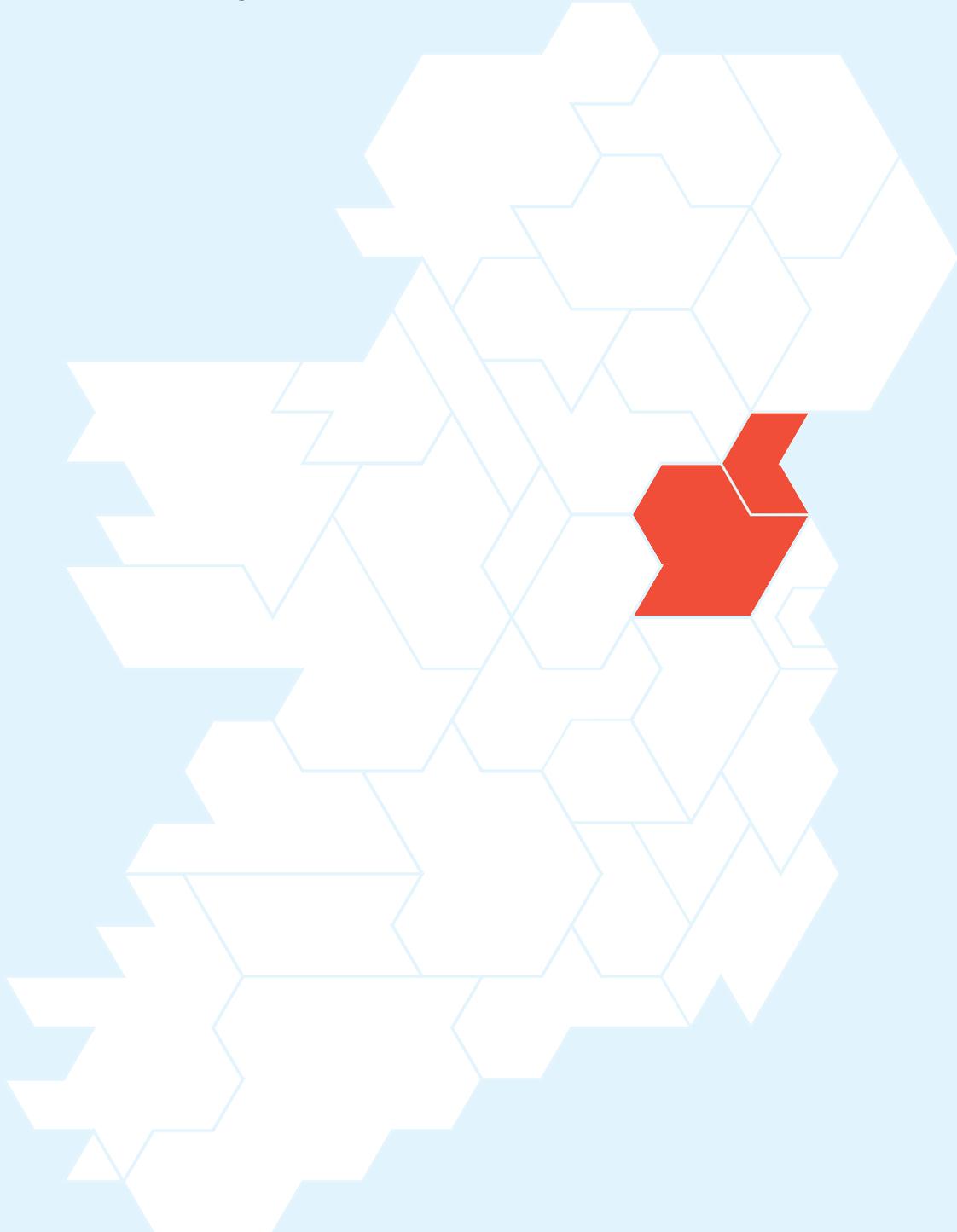


# Strategic Performance Agreement 2018 – 2020

---

Louth and Meath  
Education and Training Board



European Union  
Investing in Your Future  
European Social Fund



# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	1
<b>2. Profile of the ETB Region</b>	3
<b>3. ETB FET Provision</b>	6
3.1 Staffing and Infrastructure	6
3.2 FET Provision	7
<b>4. ETB Strategic Priorities</b>	10
4.1 LMETB Strategy	10
4.2 LMETB FET Strategic Priorities	11
4.3 Risks and Challenges	16
4.4 Delivering on FET Relevant Policies and Strategies	17
<b>5. ETB Contribution to National FET Strategy and Targets</b>	19
5.1 Skills for the Economy	19
5.2 Active Inclusion	20
5.3 Quality Provision	21
5.4 Outcomes-based Planning and Funding	21
5.5 Standing of FET	21
5.6 ETB Contribution to National FET Targets	22
<b>6. Performance Agreement</b>	24
<b>Appendix A: LMETB Contribution to National FET Sector Targets by Skills Cluster</b>	26
<b>Appendix B: Explaining the Targets</b>	29

---

# 1. Introduction



# Introduction

This agreement between SOLAS and Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) 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 LMETB, 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

LMETB covers an area of 3169 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 323,928 people (2016 Census of Ireland). Population growth was 5.5% in the period between 2011 and 2016. The three large towns in the region, Navan, Dundalk and Drogheda, show a significant increase.

Also of note is the increased sub-urbanisation in the south of the LMETB region with, for example, Ashbourne showing a growth of 11.7%. The 2016 census shows that Co. Meath was the second most common destination for persons leaving Dublin with a total of 2,602 persons moving there.

Greater socio economic isolation is a key feature in its rural communities. This presents key challenges to LMETB in providing services for growing regional towns and rapidly growing sub-urban centres in the Dublin commuter belt, while also addressing greater rural isolation because of the size of the region and distance of some communities from the capital. Rural communities such as Cooley, Kilsaran and Athboy have significant levels of disadvantage aligned to high levels of lower secondary/primary education attainment (as recorded by the CSO).

This is reflected in serious issues of deprivation and disadvantage across many communities in Louth and Meath. Concentrations of high levels of disadvantage are apparent in areas including: Coxs Demesne (61% Male unemployment rate, 76% Lone Parent ratio); Fatima Muihevna Mor (70% male unemployment); Moneymore (51% male unemployment and a 76% lone parent ratio); and the Ballsgrove/Rathmullen/Finians Park areas (68% lone parent ratio and between 51-61% male unemployment).

Proximity to the border with Northern Ireland, along County Louth's northern perimeter, has significant implications, which must be reflected in our FET planned provision going forward. This location will be further impacted by the outcomes from the ongoing Brexit negotiations. LMETB will have to be swift in reacting to any consequent regional socio economic implications.

### LMETB Area 2016



#### POPULATION

323,928

#### UNEMPLOYMENT

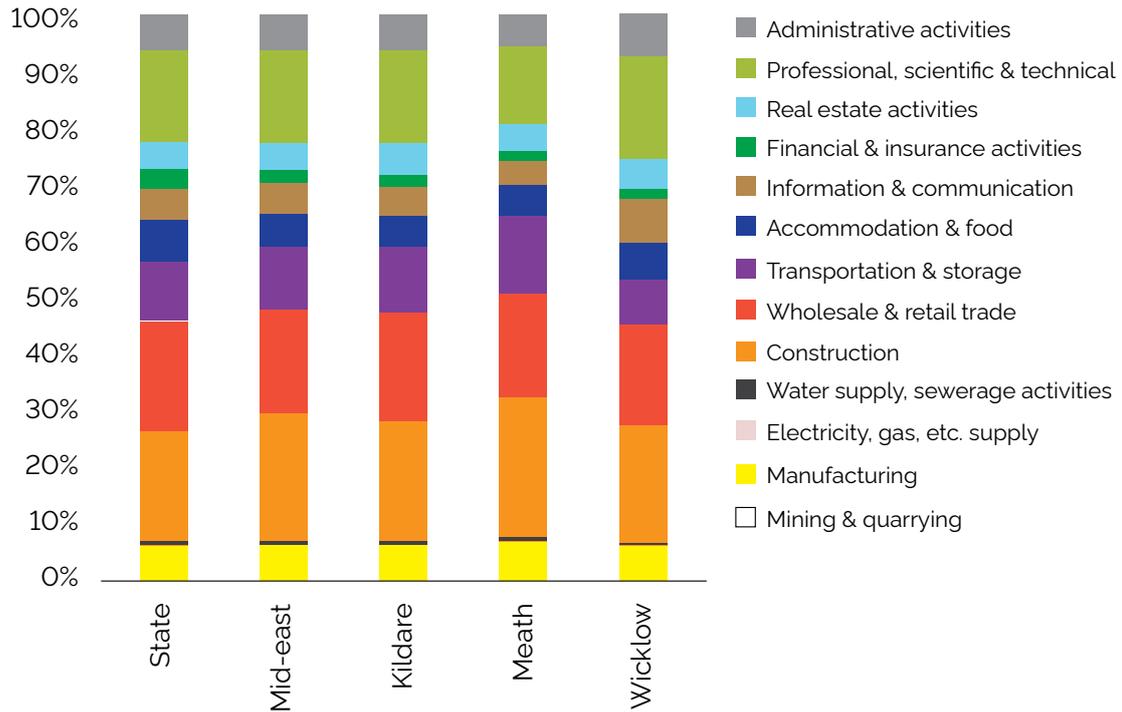
14.3%

(Source: 2016 Census)

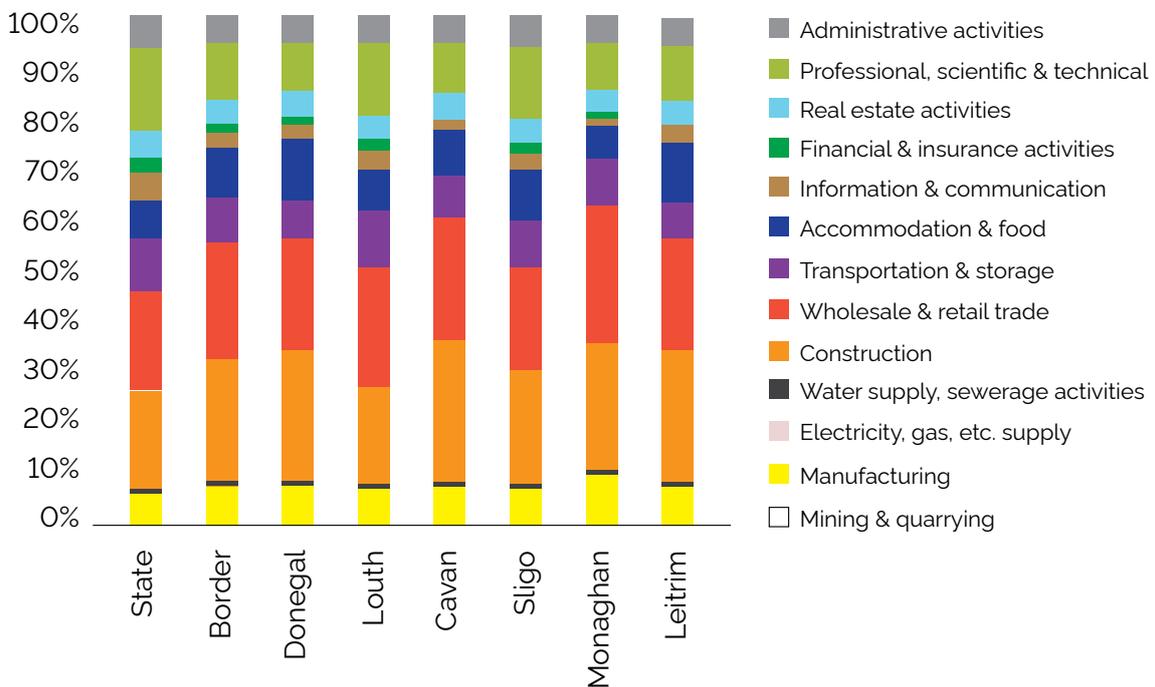
LMETB's communication strategy encompasses linkages with employers/employer fora in Louth and Meath which will greatly assist in meeting labour market needs in the region as we plan forward for FET programmes and services. Nevertheless the number of active enterprises is falling by 5.9% (Louth) and 5.1% (Meath) according to the Regional Skills Fora reports for each county. While unemployment is declining overall, much of this has been addressed by the growing suburbanisation and work commuting trends to and from the capital. However there may also be potential for enterprise growth from the impact of Brexit in terms of migration of industries from the UK into Ireland. LMETB must be cognisant of these changes and opportunities.

Employment by sector shows considerable similarities in both counties as set out in the graphs below. The range and supply of course/programme provision by LMETB has assisted local economies in maintaining a ready source of skilled labour to the key employment sectors identified, including professional services, retailing and construction.

## Distribution of active enterprises by sector, Mid-East, 2014



## Distribution of active enterprises by sector, Border, 2014



Various skill shortages identified in both Regional Skills Reports are reflected in the nature, level and type of course programme provision, as LMETB transitions to a demand-driven training model. To support this process, LMETB proposes to enhance existing networks to enable partnership working with the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and Local Enterprise

partners to audit potential skills requirements in the short to medium term with a view to alignment of core provision to labour markets requirements. This will necessitate sanction and recruitment of full-time Employer Engagement Officers to coordinate this research and assist in planning course provision to meet existing and future demands of the area.

---

# 3. ETB FET Provision



# Section 3

## ETB FET Provision

### 3.1 Staffing and Infrastructure

LMETB Further Education and Training department is led by the Director of FET reporting to the Chief Executive. The department structure includes the following roles, with vacant posts needing to be filled and additional staffing required to meet the ever increasing needs of FET learners, government priorities, employers and communities:

- Adult Education Officers
- A Training Manager and Assistant Training Managers
- PLC principals
- 9 Youthreach Coordinators
- 3 VTOS coordinators
- 3 Adult Literacy organisers
- 2 Community Education coordinators
- 2 BTEI coordinators
- 2 Youth Officers

LMETB FET provision is operating from multiple dedicated centres in the large urban and rural towns. The adult education, community education and PLC facilities are set out in map opposite. LMETB utilises former technical school buildings and former industrial units, all of which require significant upkeep and investment in order to adequately maintain them and adhere to Health and Safety requirements. Every effort is made through planned maintenance programmes to maintain infrastructure to a high standard. However, significant capital is required to enable essential works to ensure health and safety compliance state of the art facilities for learners and other stakeholders. The complete portfolio of LMETB further education and training infrastructure comprises:

- 2 Dedicated PLC Colleges
- 1 College with PLC provision (shared campus)
- 9 Youthreach Centres
- 3 Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme Centres
- 1 Training Centre (RSTC includes apprenticeship, traineeship and contracted training and evening course provision)
- 12 Centres offering a range of Adult Literacy, BTEI, Community Education, Adult Guidance Recruitment and Information Service
- 9 Evening Course Centres across the region
- Youth Service supporting 106 Voluntary Youth Clubs and 5 Youth Projects
- 10 Co-operation centres
- 1 Community Training Centre
- 9 Local training initiatives
- 1 Specialist training provider (NLN)
- 1 Direct Provision / Refugee Centre
- Skills for Work programmes (multiple sites)
- 3 Adult Guidance Recruitment and Information Services Centres

LMETB works actively to support a number of post primary community schools within the region, of which there are six, LMETB FET actively engages in a planned strategy which enables and supports progression pathways, which facilitates transitioning of second level and centre based students into FET programmes. Also located in the LMETB region is Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT), with approximately 15,000 (full and part-time) learners per annum, providing significant progression opportunities for FET learners in the Louth Meath area. LMETB has over the past decade developed significant linkages between FET and HE/ employment with multiplicity of programmes and strategies devised which both support, enable and encourage positive transitions.

### 3.2 FET Provision

LMETB received funding from SOLAS of €29.8m in 2017 and supported over 18,000 beneficiaries across the range of programmes set out in the diagram below.

#### LMETB 2017

NOS COMMENCING COURSES

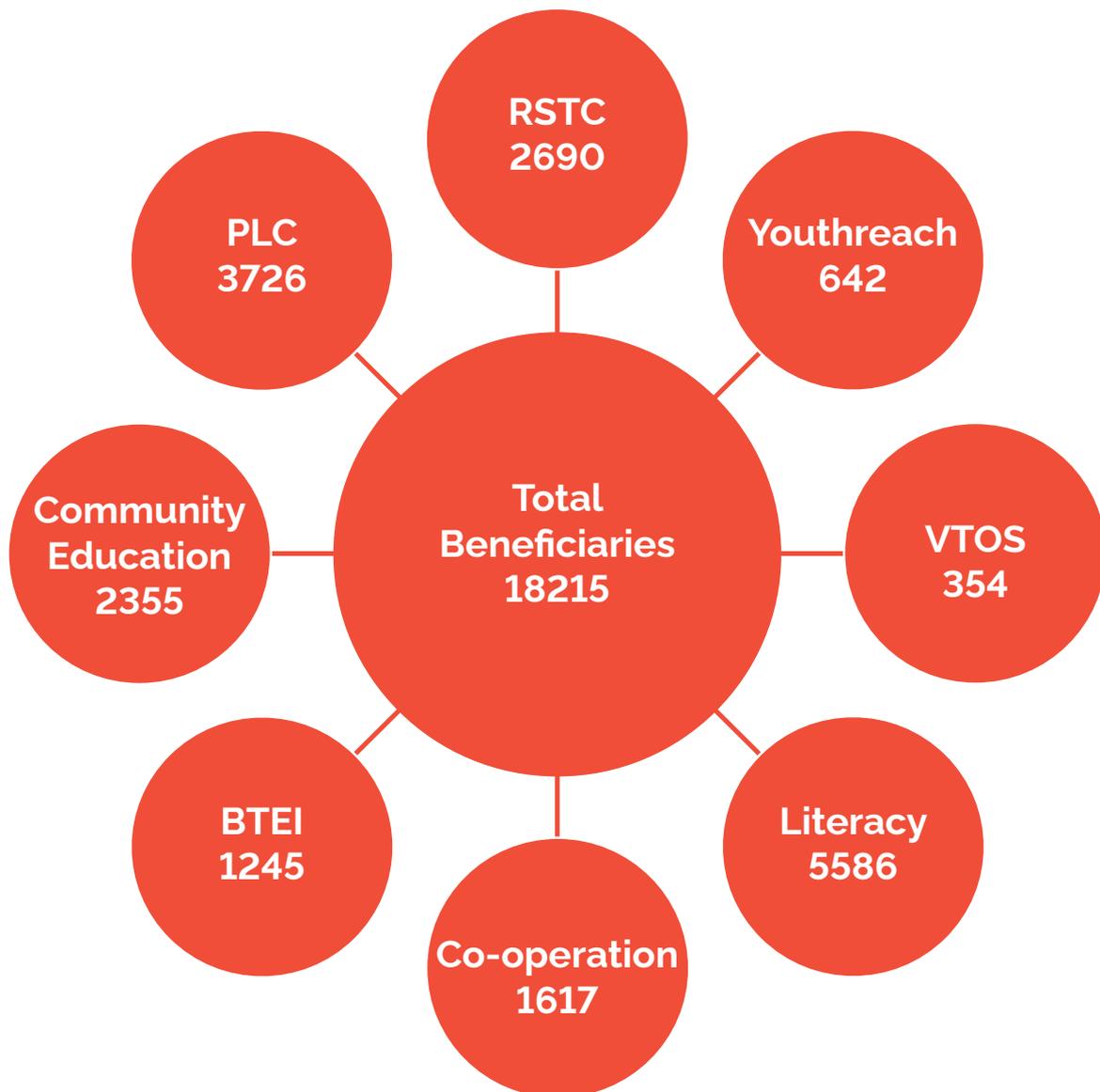
14,779

NOS COMPLETING COURSES

11,626

NOS OF OVERALL BENEFICIARIES

18,215



Analysis of provision LMETB FET is set out by skills cluster in the table hereunder. This highlights the strong focus on transversal skills development within the general learning and core personal categories. However it also highlights strengths in provision in the key specific skills areas identified earlier, like health, family and other social services; business and administration; and the build environment.

### 2017 Provision by Skills Cluster

	Total Actual Beneficiaries	% of Total Beneficiaries
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	25	0.14%
Animal Science	224	1.23%
Art, Craft and Media		
Arts & Crafts	127	0.70%
Built Environment	586	3.22%
Business, Admin & Management		
Business, Administration	788	4.33%
Core ICT	673	3.69%
Core Personal	7,625	41.86%
Engineering	76	0.42%
Engineering (Electrical)		
Engineering (IT)	14	0.08%
Engineering (Mechanical)	98	0.54%
Engineering (Transport)	31	0.17%
Entrepreneurship	53	0.29%
Financial Services	56	0.31%
Food and Beverage	129	0.71%
General Learning	4,055	22.26%
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	323	1.77%
Health, Family other Social Services	1,417	7.78%
Information Technology	232	1.27%
Management	17	0.09%
Manufacturing	204	1.12%
Media Graphics Communications	255	1.40%
Research and Education-Training		
Sales & Marketing	158	0.87%
Sampling Skills		
Science and Technology	184	1.01%
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	39	0.21%
Sport and Leisure	264	1.45%
Tourism	287	1.58%
Tourism and Sport		
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	179	0.98%
Web Development & Design	96	0.53%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,215</b>	

---

# 4. ETB Strategic Priorities



# Section 4

## ETB Strategic Priorities

### 4.1 LMETB Strategy

#### 4.1.1 LMETB Mission Statement

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board is committed to excellence and innovation in the education of young people and adults through the provision of dynamic services delivered by professional staff.

#### 4.1.2 LMETB Strategy Statement

The LMETB Strategy Statement 2017 – 2021 sets out high level strategic objectives and actions for the organisation under seven strategic goals:

- To promote active inclusion and access to high quality teaching, learning and assessment for all students/learners in LMETB
- To enhance communications across LMETB and to further develop the capacity of LMETB staff to provide responsive, high quality programmes and services
- To ensure continued provision of high quality and innovative teaching and learning in LMETB Schools & Colleges
- To support the development and expansion of the Further Education and Training Section of LMETB
- To strengthen and develop LMETB organisation systems
- To develop LMETB Buildings, Facilities & Infrastructure
- To further develop strategic partnerships and to promote the LMETB brand within the communities of Louth and Meath

Each of the seven strategic goals has been expanded into objectives which have been further described in terms of actions. Many of the actions outlined in the Strategy Statement will only be delivered by working across and between LMETB services at all levels of the organisation and in particular by engaging with school and centre leaders and frontline staff who are our connection to those students and learners who engage with our educational services. By working together on the implementation of the Strategy Statement we can continue to enhance, improve and further develop our diverse range of educational provision and services and therefore have pride in our organisation and have increased confidence in our ability to deliver excellence and innovation in education to the people living in counties Louth and Meath. The implementation of the actions will be overseen by the LMETB Board, the CE,

Directors of Further Education and Training, Schools, Organisation Support and Development and Further Education and Training centre leaders/coordinators/principals.

#### 4.1.3 LMETB Core Values and Principles

LMETB has also establish core values and principles to underpin all its work, including further education and training:

- **Excellence:** All stakeholders are afforded the highest standards of service provision
- **Innovation:** Staff and learners are encouraged to be progressive, creative and dynamic in their teaching and learning practices. Staff and learners are encouraged to explore the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning
- **Learner Centered:** LMETB programs and services are delivered in response to the needs of the learners in counties Louth and Meath.
- **Supporting Transition:** Transfer, Transition and Guidance: Programs and supports are provided to all learners to ensure they make the right choices regarding career pathways and choices and that they transition successfully from one phase of their educational journey to another
- **Learning:** A lifelong learning perspective is promoted among staff and learners
- **Equality:** All learners are provided with access to education and supports that maximise learning opportunities and help them to reach their potential
- **Inclusion:** All learners are enabled to participate effectively in education, particularly those groups who may have experienced exclusion or isolation
- **Holistic:** The programs and services available in LMETB cultivate the moral, emotional, physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions of the learner
- **Professionalism:** Staff, learners and our stakeholders are encouraged to interact with each other in a courteous, respectful and professional manner where diversity is welcomed and embraced
- **Responsiveness:** An awareness of national and local requirements forms the basis for provision
- **Wellbeing:** The programs and services available in LMETB strive to develop learners' self - confidence and promote learner wellbeing
- **Fairness:** All policies, procedures and practices of LMETB are just and reasonable
- **Integrity:** Staff, learners and stakeholders are encouraged to ensure they act honestly, ethically

transparently. Highest standards in confidentiality where applicable are promoted

- **Partnership & Collaboration:** Programmes and services are developed and delivered in conjunction with key stakeholder groups and organisations
- **Value for Money:** The work of LMETB is conducted in an efficient, transparent manner with due regard for public accountability

## 4.2 LMETB FET Strategic Priorities

The direction for FET that LMETB intends to take in the period 2018-2020 is clearly signposted by the Goals, Priorities & Actions contained in the LMETB Statement of Strategy 2017 – 2021 and referenced above.

### 4.2.1 Teaching and Learning Enhancement

The continuing enhancement of teaching and learning is a central priority of LMETB and key initiatives planned over the course of this agreement include:

- Enhancing FET premises/facilities so as to enable and support a positive learning environment and further developing physical resources so as to support learner engagement and positive learner experience.
- Reviewing and developing learner resources so as to enable and support learner participation. Examples include induction/study skills programmes, provision of education material, learner hubs (as appropriate), and adapted equipment.
- Reviewing existing blended learning opportunities provided by LMETB in evening course provision and PLC programmes. The review will aim to capture best practice, share learning across the sector and identify area and opportunities to introduce blended learning as a vehicle in other FET programmes.
- Reviewing and developing communications strategies which enable and supports two-way communication for FET Learners including feedback strategies/mechanisms to support FET learner participation/ progression/ enhanced attainment/certification.
- Developing learner supports to enable integration and use of ICT as a learning tool. Learners are upskilled in ICT to enable and support participation/progression and assessment opportunities. This will tie in with LMETB's commitment to the use of ICT as a support to and aid for teaching and learning, effected through the LMETB TEL Strategy. This strategy highlights on-going training and upskilling of staff to increase effective use of ICT in classroom and training facilities, and to effectively utilise blended learning opportunities in programmes where appropriate.
- Reviewing teaching and learning strategies as part of the QA assessment and review process with the aim to improve learning experience of FET learners in LMETB programmes.

- Prioritising Continuous Professional Development, enabled via both individualized and clustered activities relevant to a number of staff teams e.g. data protection, FOI, dealing with mental health, suicide prevention, ICT etc.
- LMETB will continue to upgrade and enhance facilities to reflect the 21st Century expectations of its stakeholders, although additional capital funding will be required to ensure this is the case.

### 4.2.2 Expansion of Apprenticeship and Traineeship Provision

LMETB is committed to the expansion of apprenticeships and traineeships which are tailored in response to the evolving needs of the learners, employers, the economy and wider community. On apprenticeship, LMETB is working with colleagues in other ETBs to develop new programmes while liaising with SOLAS to develop and enhance existing provision for LMETB. This will include expansion of both pre-2016 and new apprenticeship provision to meet national demand. As a result of both analysis of skills cluster data and significant work with local Employers groups and SMEs, LMETB subject to resourcing, hope to be in a position to offer both enhanced and New Apprenticeship offerings in existing centres of excellence at the Dundalk Training centre and in new locations, alongside introducing new offerings / Programmes to meet target identified Skills needs as per our interface and research with local employers groupings and National intelligence provided by SMLRU. In order to increase potential perspective applicants for apprenticeship craft programmes,

Proposed new **apprenticeship** programmes/initiatives over the period 2018-2020 will include:

- Pre-apprenticeship programmes as part of new apprenticeship academy initiative as significantly important and LMETB is seeking resourcing of same.
- Pre – apprenticeship programmes will include; Engineering, Catering /Hospitality, Tiling, Wood Manufacturing, Painting, Decorating, and Carpentry, Employability skills programmes.
- ICT Associate Professional Software Developer
- ICT Associate Professional Network Engineer
- Accounting Technician
- Hairdressing
- **Craft Apprenticeships enhancement** and strengthening of offering in: Construction trades including Metal Fab, Plumbing, Electrical, wood manufacturing to meet significant demand of employers in our region.
- **Existing Apprenticeship /capacity for planned development** in existing craft areas; Electrical, Metal Fabrication, Carpentry and Joinery, Pipefitting, Motor Mechanic, Wood Manufacturing and Finishing, Tool Making, Tool Making and fitting

LMETB is also committed to working in partnership with local employer groups to develop traineeships which meet the ever changing needs of local economy and to address skills shortages. New **traineeship** programmes proposed by LMETB include:

- Culinary Arts/ Hotel and Catering
- Engineering
- Tourism/ Tour Guiding
- ICT
- Pharmacy Sales
- Retail and Call Centre Sales
- Logistics and Distribution

LMETB has established a significant need for pre apprenticeship and pre traineeship type programmes. Budget permitting it is hoped to address this need through innovative courses tailored to meet clients' needs delivered in multiple LMETB sites which will enable transition and progression to apprenticeship or traineeship programmes.

In order for LMETB to provide a world class apprenticeship and traineeship service to employers, learners and communities of Louth and Meath, it is essential that adequate funding is provided to resource the acquisition and development of fit for purpose premises and purchase of new equipment relevant to the apprenticeship/traineeship discipline. LMETB has demonstrated its willingness to be involved in all aspects of preparation for, and management of, such a world class service, but are limited by a lack of resourcing at national level. It is hoped that with support of SOLAS, capital budgets will be made available to LMETB to enable this development.

#### 4.2.3 New Programme Development

In addition to these plans around apprenticeships and traineeships, LMETB will also focus on wider programme development to introduce new and innovative courses utilising teaching, training and learning methodologies which meet the needs of a varied and disparate target cohort. This will improve both course retention rates and progression to employment or higher education. The FET department will work in partnership with the Curriculum Development Unit to enable and support this new programme development.

**New PLC programmes** planned are reflective of the needs identified by research carried out with local employers, analysis of data regarding industries in local areas and planned development in this regard. LMETB mindful of different entry level of learners to PLC programmes aims to develop and deliver pre-apprenticeship /traineeship/PLC type programmes which will support learners transitioning into such courses.

- Pre-apprenticeship programmes in Engineering.
- Pre Apprenticeship Employability skills sampling
- Traineeship: Hotel and Catering Hospitality Studies. (L4/5)
- Food Science Nutrition and Dietetics, L5
- Health Supervisory Management, Level 6
- Advance Certificate in Fashion Design L6
- Entrepreneurship: Art and Business Programmes, Level 6
- Beauty Therapy L6
- Hairdressing, L6 and C&G
- Animal Science L5
- Equine Studies L5 and 6
- Sports Injury and Massage L5 and ITEC
- Soccer Coaching L 5
- Human Resource Management L5
- Applied Psychology L5

LMETB's willingness to deliver such programmes is constrained by its PLC cap which LMETB hopes will increase significantly in order to meet needs of the ever expanding region. These new programmes (and existing PLC provision) will also reflect the recommendations arising from the national PLC evaluation and indeed highlight a rebalancing of PLC provision towards inclusion of increased labour market focus.

**NEW BTEI Courses** planned at Levels 3, 4 and 5 are dependent on the needs identified by learners, local communities and employers. Proposed courses include:

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| — Barbering (level 5 and C&G) | — Business and Administration   |
| — Hairdressing                | — Social Media  |
| — Medical Secretary,          | — Fisheries: Boat repair, Nets, ICT, Accounts                               |
| — Retail Skills/Sales         | — Start your own Business   |
| — Customer Service,           | — Entrepreneurship programme  |
| — Tourism L3/4/5,             | — Transport /Logistics  |
| — ICT                         | — Farm enterprise   |
| — Caring for Elderly          | — Farm Accounts   |
| — Palliative care             | — Personal / interpersonal skills   |
| — Driving                     | — Intercultural awareness   |
| — Tour Guiding                | — Floristry   |
| — Employability Skills        | — Sewing  |
| — Skills sampling courses     | — Career Planning and Pre-Development Programmes such as Mapping My Future. |
| — ICT                         |   |

**VTOS Programmes** ensure delivery of transversal skills programmes whilst also focusing on specific skills acquisition to enable progression to employment as well as HE/FE. LMETB plans an increase in skills based programmes such as – occupational first aid, coding, team working and decision making

**Youthreach Programmes** ensure delivery of transversal skills programmes whilst also focusing on specific skills acquisition to enable progression to employment as well as other HE/FET learning opportunities. Skills based programmes such as Horticulture level 2, Culinary Arts level 3, Breakfast Cookery and Short Order Cooking levels 3 & 4 are planned (all of which are a response to needs identified in the local employment market in rural locations in Louth and Meath)

**Contracted Training Provision** will also play an important role in enabling targeted delivery of training in location across the LMETB region to support the needs of local economies and communities. Provision planned includes: Healthcare, Social Media, Mobile Technology and App Design, Barista, and Level 4 Employability Skills Programmes to incorporate career planning, entrepreneurial skills, customer service, IT and work experience.

#### 4.2.4 Innovative Service Development

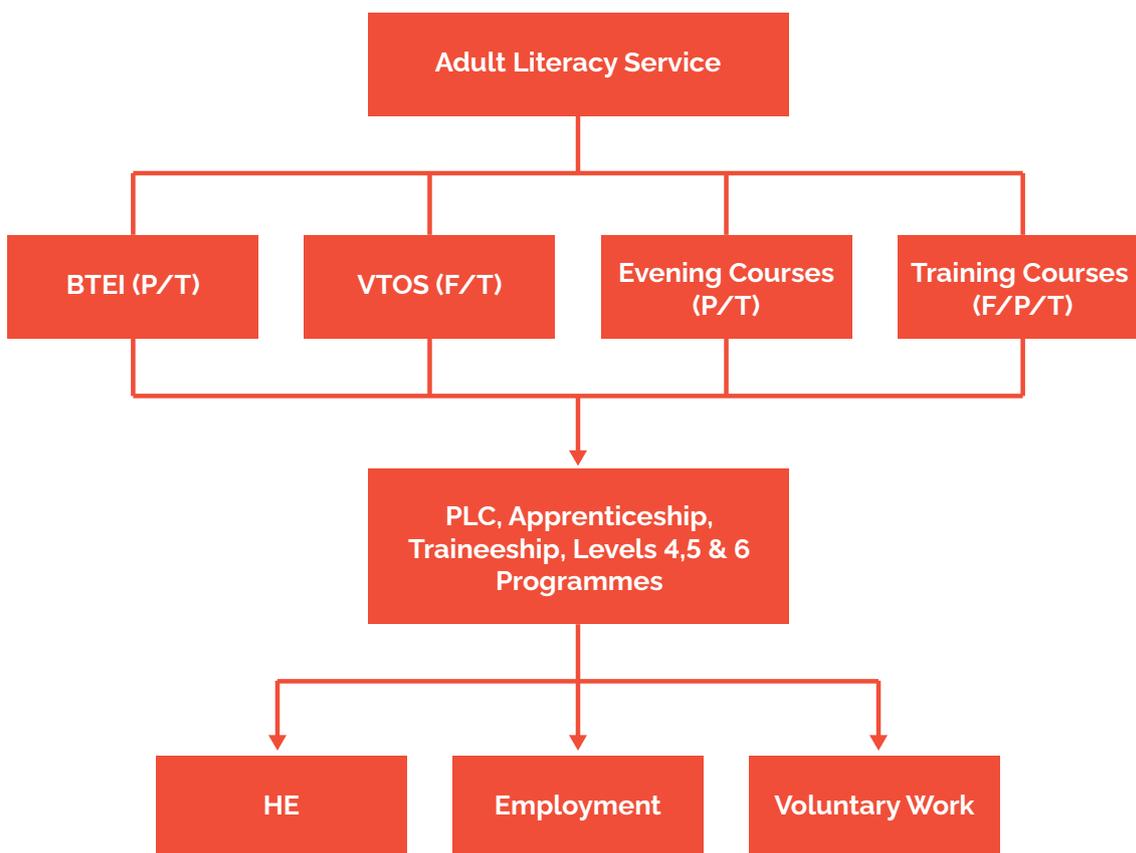
Engagement with stakeholders will be key to LMETB's commitment to ensure innovative service development. Programmes are planned targeting school leavers to consider FET as a first option for progression. Planned interventions include open weeks in all FET centres, strategically targeting School Career Guidance Personnel and potential school leavers, who can then review and visualise the wonderful facilities and the breadth of opportunity available. This will entail extensive preparatory collaboration and planned visits by a strategically identified group of LMETB staff to all Post Primary Schools within our region to outline the

opportunities available. The overall aim of this initiative is to enable and guide all, including vulnerable young people into courses including pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeships, traineeships and PLC programmes as a first option, and then onward to sustainable employment or higher education.

LMETB will also continue to develop innovative communication and engagement tools. As part of the European Commission funded project, Innovation Ecosystems for Vocational Education and Training (InEcVET), LMETB produced a suite of four videos, with one directly targeting employers to give them an overview of FET Services within LMETB and what the service has to offer. Other promotional videos have been developed by LMETB training services to enable and support communication strategies and engagement of learners. As a tool these videos are extremely useful for promotion events in public areas and school environments. It is proposed, subject to funding, to continue to develop and progress this work.

#### 4.2.5 Learner Progression

LMETB FET programmes will work in partnership to both enable and support progression within FET programmes and onwards to higher education or employment as is appropriate. LMETB refers to this as the progression ladder as set out, for example, in the diagram below. LMETB will ensure that such effective pathways for progression to further/higher education and employment are clearly defined and communicated to the learners.



Innovative pilot strategies have been introduced to manage and support progression from FET to HE. The learners are supported in the transition through one to one inductions, group week long shadowing, and induction programmes. Support is provided once transitioned, for a defined period, until learner is comfortable in the new environment. Learners are also supported through provision of books, materials and stationary to ensure smooth and easy transition.

LMETB have had significant success in placing our graduates in both employment and through strategic linkages developed with HE institutions, **PLC progression** rates to higher education are significant, ranging from 60% to 85% of PLC graduates who have successfully attained full awards and have been offered places in HE institutions on successful completion of course. It is LMETB's intention working with staff team in FE and through our strategic alliances with HE to further grow this percentile by 2020 by at least 10%. LMETB is a founder member of NEFHEA (North East Further and Higher Education Alliance) and MEND (Midlands East North Dublin cluster clusters which bring together FE colleges IOTs and universities to enable and support transitioning and alignment of courses to enable progression opportunities. LMETB plans to further develop linkages with other universities and IOTs to support this process. Management teams in PLC colleges continually review course content to ensure it is apt for learners to achieve successful progression both directly into employment and also to related subject disciplines in higher education institutions.

Pre – college orientation programmes are also an important aspect of the LMETB progression strategy. Learners attending **VTOS** are well prepared for considering HE as a realistic progression opportunity on completion of the programme. To date between 60 – 80% of learners successfully completing VTOS programmes at leaving cert/level 5 have being offered places in IOTs and other HEIs to pursue relevant higher education. Existing HE preparatory pilot programmes in LMETB are to be extended – these offer support in areas including study skills, research and analysis skills development, time management and organisation skills and the ability to work to a deadline. Learners are also facilitated to attend HE open days, take part in shadowing opportunities and are visited by the Access Officers from a number of colleges. Support is provided by the Adult Education Guidance and Information Service regarding college and CAO applications. It is hoped to improve on follow up statistics and the ultimate destination of VTOS students who enter HE with respect to employment and further study.

LMETB also plans to renew efforts to ensure learners keep LMETB updated on their progress. Additional staff and funding will be needed if this is to be managed in a systematic way, to recruit proposed Learner Placement Coordinators across the LMETB region to support this process and enable **systematic tracking** and follow up of learners. FET learners

recognising and being able to articulate the skills acquired whilst in FE colleges for translation this into the world of work is important, and we have a number of pilot initiatives planned from 2018 in PLC Colleges in Dunboyne, O'Fiach and Drogheda respectively. LMETB has also piloted the development of a graduate associate, tracking and recognition system.

**Progression opportunities within FET** are also an important focus and integrated FET provision, in a one-site location such as a FET facility is the ideal vehicle for many learners to access progression opportunities in surroundings that are welcoming and familiar. LMETB seeks to prioritise and target funding at upgrades of certain centres to support progression internally in FET. Within FET there are multiple opportunities to transition across and to progress onwards within FET programmes. Examples of this include:

- **Youthreach** centres have individual learning plans for their young people and use them to explore opportunities for progression. Centres ensure they offer modules that complement the courses offered in PLC colleges. For example, centres offer Human Biology at NFQ Level 4 and Anatomy and Physiology at Level 5, which are modules in many health-related courses in PLC settings. It is planned to extend a current successful pilot initiative which sees Youthreach programmes linking to PLC colleges, with a one week orientation programme for potential learners considering this as a progression option. In extending this pilot programme which has run successfully with DIFE, LMETB intends to include pre- apprenticeship and traineeship programmes. All centres take their young people to the PLC open days in their local areas and support them with the PLC application process, interview preparation and where necessary travel arrangements. They are also supported by centre staff when making their SUSI grant application.
- **Adult Learning Services** - learners who enter part-time programmes in adult literacy, the back to education initiative and community education are enabled and supported to progress as appropriate into FET programmes including VTOS, Youthreach, traineeship, apprenticeship and PLC (dependant on skills base/level). Learners are supported by both programme teams and the guidance, recruitment and information service to identify appropriate options and to attend induction/ orientation initiatives to explore possible opportunities. Examples of best practice include: one step up programmes, return to learning programmes, fresh start programmes to name but a few. These are to be extended across LMETB, funding permitting.

#### 4.2.6 Learner Guidance and Support

LMETB will enhance the **learner guidance** information and recruitment services within FET to support extension of services to as broad an array of the communities of Louth and Meath in so far as resources permit. The Adult Guidance and Information Service provides this extensive service in conjunction with DEASP, with clinics provided in local areas to enable access alongside one to one meetings with each client presenting to the service. The service support adults to both identify opportunities and engage in FET provision appropriate to their needs and stated career/ personal goals and signposts additional supports to facilitate their engagement in training and educational opportunities with LMETB if required. Presentations on the National Framework of Qualifications foster and facilitate a clear understanding of achievements at each of the levels and serve to boost confidence and offer encouragement to learners to progress in their education journey and learner pathway. For example, a presentation to a Level 3 group will focus on the opportunities and demands of a level 4 course and what is available locally. If a learner wants to go on to third level as a mature student, we encourage them to do a Level 5 course. If a learner does not have a Level 4 or Leaving Certificate we encourage the individual to undertake a course which will prepare them for a Level 5. The type of course will depend on the location and the hours they have available and whether or not they are on allowances or other supports. The service also supports the general public to identify pathways to progression opportunities for any course they might consider taking on. With few exceptions, e.g. literacy needs, all DEASP referrals come through the Guidance Service. The Guidance Service then refer on for assessment or directly to the relevant centre/course whether that be in a Training Centre, PLC college or Adult and Community education setting.

Innovative online **learner assessment tools** which have been piloted by LMETB are to be extended subject to funding across relevant FET centres and services. LMETB have developed an assessment methodology for all learners who enter FET programmes. This enables learners and FET staff to clearly identify educational deficits and thus areas for improvement. The tool allows FET management to appropriately place learners in the correct level of course to meet their needs and in turn the continuous staff development and upskilling required to ensure the highest level of teaching and learning in FET provision.

LMETB in consultation with existing learners and instructors and in response to employer requests feedback have identified the need to establish an innovative **learner support unit** within the training centre which will allow learners enrolled in traineeship and apprenticeship programmes to identify specific learning and skills areas where they may need assistance (e.g. maths, ICT and English). This support will be in line with the best practice highlighted in the

literacy integration strategy documents. Provision will be learner centered and is based on identified needs of either individuals or small groups, with supports being provided whilst learners are on site to enable participation.

Whilst the number of **learners who exit without formal qualification** is low, they pervade all programmes due in part to the very complex lives of many adult learners. All learners are supported by programme management and guidance staff before exit (if it is a planned exit) or on exit if unplanned. The guidance service works seamlessly with all groups of learners so is a known and trusted support. Learners are supported and actively encouraged through phone calls, texts and meetings by LMETB staff to re-engage either with the same service or one that might better meet their needs in the changed circumstances.

#### 4.3 Risks and Challenges

LMETB has identified a number of risks and challenges that will have to be addressed over the period 2018-2020 to underpin delivery of the commitments and proposed contributions to the national targets set out in this agreement.

##### 4.3.1 Funding

Adequate capital funding is essential to meet LMETB requirements in maintaining existing facilities, ensuring a health and safety standard, and upgrading facilities and equipment to provide for the needs of both new and emerging employers in the region. FET programmes are currently provided to our stakeholder groups using buildings which in the main are not fit for purpose. These buildings date from the 1930s/1940s/1950s and their upgrade and maintenance is no longer sustainable under the current budgeting constraints and format. Most are listed buildings, which necessitates both planning and conservation compliance. Capital funding to enable basic maintenance of these buildings is an urgent requirement. Given the age of buildings, the ability to make enhancements to enable disability access/ support also becomes a significant cost. Without additional resources, LMETB is very limited in the scope of works possible in this regard. An urgent dedicated capital budget for LMETB is required if we are to meet both basic health and safety in our building whilst alongside planning to meet the needs of employers and our local community into the future.

LMETB have significant plans for Traineeship development, it is hoped that PLC campuses can support this roll out, Management are supportive. However, funding models currently need review to enable this to happen effectively, so as to capture the good will of employers and FET management.

LMETB Training section want to expand on the current offering of both Craft and new Apprenticeship offerings. LMETB have a reputation for the highest standards in Apprenticeship training and want to further expand and enhance existing offerings. LMETBs ability to reach Targets are inextricably linked to SOLAS sanction of Apprenticeships/Staff /capital and associated resourcing.

#### **4.3.2 Staffing**

The ongoing national review of FET/LMETB staffing levels needs to provide additional resources to meet the needs of learners, communities and employers. In addition, the availability of appropriately qualified staff in the market in areas of teaching/instructing is significantly challenging and thus may impact LMETB's ability to deliver on its programme commitments. Dedicated sanctioned staff for FET LMETB in areas such as QA, Employer Engagement, CPD and Placement alongside administration personnel to meet the significant reporting requirements is urgently needed by LMETB to effectively meet complex and extensive requirements of SOLAS and DES, the needs of learners, employers and communities in Louth and Meath.

#### **4.3.3 Brexit**

In the current political and economic climate, a lack of clarity around Brexit is a significant risk to the region served by LMETB. The current level of uncertainty requires LMETB to work with colleagues in other state agencies and with employer bodies to share information and plan for possible eventualities from the Brexit negotiations, including whether a hard or soft border will result. Implications of either for the FET sector are substantial and will unfold as soon as negotiations are concluded, and only when this clarity is forthcoming will LMETB be able to plan fully and effectively.

#### **4.3.4 Addressing Areas of Disadvantage**

As we noted in Section 2, the LMETB area is characterised by relatively high concentrations of social/economic deprivation which presents a particular challenge in comparison with other ETB areas. It is clear that over the past decade addressing the issue of unemployment requires a multi-faceted approach, and to this end new programmes proposed in BTEI/PLC/Traineeships and part-time course offerings are designed to be attractive, engaging and non-threatening, building on the tremendous work already commenced by LMETB in these areas. Our aim in targeting new innovative provision is focused on Lone Parents, LTU males and Females in the areas referenced to stimulate and encourage engagement in Courses and Programmes. LMETB will be actively supported in its work by its longstanding successful working relationship with DEASP personnel. As part of our innovative courses LMETB plan to deliver

programmes in partnership with DEASP that target the live register and align to skills needs of local employers. In so doing LMETB will design bespoke tailored courses/programmes (as appropriate), to meet employer needs whilst also enabling and supporting the LTU to be actively considered and indeed successful in gaining employment through participation in such programmes.

#### **4.3.5 Learner Demand and Increasing Complexity of Learner Needs**

As the economy improves and employment opportunities increase the number of available potential learners for full time courses is diminishing, with a risk that such courses become uneconomic, unless operating guidelines at national level are reviewed (e.g. around eligibility). In the same way retention of learners on courses is becoming increasingly difficult given alternative employment opportunities. The recent launch of the policy framework for employee development will be of significant importance to LMETB in setting the context for intensive engagement with employers and employees, but associated funding will also be required. While there is increasing pressure to sustain numbers across programmes due to unemployment and employment trends, this is countered by the fact that in Louth/ Meath over the past decade LMETB has accepted in excess of 300/400 PLC learners per annum over and above its PLC allocation due to the strength of demand in the region. This situation needs immediate remediation with an increased allocation of PLC learner numbers to enable and support upskilling of learners attending courses and programmes at levels 5 and 6. Learner demand is also affected by opportunities available to learners in IOTs who would be better served by firstly engaging with LMETB to attain a L4/5 qualification, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful completion of a course in HE. LMETB willingness to continue to deliver additional PLC programmes in all of its colleges is significantly constrained by a historic PLC numbers cap, which no longer reflect the significant demand for places ever increasing, which is being experienced by LMETB and urgent upward review of PLC cap is required with an additional minimum 500 places being required.

Learner needs are also becoming increasingly complex raising a number of associated challenges:

- Statistically small, but none the less significant, numbers of U16s not engaged in school presenting for assistance to LMETB.
- Significant numbers of ESOL learners needing appropriate support and resourcing.
- Changing policy on asylum seekers/refugees has significant impact on service provision.
- Mental health and wellbeing of FET learners is a significant factor in many programmes. The need for dedicated, funded counselling support,

adequate to meet the significant demands for same urgently needs to be addressed.

- Whilst LMETB enables and supports all FET learners to attain certification if at all possible, for a significant number of learners this is not a practical option, however there is real benefit from participation which is not always measurable in certification but in terms of civic engagement and volunteerism / acquisition of independent living skills. The push for certification of courses focused on transversal skills development should take this into account.

#### **4.3.6 Reporting**

The increased requirements for reporting of statistical and analytical data are placing an unreasonable burden on management teams and the limited administrative staff within the FET sector. As a result of these requirements, management effort is diverted away from the essential stakeholder engagement with employers and other agencies and indeed learner recruitment and engagement and this is a significant concern for FET management in LMETB. The need for dedicated data input and analysis staff at ETB level cannot be overstated if we are to ensure accuracy and consistency of the essential data to be uploaded and extracted from databases such as FARR and PLSS.

#### **4.4 Delivering on FET Relevant Policies and Strategies**

Working within available resources, LMETB endeavours to ensure where possible the policies and strategies listed below are given due consideration when planning FET provision and services.

- Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015-2022
- Updated National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2015-2017
- National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021
- The Migrant Integration Strategy 2017-2020
- Better outcomes brighter futures: The National Policy Framework for Children & Young People 2014-2020
- National Youth Strategy 2015-2020
- Action Plan for Education 2018
- Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People.
- National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021
- National Positive Ageing Strategy 2013-2020
- National Carers' Strategy: Recognized, Supported, Empowered
- Connecting for Life – Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide 2015-2020
- Action Plan for Jobs 2017
- Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth

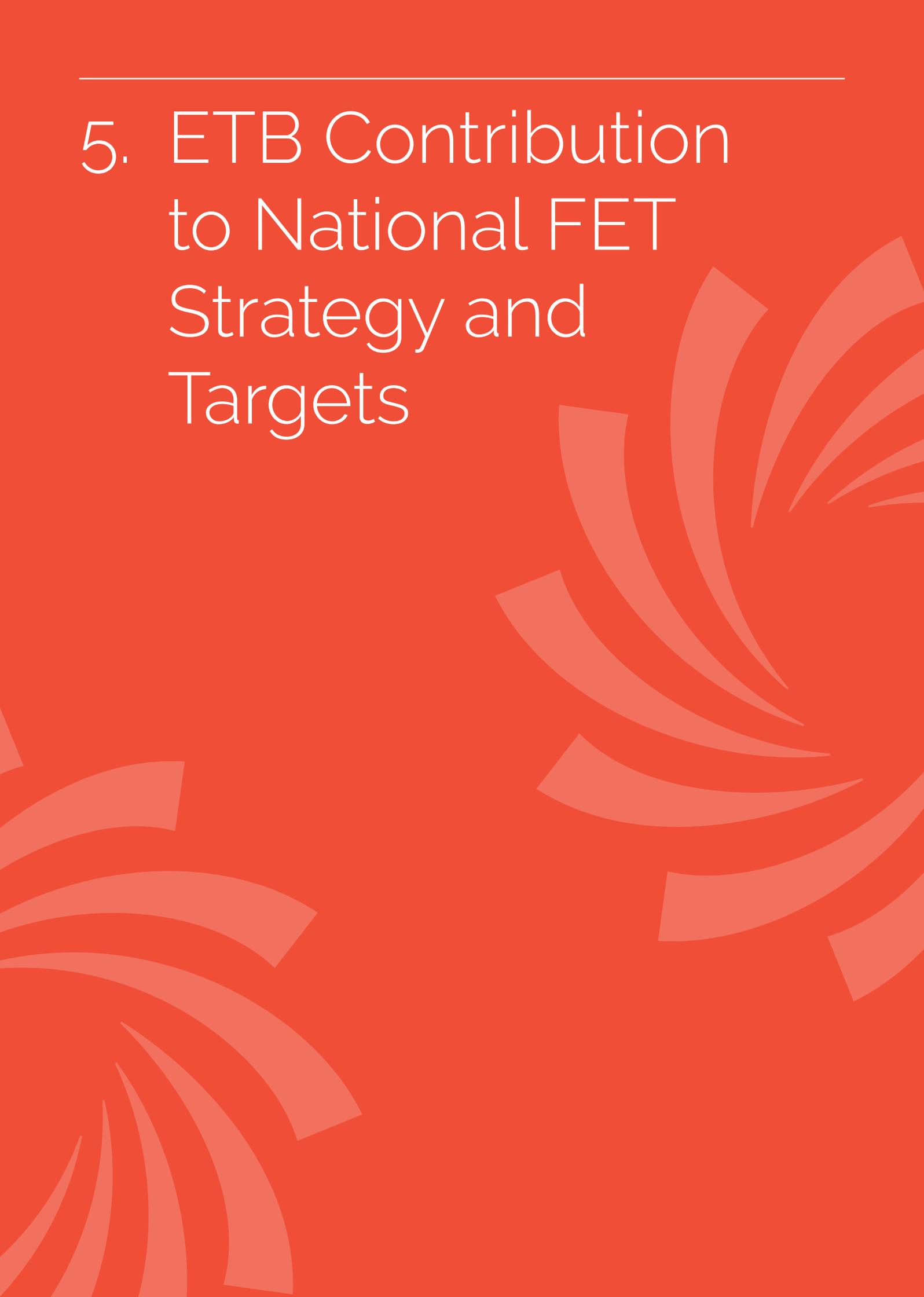
- National Action Plan for Expansion of Apprenticeships and Traineeships 2016-2020
- National Skills Strategy

LMETB 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. This is of course subject to appropriate resourcing and funding to enable same. 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

LMETB FET will address current and future needs of learners, job seekers, employers and employees and will contribute to national economic development, conscious of the need to both maintain levels of service provision in key areas and to meet new and emerging needs. To do this LMETB is informed by the Skills and Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU), consultation with employers, employer representative bodies (Chamber of commerce, IBEC, Enterprise Ireland, IDA) and skills fora for the north east and mid-east. Local community and voluntary networks, discussions with key groups such as DEASP, local authorities, HSE, Carer/Disability interest groups is used to both ascertain current needs to identify how these might be met through existing provision or the development and introduction of new provision. LMETB will continue to develop this advisory infrastructure to ensure that LMETB provision is relevant and is informed directly by employers and other relevant stakeholders.

Employer engagement happens at number of different levels based on programme/college requirements. It is central to the development of new courses and informs curriculum design/development and enables work placements for learners involved in variety of FET programmes, particularly level 4,5 and 6. Industry databases have been developed which identify employers active in the area of Louth and Meath and their employee profile and the skills category within which they work, and LMETB intends to utilize this information to increase and enhance engagement opportunities. Employer representatives are also active members of BOM's and advisory groupings which link to FET centres/colleges. Employment engagement is central to the development of new courses and informs curriculum design /development, All PLC management teams in each of our campus have well established Employer networks, alongside working strategically with employer fora/representative groups to address curricula needs of industry so as to ensure relevancy of awards , skill and competencies of graduates are in-depth, of a range to ensure fit for purpose to enable and support ease of progression into both industry or HE options.

The new courses and programmes planned to meet the evolving needs of employers via apprenticeships, traineeships, PLC and other provision were set out in section 4.2.2 and 4.2.3. All of these are strongly linked to regional industry need, with, for example, Culinary Arts programmes at levels 5/6 meeting the stated needs of the hotels federation, food processing consortia and restaurateurs. New courses planned in biopharma reflect needs identified by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, while new courses in information technology (taking cognisance of the demands of cyber security/cloud computing/software development/coding/gaming) align with recent vacancy reports.

LMETB aims to provide for the development and delivery of bespoke and off the shelf FET programmes/ courses. These programmes are developed in conjunction with and for employers to support employment opportunities and/or upskilling. This strategy is to be supported by a new LMETB FET Employer Development Strategy. LMETB targeted provision in 2018-2020 will include the following:

- **Skills for Work:** Further increase the identification and recruitment of employers to participate in the **Skills for Work** programme, enabling and supporting upskilling of employees in Literacy, Numeracy, Language and ICT.
- **Adult Education Evening course provision.** LMETB have over the past decade worked to enhance and develop, self- financing opportunities for members of our community to avail of upskilling opportunities, which provide formal, industry recognised certification. It is estimated that there are currently over 2,000 learners per annum availing of these self-financed learning opportunities.
- **Enterprise development:** LMETB provide for the development and delivery of start your own business and specific skills development programmes so as to enable and support people to start and sustain their own business.
- **Employer needs led programme development:** LMETB have proactively worked in partnership with a number of local employers to support workforce enhancement /development and enlargement with tailored provision, with employee mentoring programmes and employer ambassador schemes alongside this.

All courses where possible will afford Certification opportunities to Learners. Courses are designed to include core modules developing transversal skills alongside specific skills training. The nature and extent of certification is limited by time and is agreed in advance with the employer.

## 5.2 Active Inclusion

LMETB uses all the resources at its disposal to enable and support social inclusion and participation of learners in FET programmes suited to assessed needs. Priority learner cohorts including the long-term unemployed, Early School leavers and those with disabilities are actively encouraged and facilitated (subject to limited resources) to access LMETB services/courses/programmes. Every effort is made to enable access and participation including:

- A communication medium suited to needs of learners (oral, visual, written)
- Equipment which will enable/support teaching/ learning (e.g. large print screens on computers, recording facilities, use of online platforms)
- Courses/ programmes delivered at times/venues which meet needs of learner group.
- Adapted teaching/ learning methodologies to meet the needs of learners
- Resources provided to learners (e.g. books/ stationary) to enable and support access and participation.
- Means tested training allowances, including limited travel support made available to learners engaged in VTOS, Youthreach, and Specific Skills Training programmes.

LMETB FET provision will support the active inclusion of all abilities with special reference to Literacy, Numeracy and Transversal skills development. It will develop and enhance key referral networks with stakeholders, particularly DEASP, to enable learner access to the literacy service, with joint information days to be held. LMETB has also developed videos to demonstrate to potential learners the programmes/services available and is looking at other communication mechanisms to allow learners to tell their own story. The innovative on line assessment tool referenced earlier in this agreement supports identification of areas where learner may be strong and those requiring support. LMETB is also cognisant of the good practice guidelines and toolkit in the assessment of literacy and numeracy at levels 1-3 which was produced by SOLAS and ETBI in March 2018. Volunteer tutors support Learners in One To One engagement, a central plank of LMETBs service. Literacy resources have also been developed to support delivery of programmes at Levels 1-3, including themed literacy programmes. LMETB support learners to attain certification wherever possible. NALA and AHEAD provide excellent training for teachers in FET to encourage inclusive practices in the classroom. It is hoped to roll out training for staff in integrating literacy and numeracy into their daily practice (NALA) and to examine the implication of the universal design model in the classroom to include students with disability (AHEAD).

Students who do not have English as their first language are well served with classes provided by the Adult Learning Services to improve primarily their spoken and then their written English. These classes aim to progress learners from Level 1 to Level 4 ESOL. As learners progress into other programmes, eg PLC, VTOS, BTEI, English language support classes are offered to help students meet the demand of the course. LMETB is committed to progressing the recommendations of the review of ESOL provision which was published in March 2018.

LMETB will also devise and Implement a strategy to promote seamless integrated literacy and numeracy services across FET provision, in line with the findings of the Integrating Literacy and Numeracy report. This will include:

- Development of a literacy/numeracy support hub in the Training centre to enable and support learners in Apprenticeship /Traineeship
- A pilot programme with the Defence Forces which looks to capture and support APL (Accreditation of Prior Learning). It is hoped that LMETB will be able to cascade the learning from such programmes across the wider FET sector.
- Literacy awareness training carried out with external agencies and LMETB staff to support identification of persons in need of assistance with Literacy /Numeracy /ICT. Development of Teaching /Learning resource library which can be used by all Literacy tutors.

LMETB is committed to supporting active inclusion across FET to remove barriers to participation and create centres that value inclusive education and training. FET centres in LMETB house a multiplicity of programmes which supports progression and transfer across programmes, encouraging learners to continue their learning. Programmes have also been developed, such as Steps to learning/ Return to learning/ Supporting access into learning (SALE), which are innovative mechanisms to engage adults back into learning in a non-threatening way, encouraging further engagement in FET. CPD for staff also plays a role in enabling and supporting active inclusion and dispelling misconceptions by helping them to become familiar with resources available and how to integrate relevant literacy/numeracy support into programmes.

### **5.3 Quality Improvement**

LMETB FET will provide high quality education and training programmes to meet appropriate national and international standards. It is working in partnership with QQI and ETBI to enable and support staff to both review and develop new overarching policies and procedures across FET. In addition, LMETB has actively engaged with both national and industry-specific certification authorities to ensure compliance and maintenance of respective QA policies and procedures and standards.

As part of the commitment to quality improvement, LMETB values the view of all learners, encouraging them to give feedback in writing, verbally or as part of a group activity. Management considers feedback and where possible will endeavour to take this on board. Other stakeholder feedback is also encouraged and facilitated.

LMETB supports continuous staff development and upskilling in line with the seven areas of focus identified in the national professional development strategy. To ensure excellence in FET programme development, LMETB also engages staff in ongoing review and course development work to ensure they continue to meet the evolving needs of learners and a growing economy.

### **5.4 Outcomes-based Planning and Funding**

LMETB is committed to a process of integrated planning across all further education and training as set out in this agreement and is implementing a new integrated and coordinated FET planning model. LMETB FET provision will be planned and delivered on the basis of objective analysis of needs and evidence of social and economic impact. LMETB engages with the SMLRU on an annual basis as part of its planning processes, and this invaluable resource greatly informs and influences future planning to reflect evolving needs in the Louth and Meath. Additional data sources for planning purposes found to be significantly beneficial for planning purposes include Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Chambers of Commerce, Employer Networks and Skills Fora North East and Mideast. LMETB will work collaboratively with SOLAS to enable and support development of data capture and reporting systems. It will also benefit from access to learner outcome data from the administrative datasets available from the SOLAS and CSO agreement and will utilise this in its planning process, including in the continuous review and evaluation of the effectiveness of its FET provision.

### **5.5 Standing of FET**

LMETB endeavours to use many mediums of communication in order to provide information to our learners/potential learners as effectively and succinctly as possible and promote the value of FET to their development. This includes using local radio (regular interviews and a radio community diary), EXPO events, and interviews and profile pieces in local newspapers. Networking across agencies is also key to developing understanding of the role and potential contribution of FET, with strong links with DEASP as detailed earlier in this agreement. Open days are hosted in venues across the region to stimulate interest and encourage adults to step forward into non-threatening engagement programmes.

LMETB utilises FETCH and has its own websites and social media platforms, promoting a significant wealth of services, courses and programmes and raising awareness of our brand and value. Learner recruitment information is made available by the Guidance, Recruitment and Information services of LMETB via multiple websites (Colleges/ETB), newspapers, radio, and with leaflets and brochures made available to libraries, citizens information services, DEASP offices, Seetec Services and Post Offices. Open days are a part of LMETB communications strategy and are hosted in venues across the region, so as to stimulate interest and encourage adults to step forward into non-threatening engagement programmes. LMETB have developed a series of induction Programmes/Taster Courses that afford potential learners the opportunity to attend in a warm and friendly environment. Such programmes also provide LMETB staff with an opportunity to assess Literacy /Numeracy needs and ability of learner to engage/commit

Presentation and award events are an important promotional tool and facilitate the celebration of success of learners and their attainment of qualifications. Former graduates often act as keynote speakers at these events to highlight the benefits of FET. Learner works are where possible published in book format or displayed in FET centres and local libraries providing an opportunity to highlight the excellent work of learners involved in the service.

Employer engagement will be a key focus in building the standing of FET over the course of this agreement, ensuring strong demand as the employee development policy is rolled out and supported. LMETB will also work with SOLAS on the roll-out of a national campaign to promote the standing of FET in late 2018 and 2019.

## 5.6 ETB Contribution to National FET Targets

Louth and Meath 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. There are a multiplicity of complimentary and competing drivers which impact LMETBs targets and which were discussed in the risks and challenges identified in section 4.3.

Target	National Sectoral Target	LMETB Contribution
1. More learners securing employment from provision which primarily serves the labour market	10% over 3 years	16% over 3 years, equating to 794 learners 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	10% over 3 years, equating to 831 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	13% over 3 years, equating to 1,250 completers certified in 2020
4. Increase in adults seeking FET level provision engaging in lifelong learning interventions	10% over 3 years	12% over 3 years, equating to 10,501 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 351 and a 41% increase in learners in 2020 compared with 2017
6. New apprenticeship and trainee registrations in the period 2017 to 2019	30,500 over 3 years	618 over 3 years or 102% increase on 2017 levels

---

# 6. Performance Agreement



## Section 6

# Performance Agreement

In entering this agreement, Louth Meath 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 4.3 of the agreement. LMETB 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



**Martin G O'Brien**

Chief Executive, Louth and Meath  
Education and Training Board

Date: 15/10/2018

Date: 15/10/2018

---

# Appendix A



# Appendix A

## LMETB 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	0	0%	0	0%		
Animal Science	0	0%	0	0%		
Arts and Crafts	0	0%	0	0%		
Built Environment	8	400%	0	0%		
Business Administration	9	13%	8	21%		
Engineering	13	260%	0	0%		
Engineering (Electrical)	0	0%	0	0%		
Engineering (IT)	5	100%	0	0%		
Engineering (Mechanical)	0	0%	0	0%		
Engineering (Transport)	0	0%	0	0%		
Entrepreneurship	3	0%	0	0%		
Financial Services	-2	-17%	0	0%		
Food and Beverage	0	0%	0	0%		
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	-2	-2%	0	21%		
Health, Family other Social Services	20	9%	9	21%		
Information Technology	0	0%	0	0%		
Management	10	333%	0	0%		
Manufacturing	9	900%	0	0%		
Media, Graphics Communications	0	0%	3	21%		
Natural Resources	0	0%	0	0%		
Research and Education-Training	0	0%	0	0%		
Sales & Marketing	0	0%	0	0%		
Science and Technology	0	0%	0	0%		
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	0	0%	0	0%		
Sport and Leisure	10	21%	0	0%		
Tourism	0	0%	0	0%		
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	26	186%	0	0%		
Web Development & Design	0	0%	0	0%		
Core ICT			10	7%	50	0%
Core Personal			10	2%	3466	11%
General Learning			33	31%	84	0%
Language			0	0%	0	0%
Skills Sampling,			0	0%	0	0%
Key Skills			0	0%	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3600</b>	<b>13%</b>

[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	
<b>Sector Provision 10% increase of adults, who are seeking FET level provision, engaging in lifelong learning interventions[1]</b>		<b>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</b>		<b>Traineeship Programmes. Traineeship National Target of 19,000 (2016-2020) - 13,900 - (2018-2020) Commencements on Traineeship (Skill Clusters By Starters)  Labour Market Skills</b>	
<b>Expected overall contribution to the National Target for increase in Starters and ETB capacity %</b>		<b>Expected overall annual average contribution to National Target for Completers Certified &amp; ETB Capacity %</b>		<b>Expected overall contribution to National Target and ETB capacity %</b>	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	6%			0	0%
1	5%			0	0%
0	0%			0	0%
1	5%	7	100%	0	0%
17	5%			172	45%
31	182%	80	490%	60	8%
0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
10	71%	36	0%	0	0%
22	22%	28	40%	0	0%
1	5%	8	125%	0	0%
37	70%	24	3900%	0	0%
3	5%			54	-33%
1	5%	10	18%	78	63%
3	5%			14	0%
317	96%	77	36%	160	0%
62	207%	44	67%	0	0%
0	0%			0	0%
1	5%	3	0%	40	0%
0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
0	0%			0	0%
0	0%			0	0%
2	5%	11	21%	0	0%
1	5%	8	21%	0	0%
2	5%			0	0%
0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
15	0%	10	11%	0	0%
9	5%			40	0%
0	0%	5	21%	0	0%
31	5%				
208	5%				
168	5%				
60	0%				
28	0%				
90	0%				
<b>1121</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>102%</b>

---

# 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:

<b>Full-Time</b>	Apprenticeship Training	Blended Training
	Local Training Initiatives	PLC
	Specific Skills Training	Traineeships Training
	VTOS	VSCCS PLC
<b>Part-time</b>	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.

<b>Full-Time</b>	Justice Workshops	Youthreach
	Bridging & Foundation Training	Community Training Centres
	Specialist Training Programmes	
<b>Part-time</b>	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.

<b>Full-Time</b>	Irish Deaf Society provision	
<b>Part-time</b>	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.

**LMETB**

Chapel Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth A91 C7D8  
+353 (0) 42 933 4047 / [www.lmetb.ie](http://www.lmetb.ie) / [education@lmetb.ie](mailto:education@lmetb.ie)

**SOLAS**

**An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna  
Further Education and Training Authority**

Castleforbes House, Castleforbes Road, Dublin D01 A8N0  
+ 353 (0) 1 533 2500 / [www.solas.ie](http://www.solas.ie) / [info@solas.ie](mailto:info@solas.ie)

---