020
- Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020
- Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 - 2019
- National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030
- Framework for Junior Cycle
- National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland, 2014-2020
- 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030
- Gaeltacht Education Strategy

The Department has also developed the following strategies, which have yet to be published.

- Ireland's International Education Strategy
- Foreign Languages in Education Strategy
- DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Review

¹ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Department-of-Education-and-Skills-Strategy-Statement-2016-2019.pdf>

² http://www.merriestreet.ie/Merriestreet/en/ImageLibrary/Programme_for_Partnership_Government.pdf

Every one of these strategies has and will have implications for ETBs and their work.

The European Context

According to Article 165 of the 2012 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Community:

shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States, through actions such as promoting the mobility of citizens, designing joint study programmes, establishing networks, exchanging information or teaching languages of the European Union. The Treaty also contains a commitment to promote life-long learning for all citizens of the Union.

There is a broad consensus that education is essential for Europe's economic vitality, driving the employability, productivity, innovativeness and entrepreneurial spirit of tomorrow's working population and that its role in creating a better and more inclusive society is of equal importance. Education and Training have been identified as having a very significant role in the regeneration of economies.

The promotion of lifelong learning, the European framework for quality in education, the identification of the need for transversal skills and competencies; all reflect the continuous drive by policy makers, teachers, education leaders and managers to enhance both the quality and capacity of education and training across Europe. The EU gives this policy direction and substance through a range of communiqués, reports and plans such as Europe 2020, Youth on the Move, New Skills for New Jobs, etc.

In the Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU repeatedly underlines the significance of better equipping young people for the job market. Towards a Job Rich Recovery further emphasises that lifelong learning invested in skills, and ongoing European sectoral social dialogue, are crucial for a sustainable labour market. It is within this framework that education policies have become closely linked to employment policies. Such policies have

a direct influence on labour market and employment issues like teacher mobility and working conditions.

THE EU'S ROLE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Each EU country is responsible for its own education and training systems. EU policy is designed to support national action and help address common challenges, such as ageing societies, skills deficits in the workforce, technological developments and global competition.

Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) is the European framework for cooperation in education and training. ET 2020 is a forum for exchanges of best practices, mutual learning, gathering and dissemination of information and evidence of what works, as well as advice and support for policy reforms. In order to ensure the successful implementation of ET 2020, Working Groups composed of experts nominated by member countries, including Ireland, and other key stakeholders work on common EU-level tools and policy guidance. Funding for policy support and innovative projects is available through Erasmus+ for activities that promote learning and education at all levels and for all age groups.

In 2009, ET 2020 set four common EU objectives to address challenges in education and training systems by 2020, which were (a) making lifelong learning and mobility a reality, (b) improving the quality and efficiency of education and training, (c) promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship, and (d) enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

Lifelong Learning and mobility are enhancing the quality and efficiency of education and training, promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship, while also increasing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. These are matters that interest and concern the Education and Training Boards, and ETBs are determined to be part of the process of change where they can influence policy and processes in the EU.

These concerns and this determination are at the core of ETBI's involvement in Europe. Through its membership of the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE), ETBI participates in the bi-partite (employers and unions) European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education. ETBI is also a founder member of EUproVET, which voices the interests of providers of vocational education and training and adult education within the European Union, and works to contribute to the European agenda to achieve effective and feasible VET policy development for implementation in a unified manner across Europe.

The roles of ETBs and ETBI in a changing context

EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS (ETBS)

The main challenges for ETBs arising from the implementation of the above-referenced new legislation (ETB/FET/QQI) fall under several major headings:

- Structural change and reform
- Strategic planning and implementation
- Capacity building and leading change
- Partnership and collaboration
- Programme development in Further Education and Training (FET)

Aside from meeting the internal and external challenges arising from the establishment of the ETBs, SOLAS and QQI, and the requirements of the new legislation already mentioned, the ETBs are also dealing with a number of **sectoral priorities** that have come to the fore, and which require negotiations (with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and a number of other relevant stakeholders), as well as far-reaching actions by the ETBs.

- **Multi-denominational state primary schools:** While the ETBs' predecessors the VECs were piloting the Community National Schools (CNS) model of

state-sponsored primary schools on behalf of the DES since 2008, the Minister has now (1st September 2016) transferred full patronage of the CNS schools to the ETBs. ETBs now have the responsibility to establish and grow the CNS model throughout the state, which requires negotiations with the DES; negotiations with religious bodies regarding transfer of patronage; conducting and managing, on behalf of the state, surveys of parents regarding preferences of primary school models in their local areas; purchasing of land; dealing with landlords; managing building and ancillary works; hiring and training of personnel; establishing the CNS ethos across the CNS schools; promotion of the CNS model to parents and the wider general public; and many other related issues.

- **New forms of apprenticeships:** Apprenticeship, as defined in the 2013 Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland², is a programme of industry-led structured education and training which formally combines and alternates learning in the work place with learning in an education or training centre, (a dual system i.e. a blended combination of on-the-job employer-based training and off-the-job training) whose completion (a) prepares the participant for a specific occupation and (b) leads to an award, recognised under the National Framework of Qualifications from Level 5 to Level 10. The Apprenticeship Council, established in November 2014, is tasked with the expansion of Apprenticeships into new sectors of the economy and mapping out the sectors where new apprenticeships can make a real difference to both employers and employees. ETBI is represented on the Apprenticeship Council, and several ETBs are currently in the process of developing, with relevant industrial partners, proposals for new apprenticeships in new sectors (catering, insurance, IT, etc.). With QQI, they are also developing, in parallel, quality assurance processes for these new apprenticeships. Once operational, it is hoped that these new

² <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Review-of-Apprenticeship-Training-in-Ireland.pdf>

apprenticeships may be rolled out in the other ETBs.

- **Traineeships and work related training programmes:** In parallel with working to bring on-stream new apprenticeships, ETBs are also collaborating with local industries to develop a range of new traineeships and work-related training programmes; part of the government initiative to promote a well-educated, highly skilled and adaptable Irish workforce in the National Skills Strategy 2025. Providing these new programmes requires ETBs to work alongside local companies to develop and deliver courses, promote and recruit trainees, and provide tutors, mentoring and certification for trainees.

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) is the national representative body for Ireland's sixteen regional Education and Training Boards (ETBs), and works to protect, promote and enhance the interests of member ETBs and of vocational education and training within the wider education sector in Ireland and in Europe.

In the period leading up to and immediately following the establishment of ETBs, there was an intensive focus on re-structuring ETBI's predecessor, the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) as a new organisation, Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), to support ETBs in the performance of their functions. There was strong and unanimous agreement among ETBs that the establishment of ETBI was an important element in reinforcing the success of ETBs over the coming years.

The new governance and corporate structure of ETBI was designed to ensure that the organisation would be fit for its expanded role and functions. It was envisaged that with the re-imagining and re-invention of ETBI, the entire ETB sector would gain the following benefits:

- A strong, unified, dynamic, fit-for-purpose organisation that would

position ETBs as a major force in Ireland's changing education and training landscape, by aligning its professional support structures to promote the effective implementation of the ETB legislation

- An enhanced culture of collaboration and collegiality among the professionals working in the sector, based on common shared values and commitment to excellence in education and training
- A renewed sense of purpose for all involved in ETBs, building on the strong legacy of VECs over the previous 80 years.

ETBI is a central resource for the ETB sector, providing, procuring and co-ordinating a range of support services which are most appropriately and efficiently delivered at national level. ETBI acts as a repository for best practice, providing research, development and specialist expertise to the sector. ETBI provides a range of co-ordinated and cost effective services that include:

- Representation for the sector
- Staff negotiations
- Policy analysis, research and administrative support services
- Management services required by ETBs in the performance of their executive and reserved functions, with specific reference to schools, further education and training (FET) and organisational development and support;
- Specialised supports to assist ETBs in promoting equality of opportunity in education and training, and in responding to the needs of disadvantaged communities
- Services as required by the Minister for Education and Skills.

ETBI fulfils its role through collaborative practice between the secretariat staff and the expertise that exists within ETBs. It also promotes effective working partnerships among ETBs, the Department of Education and Skills, SOLAS and a large and diverse range of external bodies.

