



etb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Thiobraid Arann
*Tipperary Education and
Training Board*

EXECUTIVE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT FOR TIPPERARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

JANUARY 31, 2018

Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB), Church Road, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

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List of Acronyms

AEO	Adult Education Officer
AIS	Assessment Instrument Specification
BTEI	Back to Education Initiative
CAS	Common Awards System
CE	Chief Executive
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CTC	Community Training Centre
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DES	Department of Education and Skills
EA	External Authenticator
ESE	Executive Self-Evaluation
ESER	Executive Self-Evaluation Report
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Board Ireland
FARR	Funding Application Requests and Reports
FÁS	Foras Áiseanna Saothair
FE	Further Education
FESS	Further Education Support Service
FET	Further Education and Training
IACTO	Irish Association of Community Training Organisation
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IQDM	Initial Quality Dialogue Meeting
ITABE	Intensive Adult Basic Education
IV	Internal Verifier
IVEA/CEEQA	Irish Vocational Education Association/Chief Executive and Education Officer Association
LCDC	Local County Development Company
LEO	Local Enterprise Office

LIT	Limerick Institute of Technology
LTI	Local Training Initiative
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
OSD	Organisation Support and Development
PAA	Programme Approval Agreement
PAC	Programme Approval Committee
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
PLSS	Programme Learner Support System
QBS	QQI's Business System
QIP	Quality Improvement Plan
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RAP	Results Approval Panel
RCCRS	Results Capture and Certification System
RPL	Recognised Prior Learning
SLMRU	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
SMT	Senior Management Team
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
SPDM	Special Purpose Dialogue Meeting
STP	Specialist Training Provider
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
TETB	Tipperary Education and Training Board
TQAS	Transitional Quality Assurance System
VCTC	Vocational Training Charitable Trust
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
VTOS	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme
WBL	Work Based Learning

1. Introduction, Purpose and Objectives

This document is the Executive Self-Evaluation Report (ESER) for all Further Education and Training (FET) under the remit of Tipperary Education and Training Board (TETB) that lead to awards in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) from levels 1-6. This Executive Self-Evaluation (ESE) was conducted in line with Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI's) Statutory Core Quality Assurance and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the Education and Training Boards and within nationally agreed Terms of Reference (See Appendix A).

It is the responsibility of TETB to devise procedures for QA and to have its own systematic processes for evaluating its own provision and for formulating plans and recommendations for its own improvement. This self-evaluation process is flexible and appropriate to TETB and its stage of development.

TETB is committed to quality assuring all its programmes and services. This ESE process is enhancement-based and focused on identifying improvements to policies, structures and processes to enhance the quality of learning opportunities for all learners within TETB. It is a quality objective of TETB to ensure compliance with QQI's Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines.

The purpose of the ETB ESE process is to evaluate the governance and management of QA and the effectiveness of QA procedures. This evaluation was carried out through a consultative approach involving various stakeholders in the organisation. In addition, it will contribute to the development of an improvement plan which will support TETB in meeting its statutory requirements for the establishment and operation of internal QA procedures, with due recognition to the developmental and transitional contexts.

The objectives of TETB's ESE are:

- to contribute to and support TETB's quality improvement planning, governance of quality and quality enhancement
- to promote the improvement of QA and further embed the quality culture in TETB
- to support sectoral level improvement by ensuring there is a consistency in the approach to the ESE process

2. ETB Profile

2.1 Overview

TETB is one of 16 ETBs established under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. The introduction of this legislation in 2013 saw both North Tipperary Vocational Education Committee (VEC) and South Tipperary VEC amalgamate to become TETB. The remit of TETB, as the statutory provider of education for the County, is to provide a comprehensive range of quality education programmes to meet the needs of the community we serve. These include Second Level Education, Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Programmes, Further Education, Second Chance Learning, Adult and Community Education and Training Services. In addition, TETB plays a significant role in the strategic development of the county through a variety of inter-agency programmes.

The Further Education and Training Act 2013 was signed into law in July 2013. The Act provided for the establishment of An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna (SOLAS) and the dissolution of Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS). SOLAS was established on the 27th October 2013. SOLAS works with the ETBs to support the development of appropriate FET programmes and curricula. TETB formally assumed responsibility for training services in Tipperary on the 28th March 2016.

TETB has three legacy FE QA agreements – North Tipperary VEC, Institiuid Thuamhumhan and South Tipperary VEC QA Agreements. TETB has one legacy training QA agreement, the Transitional Quality Assurance System (TQAS).

2.1.1 What we do

TETB has responsibility for:

- 10 Post Primary Schools
- 1 Gaelcholáiste
- 7 PLC Colleges (1 stand-alone and 6 dual-provision)
- 1 FE Training Centre
- education provision at St. Josephs Special School
- a range of FET centres, programmes and services
- the administration of support services including Further Education Support Service (FESS), Youth Services, Adult Guidance and Information Service
- the patronage of the Board of Management of Cashel Community School

2.2 Location of Services

TETB serves the entire County of Tipperary, with a population of circa 160,000 people (*see Figure 1*).

The services TETB provide to this population includes Post Primary Education, FET, Youthreach and Youth Services in addition to other community based education programmes and services (*Appendix B – ‘Overview of TETB Service Provision’ including a list of TETB Programmes, Services and Locations*).



Figure 1: Map of Tipperary

2.3 Provision and Staffing

2.3.1 Students and Learners

In September 2017, there were approximately 4,700 students enrolled in our post primary schools and gaelcholáiste and 10,500 beneficiaries of our FET programmes and services throughout the County (see Figure 2).

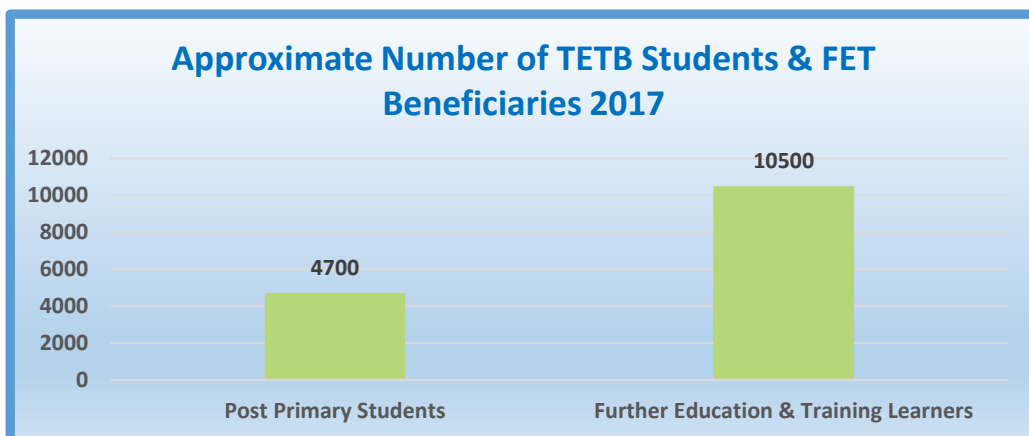


Figure 2: Beneficiaries of our Services



Figure 3: Range of Programmes and Services

TETB provides FET services to more than 10,500 learners. The Pie Chart below illustrates the services provided and the number of learners benefitting:

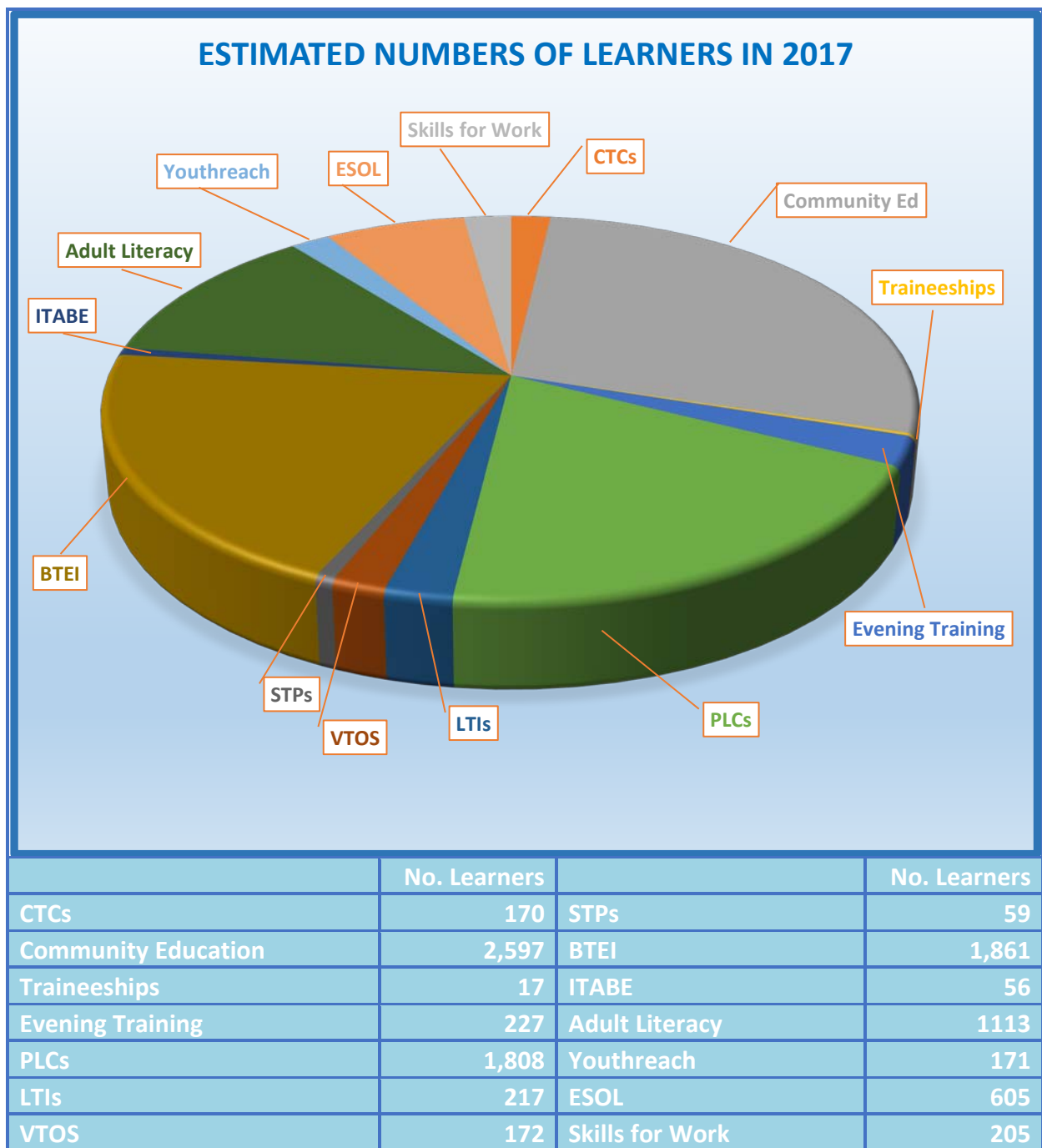


Figure 4: FE Services and Numbers of Learners Benefitting

Note: The above table does not include learners in the SKILLETB project, self-financing night-classes or the Adult Guidance and Information Service.

In terms of QQI certification achieved by learners in 2017, Level 5 awards continue to represent the highest volume of certification, as depicted by the next graphic taken from QQI's Infographics:

Award Level

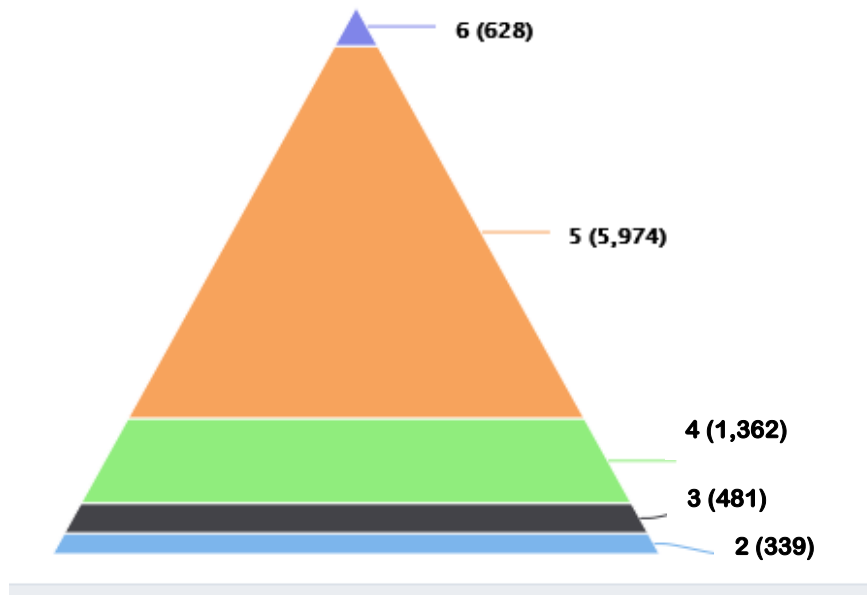


Figure 5: QQI Awards achieved by Award level in 2017

In addition to delivering courses leading to QQI certification, TETB offers courses leading to certification from other awarding bodies, such as City & Guilds, CompTIA, CIBTAC, CIDESCO and CISCO amongst others.

2.3.2 Staff

TETB employed 1,155 people in 2017. This number included approximately 470 teachers, 45 Special Needs Assistants (SNA), 20 full-time training staff, 50 full-time FE staff, 500 part-time FET staff, 53 administration staff and 17 ancillary staff (Figure 6).

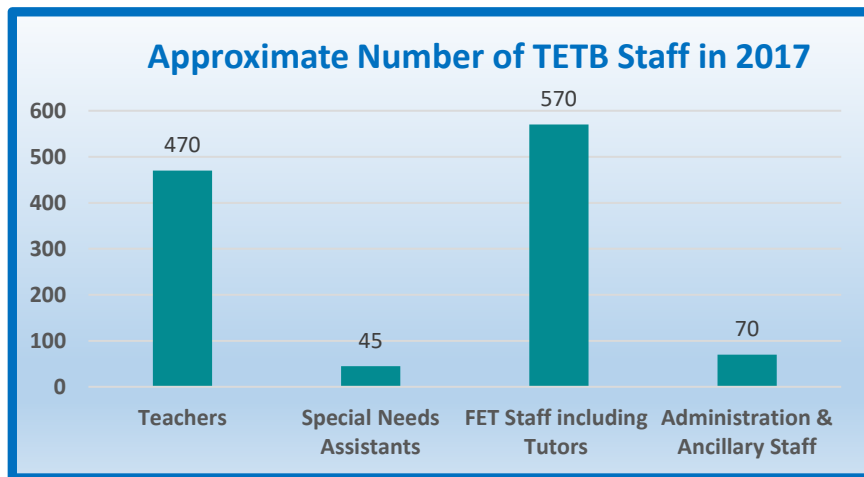


Figure 6: Number of Staff in TETB 2017

2.4 Corporate Governance

2.3.3 Structures

Current governance structures in TETB operate both at ETB and centre/college level. A board comprising of 21 members governs TETB. This includes 12 local authority representatives, 2 staff representatives, 2 parent representatives and 5 members from bodies with a special interest in, or knowledge of, education and training. At least, 1 community/business interest representative must be drawn from business, industry and employers; 1 must be drawn from learner representative bodies and 1 must be representative of bodies connected to school management or leadership.

The reserved functions of the TETB Board are stated in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. TETB established a FET Committee to perform such one or more of its functions as, in its opinion, could be better or more conveniently performed by a committee or to advise it in relation to the performance by it of any of its functions (*see Appendix C, terms of Reference*).

QA is considered an executive function of an ETB. As such, according to the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, “the executive functions of an education and training board shall be performed by the chief executive of that board”. Thus, the Chief Executive (CE) of TETB is ultimately responsible for the oversight of FET and its QA policies and procedures in TETB.

The Director of FET reports to the CE of TETB and is responsible for the delivery of high quality and responsive FET provision and the governance and management of FET.

While the FET committee has overall strategic input to FET in TETB, as a result of our ESE consultation we recognise the need for a QA specific governance structure with its own terms of reference.

TETB has a unit dedicated to corporate governance which includes responsibility for oversight of data protection, freedom of information and risk management.

The Director of Schools also reports to the CE of TETB and is responsible for assisting the CE in the leadership of teaching and learning and the governance and management of schools.

The Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD) reports to the CE of TETB and is responsible for assisting the CE in the leadership of the organisational administrative function and the governance and management of TETB services.

The CE and three directors are the senior management team (SMT) of TETB.

Figure 7 illustrates the current macro organisational structure of TETB.

Figure 8 illustrates the micro governance structure of TETB and *Figure 9* illustrates the areas of responsibility of the Director of FET.

TETB Organisational Structure

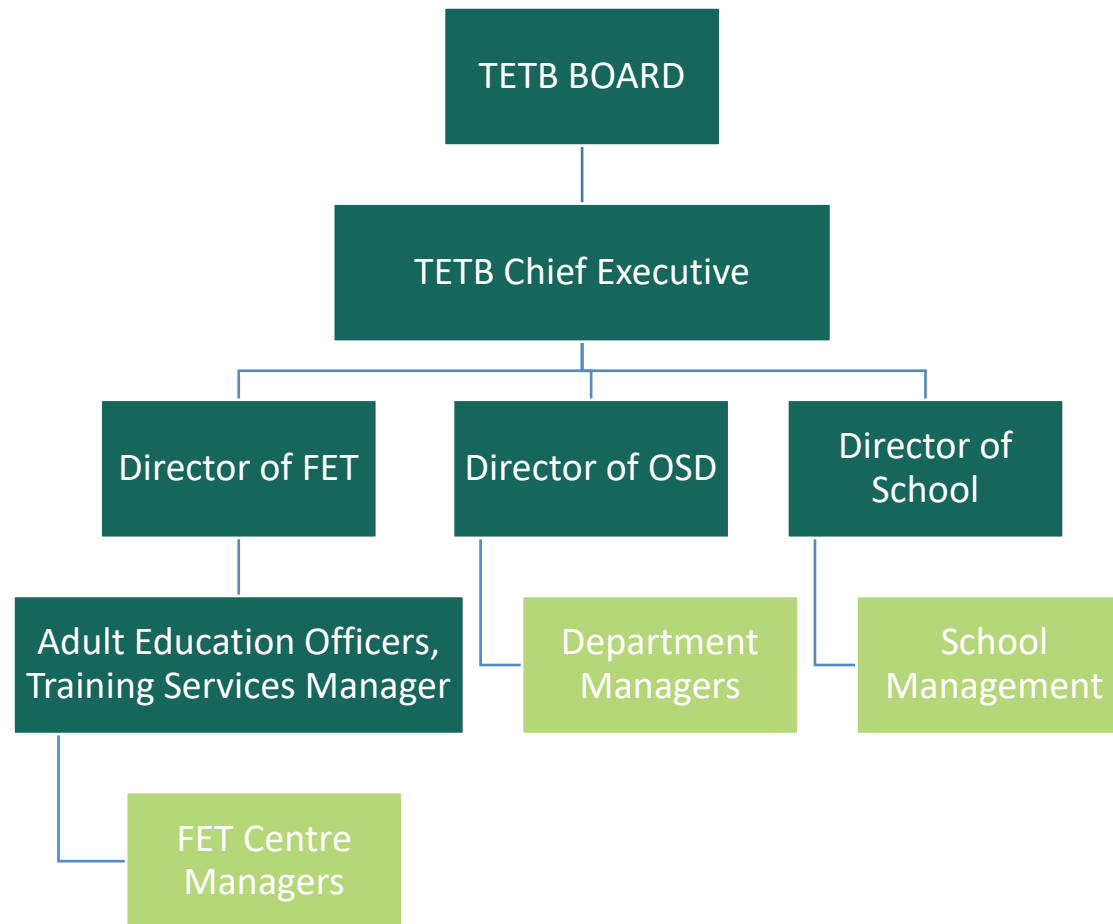


Figure 7: Macro Organisational Structure of TETB

TETB Governance & Management Structures

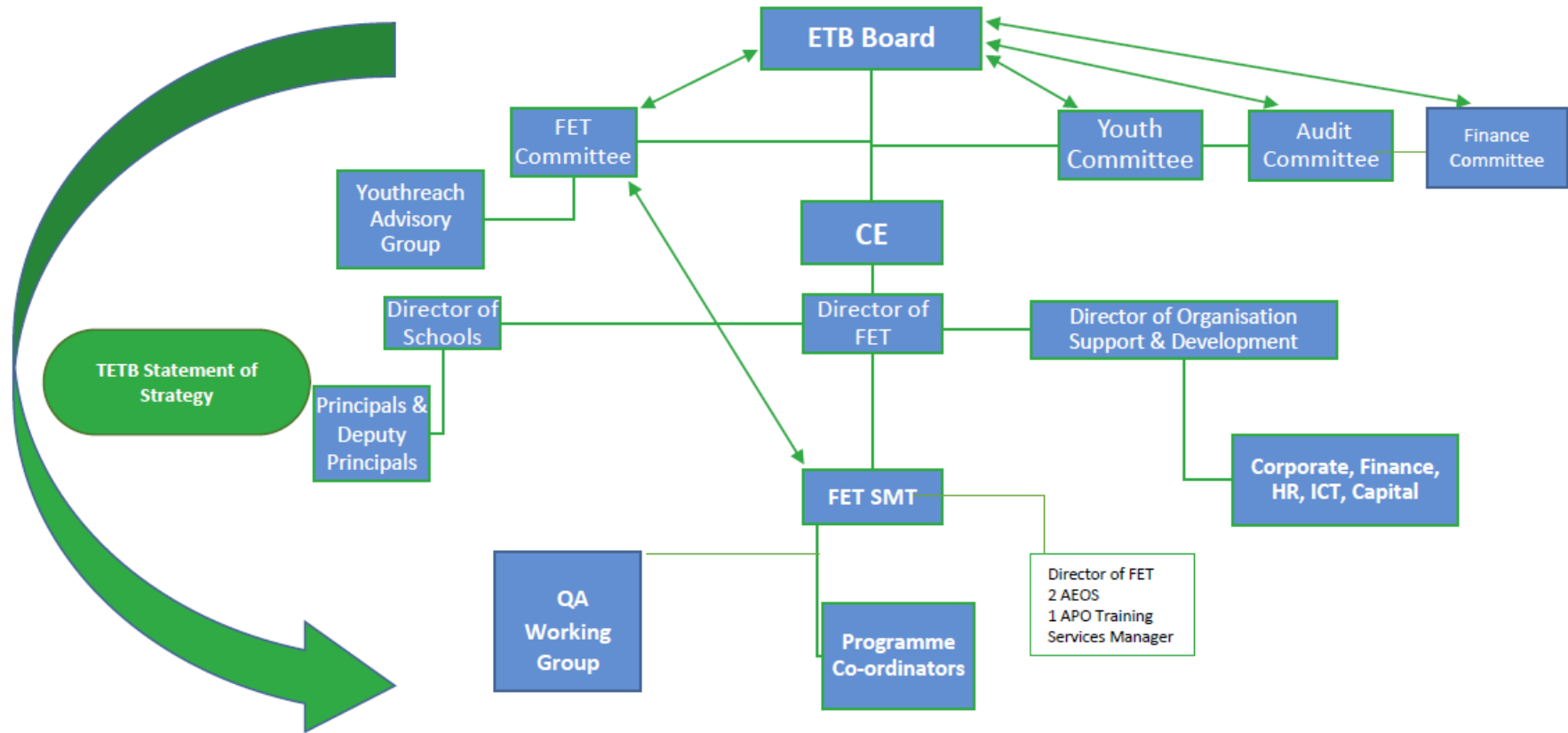


Figure 8: TETB Governance & Management Structures

Responsibilities of the Director of FET

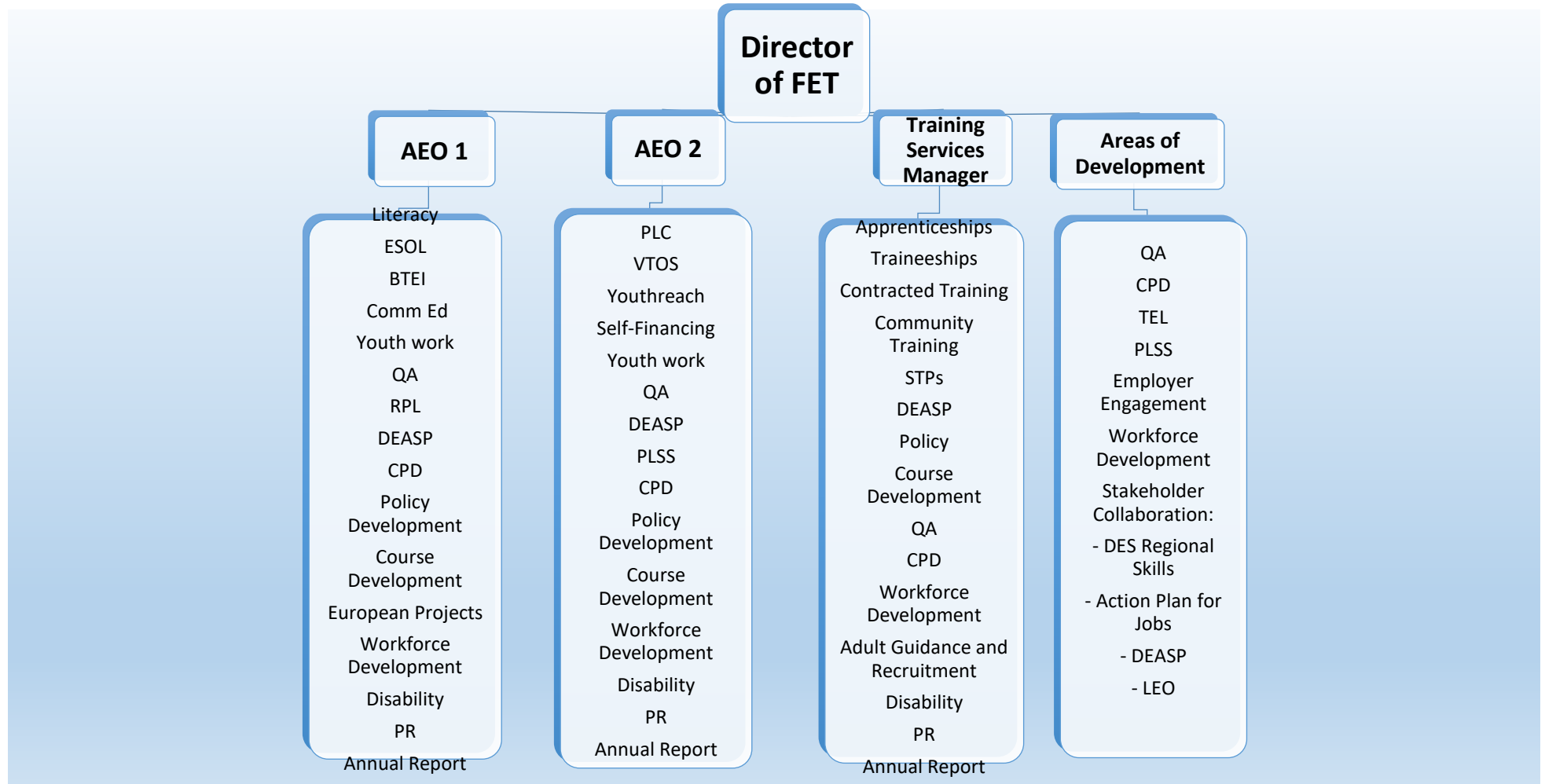
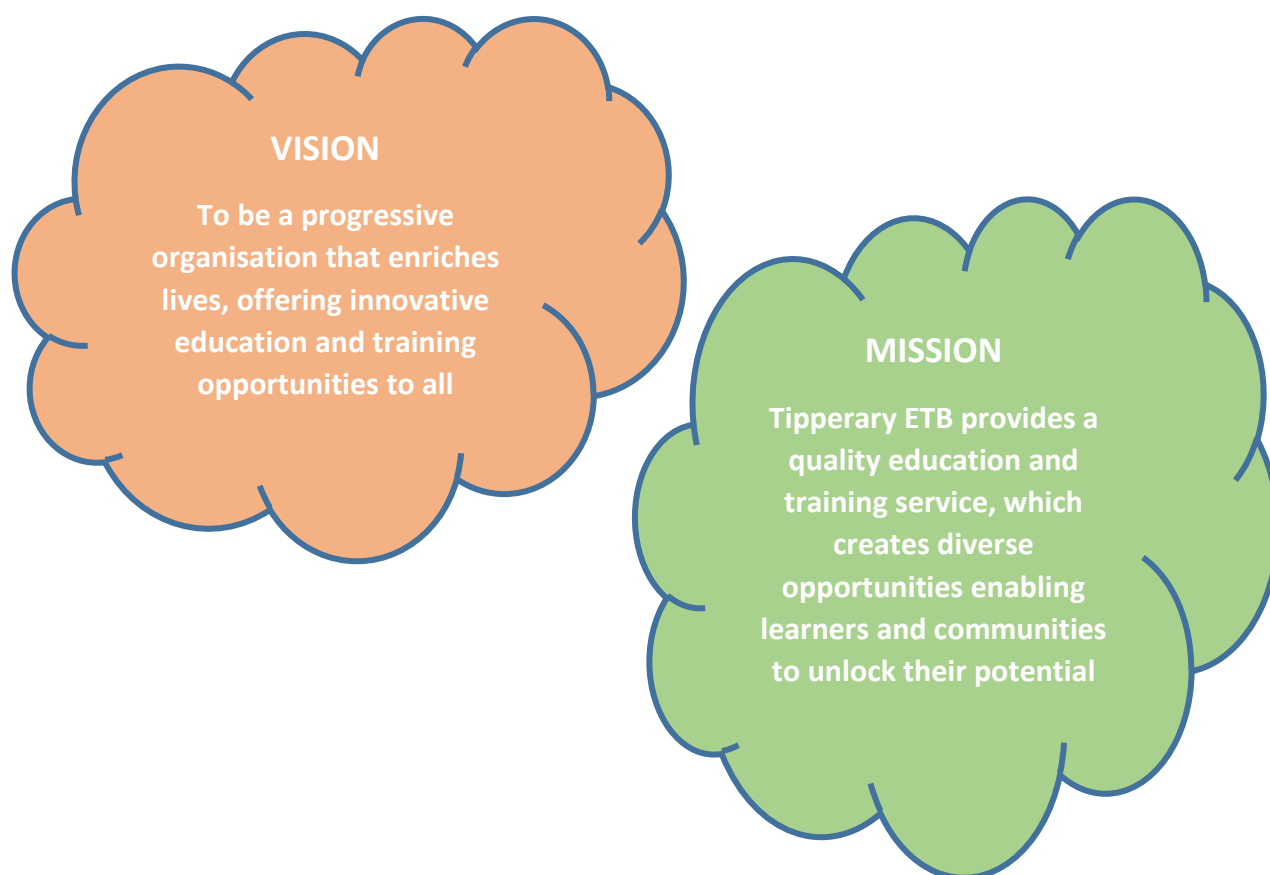


Figure 9: Areas of Responsibility of the Director of FET

2.3.4 Statement of Strategy

At the time of writing TETB is finalising its Statement of Strategy, 2018 – 2022. The following is a synopsis of its vision, mission, goals and priorities:



GOALS OF TIPPERARY ETB			
1. Lead the development of quality provision to meet the education & training needs of learners and the wider community engaging with Tipperary ETB	2. Continue to build an effective and progressive organisation by embracing innovative practices	3. Develop modern, dynamic learning and working environments to support learners and staff	4. Communicate and collaborate internally and externally in an effective manner to reinforce inclusivity and promote our organisation

Table 1: Goals of Tipperary ETB Statement of Strategy

Strategic Priorities for Each Goal			
1.1. Ensure education and training programmes and youth service are quality-assured, relevant, innovative and evidence-based	2.1 Develop an organisational structure that ensures purposeful integration of services and reflects evolving needs	3.1. Continue to improve and invest in facilities	4.1. Enhance internal and external communication across the organisation using the most up-to-date methods
1.2. Demonstrate a commitment to all learners across the organisation by developing policies and practices that assist access and appropriate course placement	2.2. Support the on-going professional needs of staff and Board members to develop capacity and skills	3.2. Create inclusive practices and environments	4.2. Establish mechanisms for feedback from learners, staff, Board members and stakeholders
1.3. Develop and implement integration of literacy and numeracy across provision	2.3. Ensure robust corporate governance, practices and compliance across the organisation	3.3. Embrace and utilise new technology	4.3. Foster a culture of collaboration and partnership with current and future stakeholders, and showcase best practice
1.4. Improve integration and inclusion of all learners via targeted provision 1.5 Support innovation, creativity and change across all provision 1.6 Encourage activities that promote well-being in all our school and centres	2.4. Undertake regular planning and review to improve the provision of all services		4.4. Engage in a variety of activities that promotes TETB as an organisation of high standing and responsive to evolving education and training needs 4.5 Recognise and communicate achievements and contributions of specific groups and individuals within the organisation

Table 2: Strategic Priorities for each Goal

3 Executive Self-Evaluation Process

The Terms of Reference for the ESE process were agreed nationally between the Directors of FET and QQI. Following this, the TETB Director of FET co-ordinated the completion of the governance questionnaire. It was completed during March and April 2017 and subsequently submitted to Dr. Trish O'Brien for her comment. Dr. O'Brien reviewed the questionnaire findings and responded to the Director of FET with her observations. These included the potential gaps between what is currently in existence in TETB and the QQI's Core Statutory and Sector-Specific QA Guidelines for the ETB sector.

In July 2017, Dr. O'Brien facilitated a workshop in TETB, which was attended by the members (at that time) of the QA Working Group. This workshop allowed for the sharing of ideas on how oversight, management and development of QA related processes could be governed within TETB.

ETBI provided TETB with the following four support documents to assist in the ESE process:

- 1. ETB executive self-evaluation [2017] terms of reference**
- 2. Summary of key features to consider when conducting self-evaluation of current quality assurance policies and procedures against core and sector-specific guidelines – TETB adapted this mapping tool and used it as a basis to generate discussion and facilitate feedback on what TETB could do to improve on its current quality assurance system and the priority that should be given to identified actions. All TETB FET staff were given an opportunity to participate in this exercise**
- 3. Executive self-evaluation report template– this formed the basis for recording TETB's ESER**
- 4. Quality Improvement Plan, Guidelines and Template – this was adapted for use in generating TETB's (Quality Improvement Plan) QIP**

In November 2017, TETB hosted the QQI Initial Quality Dialogue Meeting (IQDM) in Head Office. At this meeting, TETB updated QQI on progress to date and timelines of the ESE process. QQI will arrange a follow-on Special Purpose Dialogue Meeting (SPDM) with TETB in February 2018. At this meeting, it is envisaged that there will be an opportunity to discuss the establishment of QA procedures with a view towards arriving at a recommendation for approval.

The Director of FET delegated the compilation of the ESER to the AEO, with assistance from the members of the QA Working Group between October 2017 and January 2018.

The initial consultation process involved a meeting with the QA working group which is made up of representatives from PLC, FE, and training, the QA Officer, AEO's and the Director of FET in October. Each member committed to consulting with their counterparts, using the mapping tool provided by ETBI as a basis for discussion.

In November 2017 all centre/programme managers were invited to attend a meeting where the mapping tool, with input to date was presented and further discussion ensued. Also, at this meeting areas for improvement were prioritised. TETB hosted an Aontas facilitated learner forum. Over 70 learners from across the ETB programmes and services took part and gave their view of their experience of provision in TETB. Their views were considered when compiling the quality improvement plan.

Following completion of the ESER and the consultation process the QA working group identified the actions for completion in 2018 and these formed the basis for the QIP. These were circulated to FET Senior Management Team and QA Officer in TETB for agreement. In addition, consultation also took place with an independent consultant with expertise in QA. The ESER and QIP were then forwarded to TETB senior management and FET Committee for consideration and approval and were subsequently submitted to QQI in January 2018.

4 Governance, Planning and Management of Quality

4.1 Governance

Figure 10 illustrates the QA governance structures currently in place in TETB. Work has already been undertaken to separate out the functions of governance and oversight from planning and implementation in terms of QA and programme approval.

Within TETB there is a FET Senior Management Team (SMT) consisting of the Director of FET, Adult Education Officers (2) and a Training Services Manager. They meet regularly to plan and manage all FET provision in TETB. For the purposes of FET QA, two members of this FET SMT provide the governance and oversight of the work of the QA working group. It is envisaged that membership of this oversight committee will expand. The other two members of the FET SMT are active members of the QA Working Group and the Programme Approval Committee (PAC).

Currently these governance structures relate to activities on programmes leading to QQI certification only.

Consideration will have to be given to how new QA structures can operate within good governance, e.g., separation of programme development and programme approval. The possibility of sub/task groups emanating from an overarching group to research various areas within delivery of FET including how these proposed governance structures can be associated with other awarding bodies.

CURRENT FET GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES IN TETB

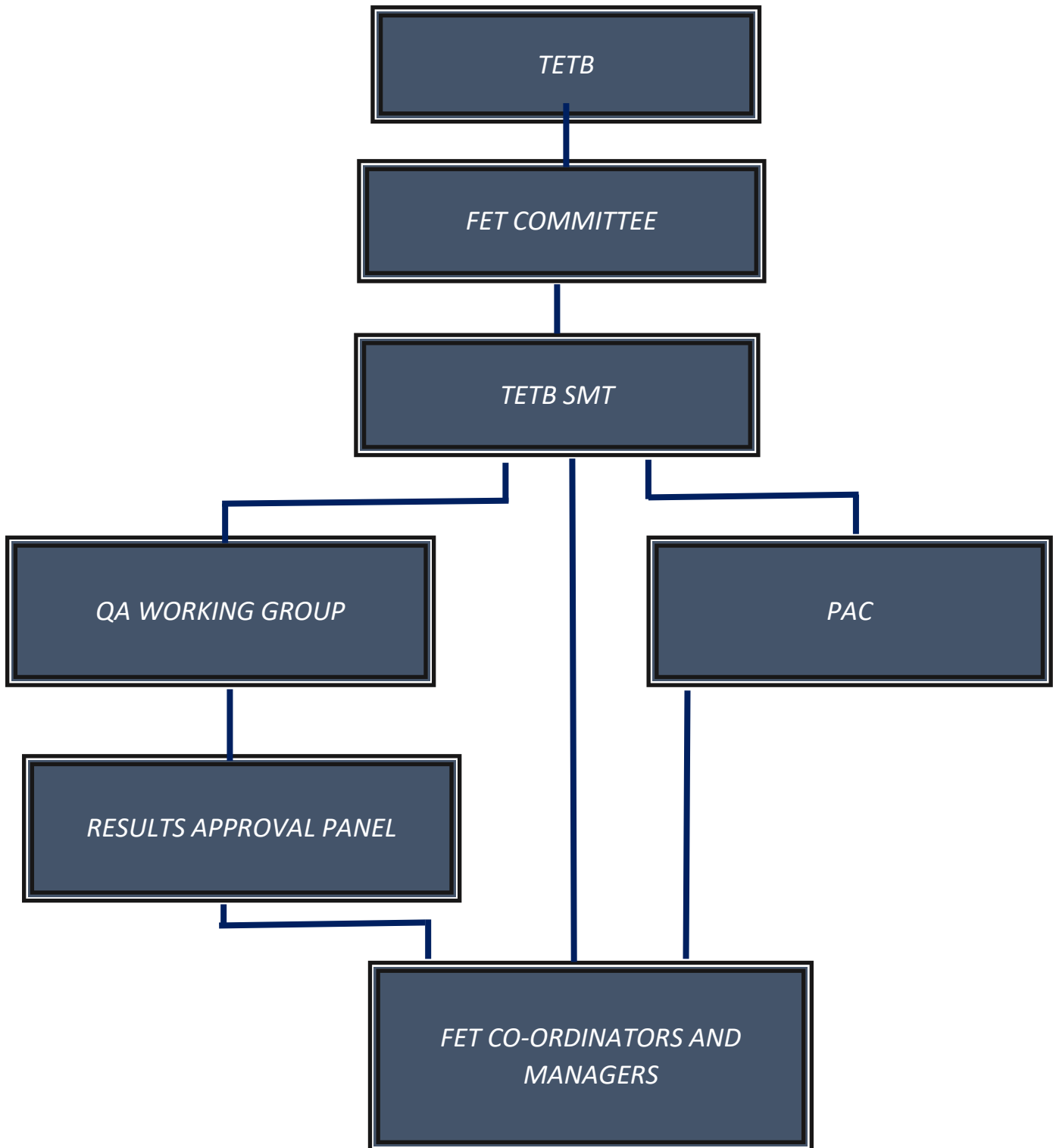


Figure 10: TETB QA Governance Structure

4.1.1 Further Education and Training Senior Management Team

Within TETB there is a FET SMT consisting of the Director of FET, Adult Education Officers (AEO) (2) and a Training Services Manager. They meet regularly to plan and manage all FET provision in TETB.

4.1.2 FET QA Working Group

The FET QA Working Group consists of the Director of FET, Training Services Manager, Adult Education Officers (2), QA Officer, QA Support Officer, Assistant Training Services Manager, Principal of an FE College and a FESS Officer. This group meet every 4-6 weeks. The meetings are co-ordinated and managed by the QA Officer and chaired by the Director of FET. The meetings are minuted and minutes circulated to the members of the QA Working Group.

The role of the QA Working Group is as follows:

- Review and update existing TETB QA processes, policies and procedures
- Develop new QA processes, policies and procedures
- Identify and plan Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- Have regard to national and international developments - statutory, regulatory, professional or other - that impact on TETB FET provision

The restructuring of the current QA Working Group is necessary in order to create the further governance groups needed by a multi-layered governance structure.

4.1.3 FET Programme Approval Committee

The membership of the PAC consists of the Director of FET, AEOs (2) and the QA Officer. The FESS Officer acts in an advisory capacity. If required, they meet following the meeting of the QA Working Group. The meetings are co-ordinated and managed by the Process Co-ordinator who is currently a Principal of an FE College. The PAC is chaired by the Director of FET and the Process Co-ordinator acts as secretary.

Programme development, evaluation and approval related activities in further education in TETB are guided by the original programme approval agreement (PAA) between North Tipperary VEC and FETAC. At the time of the establishment of TETB, South Tipperary VEC had a service level agreement with City of Cork VEC. For that reason, the decision was taken that TETB would maintain the programme governance structures previously implemented under North Tipperary VEC's programme approval agreement. TETB acknowledges the need to update the programme approval agreement to include managing training programmes as well as further education programmes.

The role of the PAC is as follows:

- Agree to the submission of programme validation applications to QQI
- Approve the addition of modules to validated programmes
- Approve the correction of errors/omissions in a validated programme and or related modules

While new modules are being developed in TETB in line with the PAA processes, approval to undertake this work is currently not formally signed off by the PAC. Normally the centre/college wishing to offer certification in a component for which a module is not available in TETB will contact the Process Co-ordinator to establish if there is a module developed for sharing through the ETBI shared programme development process. If there is not, then the Process Co-ordinator will give the centre/college permission to secure the services of experienced and qualified people to be trained to develop the module. The services of FESS are used to train and support the programme developers.

When a centre/college wants to offer a programme, the centre/college must complete a form and submit this to a member of the FET SMT. Approval or refusal is granted by the FET SMT rather than the PAC.

4.2 Centre-level Roles and Governance Structures in FET

The roles and groups that are responsible for the management of quality at centre-level vary, depending on the service that the individual centre belongs to (*see Table 3 below*). Meetings between the FE Programme Co-ordinators and the AEOs occur every 4-6 weeks. Among the items on the agenda for these meetings are CPD, programme updates, QA/certification updates and policy development/updates. Reports from these meetings are brought to the FET SMT meetings for consideration.

	FE SERVICE (EXCL. PLC)	FE SERVICE (PLC)	TRAINING SERVICES
Centre level responsibility	Programme Co-ordinator (reports to AEO)	Principal (reports to Director of Schools on Teacher allocation and Director of FET on provision) PLC Co-ordinator (reports to AEO on activity)	Training Services Manager (reports to FET Director)
Programme level responsibility	Programme Co-ordinator (reports to AEO)	Department Heads/ Programme Co-ordinators	Assistant Manager, Contracted & Community Training Officers, Senior Training Advisors
Day-to-day responsibility	Teachers/Tutors Resource Workers	Teachers	Trainers and Instructors
QA Support	AEOs, QA Office, FESS	AEOs, QA Office, FESS Officer	QA Office

Table 3: Centre-level Governance and QA Responsibilities

5. Delivery of FET

5.1 Programme Design, Development, Approval, Monitoring and Review

5.1.1 QQI Programmes in Tipperary ETB

TETB delivers programmes leading to QQI compound and minor awards under the Common Awards System (CAS), as well as delivering a number of programmes leading to non-QQI awards. The FE programmes leading to QQI certification were originally developed as part of the Irish Vocational Education Association/Chief Executive and Education Officer Association (IVEA/CEEEOA) shared programme development process that has since become the ETBI shared programme development process.

For each compound award for which TETB has a validated FE programme, there is one programme descriptor published on SharePoint, with a broad programme structure. This means that while the same validated programme may be offered in many FE centres/colleges in TETB, the combination of modules offered may be different. Modules may be chosen to enable a centre/college to offer a specific specialism or focus and to meet a particular local need.

TETB offers FE programmes leading to compound and minor awards at NFQ levels 2-6. TETB also offers a number of training programmes, levels 3-6, that were originally developed by FÁS.

At present, TETB FE centres/colleges do not access former FÁS programmes and similarly training provision does not access FE programmes, as clear QA structures and procedures for the management of FET programmes have not yet been established.

TETB recognises the need for QA procedures to take cognisance of the differentiation in how assessments are devised and administered in both FE and training programmes.

FE programmes use locally devised assessment instruments that are designed and also administered by the local centre. Training programmes by contrast, use assessment instruments that are centrally devised and administered by the QA Office following the request from the local centre. The capacity of TETB to provide access to the suite of FET validated programmes for all FET centre/colleges requires a very significant CPD input that should be accompanied by ongoing support with regard to devising/controlling assessment instruments. At the time of writing, TETB is not adequately resourced to provide this input.

TETB will highlight this resource issue to SOLAS.

5.1.2 Programme Accessibility

5.1.2.1 Further Education Programmes

The latest versions of all FE programmes and related modules are available for download, via SharePoint, by all FE staff in TETB. SharePoint is password protected and accessible via the TETB website.

When a programme descriptor and/or module is updated in TETB, the footer of the document is changed to note the month and year of the change and the new version of the document uploaded to SharePoint, with a comment indicating the details of the change(s). At the commencement of each iteration of a

programme/module the teachers/tutor is required to use the current version.

5.1.2.2 Training Programmes

Training programme information in the form of FÁS Programme Specifications (QA58s) are accessed by centres in different ways, depending on whether the provision is through contracted training, evening provision, community training or second providers. Currently QA58s that are validated for use in contracted and evening training provision are accessible to the Contracted Training Officer, Assistant Training Services Manager and the QA Office staff in TETB, via the eCollege portal. The QA Office or the Contracted Training Officer provides contractors with the QA58.

Some of the more popular QA58s that are in use in community and second provision are uploaded to the TQAS section of the TETB website for information purposes only.

In terms of updating QA58s, SOLAS does not have a remit to maintain them. Currently TETB does not have the resources to roll out a systematic review of all existing QA58s in use in its training provision but in the event that there is a national approach to the review of the QA58s, TETB will contribute to this.

5.1.3 Programme Development

TETB has been an active contributor to both the legacy IVEA/CEEEOA and the ETBI shared programme development processes. TETB has taken a lead in both the development and evaluation of programmes, at levels 2, 4, 5 and 6, for sharing within the sector. TETB adopted the sample programmes developed by the FESS and supplemented these with additional modules developed and evaluated through the PAA process in TETB at level 3.

As an ETB with limited resources to invest in programme development, TETB will continue to work collaboratively with other ETBs to develop shared curricula to spread the programme development load across the sector.

5.1.4 Programme Review and Update

Once a programme has been offered, it may be the case that centres/colleges have suggestions for additions or modifications.

Where there is a request for an additional component to be added to an already validated programme, the centre/college is asked to complete a form providing:

- information about the existing programme
- information about the module(s) to be added
- a rationale for requesting the addition
- an explanation as to how the additional module(s) will fit in with the existing programme

This request is considered by the PAC, in terms of its appropriateness and adherence to the QQI 20% rule for adding components to validated programmes.

If approved, the addition is recorded in a master list of all changes made to TETB programmes and the updated programme documentation is updated on SharePoint. QQI is notified of the change, in the

event of the additional module not being part of an already validated programme.

Where there is a request to offer certification in a component for which a module was never developed, TETB will facilitate the development of a new module. In this case:

- programme developers with the necessary subject-matter knowledge base and experience are identified and trained
- once written, the module is evaluated, in line with the procedures outlined in the PAA, by two independent, trained evaluators until a consensus is reached on whether to recommend the module for approval or not
- the PAC reviews the documentation and reaches agreement on whether to recommend the module for validation or not

Where there is a suggested modification to an FE module:

- this suggestion is considered by the PAC
- in the event that the modification is adopted by the PAC, the updated module is uploaded to SharePoint

To date TETB has not reviewed programmes in a systematic way but has rather been led by the users of the programmes identifying how and where modifications could and should be made.

TETB is eager to begin the review of its programmes at levels 1 - 3 and awaits the review of the QQI awards to begin this work. Ideally programmes at these levels would be developed collaboratively by the ETBs, with shared curricula, to speed up the process. TETB is not currently offering certification at level 1 as the programme is no longer fit-for-purpose. Also there is a demand within TETB for greater choice of programmes at level 3 as currently the ETB is only validated to offer programmes leading to General Learning 3M0874 and Information and Communication Skills 3M0877.

5.1.5 Staff Recruitment, Induction and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

5.1.5.1 Staff recruitment

TETB is currently updating its staff recruitment policies and procedures that will be managed by our HR Department in line with nationally agreed policies and procedures.

All FET provision is delivered by appropriately qualified staff who have been recruited in line with TETB policies and procedures

5.1.5.2 Organisational Induction

TETB provides induction for new fixed-term staff and those covering maternity leave. This induction includes information on:

- Schools
- Corporate Governance / FOI
- Finance - pay
- Human Resources

- Further Education /Training

Where applicable induction is also provided at centre/college/programme level.

5.1.6.2 QA Induction

TETB offers a one-day information session, managed by the QA Officer to new teachers/tutors/trainers at the beginning of each academic year. This information session covers how to:

- interpret QQI award standards
- access and interpret programme related documentation
- ensure best practices in relation to assessment, including documentation
- link learning outcomes to assessment

5.1.6.3 Continuous Professional Development

Centres/colleges may invite a member of the QA unit to facilitate centre/college-based CPD on a QA topic requested by staff. Also, in the event that a CPD need is identified as a result of the assessment process, the QA unit makes a proposal to the QA Working Group about how to meet that need.

TETB has an Academic Staff CPD Policy and Process to support the well-being and professional development needs of staff, with the following strategic priorities:

- harness the strengths of staff for the benefit of the organisation and its students
- support staff to develop the necessary skills to deliver a quality service
- develop an ETB-wide policy on individual staff development
- foster an ethos of lifelong learning

TETB facilitates further education and training staff to attend relevant CPD events offered by, amongst others, the FESS. The QA Officer regularly updates Programme Co-ordinators, Principals and Centre Managers with information about CPD events that may be of interest to staff.

TETB staff have the opportunity to access eCollege courses and currently there are a number of TETB staff undertaking CPD using this platform.

Participation in professional development opportunities, either formal or informal, is not required to be recorded at organisational level in TETB. Therefore, there is no definitive TETB record of CPD opportunities availed of.

TETB will keep abreast of development in this area by participating in the ETBI FET CPD technical group.

In addition to traditional CPD training, management staff in the PLC colleges are involved with the National Association of Principals and Deputies. Also managers of the various programmes are all members of their respective national organisations, for example, National Association of VTOS Co-ordinators, National Association of Youthreach Co-ordinators, Adult Literacy Organisers' Association etc. CPD opportunities are also provided through these associations.

At national level, a senior manager from TETB is part of the SOLAS/ETB Professional Development Technical Group set up to provide strategic oversight of the FET Professional Development Strategy.

TETB has identified a professional development lead at senior management level with responsibility for 'championing' professional development within the organisation.

5.2 Consistency of Assessment

In many instances the same module is taught in multiple locations in TETB. While TETB has no structured mechanisms in place to facilitate assessors in developing shared assessment instruments and related documentation, it encourages collaboration where possible. This identifies an opportunity to explore and develop terms of reference for a task group to research current practice in relation to assessment procedures across centres/colleges and develop procedures to ensure consistency of assessment.

TETB, where possible, secures the services of one external authenticator to authenticate assessment results for the same programme/modules in more than one location. In doing this TETB can, not only determine whether assessment results are in line with the standard, but also, whether there is consistency of approach to assessment across provision. The EA reports may highlight discrepancies in consistency and in this case, the QA Working Group will suggest remedial action.

A number of TETB staff members work as external authenticators for other FET providers. This allows for these staff members to identify good practice in other provider's approaches and to help inform processes in TETB.

5.2.1 Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners

TETB has three legacy FE QA agreements – North Tipperary VEC, Institiuid Thuamhumhan and South Tipperary VEC QA Agreements. TETB has one legacy training QA agreement, the TQAS. In FE progress on merging procedures in policy area, B6 Fair and Consistent Assessment of Learners has taken place and the updated TETB agreed procedures and related documentation (including templates), are uploaded to the TETB website.

TETB has reviewed, approved and implemented FE processes for:

- plagiarism
- marking learner assessment evidence
- sampling for the authentication process
- internal verification (IV)
- external authentication (EA)
- the RAP
- learner appeals

5.2.2 Assessment to Support Standards Based on Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes as specified in the QQI component specifications are mapped to specific assessments in the modules. Information on assessment guidelines and criteria, consistent with the QQI learning

outcomes, are also provided in the modules. These guidelines are adhered to by the assessor when devising assessment instruments and the learner's work is marked in line with the assessment criteria. Learners must be facilitated to demonstrate achievement of all learning outcomes specified in the component specifications before certification for the learner can be sought by TETB.

5.2.3 Assessment to Support Effective Teaching and Learning

Learners are provided with feedback on their formative and summative assessment work. Assessors are required to provide this feedback in a timely manner so as to inform a learner's participation on the programme. Currently TETB has a number of legacy QA procedures for feedback to learners.

5.2.4 Assessing Learners

Assessors working in FE in TETB devise local assessment instruments and related documentation for the module they are delivering. They plan when, during the course of the module, they will assess learners. This plan is documented in a template and communicated to learners. The plan is also available to the internal verifier and external authenticator. Assessors are required to develop assessment instruments and related documentation in the form of briefs and examination papers.

Assessors in training in TETB use the relevant assessment instrument specification (AIS) that accompanies a module. These specifications were originally developed by FÁS and are still in use today. TETB is aware of the ETBI facilitated review of a number of AISs and intends to use the revised AISs when they become available. TETB is also contributing to this work through their review of the specifications accompanying the module leading to Assessment Practice 6N2228.

5.2.5 Internal Verification, External Authentication and Results Approval Panel

TETB has put a lot of time and resources into reviewing legacy procedures for IV, EA and RAP. The result of this work is that there is now a single set of templates in use in FE to support the implementation of these procedures. Staff involved in the implementation have also been regularly briefed and updated on any changes made.

The templates are available for download on the TETB website and are reviewed and updated regularly. The most extensive review of these processes happens following the June certification each year, as this is the busiest round of certification in TETB. However, if issues are identified with these processes at another certification round there will be a review, instigated by the QA Officer and supported by the QA Working Group.

While in FE review of IV, EA and RAP processes have taken place these have yet to be considered in training.

5.2.5.1 Internal Verification

The role of the internal verifier is carried out by those managing/overseeing programmes in a centre/college and also by those teaching on a programme. Normally one person will internally verify the documentation per module, but in some cases there will be two people assigned to one module,

particularly where one or both people are new to the role. The IV process in TETB is exclusively a quantitative process. The QA Officer provides training for anybody who will be working as an internal verifier for the first time, or for anybody who wants to refresh their knowledge about the process and the related documentation. All documentation relating to the IV process is available for download from TETB's website.

5.2.5.2 External Authentication

TETB uses trained authenticators that are external to the ETB, i.e., those that are not employed by the ETB in any other capacity. The booking of external authenticators is facilitated centrally by the ETB. In FE, those with responsibility for organising the authentication process come together to identify overlap in need and to agree people taking a lead in securing the services of authenticators for specific subject areas. In training, the QA Office identifies and assigns an appropriate EA. A record of EA usage is maintained by the QA Office for all FET programmes.

In training, the EA report is forwarded to the QA office as well as the centre manager. This facilitates the collation of feedback to inform an annual review and feedback session for centre managers/QA personnel. Whilst, the QA office has recently begun to request receipt of EA reports from FE centres/colleges following each authentication period, the review exercise could become more comprehensive.

In relation to EA sampling of learner portfolios in the training context, currently the EA advises the centre/college of the sample in advance of the visit. As the EA is only provided with a grade sheet that does not contain individual learner results, it increases the risk that borderline grades are omitted from the sample selected and therefore the authentication process.

A review of TETB FET sampling procedure is required to improve assessment practice.

5.2.5.3 Results Approval Process

TETB Results Approval Panel is made up of a minimum of three of the following who have completed the appropriate training with the QA Officer:

- Adult Education Officer
- Assessor
- Centre Manager
- Chief Executive
- Department Head
- Deputy Principal
- Director of FET
- External Authenticator
- Internal Verifier
- Principal
- Programme Manager

For certification rounds other than June, TETB convenes one results approval panel meeting to sign off on all results for TETB. For the June certification round, due to the volume of work involved, TETB convenes two results approval panel meetings, normally with one held in Clonmel and one held in Nenagh. The two meetings run consecutively so that all centres/colleges can be accommodated. Any centre/college in TETB presenting learner results to the results approval panel must make a short oral presentation outlining:

- examples of good practice identified during the authentication process
- areas for improvement identified
- suggestions for actions to be taken to address areas for improvement

The oral presentations are made while representatives from all centres/colleges are present. This means that each centre/college hears about the experiences of their colleagues in the other centres/colleges. This has proven to be a very positive learning experience for all.

Following the oral presentations, the representatives of the centres/colleges will leave the room to allow the panel to review the IV and EA reports and to agree to the submission of results to QQI. The results approval panel members will also identify and discuss any issues arising in relation to the results and the QA process and make recommendations for corrective action.

As appropriate, the detail contained in the oral presentations and the findings of the results approval panel members will be contained in the RAP report. These reports are available for viewing via SharePoint so that all FE staff can inform themselves of actions/recommendations.

TETB has a similar approach in place for approving results in training with the exception of CTCs and STPs who operate a centre-based results approval process. Results are both presented and approved by members of same governance group.

The results Approval Process in CTCs and STPs will need to be explored and a TETB FET wide policy developed.

5.2.6 Appeals

TETB operates a centralised appeals process for FE which is managed and administered by the QA Unit. All documentation relating to the appeals process is available for download from the TETB website. Learners are informed of their right to appeal a result and/or the assessment process when they are issued with their statement of results, following sign off by the results approval panel.

Whilst the FE appeals process has been embedded for the last 2 years, the growth of programme offerings by training services now triggers the need to create a process that can be consistently applied to all FET learner appeals.

5.2.7 Quality Assurance Issues Arising

It has been a very positive development for TETB to have dedicated QA staff in place for the first time since March 2016. This has created a central base for contact for staff in the event that a centre/college has an issue or query relating to the implementation of any of the QA procedures. In addition, the QA

Officer regularly updates colleagues in TETB with information on QA-related matters. Currently the QA unit has two staff who have responsibility for the promotion and oversight of QA across FET.

When an issue relating to a QA assessment procedure has been identified through the authentication process, the issue is discussed by the results approval panel, recorded in the RAP report and further considered by the QA Working Group. Recommendations are made by the RAP members to the QA Working Group for endorsement and sign-off. Other assessment related issues identified through the day-to-day rollout of programmes are also brought to the attention of the QA Working Group by Co-ordinators/Principals for discussion/clarification and action, as appropriate.

TETB convenes meetings of Principals and Deputy Principals and also of FET management staff every 4-6 weeks. QA is a recurring theme on the agenda for these meetings and the QA Officer attends these meetings regularly.

As a proactive measure of preventing QA issues, TETB has invested considerable time and resources, since March 2016, in delivering QA-specific CPD/supports to all FET staff involved in assessment. Sustaining this level of CPD/support, however, will prove challenging with limited QA staff, the development of training services and the significance of QQI's new QA Guidelines.

Mechanisms of delivering timely CPD will need to be explored, for example, the use of technological tools.

5.2.8 Non-QQI Assessment Processes

Non-QQI assessments are undertaken in line with the QA regulations of the certifying body. Currently, all assessment procedures being undertaken for non-QQI assessments are managed at centre/college-level.

5.3 Public Information and Communication

The TETB website, www.tipperaryetb.ie, provides information on the range of services that it provides, including links to its various centres/colleges. A range of information is made publicly available on the website, including, for example, annual reports, newsletters, customer service charter, audit and finance reports, data protection policy and freedom of information policy.

In addition to the TETB website, all second level colleges that incorporate PLC provision have their own website, as do some of the FET centres/colleges. TETB's website provides information relating to all courses on offer in the ETB. Many of the FET centres/colleges use social media, the local radio station, TippFM, and local papers to inform the public about what their centre/college does and what services it offers.

In addition to all course information being available via the website, all FET courses are also scheduled on the National Course Calendar, via the PLSS, and this information is made publicly available through the FETCH website, www.fetchcourses.ie.

In 2017, TETB engaged in a marketing exercise which resulted in the delivery of a brochure to 4,000

households in Tipperary. This brochure lists all FET courses for the academic year 2017/2018 as well as information relating to how to apply for a course, the NFQ and descriptions on both full-time and part-time FET programmes.

Whenever there are career days organised in the area, TETB takes a stand as an exhibitor. TETB FET staff also support local businesses by going into the workplace to inform staff about the courses on offer, at the request of the business.

TETB has a very active social media presence via Facebook, Twitter and a YouTube channel where information is posted daily with a view to engaging with as many people as possible in the locality.

6. The Learner Experience

6.1 Learner Admission

There is a range of ways an individual can become a learner in TETB, for example:

- walk-in
- DEASP referral
- self-referral through www.fetchcourses.ie
- guidance referral
- recruitment office
- Community Employment referral
- tutor referral
- employer referral
- Skills for Work referral
- Community Education engage adults in partnership with voluntary groups

Eligibility criteria for learners for programmes are set out in the specific Programme Operational Guidelines for Providers and where applicable in the European Social Fund (ESF) guidelines. Learner admissions are managed locally by programme management, by the TETB recruitment office or nationally, as appropriate. However, there are local variances in approaches to advertising, information to learners, pre-admission interview, screening assessments, course placements and English language testing as appropriate. It is expected that any learner seeking access to a programme would have the appropriate knowledge, skill and competence at the appropriate level of the NFQ as detailed in the programme or module descriptor.

6.2 Cooperation with other Agencies

6.2.1 Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

The DEASP and TETB recognise the close liaison and co-operation that has traditionally existed at national, regional and local levels. In recognition of the common elements of our respective missions we operate a formal protocol of referral. We work closely together to increase the effectiveness and efficiencies of our services for unemployed people and other socially excluded groups, particularly, in the context of the Government Policy Statement on Labour Market Activation, Pathways to Work. TETB also operates within service planning and other parameters as set by SOLAS and within the context of the FET Strategy 2014-2019 and national and regional skills priorities and structures, as outlined in the National Skills Strategy 2025.

Partnership work with community and voluntary groups is an important element for our part-time programmes as well as training where a number of courses run in Family Resource Centres (LTIs, family learning, Intensive Adult Basic Education (ITABE), BTEI and Community Education). Co-operation takes place with the wider non-statutory community groups and engagement with these groups sometimes shapes our provision.

Partnerships with employers for TETB Skills for Work programmes and for work placements for QQI Level 5 vocational courses are an integral part of our work.

6.3 Recognition of Prior Learning

TETB operates Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) QQI procedures for access to a programme and exemptions towards an award within FE. While TETB does not currently have agreed procedures for RPL for awards, this is an area that we will investigate in the future based on outcomes of current pilots.

6.4 Learner Information and Guidance

Some TETB learners attend an induction session(s) in which they receive general information about the centre/college, as well as the course-specific information. This may include:

- modules to be covered
- certification information
- assessment information including assessment deadlines
- assessment policies and procedures
- the course calendar and timetable
- centre attendance policies and procedures
- supports available to learners
- Susi grants (if appropriate)
- code of conduct
- complaints procedure
- and other relevant information

These inductions are facilitated and managed locally by centre/college and, in the case of some training programmes, the Contracted Training Officer/Evening Training QA staff are involved in induction. There is variance as to how learners are kept informed of activities throughout centres/colleges, with centres/colleges using course notice boards, emails, text messages and centre/college Facebook pages to mention but a few.

Assessment information and requirements are provided in the form of assessment instruments by the assessor. An overall assessment plan is devised at the start of the programme.

Learners are informed of the right to appeal their grade(s) and the assessment process in accordance with TETB's Appeals Policy.

There is a need for TETB to develop a learner information pack that can be modified to suit individual centres/colleges.

6.5 Learner Supports

Learners are encouraged upon application for admission to disclose any special needs or disabilities that they have, in order that reasonable accommodations may be considered. Where such a disclosure is

made, an appropriate staff member, e.g. programme co-ordinator, resource worker, guidance counsellor, teacher, tutor or instructor, will meet the learner to discuss the nature of the support(s). In training, applications for learner support are centrally co-ordinated by the QA Unit and endorsed by the Assistant Training Services Manager, where appropriate.

Supports sought may involve the application for a HEA grant in the context of an FE Learner in a full-time course (e.g. for laptop, light scribe pen, sign language interpreter, etc.) and other reasonable accommodations, such as extra time in an exam or a scribe.

New guidelines are being developed around reasonable accommodations by the ETBI Assessment Procedures Working Group and these will inform the development of the common TETB policy on reasonable accommodation.

Every reasonable accommodation is made to support learners either before admission or, once they have started a course. Individual learner needs are recognised and facilitated, e.g. prior learning or experience, maturity, differing capabilities etc. Supports are agreed with the learner. However, it is acknowledged that the granting of support needs is dependent upon programme type as well as physical, financial and staffing availability.

6.6 Learner Engagement

Centres/colleges generally have policies and procedures for the following areas which support learner engagement:

- Attendance – acceptable minimum level, punctuality, deadlines
- Encouraging attendance and retention on programmes
- Authorised and unauthorised absences (including Jury Service, certified sick leave, absence on compassionate grounds)
- Cases of regular absences
- Classwork missed due to attendance
- Internet use
- Code of conduct/behaviour
- Learner Charter

6.7 Learner Feedback

Learner feedback is an essential element of the life cycle of a programme within TETB and may be sought through written learner evaluations, online surveys, learner testimonials, via tutor feedback, verbal feedback. This feedback is used to inform future provision.

6.8 Learner Complaints Procedures

TETB learner complaints procedure adheres to the nationally agreed third party complaints procedure.

6.9 Programme Learner Support System

PLSS is a national joint initiative between ETBI and SOLAS which is hosted by SOLAS. PLSS is a data management system that includes a National Course Calendar (NCC) (further information on the PLSS is provided in 7.1).

The NCC provides an opportunity designed to provide the key data on programme outputs, outcomes and performance for the FET Sector. It provides for the secure sharing, collecting and utilising of data within the FET sector. The system incorporates the NCC, the National Programme Database (NPD), the Funding Allocation Requests and Reporting (FARR) system.

6.10 Technology-Enhanced Learning

The recently published National Strategy for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) in FET (SOLAS) defines TEL as “using technology to facilitate and support innovative teaching and learning practices and sets out a vision where, by 2019 teaching and learning is providing greater access to FET and is achieving positive outcomes, for learners, enterprise and our wider society and economy”. It sets out 18 actions under 3 themes including the development of actions plans within each ETB.

In line with the SOLAS Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy, TETB is currently participating in a baseline audit of TEL with Michael Mooney from SOLAS.

To progress the implementation of the strategy TETB will need to complete its TEL action plan.

7 Information and Data Management

The amalgamation of the VECs and training services into TETB meant that a number of different information and data management systems were inherited and are still being operated on a legacy basis. Over time, some of these will be phased out and will be replaced by the Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS) which is an information and data management system designed to manage course scheduling, learner applications and data, funding applications, evaluation and reporting.

7.1 Programme and Learner Support System

PLSS is a national joint initiative between ETBI and SOLAS which is hosted by SOLAS. PLSS is a data management system designed to provide the key data on programme outputs, outcomes and performance for the FET Sector. It provides for the secure sharing, collecting and utilising of data within the FET sector. The system incorporates the National Course Calendar (NCC), the National Programme Database (NPD), the Funding Allocation Requests and Reporting (FARR) system.

- National Course Calendar (NCC) - this facilitates the scheduling of courses, management of course applications and is a repository for the safe and secure storage of applicant details. Scheduled courses can be published on the Further Education and Training Course Hub (FETCH) – www.fetchcourses.ie which is operated by SOLAS. Applications for courses can be made through this website. Once a course is scheduled on the NCC all course data will be copied across to the DEASP ACM (BOMI) System (or the current CSS if the new DEASP ACM BOMI System is not yet live) and allows for referrals from the DEASP. It also facilitates the relaying of notifications to applicants/learners by email, text message and/or letter.
- National Programme Database (NPD) - this contains a full inventory of programmes being delivered in FET nationally. All FET programmes are stored in a central partition. Each ETB has its own partition where locally developed programmes are stored. It facilitates scheduling of courses on the course calendar system, which is part of the Client Service System (CSS).
- FARR - this is a web application linked to a database which has the capacity to capture quantitative data. It provides a coherent mechanism through which funding can be requested by TETB and presented for approval to the SOLAS Board. It also ensures that required statistical information/data related to FET provision is available for collation by SOLAS to inform future planning and for provision to other stakeholders, for example Department of Education (DES), DEASP, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER), etc.
- PLSS Reports – This allows one to browse Published Programmes, obtain statistical information on programmes by category and on learners by programme category

PLSS is being developed on a phased basis, with additional features and functions being released in sequence. It is intended, that over time, PLSS will replace all other Management Information Systems (MIS) being used in the sector to record and store learner data. The continued rollout of PLSS and its eventual linkages to FARR means that centres/colleges plan courses annually on FARR; they schedule courses on the National Course Calendar; they manage applicant referrals and direct applications to their courses, and they record retention, completion, accreditation, and progression rates on those courses.

As the Learner Database is rolled out, and learner records are entered, these will remain available for historical purposes. Older records will remain available through legacy databases.

TETB will engage with the new developments in PLSS.

7.2 QQI Business System

QBS is the online service provided by QQI to facilitate the making of awards to learners. It incorporates all awards made by QQI and operates at all 10 levels of the NFQ. QBS is a secure on-line system that authorised providers and centres/colleges can log into. QBS provides opportunities for certification every two months – i.e. six times per year. Providers enter learner, programme and result data into the QBS workspace in one of two ways, either by data file upload, where the provider's own IT system can generate the data file in a specified file format, or, by direct data entry using the QBS user interface and/or copy and paste from Excel. When all or part of the data in the certification workspace has been authorised following the completion of TETB's results approval processes, the learners are submitted to QQI for certification.

The QBS also allows for TETB to make an application for programme validation as required via the QBS programme validation services workspace.

QBS is currently being updated by QQI and TETB will participate in its rollout.

7.3 Other Data Management and Information Storage Systems

TETB uses a range of other data management systems in addition to the ones mentioned above, such as Salespulse, eNROL and VShare for attendance, assessment, timetabling, supervision and substitution, learner data, text messaging, on-line payment, returns etc. Training services use the results capture and certification request system (RCCRS) to upload results to the QBS and the Apprenticeship Client Services Management System for apprenticeships.

A range of information storage/document repository systems are also in place, both to address current and future as well as legacy needs.

Sharepoint is used to host TETB's validated programmes and RAP reports. These are password protected. TETB's website - <http://tipperary.etb.ie/> - is home to a large amount of information relating to TETB including its QA policies and procedures, schools, centre/college, programmes and courses. Moodle is currently being piloted in one college.

TETB recognises the volume of potential data sources available to support FET services and further acknowledges the role of data in terms of strategic planning. Greater analysis of this data in the future is undoubtedly needed.

TETB's QA Working Group has just begun to explore how QQI's certification reports may be utilised. Thus far, the group has only yet reached a superficial level of analysis but has identified the need for a universal approach to the treatment of unsuccessful results by all FET centres/colleges.

8 Collaborations and Stakeholders Relationships

8.1 Relationships with Key Stakeholders

8.1.1 SOLAS

TETB's primary relationship is with SOLAS due to its central role in funding, managing, coordinating and supporting the delivery of FET services.

This relationship revolves around information supply on measures including planning, inputs, outputs and certification for budgeting purposes.

The information supply is formalised through a national database namely FARR which in turn assists with strategic planning, European Social Funding requirements and the identification of future service requirements.

TETB also engages with SOLAS through the provision of craft apprenticeships under a National Memorandum of Understanding and has in place four approved Authorised Officers in compliance with the requirements set out therein.

TETB will deliver, during 2018, a direct training service at Phase two of the Standards Based Apprenticeship on behalf of SOLAS. In addition, TETB collaborates with SOLAS in the provision of traineeships with the sectors of Equine and Logistics and Distribution planned for future career traineeships.

8.1.2 QQI

TETB is a provider of QQI and we currently operate under four QA legacy agreements. Our QA Office ensures adherence to all QA requirements in the delivery of all validated programmes provided. TETB's development and review of its QA policies and procedures are guided by QQI's Core and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines.

TETB is currently completing this Executive Self Evaluation as part of the reengagement process with QQI.

8.1.3 Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection

TETB works closely with the DEASP in a collaborative way to ensure the delivery of services proactively and in a responsive targeted way. DEASP is the primary referral agency for training in TETB. An interagency protocol between TETB and DEASP is in place to manage this relationship.

8.1.4 Other Key Stakeholders

TETB has strong working relationships with a diverse range of National and Local stakeholders including the Local Authority, Local Enterprise Board, Regional Fora, Employers, Trade Unions, Sector Representative Bodies, Institutes of Technology, Community Activists, Voluntary Bodies and Boards, which have developed through the provision and delivery of services.

8.2 Second Providers

8.2.1 Contracted Training

Contracted Training is a procured service to deliver training on behalf of TETB. TETB has in place a Contracted Training function and as part of this framework, four main contractors have been awarded contracts for the provision of the service under twelve technical categories arising from a new National Competitive Procurement Process completed in collaboration with the Office of Government Procurement.

Contracted Training providers operate under one of TETBs legacy QA agreements, the TQAS. The QA Office support and monitor contracted programmes.

8.3 Community Training Providers

8.3.1 Community Training Centres

Community Training Centres (CTCs) are independent community-based organisations, catering for the training and employment needs of early school-leavers, primarily aged between 16 and 21 years. CTC programmes are intended for young people who:

- meet the current statutory school leaving age
- have no, or minimal, formal qualifications
- have not secured full time employment

Examples of programmes offered include employability skills, personal and social employment skills and a range of hairdressing and beauty courses. Courses are generally one year in duration, are full-time and lead to major and minor QQI Awards at levels 3 and 4. Beauty and hairdressing courses are certified by the Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VCTC).

CTCs operate under the TQAS and are supported and monitored by the QA Office. There are three CTCs funded by TETB and they are located in Clonmel, Thurles and Nenagh.

8.3.2 Local Training Initiatives

The Local Training Initiatives (LTIs) are project-based training and work experience programmes carried out in the local community and run by local community groups throughout Tipperary. These are

designed for people who are unemployed, and who are experiencing difficulty in gaining entry to the labour market. Programmes work towards QQI Major Awards Level 3, 4 and 5.

Courses can be full-time or part-time and are delivered over a 40-week period.

LTIs operate under the TQAS and are supported and monitored by the QA Office.

TETB currently have seven LTIs in operation throughout the County as shown in the following table:

Community Group	Location
Knockanrawley Resource Centre	Tipperary Town
COSDA	Carrick-on-Suir
Spafield Family Resource Centre	Cashel
Tipperary Association for Special Needs – Scoil Chormaic	Cashel
Making Connections	Clonmel
Moycarkey Borris Community & Sports Centre	Littleton
Cahir Development Association	Cahir

Table 4: List of LTIs in TETB

8.3.3 Specialist Training Providers

Specialist Training Providers (STPs) provide training programmes for people with a range of disabilities who require intensive support. The features of this specialist vocational training include longer duration, adapted equipment, transport arrangements and enhanced programme content. Examples of programmes offered include Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and vocational multi-skills. These courses have continuous intake and are delivered all-year round and lead to QQI awards at levels 3 and 4.

STPs operate under the TQAS and are supported and monitored by the QA Office.

TETB works with two STPs in Clonmel:

- National Learning Network
- Cluain Training

8.4 Community Education Providers

The Community Education strand of the Adult Education Service collaborates with a wide range of community development groups and other community providers to deliver both certified and uncertified programmes.

8.5 Stakeholder Engagement

The following outlines TETB's engagement with stakeholders.

1. The Director of FET is involved in the following:
 - Director of ETBI FET Forum. Guest speakers from SOLAS and other bodies attend this forum to provide important inputs
 - ETBI QA Strategy Group
 - ETBI Apprenticeship Strategy Group
 - ETBI Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Basic Skills Network
 - Local County Development Company (LCDC) and reports regularly on TETB actions in the Local and Economic Community Plan for Tipperary
 - Leadership and Management SOLAS FET CPD Strategy Sub Group
2. TETB AEOs participate in the following groups:
 - ETBI FET CPD Strategy Technical Group
 - ETBI TEL Strategy Group
 - ETBI PLSS Advisory Group, (The Recruitment Officer also participates)
3. The ETBI Principals of FET Colleges Network is a newly established network that is represented by a TETB FET Principal.
4. TETB has an excellent relationship with FESS and has supported staff to attend CPD organised by FESS.
5. The QA Officer represents TETB on the ETBI QA Group and has contributed to key national documents, such as Assessment Procedures and the Work Experience review.
6. TEB has several relationships with local, regional and national organisations and are active members of several forums as follows:
 - operates protocols with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), Libraries, DEASP and Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

- interacts with AONTAS and NALA on key initiatives and research. (TETB hosted the AONTAS Learner Forum in 2017 and TETB numeracy learners were winners in the Maths Eyes Competition, organised by NALA)
- engages with employers via Skills for Work and other provision
- member of both the DES Mid-West and South-East Regional Skills Forums
- links with QQI formally via ETBI Forums
- links with a wide variety of Community Groups e.g. Disability and others
- relationships with other awarding bodies and is mindful that its QA Guidelines will include these bodies
- links with Leargas to provide innovative CPD opportunities beyond Ireland to FET staff in a wide variety of topics
- TETB has a FET Committee with representation from Industry, Community and Voluntary Sector, LIT, LEO, Teagasc, DEASP and Learners (ETB Learner Representatives)
- FET staff meets formally and regularly with DEASP managers and Case Officers

9 Apprenticeships/Traineeships and Work Based Learning

TETB has developed, in collaboration with SOLAS, a FET Centre in Thurles where Phase two training under the Standards Based Apprenticeship scheme is being provided for.

The Thurles FET Centre caters for apprentices in the trades of Electrical, Electronic Security Services and Construction Plant Fitting. TETB hopes to engage in the provision of new apprenticeship programmes in consultation with SOLAS.

TETB is providing a Certified Accountancy Pathway Traineeship and Cleanroom and Packaging Operations (Manufacturing) Traineeship under the contracted training service and intends putting in place, following agreement with SOLAS, Career Traineeships in Equine and Logistics and Distribution in response to needs identified from research.

TETB delivers work-related learning at present through the Skills for Work programme in a range of employer sites, by arrangement, across the County.

10 Conclusions and Planned Actions

TETB has successfully amalgamated two Vocational Education Committees and training into one ETB. While it also has made considerable progress in agreeing common practices and procedures and integrating services, it recognises that further improvements are necessary to ensure that the services provided are of high quality and are innovative, responsive and inclusive.

This ESE process has enabled TETB to critically reflect on its progress to date in relation to its QA with reference to QQI's Statutory Core and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for ETBs, and subsequently identify key areas for improvement. The process was very beneficial in focusing staff on policies and practice currently in place in relation to QA. The process of focusing on QA has assisted in concentrating attention on the importance of explicitly developing and embedding a commitment to quality within TETB, with a structured review and improvement approach to support all aspects of TETB FET activity.

TETB recognises that it is primarily responsible for quality and its assurance of it. The goal is to have one QA system for TETB that is efficient, well communicated and integrated into the day-to-day activities of the organisation, with staff commitment being based on their ownership of the quality agenda.

TETB has agreed on four quality improvement objectives:

1. Governance, planning and management of quality
2. Delivery of FET
3. The Learner Experience
4. Information and data management

Details of the related key tasks/activities, the responsible person, timeline and benchmarks associated with each of these objectives are outlined in the accompanying TETB Quality Improvement and Development Plan. These take account of the size and complexity of TETB whilst also ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning are maintained.

Appendices

Appendix A



ETB Executive Self-Evaluation Terms of Reference [Version 0.1]

1. Background and Context

The 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established in 2013 following the amalgamation of former Vocational Education and Training Committees (VECs) and the transfer of 13 former FÁS training centres.

The 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act 2012 sets out detailed responsibilities that apply to the ETBs for quality assuring their programmes of education and training and related services. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) published Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines in April 2016 and Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the Education and Training Boards in May 2017.¹ Since establishment in 2013 ETBs have been operating legacy QA arrangements which transitioned to QQI under section 84 of the Act.

The FET Strategy 2014-2019 provides a clear policy context for quality in further education and training (FET). One of the five goals within the strategy is 'Quality Provision - *that FET will provide high quality education and training programmes and will meet national and international quality standards.*'² ETBs are moving now to new phase of QA and establishing the foundations for the development of a sectoral QA Framework that will assure quality across the sector and enable the sector to deliver on both its statutory and policy objectives for quality. This is a transformational change and developmental process; several sectoral development projects are progressing and will impact in this regard.

2. Executive Self-Evaluation

It is the responsibility of each provider, i.e. ETB, to devise procedures for QA and to have its own systematic processes for evaluating its own activity and for formulating plans and recommendations for its own improvement. The self-evaluation process needs to be flexible and appropriate to the provider and its stage of development. ETBs are relatively new statutory entities, within a significant transformational change process, including for structures and governance. In the context of the requirements of QQI Core and Sector Specific QA Guidelines, there is need to evaluate the effectiveness of legacy QA procedures which may no longer fit for purpose. Within the current developmental context of ETBs, this self-evaluation process is designed to:

¹ <http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Sector%20specific%20QA%20Guidelines%20for%20ETBs.pdf>

² <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

- assist in building capacity and identify gaps within ETBs to ensure compliance with QQI statutory core and sector specific QA Guidelines
- enhance ownership of quality and quality enhancement processes
- demonstrate leadership within the ETB
- result in recommendations for improvement and priority actions for each ETB
- recognise the environment, contexts and emerging structures of the ETBs

This is an ETB executive management level self-evaluation which will be undertaken in the context of QA sectoral development projects and in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the ETB executive self-evaluation process is to evaluate the governance and management of QA and the effectiveness of QA procedures, and to contribute to the development of an improvement plan which will support the ETB in meeting its statutory requirements for the establishment and operation of internal QA procedures, recognising the developmental and transitional contexts.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the ETB Executive Self-Evaluation are:

- I. To contribute to and support the ETB quality improvement planning and ETB ownership and governance of quality and quality enhancement.
- II. To promote the improvement of QA and further embedding of a quality culture in the ETB.
- III. To support sectoral level improvement by ensuring there is a consistency in the approach to the executive self-evaluation process, thematic focus and criteria applied self-evaluation report format and improvement plan.
- IV. To identify current gaps and priorities for improvement in the context of QQI statutory QA guidelines.

4. Process and Methodology

The executive self-evaluation will be conducted with an external advisor/facilitator(s). A project lead for the executive self-evaluation process will be identified in the ETB.

The FET management team in the ETB, in collaboration with the external facilitator(s) will identify the evidence basis for the self-evaluation, and will produce the ETB executive self-evaluation report addressing the agreed objectives, criteria and terms of reference.

The final report will be agreed and signed off through the ETB Chief Executive and will form the basis of the ETB Improvement Plan.

Appendix B

Overview of TETB Service Provision

Centre Type	Locations	Range of Provision
Administration Offices	Nenagh (Head Office) Clonmel (Sub Office)	Human Resources Finance Corporate Governance Capital Procurement IT & Communications
FET	Thurles	Contracted Training Evening Training Apprenticeships
Post Primary	Borrisokane Community College Coláiste Dún Iascaigh, Cahir Comeragh College, Carrick-on-Suir Coláiste Chluain Meala, Clonmel Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed, Thurles Coláiste Phobal, Ros Cré Nenagh College, Neangh Newport College, Newport Scoil Ruain, Killenaule St. Ailbe's School, Tipperary Town	Post Primary Education
Gaelcholáiste	Gaelcholáiste Cheitinn, Clonmel	Post Primary Education (through Irish)
PLC	Templemore CFE CTI, Clonmel Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed, Thurles Coláiste Phobal, Ros Cré Nenagh College Newport College St. Ailbe's School, Tipperary Town	PLC VTOS BTEI (<i>Full-time, part-time, etc.</i>)
Further Education	FET Centre, Cahir FET Centre, Carrick-on-Suir Adult Learning Scheme, Clonmel FET Centre, Clonmel (Old Army Barracks) FET Centre, Clonmel (Prior Park) FET Centre, Killenaule	Second Chance Education Community Education Literacy Education Traveller Training Work-related Education BTEI Adult Literacy

	Coláiste Eile, Thurles Teach an Leinn, Nenagh FET Centre, Cashel FET Centre, Roscrea Céim Eile, Templemore FET Centre, Nenagh	<i>(Full-time, part-time, night etc.)</i>
Community Training	CTCs – Clonmel, Thurles, Nenagh STPs – Clonmel (x2) LTIs – Littleton, Cahir, Cashel Tipperary Town, Carrick-on-Suir Clonmel (x7)	Community Training
Youthreach	Cappawhite Roscrea Templemore	Introductory Vocational Skills



Appendix C

TETB FET Committee Terms of Reference

Tipperary Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Committee

Legislative Background: A Further Education and Training (FET) Committee can be established by the Education & Training Board in accordance with Section 45 of the Education & Training Board Act 2013.

Section 45 of the ETB 2013 Act states:

1. An Education and Training Board may establish committees to:
 - a. perform such one or more of its functions as, in its opinion, could be better or more conveniently performed by a committee, or
 - b. advise it in relation to the performance by it of any of its functions,
 - c. and may determine the terms of reference and regulate the procedure of any such committee

Remit

- A. Assist Tipperary Education and Training Board on any matter on which it requests advice in relation to further education and training.
- B. Advise and support ETB further education and training (FET) management, e.g. Acting Education Officer, Adult Education Officer, and Training Manager, on matters regarding further education and training in the ETB area. This guidance will also apply to other further education and training staff who may be invited to give input to the Committee on specific programmes and services from time to time.
- C. Monitor and review the timely delivery of further education and training inputs and outputs in order to ensure a continued flow of funding, and maximum impact for learners, employers and the community, according to government policy.
- D. Provide a forum for further education and training stakeholders operating in the ETB area to discuss the provision of further education and training programmes and services. This could include the sharing of expertise and suggestions of areas of collaboration between the ETB and relevant local stakeholders.

- E. Support ETB FET service to address key ETB further education and training actions named in relevant national and local government action plans/ documents e.g. SOLAS, DES, DJEI. DSP and LECP.
- F. Offer guidance to the ETB further education and training services in its development of quality assurance systems and procedures.
- G. Assist the ETB in supporting the professional development of its FET staff.
- H. TETB Codes of Conduct and Governance apply to all members of the FET committee.
- I. A FET Committee shall, from among the representatives of the Education and Training Board -
 - i. Appoint to act as chairperson a person appointed to the Committee
- and*
- ii. Appoint any other member of the Committee to act as vice-chairperson to perform the functions of the chairperson in the absence of the chairperson.
- J. A FET Committee shall, by the Standing Orders of the Education and Training Board, regulate its procedure or business at its meetings.
- K. A FET Committee shall hold at least one meeting in each financial year but shall not hold more than 4 meetings in any financial year.
- L. The quorum shall be five.
- M. The members of a FET Committee shall hold office for such period, not exceeding 5 years, in line with the term of office of Tipperary Education and Training Board, but are eligible for re-appointment.
- N. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed at an agreed timeframe.

Appendix D

How CPD currently works in TETB

TYPE OF CPD	HOW IT WORKS	COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT	SCHEDULE OF DELIVERY	EXAMPLES	EVIDENCE
FET or school centred based	At local level, Programme Managers and Principals identify new and/or current tutors/teachers who may benefit from extra support (individual or small group) mentoring	Programme/Centre Manager identifies gaps in current knowledge or new areas that may enhance programme delivery	On an ongoing basis	Current or new tutors are mentored by an experienced tutor/teacher	Support agreed and monitored by Programme/Centre Manager/Principal
FET or school centred based	At local centre or school level, a particular need is identified	Programme/Centre Manager identifies an area of professional development needed and this is discussed with the appropriate AEO/Training Manager so that a support may be put in place	On a planned basis through AEO consultation with Programme Managers/Centre Managers	Integrating local authentic materials into ESOL A1 courses Teaching Methodologies for Maths/Numeracy at Level 2 (Quantity and Number)	CPD Calendar for full-time and part-time programmes from Jan-Dec available
On a national basis	CPD opportunities are available through associate/support organisations that are	Programme/Centre Managers/Principals/AEO/Trainin	On an ongoing basis	FESS: Active learning approaches and tools to support FET learners in the classroom	Certificate of attendance/ Sign-in sheet

	deemed beneficial to staff	g Manager/FET Director		<p>NALA: ESOL Conference</p> <p>HSE: Self Harm Workshops, Assist Training, Child Protection Workshops</p>	
QA specific training identified locally	Through the ongoing monitoring of Results Approval Panels Reports, areas that need development or improvement are noted by the QA Working Group or as requested by specific centers	Arranged by the QA Officer in consultation with the QA Working Group or school/centre	As needed	<p>Academic Writing for teachers/tutors/trainers workshop</p> <p>How to write assessment instruments for new assessors workshop</p>	Sign-in sheet
Specific CPD for Targeted group of Staff	On occasion, a particular opportunity within a specific programme may require a targeted approach for a specific group	Programme/Centre Managers/ Principals/AEO/Training Manager/FET Director	As programme requires	<p>Transformative Community Education (QQI Level 7, 10 credit Certificate)</p> <p>Volunteer Tutor Training for Adult Literacy Service</p>	Certificates of Award or attendance available

CPD Policy	Staff with one year's continuous employment with TETB may apply on an individual basis for financial support for an accredited qualification	Senior Management Team	Application process available on a yearly basis	BA MA	Certificates available in HR
Leadership and Management Development	Specific targeted training provided for managers or programme leaders as the need is identified	Senior Management Team	As needed	Project Management	Sign-in sheet
Erasmus	On an annual basis, staff working in the FE area are invited to submit an Expression of interest form for an Erasmus opportunity	AEO with responsibility for CPD makes an overall application through KA1 application process	Yearly application	Specific areas of development identified: TEL	Erasmus mobilities logged online

