

Strategic Performance Agreement 2018 – 2020

Cork Education and Training Board

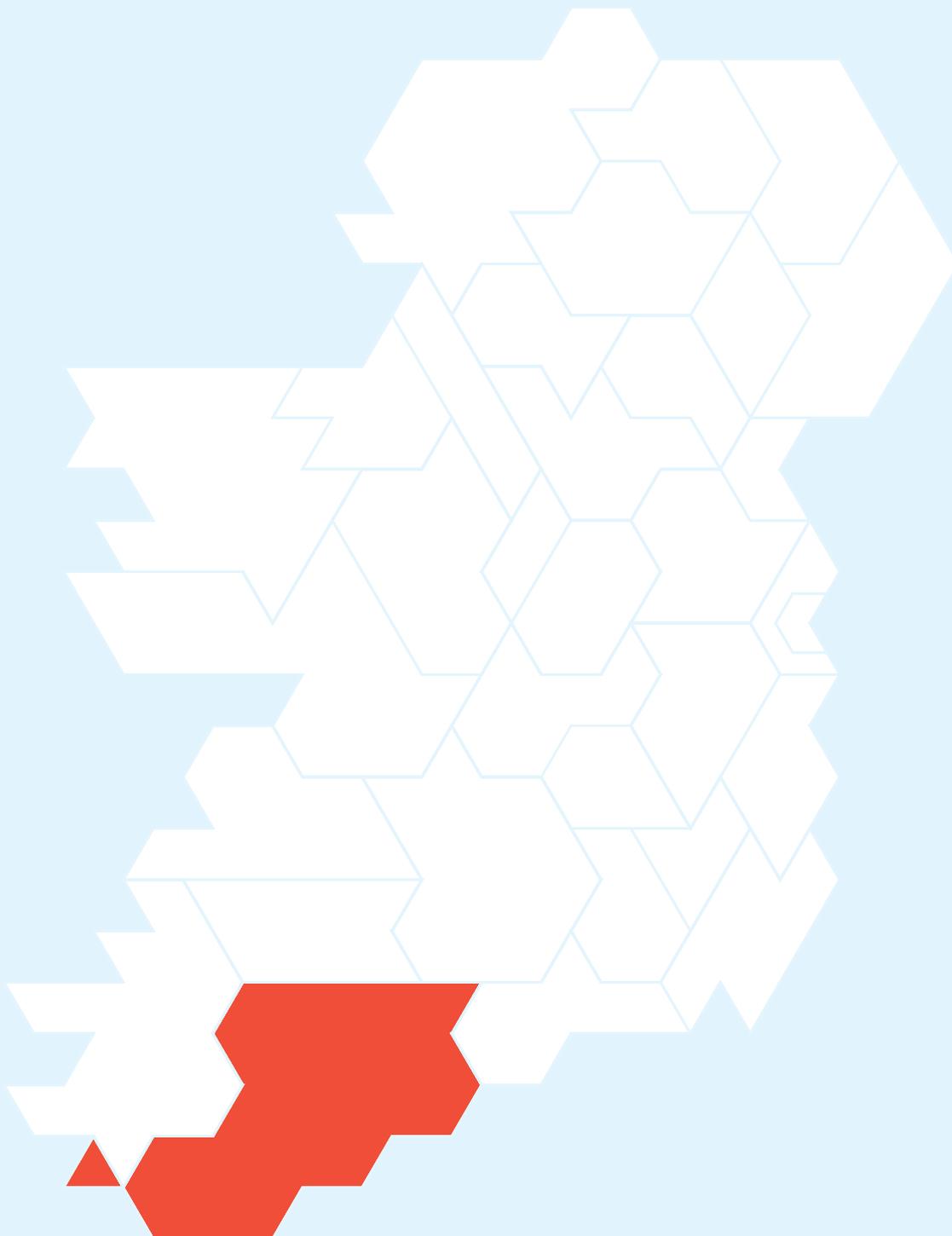


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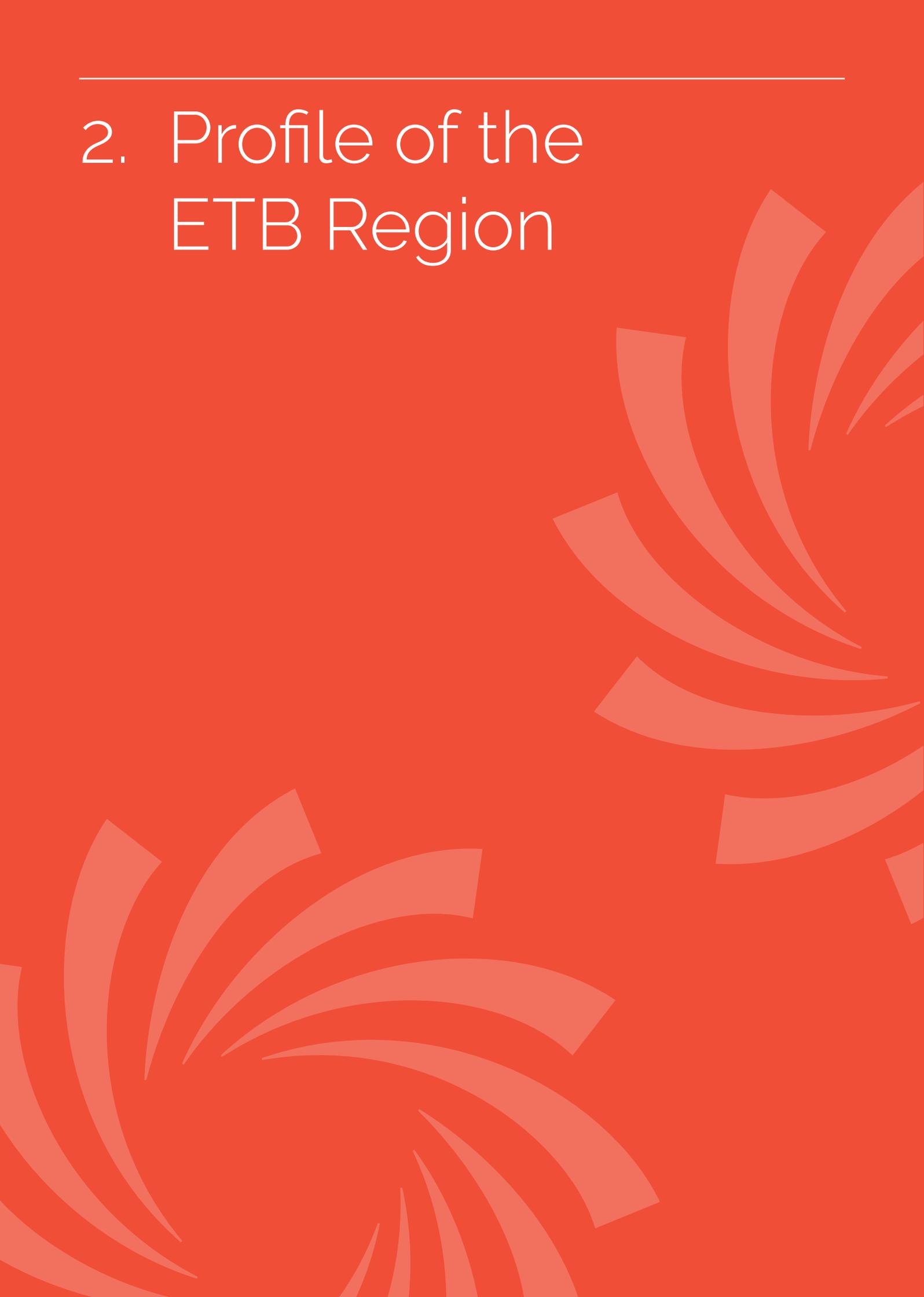
1. Introduction



Introduction

This agreement between SOLAS and Cork Education and Training Board (Cork ETB) sets out the context, strategic priorities and ETB contribution to achievement of key national further education and training (FET) sector targets over the period 2018-20. It also articulates the ETB's commitment to supporting the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant to FET provision and identifies the key risks and challenges which must be mitigated and addressed in order to ensure successful delivery of this agreement. The agreement is the product of extensive dialogue and engagement between SOLAS and Cork ETB, with independent input and validation from a panel of experts with an understanding of Irish and international good practice in further education and training systems.

2. Profile of the ETB Region



Section 2

Profile of the ETB Region

Cork Education and Training Board services one of the largest areas, by both in terms of size and population, in the country. The distribution and variances in population across the region create a unique set of challenges for CETB in the delivery of services.

Within the greater Cork Metropolitan area are situated the major urban towns of Ballincollig, Carrigaline, Middleton, Cobh and Glanmire, each with populations in excess of 12,000 individuals, with Mallow and Fermoy located within 35 kilometres of Cork City. West Cork can be considered a distinct area or region within the county as a whole, with a number of towns having significant populations, including Bandon, Kinsale, Clonakilty, Bantry and Castletownbere. The distance between Castletownbere and Cork city is over 125 kilometres. The population in the East and North East of the county is more dispersed, with Youghal in the east and Mitchelstown in the north east the most populous towns.

2.1 Learner Profile

The profile of learners engaging with CETB Further Education and Training programmes reflects the diversity and complexity of Irish society. From school leavers who are engaging with Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses and apprenticeships, to mature adult learners who have engaged with a variety of programmes to build additional skills and competencies that are necessary for them to gain or progress in employment, to individuals seeking compensatory education to develop their literacy and numeracy skills, to members of the immigrant community seeking to develop English language competency, to early school leavers who are availing of second chance options through Youthreach and Community Training Centre options.

The learner cohort can be broadly categorised into four main groups, broadly based on the NFQ level of programmes aimed at addressing their specific learning needs:

- **Foundation** – comprising generally the unemployed, early school leavers, individuals with less than upper second-level qualifications and members of the new communities. Many of these learners are engaged with programmes at NFQ Levels 1 to 3, with a significant emphasis on developing core literacy, numeracy and IT skills for progression.

CETB Area 2016



- **Progression** – learners who generally have not completed upper secondary level education, but who have reasonable to good functional literacy and numeracy. Their participation is generally on programmes at NFQ Level 4 as preparation for progression to education or training programmes at Level 5.
- **Vocational** – learners who have generally completed upper secondary level education, or have engaged in significant education and skills development across a period in employment. Whether a recent post-primary (Leaving Certificate) graduate, or a mature learner returning to education/training, this cohort are generally engaged on Further Education and Training programmes at NFQ Level 5 or 6, including PLC, apprenticeship and SST programmes. Successful completion of these programmes may lead directly to employment or progression to higher education programmes.
- **Specific Skills Development** – the profile of learners engaging with specific skills development courses varies considerably, depending on the purpose and nature of the course. In many instances these learners are engaged in upskilling for a specific skill required in the workplace and the training is supported or sponsored by their employer.

There has been a change in the general learner profile as employment opportunities have increased and unemployment levels have fallen. With national unemployment dropping below 6% (5.9% April 2018), the number of individuals categorized as long term unemployed, and the general profile of this cohort, is significantly different to that of the last ten years.

2.2 Enterprise Base

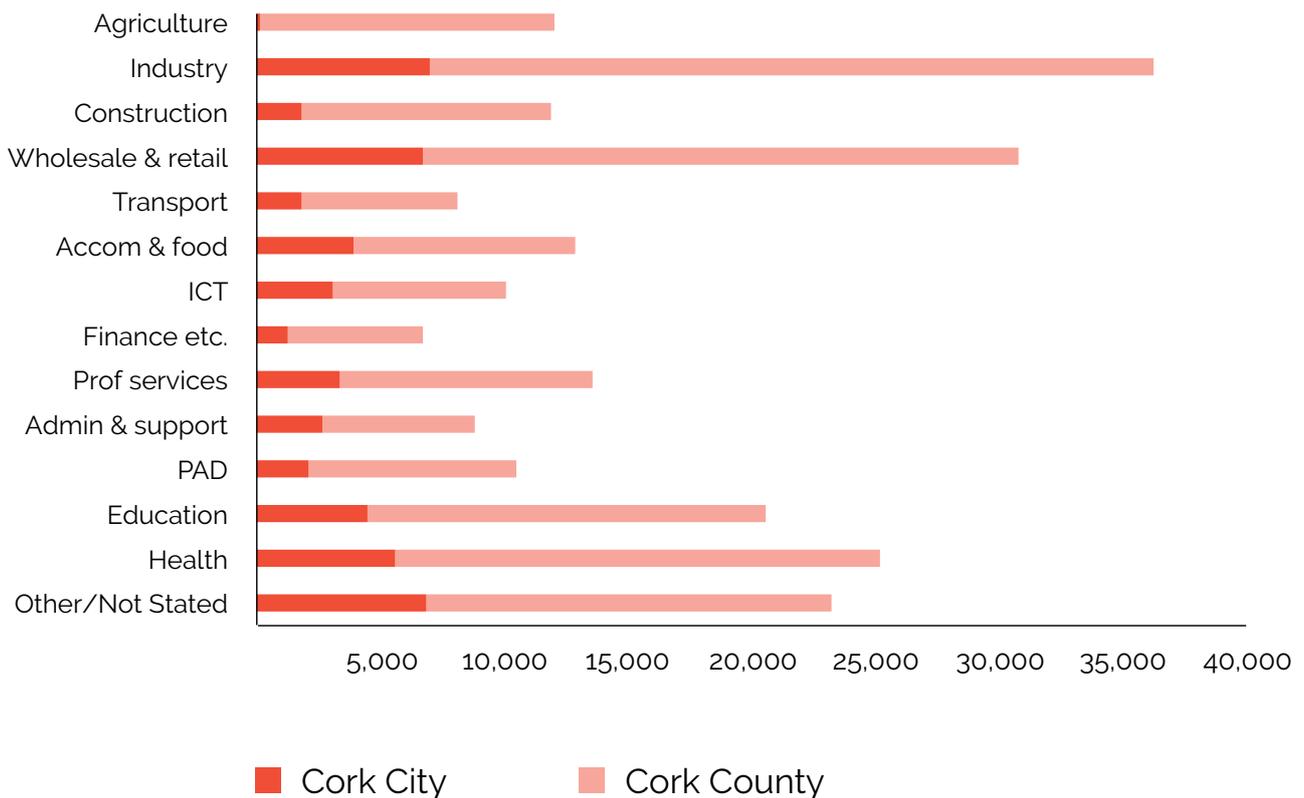
Cork has a broad enterprise sector with significant activity in Pharmaceutical and Biopharma manufacturing, medical devices, ICT (hardware and services), food and drink processing, internationally traded services, tourism, marine activity, mariculture, forestry and agriculture. The service sector, in particular health and care related services, also features strongly in the region.

The region is extremely diverse in terms of the type and scale of enterprises to be found in localities. The pharmaceutical, biopharma and medical device companies, including Novartis, GSK, Pfizer, Lilly, Boston Scientific, Stryker, PMD Solutions, AdventaMed, Millipore, Novartis and Janssen, are located largely within the greater Cork harbour area. The IT sector, while having a significant presence within the greater Cork City area (Apple, EMC, VMWare, Dell are all located in there), is more broadly spread, with a lot of smaller IT companies, largely in the IT service sector, located across the county.

Agriculture and related food industries, both large scale and smaller, artisan food producers, provide significant employment across the region, and are a growing sector. Hospitality and Tourism, with the wealth of opportunities presented by Cork's location on the Wild Atlantic Way and the Ancient East tourist offerings, and the appeal of both Cobh and Spike Island, are major employers and are evidencing strong growth following improvement in the national economic situation. The breakdown of employment across the county is provided in the diagram below.

The diversity of the region is further illustrated by the categorisation of employers/enterprises when categorised by workforce size, with over half of the workforce employed in companies/enterprises with less than 50 employees, and almost one third of the workforce are engaged in enterprises with less than ten employees.

Detailed Breakdown of Employment



3. ETB FET Provision



Section 3

ETB FET Provision

3.1 Staffing and Infrastructure

Cork ETB employs over 1,200 staff in the delivery of its FET services, with approximately 70% full-time (PWT or CID). These staff are employed across the region, in 5 Further Education Colleges, 7 Further Education units attached to post primary schools, 12 Youthreach Centres, the Cork Training Centre (Services), FET Centres in Fermoy, Mallow, Youghal, Bandon, Carrigaline and Bantry, as well as a variety of outreach centres and in locations provided by, or operating in, co-operation with other organisations.

The range of staff grades and positions is complex and diverse, and while integration on an operational level has been achieved to a considerable degree, the absence of a nationally agreed organisational structure and a revision of terms and conditions with appropriate designation of roles and responsibilities to meet the new and developing requirements of the sector is a cause for some frustration. To illustrate the complexities within the sector, there are 28 employment categories/positions in the FET service, with a myriad of associated pay scales attached to same.

CORK ETB 2017

NO. COMMENCING COURSES:

25,390

NO. COMPLETING COURSES

23,560

NO. OF OVERALL BENEFICIARIES

28,506

Service	No. of locations	Capacity	Notes
PLC (Independent)	4	5,000	
PLC (attached)	7	1000	Includes Kinsale College
Training Centre	2	1500	Biopharma (Carrigaline Centre leased
Youthreach	12	400	8 leased
Prison Education Unit	1	100	IPS, Cork Prison
FET Centres/Adult Education centres	46	5000	Youghal, Bantry, Fermoy CETB owned
Outdoor Education Centres	2	200	Kinsale, Schull

3.2 FET Provision

In 2017 Cork ETB supported over 28,000 beneficiaries¹, with funding from SOLAS of €48.8m. As noted above, FET is delivered across a range of facilities of differing scales, as set out in the table below. CETB's network of centres across the county includes a combination of owned and leased premises. CETB has undertaken a significant programme of review and consolidation of leased premises over the past three years, with a targeted investment into centres which fell below the standard that was considered acceptable for learners. Where identified, alternative improved premises were procured. A new FET centre was developed in Carrigaline in 2017, as there was no presence in the town for FET services outside of the Biopharma Training Centre.

New premises were procured in 2017 close to the main Training Centre in Bishopstown for development as a Hospitality and Training centre. Capital funding to commence the conversion of these premises and install training kitchens has been granted by SOLAS and it is intended that initial delivery will commence in the centre in Q1 2019.

CETB delivers some services in collaboration with community groups/providers across the region, many of whom provide course venues as part of the arrangements in place. Engagement with the two local authorities is good, and Cork City Council in particular has, for many years, provided premises on favourable terms for FET programmes, including Ringmahon House (Youthreach Mahon) and the purpose built Youthreach, Adult Education and Youth building in the Glen, as well as additional PLC accommodation at Browns St, adjacent to St John's College.

CETB requires a capital budget for maintenance, repairs and development of FET premises. In addition, provision is required within the allocation to renew capital equipment on a regular basis, and provide for the equipment requirements of new programmes and courses as they are developed and commence delivery.

A map setting out the main Cork ETB locations is provided below.



1 Beneficiary numbers include those already enrolled at 1st January 2017

A list of the main Cork ETB locations is provided below:

- Ballincollig Adult Basic Education Centre
- AEGI - Cork Adult Guidance Service
- Middleton Adult Basic Education Centre
- AEGI - Cork Adult Guidance Service
- Cara Lodge
- Matt Talbot Adolescent Services
- Mallow College of Further Education
- Mayfield Write On Adult Literacy Scheme
- Coláiste Ghobnatan
- Coláiste Choilm
- Scoil Mhuire
- Youthreach Mallow
- St. Brogan's College
- Kinsale College of Further Education
- Éist Linn
- Bandon Adult Basic Education Centre
- Millstreet Adult Basic Education Centre
- Glanmire Community College
- St. Mary's Community College
- Cobh Adult Basic Education Centre
- Mallow Community National School
- Clonakilty Adult Basic Education Centre
- Clonakilty Community College
- Coachford College
- Carrignafoy Community College
- Fasnet Marine & Outdoor Education Centre
- Schull Community College
- North Cork Adult Education
- Read Write Now Literacy Scheme/ Bishopstown Literacy Scheme
- Altrusa Literacy Scheme
- St. Aidan's Community College
- Maria Immaculata Community College
- Coláiste an Chraoibhín
- Youghal Adult Basic Education Centre
- Write Together Adult Literacy Scheme
- Farranree Adult Literacy Scheme
- Youthreach The Glen
- Youthreach Youghal
- CityNorth College of Further Education
- Coláiste Treasa
- Terence MacSwiney Community College
- Bishop McEgan College
- Nagle Community College
- Mahon Basic Adult Education Support Scheme
- Youthreach Macroom
- St. Fanahan's College
- Cork College of Commerce
- Macroom Adult Basic Education Centre
- The Sutherland Centre
- Carrigaline Adult Basic Education Centre
- Education Unit Cork Prison
- Dunmanway Adult Basic Education Centre
- Youthreach Mahon
- Cork Training Centre
- Coláiste Árd Álainn
- Colaiste Pobail Bheantraí
- Travellers/Roma Literacy Scheme
- Kinsale Outdoor Education Centre
- Youthreach Bandon
- Davis College
- Youthreach Dean Street
- Coláiste Daibhéid
- Youthreach Knocknaheeny
- Mallow Adult Basic Education Centre
- Castletownbere Adult Basic Education Centre
- Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa
- Youthreach Fermoy
- Youthreach Ballincollig
- County Cork School of Music
- East Cork Adult Education
- St. Colman's Community College
- St. John's Central College
- Ionad Culthúra
- Youthreach Bantry
- St. Goban's Further Education & Training Centre
- West Cork Campus (Cork College of Commerce)
- Clonakilty College of Further Education
- Cork City Learning Support Services
- Cork ETB Biopharma Training Centre
- Gaelcholáiste Carraig Uí Leighin
- Carrigtwohill Community College
- Cork ETB Head Office
- Carrigtwohill Community National School
- ABLES Adult Literacy

4. ETB Strategic Priorities



Section 4

ETB Strategic Priorities

4.1 ETB FET Strategic Priorities

The CETB focus in 2018 is primarily on maintaining and improving the quality of its Further Education and Training provision for learners and business/employers in Cork. As set out in CETB's Statement of Strategy, 2017-2021, the actions to be undertaken in respect of all ETB FET provision are closely aligned and informed by the National FET Strategy. Our aim is to continue the development of services, within an integrated FET sector, providing individuals with relevant courses of high quality, that provide for preparation for entry into the world of work, development and consolidation of skills for those in employment, facilitate progression to further studies, and contribute to the development of the individual and the community. CETB's strategy includes the following commitments which provide a framework and focus for the delivery of this Strategic Agreement:

- Further development of an integrated and robust Quality Assurance system that supports and underpins all FET activity
- Further development of the integrated comprehensive planning structures that link CETB services and delivery with the economic and employer requirements of the region
- Continued development of progression pathways for learners, within FET services and to services outside of FET
- Development and implementation of a coordinated and comprehensive ICT strategy and infrastructure to support existing provision and provide for the development and delivery of blended, online and distance learning options for FET participants
- Development of appropriate learner support services for all FET learners, including learning support structures, guidance and counselling in recognition of mental health and other factors that can impinge on an individual's ability to engage with, and succeed in, learning.

CETB will, independently and collaboratively with our sister ETBs, over the period 2018-2020, review its current provision of courses at NFQ levels 1 to 6, and restructure where necessary to meet developing or emerging needs or identified shortcomings, or develop new courses as appropriate.

A particular focus for CETB over the period will be to develop a range of appropriate offerings to meet the education and training needs of those in employment. The publication of the SOLAS led further education and training policy framework for skills development of people in employment, "Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth in Ireland 2018-2021" will provide

CETB with a structure and policy support and direction to facilitate this.

In the sections below we discuss four core priorities for FET over the course of this agreement: quality of the learner experience; improving learner outcomes; programme development; and staff development and supports.

4.1.1 Quality of the Learner Experience

CETB's focus on improving the quality of the learner experience will focus on 6 core areas discussed below.

- 1. Access, Transfer and Progression** – learners have the right to be able to access education and training options at a level, in a location and a manner which is appropriate to their requirements. In addition, we believe that all learners should be provided with a clear statement of the transfer and progression opportunities that may be available to them through their engagement with their selected course.
- The development of a clear and easily accessible access, transfer and progression profile for all courses will be developed, in consultation with the Guidance Service, employers and other education providers. This will be communicated to potential learners through standardising course brochures, improving web based communications and information systems and including information on relevant progression options.
 - The phased introduction of Guidance "progression workshops" for all learners on programmes that primarily lead to progression within FET.
 - A comprehensive recruitment/enrolment screening process will be developed and piloted to ensure that learners are engaging at a level appropriate to their needs and requirements, and to assess the supports that they may require
 - An Access, Transfer and Progression Working Group, as a sub-group of the QA Steering Group, will develop policies on access, transfer and progression, reasonable accommodations of learners with specific needs and recognition of prior learning. It will also develop common pre-entry assessments, including English language testing, and admissions procedures across the ETB.

2. Development of Appropriate Learner Supports –

Many learners engaging with further education and training programmes are presenting with a range of complex needs that are, at the current time, not being fully addressed and provided for. In some cases, the lack of appropriate supports is leading to non-completion and /or failure to obtain the target certification. Across the duration of this plan, CETB will endeavour to put in place:

- Learner support service/system that provides appropriate support for learners with educational and other difficulties/disabilities
- Literacy and numeracy supports for learners requiring same, across all services
- Learner counselling and support service for learners experiencing mental health difficulties

Cork ETB piloted an Active Inclusion programme with PLC Colleges in the first instance during the 2017/2018 academic year and plans to further roll out the principles of a Universal Design for Learning approach to the wider further education provision during the 2018/2019 academic year. This will improve the quality of the teaching and learning experience for all learners but in particular those with specific needs.

3. Improving the Teaching and Learning experience –

The quality of teaching is intrinsically linked to the quality of learning. Across the duration of this agreement, CETB will seek to improve and enhance the quality of instruction provided for all learners through cultivation and promotion of a culture that values and supports continued improvement and development. CETB will:

- Through a coordinated Professional Development strategy, aligned to the national PD Strategy for the sector, ensure that all teaching staff have access to appropriate professional development opportunities, not only in their area of specialist knowledge, but in pedagogical practice, innovation and development
- Continue to develop the ETB's quality assurance structures and approach, with a focus on the development of an intrinsic culture of quality
- Support the incorporation of technologies and alternative methodologies into the teaching and learning environment
- Support the development of systems and mechanism that encourage the sharing of experience and expertise, within and across centres
- Develop further the staff in industry programmes
- Implement a comprehensive learner review mechanism that provides the learner perspective on their experiences

4. Provision of Additional and Alternative Learning Opportunities

- The development of blended, online and distance alternatives to traditional modes and models of course delivery will be piloted across the duration of the agreement
- CETB will continue to engage with the development and delivery of new education and training options across its services, including:
 - New apprenticeships
 - New traineeships
 - Short courses and specific skills development for people in employment
 - Modular courses that enable learners to engage flexibly with the education and training requirements to enter employment or develop in employment

5. Enhancement of the Learner Environment – CETB is committed to providing the best possible facilities for learners and staff, where the physical surroundings, resources and infrastructure provide a positive and supportive environment for learning. Investment in the development and improvement of existing and new facilities will be pursued by the ETB, through the allocation of an element of the overall FET budget.

6. Development of partnerships with other stakeholders – the quality of our FET programmes, and the value of the outcomes for learners is directly linked to the quality of the engagement with other stakeholders, including employers, other education providers, state agencies and local communities. CETB will actively promote and nurture existing partnerships, and seek to develop additional partnerships at all levels of the organisation. A key feature of the development of new partnerships is the promotion and publication of the activities and successes of the FET services within CETB. A concerted effort will be made to develop the public profile and market CETB FET (Cork FET)

4.1.2 Improving Course Outputs and Learner

Outcomes

CETB has identified that a key feature in its ability to meet the six targets set out in this agreement is through the improvement of retention rates. In order to achieve this the following approaches will be adopted:

- Area and local planning will be required to interrogate more closely the employer requirements within the region, the skills needs requirements for particular industry and business needs, and the structure, content and delivery of proposed courses
- Implementation of the learner screening/ assessment tools referenced earlier to ensure that potential participants have the interest and basic skills and competencies required to engage fully with the programme
- Increase and improve work placement arrangements for learners within all programmes
- Provide learners with the additional supports referenced earlier to reduce non-completion rates due to factors that are addressable
- Improve data gathering and reporting mechanisms that enable centres and services to profile accurately on a regular basis retention and achievement statistics for their course, to set appropriate local targets for retention and progression, and to review course structure in a timely manner

4.1.3 Programme Development

The requirement that FET programmes and services develop, evolve and change to meet the changing requirements of industry and the economy is fully accepted, and CETB is committed to ensuring that the programmes and services delivered are fit for purpose and relevant to the requirements of the economy and the learner. Where change and new or additional programmes and courses are required, CETB is committed to their development and delivery.

However, it must also be highlighted that are areas within FET where provision is effective and not currently in need of reform, or where change will be more gradual and occur over a greater period of time. This may be due either to the availability of resources to effect the desired change or the alignment of programmes and courses with particular progression options (either work or further study). Over the period of this agreement, the following developments are planned:

- An increase in existing (pre-2016) Apprenticeship provision and the development of additional provision for New Apprenticeship (post 2016)
- An increase in the level of delivery of Traineeships, with a reduction in delivery of Specific Skills Training

- Development of a comprehensive approach for the delivery of appropriate industry requested certified courses for people in employment
- Changes in PLC provision based on the outcomes and implementation of recommendations from national PLC programme evaluation, including a rebalancing of provision towards a clearer labour market focus
- Review of Work Experience/Work Placement mechanisms for PLC courses, with a view to increasing the total time undertaken by the learner in the work environment
- Restructure and increase ITABE provision in the scheme
- Development of blended learning, online and distance learning options
- Increase in Skills for Work provision, including English for non-native speakers, with an increased focus on certification of outcomes and development of progression to Level 4 options
- Increased accreditation for learners engaging with the Adult Literacy programme
- Development of clear "foundation learning skills" short courses for learners engaging with the Community Education programme
- Continued development of the Youthreach Curriculum and emphasis on the development of additional progression options and supports

4.1.4 Staff Development and Supports

Staff development is a critical component in the further development of further education and training by Cork ETB over the course of this agreement. The following are identified as key staff competencies and supports necessary to support the ETB's aims and objectives:

- Further development and resourcing of a Business Engagement service, to foster business links, identify needs/requirements, obtain feedback and promote the ETB
- Development and enhancement of the Quality Assurance office and function, with a particular focus on the development of monitoring and advice/support structures
- Supporting curriculum development, on a scheme basis and as part of shared national collaborative projects, through the establishment of a Curriculum Development and Support function, linked closely to the Quality Assurance office.
- Implementation of a comprehensive PD strategy for all FET staff, based on identified needs and priorities and encompassing national PD strategy areas of focus.
- Further development of the staff placement in industry programme to facilitate staff engagement with industry, to develop skills, retain currency and improve dialogue between the workplace and the education and training sector
- Develop cross-ETB support for FARR and PLSS, and put in place a dedicated data analysis and research function at Cork ETB level

4.2 Risks and Challenges

The targeted outcomes for CETB from this strategic performance agreement must be achieved in an extremely complex and challenging environment, where complex interaction of factors may impact on success. There are some concerns about the ability to deliver on targets 4,5 and 6 given the current environment and prevailing economic situation, both of which have changed rapidly and significantly over the last few years. In this regard, there is a need for CETB with SOLAS to continuously review the appropriateness of these targets and whether others should be incorporated over the course of this agreement

As the economic situation has changed, unemployment levels have continued to decline, and as a consequence the numbers of potential learners available for recruitment to some FET provision have decreased significantly. With high levels of engagement maintained in programmes directed at the cohort with the lowest level of education attainment and skills, (Adult Literacy, Community Education, BTEI) capacity to increase participation levels in these areas will be challenging. With the continued drop in the level of long-term unemployment, there are significant challenges in engaging the individuals remaining, many of whom have experienced nothing but educational, economic and social challenge, and for whom these factors are persistent within their families and communities. The level of effort and support required to engage this cohort of learners increases substantially, with a lower level of initial engagement and success for higher levels of investment. Indeed this is already reflected in the current profile of the learners engaging with FET services, with many presenting with complex social and personal issues, as well as education and training needs, that require additional supports if they are to be engaged and retained.

A factor adding to the challenges facing CETB and the sector generally is the multiplicity of "competing" providers, many of whom are either other state organisations or funded from the exchequer, who are offering similar provision targeting the same (limited) pool of potential learners. To ensure effective and prudent use of state funding, SOLAS should be seeking, with other Government agencies, to reduce the degree and level of duplication that currently exists.

A significant challenge for the FET sector in the immediate future is to provide for the education and training needs of the individuals currently in the labour market and in employment. Previously, the absence of a clear strategy and policy direction for the ETB, which had already identified needs with employers and responses to same, had been an impediment. However the recent launch of 'Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth', a 2018-2021 FET policy framework for skills development of people in employment, has provided more clarity, and CETB will work with SOLAS to support its effective implementation over this period.

The ETB sector, and the FET services within the sector specifically, have undergone momentous change and restructuring over the past five years, with new priorities, additional goals, and increasing levels of demand for reporting on goals, targets and outcomes. These changes have been accompanied by increasing and sometimes competing governance and reporting requirements from the DES, SOLAS, QQI and the Department of Education and Skills. Many of these changed and additional requirements have been accompanied by the introduction of new and additional systems, including PLSS, FARR and e-Cohesion, with little or no additional resourcing to support them at local level.

We are now entering a further change process, introducing new elements to the sector before the changes that have gone before them have been allowed to bed in and for the sector to consolidate. The ability of the FET sector and the ETBs to continue to engage in such a comprehensive process of change without the necessary supporting infrastructure is a concern. There is generally much commentary about the availability or otherwise of "resources" to support the changes and initiatives proposed or underway in the sector. While we recognise that the availability of adequate and appropriate resources are important, what is more critical to the ongoing development of the FET sector, and the success or otherwise of the strategic planning process, is the implementation of an appropriate organisational design model and structure for the sector. The new model must reflect not only the changing demands in terms of regulatory and legislative responsibilities and the additional systems for planning, reporting, governance and quality assurance, but critically that the FET sector as now constructed is **NOT** simply a body of larger VECs, but comprises fundamentally different organisations. All aspects of the new organisational design must be considered from the perspective of what is necessary and appropriate, not simply what can be rebadged or rebranded and undergo minor amendment.

The ability of Cork ETB, and the sector generally, to respond quickly and appropriately to local labour market demands is restricted by the significant length of time it is currently taking for a programme proposal to be approved, developed and then validated by QQI. Likewise, the delay nationally in reviewing programme specifications is impacting on ETBs ability to deliver appropriate and relevant courses. For example, the level 3 specifications, in particular that for the ESOL component, have been under review for a number of years, and no outcome has yet emerged. This situation may improve in time, as ETBs gain some devolved authority from QQI in these areas, however the current situation severely restricts Cork ETBs ability to respond efficiently and effectively to local demands.

4.3 Delivering on FET Relevant Policies and Strategies

The focus of CETB's efforts in relation to Further Education and Training takes direction from the overall national priorities for the sector as expressed in the Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019. In addition, CETB recognises the opportunities and challenges presented within the National Skills Strategy, which further highlights the requirement for the ETB sector to place increased emphasis on measures to improve the opportunities available to learners to develop skills appropriate to the (changing) economy and workplace, and to meet the social as well as the economic requirements of learners. CETB's planning and strategy is made with reference to the following:

- The National Skills Strategy
- The Action Plan for Education 2015-2019
- Further Education and Training Literacy & Numeracy Strategy
- The Action Plan for Jobs
- Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth in Ireland 2018-2021 Further education and training policy framework for skills development of people in employment
- Sector (SOLAS) Technology Enhanced Learning EL Strategy
- Sector (SOLAS) Professional Development Strategy
- Integrating Literacy and Numeracy Final Report
- Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021 (Cork City and County)
- Realising our Rural Potential -The Action Plan for Rural Development
- Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2022
- Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 - 2020
- National Youth Strategy 2015-2020
- National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017 - 2021
- National Positive Ageing Strategy 2013-2020
- National Carers' Strategy
- National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017 - 2020

CETB is also committed to the wider process of programme reform across the FET sector and of responding to the findings and recommendations arising from programme reviews, evaluations and subsequent SOLAS responses and guidelines. In particular we note:

- Evaluation of Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) provision and SOLAS response
- Reviews of and guidelines issued on traineeship provision
- Evaluation of Youthreach/CTC provision (to be published in 2018)
- Evaluation of VTOS/SST provision (to be published in 2019)
- Evaluation of BTEI (to be published in 2019)
- Evaluation of Specialist Training provision (to be published in 2019)

5. ETB Contribution to National FET Strategy and Targets



Section 5

ETB Contribution to National FET Strategy and Targets

5.1 Skills for the Economy

5.1.1 Employer Engagement:

CETB has a multi-layered approach to industrial sector and individual employer engagement and is committed to continuing to improve and enhance the employer engagement structures and functions within FET services over the course of this agreement. At a senior level, the Chief Executive serves on the Cork Development Board and Cork Chamber of Commerce. The Director of Further Education and Training is vice chair of the South West Regional Skills Forum and participates in other formal and informal engagements with Local Authorities, DEASP, employer representative bodies, IDA and Enterprise Ireland. CETB has a dedicated Industrial Liaison Officer (ILO) who acts as a first point of contact between employers, and serves as an initial reference point for engagement. In May 2017 the ILO led out a pilot project for staff placement in Industry, with 14 instruction staff undertaking a week-long placement to create links and develop networks. The pilot is being extended in 2018 with a similar level of engagement anticipated. In addition to these roles, each College/ Centre engages with employers on a regular basis for student placement, curriculum review, workplace student visits and supplemental guest teaching. Other skills-focused initiatives include:

- The Regional Skills Forum identified specific skills needs in the manufacturing sector as a priority for its membership. A number of specific FET courses were developed in conjunction with the forum's technical working groups which were introduced in Q1 and Q2 2018, including a new Traineeship in Computer Numeric Control (CNC) Operator.
- St Johns College is an Apple Regional Training Centre, which delivers courses to build the skills and confidence of educators to use Apple technology inside and outside the classroom. They are a community who share best practices and inspire excellence through teaching with Apple technology.
- CETB is also a consortium partner in the delivery of post 2016 apprentices, with Cork College of Commerce currently delivering the Accounting Technician Apprenticeship and preparing for the commencement of the Property Services Apprenticeship in September 2018, both of which have had significant employer engagement information sessions.

- CETB are investing, with the support of SOLAS, in the development of a Hospitality Skills training facility for specific training and education for that sector. The facility it will provide suitably equipped kitchens and dedicated training rooms to deliver the Commis Chef apprenticeship and other related FET provision for this sector. It is planned to have this facility operational in Q1 2019.

5.1.2 Workforce Upskilling

Employee upskilling and engagement in lifelong learning crosses many facets of the CETB provision. While employees have to date largely engaged with CETB on a personal or self-directed level through night courses, community and adult education, on-line learning or other modes of delivery, the number of employer-led initiatives are increasing. During employer engagement discussions, while some specific upskilling needs have been identified, so also has a common range of broad skills needs, including:

- Communication skills
- Team Leader/ Supervisory Management
- Cost control
- Health and Safety
- Report writing
- Customer Service
- Sales
- Compliance
- Sector legislation / regulation
- Sector specific Industry certification
- IT skills focusing on a wide range of IT packages
- Team working/Cell working
- Using and following Standard Operation Procedures
- Quality Management
- General Engineering, Construction and Hospitality skills.

Employee retention is now becoming a significant factor in Human Resource Management, as are investment in staff and promoting internally, across the enterprise spectrum. The CETB is challenged to meet these new and emerging industry requirements, as delivery needs to be flexible, very often tailored and sector specific. The PLC colleges offer a wide variety of evening courses in the IT, business, healthcare, childcare and personal development areas which meet many of the current and emerging needs of these sectors, in terms of both new and existing employees. These are provided on a self-financed basis, and in 2017 there were over 7,000 learners availing of such provision. Additional requirements are being addressed through the development of tailored training courses.

The increased demand for employee development provision coincides with a decline in the number of unemployed individuals engaging with CETB seeking training for employment purposes. The delivery mix of training provision is evolving into an equal mix of apprenticeship, training of the unemployed and training of the employed. The recent publication of the SOLAS strategy for employee development, "Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth in Ireland 2018-2021" provides the sector and CETB with an agreed roadmap and tools to effectively engage with this area of provision. CETB plans to focus efforts and resources on the development of technology enhanced learning tools and delivery as a key part of its delivery in this area over the duration of the strategy.

5.1.3 Extending Progression and Employment

Opportunities

The National Framework of Qualifications was established to provide for mobility and to allow holders of vocational education qualifications to progress through the levels to a point at which they wished to engage with the workplace. By providing this pathway, learners are facilitated and supported to gain increased levels of qualification, with the attendant competencies, knowledge and skills, that allow them to improve their employment prospects and placement in the workplace. Progression from FET to HE in the longer term contributes to a workforce where someone can not only can aspire to gain a degree, but where they also have the practical skills and training (from their FET engagement) to contribute to the workforce in an immediate way in contrast to, in some cases, those who go have progressed directly from second level into HE.

The provision of alternative and additional pathways into HE, and subsequently into employment, is particularly important for learners from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The PLC review highlights the fact that learners in PLC colleges are more significantly represented of those in lower socio-economic groups, disadvantaged (economically, socially or both) communities, and students for whom school did not allow them to show their aptitude or intelligence and those seeking to return to education as a 'second chance' option.

The Higher Education Links Scheme (HELs) is an important avenue for such students, but in addition CETB has, with Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and Waterford IT (WIT), established additional progression schemes for students who successfully complete courses in CETB's FE Colleges. Similar arrangements are also in place with IT Tralee. Under these schemes, courses in the Institutes of Technology are linked to cognate courses in the FE Colleges and a number of places are reserved on the linked courses for applicants receiving indicated certification outcomes and other requirements in their awards. For example:

- Students achieving a full QQI Level 5 or 6 award linked under these schemes to a specific course in CIT may apply for year 1 entry.
- Students taking a full QQI Level 6 award linked under the schemes to a specific course may apply for year 2 entry.

The CIT Cork Colleges Progression Scheme (CCPS) is the most mature and developed of these special scheme arrangements and has now been in place for a long number of years. Communications and relationships between CIT and the FE colleges are excellent with regular engagement between the two groups. CIT have begun tracking the success rates of participants and can attest to the fact that graduates who come through the scheme have excellent retention rates and perform better than average compared to other students. The Cork Colleges Progression Scheme (CCPS) requires applicants to CIT to apply jointly through the scheme and CAO.

There are also specific relationships in place with a number of UK and Dutch universities where linked FE courses are provided with entry into degree courses at these institutions. The universities visit the PLC colleges annually to establish links and to meet with prospective students for information sessions. For example:

- In Cork College of Commerce (CCOC) there are excellent links to nursing courses in the UK, with over 30 CCOC students attending Bucks University at any one time. In addition, the Montessori Early Years course is linked directly to CIT, with Levels 5 and 6 completed in CCOC and the students then progressing to Level 7 (one year) and Level 8 (additional year) in CIT. This course was jointly designed and developed between CCOC and CIT.
- St John's Central College in conjunction with Edinburgh's Napier University offers a Bachelor of Science (Honours) Degree in Veterinary Nursing. Veterinary Nurses who want to upgrade their qualification to honours degree level can apply to Napier and undertake the programme on a part time, full time or distant learning basis, provided they are eligible for Veterinary Council of Ireland² (VCI) registration as a veterinary nurse.
- Other higher education progression links into the UK include access to the final year of the honours degree in Broadcast Media Production at the University of Sunderland and access into year two of Fashion Product and Promotion in University of Sunderland.

Progression to further studies is an integral and important part of the PLC programme offering for CETB's colleges, with over 600 learners progressing on an annual basis through the various schemes. CETB is somewhat concerned that this progression element may be overlooked in the focus on progression to direct employment, however, if progression to (delayed) employment is considered, these courses make a valuable contribution.

CETB will, as part of the overall progression agenda, seek over the course of this agreement, to develop with Higher education additional progression pathways and options, with the aim of increasing the numbers progressing through this route by 20% over the three years

5.1.4 Traineeship and New Apprenticeship Provision

During the lifetime of this Agreement CETB has plans to deliver the following Traineeships:

- Healthcare
- Childcare
- Quality
- Technical Support
- Manufacturing Technician
- Medical Administration
- Computer Numeric Control operator
- Computer Aided Design
- Life Sciences
- Pharmacy Sales
- Logistics and Distribution
- Food and Beverage Service

It is intended to increase the number of Traineeships available year on year. Traineeship delivery will expand from full time, day-only delivery targeting the unemployed to part-time delivery encompassing employees. The first pilot of this model for existing employees will commence in September 2018. Further traineeships will be developed in welding; waste management; water management; production operator; team leader; and food production.

CETB plans to continue delivery of the following pre-2016 apprenticeships:

- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Refrigeration
- Heavy Vehicle Mechanic
- Electrical Instrumentation
- Motor Mechanic
- Brick and Stone
- Carpentry and Joinery
- Metal Fabrication,
- Instrumentation

In addition, five post-2016 apprenticeships – Software Developer, Network Engineer Accounting Technician, Property Services and Commis Chef - are being delivered or planned for delivery. The diverse and expanding nature of the business and employment environment in Cork indicates a significant level of demand in these areas. CETB would intend to leverage existing business links and engagements to support the introduction of these new apprenticeship programmes.

In addition, an RPL assessment for Electronic Security is in development and will shortly commence delivery. CETB is a consortium member or supporting provider indicated for a number of other apprenticeships currently in the process of development or validation, including Butchery and Travel Operator.

² St Johns College is the only Irish FE College with VCI accreditation for its nursing programme.

5.2 Active Inclusion

Active inclusion and engaging with the more marginalised groupings and individuals in society presents a unique set of challenges. With the improving economic situation, those on the periphery become more distant and difficult to engage with and significantly increased provision and allocation of resources will be required to maintain participation at existing levels within these groups. A feature of provision targeting the disadvantaged and marginalised over the duration of this agreement will be to provide participants with increased levels or durations of engagement where possible, with a view to improving outcomes and progression opportunities. CETB's approach on active inclusion is built on solid foundations and experience of working with this target group, and the significant developments that have occurred in this are over many years.

5.2.1 Integrating Literacy

Integrating literacy support across all provision has been a priority for CETB since 2017. Professional development training on "Integrating Literacy" is planned for Autumn 2018 for CETB vocational learning practitioners. It will focus on methods for building literacy support and development into subject teaching and learning. Training is also planned for senior managers in FET centres and colleges on leading a whole-centre or whole-college approach to literacy and numeracy. This training has been offered to all CETB PLC colleges, Cork Training Centre and other relevant programmes.

There continues to be high demand for ESOL provision at all levels. CETB has been advised by employers that the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) is a preferred certification for ESOL and are investigating options for the upskilling of tutors to deliver this, or an appropriate alternative. CETB has identified an increased need for Level 4 ESOL provision as the minimum requirement in order to progress learners successfully to employment or PLC. CETB will also progress implementation of recommendations of the review of ESOL provision which was published in March 2018.

All Literacy Service Providers have been issued with the new Initial and Ongoing Assessment of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Guidelines and Toolkit, and the implementation of this will be rolled out across CETB centres from Q3 2018.

Themed literacy incorporating other courses and subject areas has also proved to be very successful in engaging learners, for example, Literacy through Cooking, Woodcraft, Upholstery, Art, Hairdressing, IT etc. The focus on developing other themed initiatives in the literacy area will continue across the duration of the plan. Individual (1:1) literacy provision is only provided through engagement with volunteer tutors. These tutors have achieved considerable success in progressing learners into group settings and continue to support them within the group until the learner is in a position to work independently.

5.2.2 Family Learning:

A more varied Family Learning programme is being developed to build on the successes and increasing engagement with learners evidenced by the success of a number of programmes have run over the past year. The focus of these programmes will be on engaging with families through programmes designed around:

- Family cooking and nutrition
- Community Gardening
- Supporting Your Child in Primary School
- Supporting Your Childs transition into Secondary School
- IT and Social Media Security for Parents
- Traveller Health
- Family Health (with the Irish Cancer Society)
- Helping parents to build resilience and develop coping skills with their children

Collaboration with organisations such as the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) and the Irish Cancer Society have proven very successful in developing targeted programmes. Additional roll out of these targeted programmes is planned for across the duration of the strategic plan.

5.2.3 Prioritising Marginalised Cohorts

CETB will continue to consider and prioritise support to address the needs of particular cohorts of learners including the following groups:

- While all CETB provision is open to members of the **Traveller and Roma communities**, due to their general reluctance to engage in mixed settings, a variety of specific programmes are provided for these communities, including: Health education; Family Learning; Cooking skills; Craft skills; ICT; Photography; Upholstery; and Sewing Skills. Some of these learners progress to other FET programmes, a focus across the duration of the plan is to increase the numbers progressing.
- The "Dillon's Cross project" continues to provide opportunities for the partners/spouses of **offenders and ex-offenders** to engage with education and training opportunities, providing extremely marginalised and socially disadvantaged group with positive opportunities. The Dillon's Cross project will continue to provide these interventions in collaboration with the Irish Prison service (IPS)
- While provision is available within all mainstream FET programmes to support **learners with disabilities**, some learners are unable in the first instance to engage with these full time offerings. CETB will continue to expand on provision for learners with a range of disabilities, physical and intellectual, in collaboration with a range of specialist service providers such as Headway, COPE, etc, for those unable to attend FET mainstream provision. Supports to assist learners with specific needs are provided to remove or reduce barriers to engagement and to support learners with Disabilities on all FET programmes. These supports will be reviewed and, where possible within available resources, additional supports will be made available.

5.2.4 Progression into FE from DEIS³ Schools

CETB has established a scheme to encourage students from DEIS schools to participate in PLC programmes. This operates on the basis of a supported application system, whereby students in eligible schools fill out a 'student support form' that assists them in preparing for the interview. In conjunction with staff in their school/ CTC/Youthreach, they update the form over a period of months. Each activity, whether it be a college visit, research on website, etc. is signed off by one of the staff members in their centre and this, coupled with a personal statement, creates a supporting structure to enable the students to excel at interview. Interviewers in the college have a copy of the completed application support form, which enhances their awareness of that student.

Course shadowing is also provided by some of the PLC colleges/courses. Over 150 students from schools/ CTCs/Youthreach took place in a course shadowing exercise over the course of the current academic year, an exercise that gave them a taster of college life and a feel for the course they are interested in.

CETB, in collaboration with UCC, is working on developing a pilot model for the creation of an FET transition support officer who will work, in the first instance, to support learners from DEIS post-primary schools in the transition to FET. This pilot will commence with one of the PLC colleges in Q3 2018.

5.2.5 Progression to Employment for Marginalised

FET Students

Within CETB, a key strategy to achieve progression towards employment is the development of a work placement programme to support marginalised students in becoming work ready. Working in partnership with employers, CETB has developed a pilot "Work Wise Skills" programme with an aim to implement interventions and development actions to enhance progression opportunities of marginalised students to employment and further education and training.

The programme provides work placements allied with curriculum development focused on three main areas: Life Skills; Vocational Preparation; and Academic Certification. This affords the student an opportunity to source employment opportunities which match their aptitude, skills and career interests. CETB staff can provide employers with scientifically validated and objective tools which measure the suitability of a student for work placement in their particular organisation. This strategy of matching the needs of the employers with the ability and career aspirations of the learner strengthens the learner's opportunities in terms of access and retention of employment. The Work Placement Programme has as its core the assessment of three areas of learner employability

- 1. Abilities and Skills:** the focus here is on assessing the core abilities of the learner in several domains including verbal, numerical, data interpretation, abstract ability, mechanical comprehension and spatial ability.
- 2. Personality;** the assessment of the learners' core personality traits to identify how they match up with work experience and job options.
- 3. Career and Vocational Interests:** the assessment of the career interests of learners including their preferences for realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising and conventional vocations and jobs.

The objective data derived from these assessments is then used to prepare a development plan, to identify best fit work placement options and to develop a curriculum that prepares learners for participation in the work placement. The work placement will leverage these natural abilities and traits and develop a foundation of general work and life skills and competencies in addition to helping the learner understand the world of work and its realities.

5.3 Quality Provision

CETB has established a centralised QA function from internal resources. The development of this function is critical to the overall quality and success of CETB FET activity. In June 2018 QQI approved CETB's application under the 2012 Act for recognition (re-engagement) which establishes CETB QA procedures with QQI in accordance with Section 30 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012. The agreed re-engagement process required CETB to develop an Executive Self Evaluation Report (ESER) addressing QQI's Core Statutory QA (Quality Assurance) guidelines and other QA guidelines as appropriate; and a Quality Improvement Development Plan (QIDP). This formal recognition by QQI is an important event and one milestone on the roadway towards a single, integrated set of QA procedures, development of an effective governance model, Devolved Responsibility and possibly Delegated Authority in the future.

Cork ETB will shortly commence preparation with the other ETBs for Statutory Review which is scheduled to take place in 2020, by consulting with stakeholders, including employers, staff and learners.

CETB has and is developing a SharePoint site for the centralised hosting of its QA policies and procedures, and this will be expanded to encompass beyond assessments to include all CETB FET governance information for all CETB FET services. To date the focus has been on standardising assessment procedures, with procedures then to be formalised on governance, access, transfer and progression and teaching and learning. The SharePoint site also hosts all programme and component descriptors to ensure version control and related resources

Robust governance structures are being established for FET quality assurance. Terms of reference have been finalised for the Executive Group, FET Steering Group, Programme Approval Group, QA Steering Group and the Assessment Working Group. Further developments are planned in line with the ETBI Establishing a FET QA Governance System handbook. The Director of FET is developing a Cork ETB FET Strategy which will review sector-based strategies, incorporate the Cork ETB Statement of Strategy and provide a clear roadmap for the service.

Monitoring of assessment activity and ensuring standards is ensured through the centralised coordination and reporting of EA and RAPS to the QA Office. This allows for areas of good practice and of concern to be highlighted to be addressed by the FET Steering Group. Cork ETB will roll out the new and improved External Authentication process being developed by ETBI.

Cork ETB has an established programme management system to provide for programme development, review and validation. On an ongoing basis the Programme Approval Group oversees requests from centres to

review and validate programmes. Cork ETB is working collaboratively with other ETBs in the development of programmes, including level 5 and 6 Music and Dance, under the new QQI validation policy.

CETB has commenced the set up a federated Moodle structure with SOLAS eCollege to enhance the delivery of FET provision. This has already been set up for Cork Training Centre and will be piloted with the PLC colleges in the 2018/2019 academic year before further roll out across the wider ETB.

Communication with learners, as our key stakeholders, is vital to ensuring quality provision. Cork ETB was one of the first ETBs to work with AONTAS on a Regional Learner Forum. A follow up forum is planned for the next academic year and Cork ETB will also develop a protocol for learner representation to ensure that the learners' voice is heard at every level of the organisation. The development of a robust feedback mechanism that will allow all learners to provide constructive and appropriate feedback on their experiences on CETB programmes has been identified as an area for prioritisation. CETB intends to pilot a learner feedback mechanism commencing in a number of centres/services in Q3 2018, with the aim of rolling this out across all provision in Q3/4 2019.

5.4 Outcomes-based Planning and Funding

Cork ETB strives to provide quality provision and value for money for all stakeholders. Through inter- and intra-agency consultation we will plan to identify where provision can become more efficient. We will continue to identify and implement further actions to address barriers to participation and increased outputs. We intend to continue developing programmes that are responsive and flexible to the needs of the learner and the labour market. Area and programme plans will be designed in response to the needs of the individual area⁴, following on from consultation with enterprise and will be reflective of employment opportunities, as well as upskilling for people currently in employment. Where employment isn't the primary path for progression programmes are planned to feed into local FE or HE provision.

Cork ETB expects to deliver a range of increased outputs and outcomes through a range of actions including:

- Reviewing underutilised course or courses that are not achieving their objectives
- Increased Professional Development opportunities for staff delivering courses to facilitate new methodologies and modules on programmes
- Further development of our employer engagement structures and mechanisms
- Development of new and revised programmes and courses to meet local and regional skills needs
- Development of additional supporting delivery tools and supports, including the development of structured blended and on-line learning engagement opportunities in a number of sectors and areas that are appropriate to these delivery approaches
- Further development of the Learning Support Unit in Cork Training Centre

It is essential that we continue to improve data collection, particularly for programmes with lower return rates, and that data is recorded consistently throughout all CETB services. As a result, by committing more resources to the collection of data, we aim to significantly increase the recorded progression for our learners and to minimise the amount of data entered in the "Other" category. The challenge will remain to resource additional personnel and to attain the learner progression data, ensuring the reliability of that data.

CETB undertook a pilot with SOLAS on outcomes based funding in 2016/17. Arising from this project, there was an identified need for a systematic, verifiable methodology for the capturing of validated data on learner progression, in particular employment. In this regard CETB recognises the importance of linking PLSS to CSO administrative datasets via SOLAS which should also provide a platform for more effective outcomes-based funding.

⁴ Area planning is aligned to the four LCDC areas existent in the region.

5.5 Standing of FET

CETB recognises that the Further Education and Training Sector in general lacks the profile and public awareness that accrues to other sectors within the Irish education system. At local as well as national level significant efforts must be made to inform the wider public, as well as employers and potential programme participants, of (a) the options and possibilities the sector provides and can provide and (b) the contribution that the sector can make to an individual's development, as a means of progressing to employment, further study or general advancement.

It is CETB's view that emphasis needs to be placed on the publicising of existing and new vocational programmes, particularly at levels 5 and 6, to promote FET as a viable option for young people completing their leaving certificate studies and contemplating the next stage on their life journey. CETB has made some efforts with its own second level schools and colleges to raise awareness and provide information to senior cycle students, including visits to schools from FET staff, holding of information sessions for parents/guardians/students, and information sessions and briefings for the guidance counsellors in schools. This activity will be augmented further across the duration of the agreement.

CETB is currently working on developing the CORK FET brand and creating information and communications channels that allow prospective learners and employers gain easy access to information about the opportunities that FET can provide for them. In addition, CETB will work with SOLAS to maximise the value and impact of a national campaign to promote further education and training in 2018 and 2019.

5.6 ETB Contribution to National FET Targets

Cork ETB commits to making the specific contribution to each of the six core national FET targets over the period 2018-2020 set out below. A summary showing how the contribution to each target is driven by activity within different skills clusters is provided as Appendix A. The definition underpinning each target is detailed in Appendix B.

Cork Education and Training Board services one of the largest geographic regions in the country, with a large population dispersed across a very varied urban and regional landscape. The enterprise profile, both in terms of the range of enterprise sectors actively engaged in economic activity in the region, as well as the variations in size and scale of employment is quite diverse. The Cork region, in particular the zone proximal to Cork City, has experienced significant jobs growth and emergence from the economic recession in the past two years.

A significant factor influencing CETB's projected and planned provision over the period of the agreement are the number of school leavers who will complete leaving certificate in that period. Notwithstanding the significant proportion of this cohort who will likely pursue Higher Education options, CETB will be seeking to maximise the numbers who apply for, and take up, FET options including PLC courses, apprenticeships and traineeships. (CETB is also considering, with CIT, how it may provide options for individuals who "drop out" of first year HE courses to engage with a more appropriate FET programme). CETB's planned activity over the period of the agreement relies heavily on the following factors:

- Increasing retention and improving completion and certification outcomes in existing programmes
- Maximising engagement with and take up of programmes from individuals in socially disadvantaged communities, particularly those who are long-term unemployed
- Improving engagement with employers to better align course and programme offerings to meet pre-employment and in employment training and education offering alignment
- Development of structured training options for individuals in employment in response to sector and enterprise specific requirements
- Developing additional supportive programme delivery approaches through the exploitation of blended and on-line learning platforms

CETB believes that it will be in a position to deliver on the commitments made⁵, with the assistance of SOLAS, through the allocation of an appropriate and responsive yearly financial allocation. In order to further support CETB's delivery of these targets, a dedicated capital allocation, revised organisational design structure, and continued support from SOLAS and other stakeholders will be required.

Target	National Sectoral Target	Cork ETB Contribution
1. More learners securing employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market	10% over 3 years	24% over 3 years, equating to 2,319 learners securing employment in 2020
2. More learners progressing to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose	10% over 3 years	12% over 3 years, equating to 2,443 learners progressing to other courses in 2020
3. Increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills development	10% over 3 years	20% over 3 years, equating to 1,163 completers certified in 2020
4. Increase in adults seeking FET level provision engaging in lifelong learning interventions	10% over 3 years	10% over 3 years, equating to 20,857 starting LLL relevant programmes in 2020
5. Increase in learners securing relevant qualifications in sectors where employment growth/skills needs have been identified	10,000 learners per annum	Average annual increase of 1,296 over 3 years and a 62% increase in learners in 2020 compared with 2017
6. New apprenticeship and trainee registrations in the period 2018 to 2020	13,900 over 3 years	828 or a 49% increase over 3 years

⁵ Note CETB's projections include possible contributions from activity that, to date, has not been included in the FET planning and reporting mechanisms, namely Self Financing Adult Education (Night Courses). If the appropriate mechanisms to allow for this activity can be included moving forward, the projected outcomes, particularly with regards to targets 4 and 5, will be revised upwards.

6. Performance Agreement



Section 6

Performance Agreement

In entering this agreement, Cork Education and Training Board commits to pursuing the priorities and actions set out in the previous sections and making the stipulated contribution to each of the six core FET targets over the period 2018 to 2020, subject to the risks and challenges identified and set out in Section 4.2 of the agreement. Cork ETB also commits to adherence to legislative requirements, the Overarching Planning and Funding Requirements for FET and SOLAS funding Terms and Conditions.

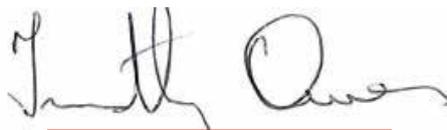
SOLAS commits to supporting the delivery of these priorities, actions and targets wherever practical subject to and within its existing resource constraints and competing commitments. The realisation of the targets will be monitored on an ongoing basis via the PLSS and FARR systems, and it is proposed that a formal mid-term review will be undertaken in September 2019, including a further strategic dialogue session between the two parties at this point.

Signed:



Paul O'Toole

Chief Executive, SOLAS



Timothy Owens

Chief Executive, Cork Education
and Training Board

Date: 21/09/2018

Date: 21/09/2018

Appendix A



Appendix A

CETB Contribution to National FET Sector Targets by Skills Cluster

Further Education & Training Provision	Target 1		Target 2		Target 3			
	2018-2020		2018-2020		2018-2020			
	Sector Provision 10% More Learners will secure employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market.		Sector Provision 10% more learners will progress to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose.		Sector Provision 10% increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills Development.			
	Expected overall Increase in Completers Securing Employment		Expected overall increase in Completers Progressing to FET or HET		Expected overall increase in Completers certified			
Skill Clusters	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	7	13%	4	11%				
Animal Science	3	11%	0	0%				
Arts and Crafts	-14	-13%	0	0%				
Built Environment	34	27%	0	0%				
Business Administration	24	12%	12	13%				
Engineering	33	194%	0	0%				
Engineering (Electrical)	66	89%	0	0%				
Engineering (IT)	2	12%	0	0%				
Engineering (Mechanical)	20	26%	0	0%				
Engineering (Transport)	7	30%	0	0%				
Entrepreneurship	50	0%	10	0%				
Financial Services	3	11%	0	0%				
Food and Beverage	76	155%	3	11%				
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	14	12%	0	0%				
Health, Family other Social Services	41	12%	16	12%				
Information Technology	9	11%	0	0%				
Management	-12	-32%	0	0%				
Manufacturing	10	12%	0	0%				
Media, Graphics Communications	0	0%	0	0%				
Natural Resources	2	13%	0	0%				
Research and Education-Training	-3	-13%	0	0%				
Sales & Marketing	24	67%	3	13%				
Science and Technology	1	13%	0	0%				
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	9	13%	0	0%				
Sport and Leisure	12	12%	1	13%				
Tourism	6	11%	0	0%				
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	12	12%	0	0%				
Web Development & Design	9	43%	0	0%				
Core ICT			18	12%			0	0%
Core Personal			179	12%			3119	14%
General Learning			24	12%			32	10%
Language			0	0%	30	0%		
Skills Sampling,			0	0%	0	0%		
Key Skills			0	0%	60	0%		
TOTAL	445	24%	270	12%	3241	20%		

[1] This target could be subject to upward revision following the benchmarking process.

Target 4		Target 5		Target 6	
2018-2020		2018-2020		2018-2020	
Sector Provision 10% increase of adults, who are seeking FET level provision, engaging in lifelong learning interventions[1]		Sector Provision Increase in Relevant Qualifications across FET programmes. Increase of 10,000 learners per annum securing relevant qualifications in sectors where employment growth/skills needs have been identified.		Traineeship Programmes. Traineeship National Target of 19,000 (2016-2020) - 13,900 - (2018-2020) Commencements on Traineeship (Skill Clusters By Starters) Labour Market Skills	
Expected overall contribution to the National Target for increase in Starters and ETB capacity %		Expected overall annual average contribution to National Target for Completers Certified & ETB Capacity %		Expected overall contribution to National Target and ETB capacity %	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
27	12%			0	0%
15	0%			0	0%
-10	-11%			0	0%
18	12%	21	24%	0	0%
112	21%			44	-50%
0	0%	2	21%	52	0%
8	12%	3	21%	0	0%
4	11%	0	0%	55	0%
-35	-11%	12	20%	66	227%
0	0%	3	21%	0	0%
17	22%	20	0%	0	0%
231	1216%			42	275%
44	36%	23	20%	122	-61%
146	270%			0	-100%
535	147%	1027	100%	34	-55%
100	31%	55	25%	0	-100%
77	335%			0	-100%
16	12%	10	0%	221	1417%
45	0%	23	20%	52	0%
0	0%			0	0%
17	45%			0	0%
22	17%	24	20%	60	-12%
0	0%	8	21%	0	0%
25	12%			0	0%
3	2%	36	20%	0	0%
5	12%	16	20%	0	0%
37	12%			80	0%
15	43%	11	50%	0	0%
-118	-16%				
107	2%				
32	0%				
175	0%				
50	0%				
100	0%				
1820	10%	1296	62%	828	49%

Appendix B



Appendix B

Explaining the Targets

In agreeing the SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017-19, the Department for Education and Skills specified a range of targets to be met by the further education and training sector over a three year period:

- **Target 1 – Employment Outcomes:** 10% more learners will secure employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market.
- **Target 2 – Progression:** 10% more learners will progress to other further or higher education courses from provision which is primarily focused on this purpose.
- **Target 3 – Transversal Skills Development:** 10% increase in the rate of certification on courses primarily focused on transversal (social mobility) skills development.
- **Target 4 – Lifelong Learning:** 10% increase of adults, who are seeking FET level provision, engaging in lifelong learning interventions (this target could be subject to upward revision following the benchmarking process).
- **Target 5 – Relevant Qualifications:** From 2018, for three years, an average increase of 10,000 learners per annum securing relevant qualifications (e.g. special purpose awards) in sectors where employment growth / skills needs have been identified (e.g. Construction, ICT, Food and Beverages, Hospitality, Wholesale / Retail, Biopharma / Pharmachem, Health / Other Care, Digital Media, Sport and Fitness, Engineering, Enterprise Skills needs).
- **Target 6 – Apprenticeship and Traineeship Provision:** 30,500 new apprentice and trainee registrations in the period 2017 to 2019 which will represent an increase in registrations from circa 6,000 in 2016 to circa 12,400 in 2019.

Also in 2017, the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform (D-PER) conducted a spending review of further education and training. A key aspect of this review involved analysis of programmes delivered by the ETBs by categorizing each programme as one of the following:-

- Predominately Labour Market Focus FET Programmes
- Predominately Progression Focus FET Programmes
- Predominately Social Mobility (Individual Transversal skills) FET Programmes

The setting of these three year national sectoral targets and broad categorisation of targets provided a framework by which strategic performance agreements between SOLAS and ETBs could be developed, highlighting the planned contribution of each ETB to their realisation. However to ensure that this

contribution could be clearly understood and linked to development of activity across FET programmes, some definitions and parameters were placed around each target, and these are discussed for each in turn below.

Target 1: Employment Outcomes

This target takes a broad strategic approach by considering FET provision in terms of the programmes that are primarily focused on leading to employment. The D-PER spending review identified programmes which had a predominantly labour market focus and to ensure consistency with this review, the measuring of employment outcomes under Target 1 was related only to programmes within this category:

Full Time	Apprenticeship Training	Blended Training
	Local Training Initiatives	PLC
	Specific Skills Training	Traineeships Training
	VTOS	VSCCS PLC
Part-time	Evening Training	On-line Learning (eCollege)

The target itself is calculated by looking at the actual completers from these programmes in 2017 logged on PLSS or via FARR who were recording as achieving an employment outcome, and then asking each ETB to set out a plan for the numbers completing who it expects to achieve an employment outcome in 2018, 2019 and 2020, calculating the expected change from this 2017 baseline. Currently therefore the contribution is self-declared by the ETB, based on its understanding of a learner outcome and with the assumption that all employment outcomes have been logged comprehensively within the system. It is however acknowledged that work to integrate FARR and PLSS and to ensure comprehensive and quality learner data input into PLSS is still progressing, and it is likely that the baseline for each ETB in 2017 may be higher than initially estimated.

SOLAS and the ETBs intend to move to a more robust method of setting the baseline by using access to revenue and jobseekers databases held by the CSO to establish independently the employment outcomes

of learners on these programmes in 2017. This should not change the ambition for number of completers securing employment outcomes in 2018, 2019 and 2020 but could revise the baseline which will mean the overall ETB contribution to meeting the target (i.e. the percentage change in completers securing employment outcomes) over the three year period could be updated.

Target 2: Progression

This target takes a broad strategic approach by considering FET Provision in terms of the programmes that are primarily focused on facilitating progression to other further education and training and higher education courses. The D-PER spending review identified programmes which had a predominantly progression focus and to ensure consistency with this review, the measuring of progression outcomes under Target 2 was related only to programmes within this category.

Full Time	Justice Workshops	Youthreach
	Bridging & Foundation Training	Community Training Centres
	Specialist Training Programmes	
Part-time	BTEI Groups VSCCS BTEI	Skills for Work

The target itself is calculated by looking at the actual completers from these programmes in 2017 logged on PLSS or via FARR who were recorded as having progressed to other further and higher education courses, and then asking each ETB to set out a plan for the numbers completing who it expects to achieve such a progression outcome in 2018, 2019 and 2020, calculating the expected change from this 2017 baseline. As with Target 1, currently the contribution is self-declared by the ETB, based on its understanding of a learner outcome and with the assumption that all progression outcomes have been logged comprehensively within the system. It is however acknowledged that work to integrate FARR and PLSS and to ensure comprehensive and quality learner data input into PLSS is still progressing, and it is likely that the baseline for each ETB in 2017 may be higher than initially estimated.

As with target 1, the baseline may be revised once learner outcome data from access to CSO databases (which also includes higher education learner data) is available. This should not change the ambition for number of completers securing progression outcomes in 2018, 2019 and 2020 but could mean the overall ETB contribution to meeting the target (i.e. the percentage

change in completers securing progression outcomes) over the three year period could be updated.

It is also acknowledged that PLC provision has an important role in facilitating progression, particularly to higher education, yet the categorisation approach to ensure consistency with the spending review within the targets, where a programme can only be either predominantly labour market focused OR predominantly progression focused, meant that it was only included in the former when setting proposed ETB contributions in the formal target template. However, each ETB has been asked to articulate the current level of progression from PLC provision, and state any ambition for change in the progression rate over the lifetime of the agreement. Given the focus on this area and wider national work of FET to HE transitions, it is expected that the current rate of progression to HE from PLC across all ETBS will be at least maintained between 2018 and 2020.

Target 3: Transversal Skills Development

This target takes the same strategic approach as Targets 1 and 2 by considering FET Provision where the aim is primarily focused on programmes which build transversal skills. The D-PER spending review identified programmes which had a primary focus on transversal skills development and to ensure consistency with this review, the measuring increases in the rate of certification under Target 3 was related only to programmes within this category.

Full Time	Irish Deaf Society provision	
Part-time	Adult Literacy	ESOL
	FET Co-operation Hours	ITABE
	Libraries Training	Refugee Resettlement
	Voluntary Literacy Tuition	NALA Write on (p/t on line)

The target itself is calculated by looking at the actual completers from these programmes in 2017 logged on PLSS or via FARR who were recorded as having achieved certification, and then asking each ETB to set out a plan for the numbers completing who it expects to achieve such a certification outcome in 2018, 2019 and 2020, calculating the expected change from this 2017 baseline. In contrast with Target 1 and 2, the data should for 2017 should be robust as it relates to certification rather than perceived outcomes.

Target 4: Lifelong Learning

The lifelong learning activity measured under Target 4 used the EU definition of lifelong learning which relates to people over 25 years. As comprehensive data for all FET learners aged over 25 is not available in 2017 (as the PLSS was rolled out during the year), the target focuses on activity (measured by numbers starting courses) within programmes that predominantly address the needs of learners over 25. This base can be reviewed at the end of 2018 when there is a full dataset available through PLSS, and where it should be possible to isolate the cohort of learners aged over 25 across all FET. In the meantime, the baseline and plans have been build up those starting or expected to start courses in the following programmes over the period 2018-2020.

Blended Training	Specific Skills Training
Traineeships Training	Traineeship Employed
VTOS	Evening Training
On-line Learning (eCollege) (p/t)	Bridging & Foundation Training
Specialist Training Programmes	BTEI Groups
Irish Deaf Society	NALA Write on (p/t on line)
Skills for Work	Adult Literacy
Voluntary Literacy	LTI
ITABE	Refugee Resettlement
Community Education	

Deriving the target in this way means that it does not fully compare to wider national lifelong learning targets, or to new targets for employee development and workforce upskilling, but it does nonetheless provide an insight and ambition to grow lifelong provision across FET in a way that can be robustly tracked over the course of the performance agreement.

It is also important to note that FARR and PLSS does not currently record the self-financed evening course provision which takes place in FET facilities, most commonly in PLC further education colleges. SOLAS has asked ETBs to estimate the extent of this cohort if possible within the agreements.

Target 5: Relevant Qualifications

This target attempts to increase the focus of FET provision on key skills areas with an ambition to grow qualifications in these areas by an average increase of 10,000 learners per annum. Relevant qualifications can include special purpose awards and are measured in the following skills clusters as part of this target.

Built Environment (Construction)	Engineering
Engineering (Electrical)	Engineering (IT)
Engineering (Mechanical)	Engineering (Transport)
Entrepreneurship/ Enterprise Skills	Food and Beverage - Hospitality
Health, Family other Social Services	Information Technology - ICT
Manufacturing	Media, Graphics Communications - Digital Media
Sales & Marketing - Wholesale/ Retail	Science and Technology - Biopharma/Pharmachem
Sport and Leisure - Sports and Fitness	Tourism - Hospitality
Web Development & Design	

The number of certificates awarded in 2017 sets the baseline for this target and ETBs are then asked to project the number of certificates within these skills clusters that they expect to award in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Target 6: Apprenticeships and Traineeships

Drawn from the Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeships and Traineeships 2016-2020, this sets a national target of 30,500 new apprentice and trainee registrations in the period 2018 to 2020. Pre 2016 apprenticeships are coordinated centrally by SOLAS while new apprenticeships are in a development stage and more difficult to plan in terms of specific course roll-out. In the performance agreements therefore, we have asked ETBs to focus on three year plans for expanding traineeship provision, asking them to project numbers starting traineeships in 2018, 2019 and 2020. The Action Plan defines a target over the period 2018-2020 of 13,900 new registrations.

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