



**lwetb**

*Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
an Longfoirt agus na hIarmhí*  
Longford and Westmeath  
Education and Training Board

# Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board

Strategic Performance Agreement 2022-2024

## Introduction from Longford and Westmeath ETB and SOLAS

“

*“I cannot fault the support and encouragement that came from the tutors. They really went above and beyond to ensure everyone reached their full potential.”*

**LWETB Learner**



### Future FET

The vision for the  
National FET Strategy  
2022 - 2024

### Outcomes

Outcomes link  
national system  
targets to the  
Future FET vision  
by 2024

### Transformation

Continuing the  
transformation of FET to  
grow its contribution and  
impact in addressing  
Ireland's social, economic  
and climate challenges is  
central to the Strategic  
Performance  
Agreement

This is the second strategic performance agreement between SOLAS and Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB). The first ran over the period 2018-2020, a period that took us into unprecedented challenge and change, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The restrictions that this placed on the FET system and the uncertainty over how conditions would develop caused SOLAS and the ETBs to collectively pause the development of the next strategic performance agreement in 2021. The pandemic had a major

impact on FET by LWETB despite the remarkable resilience and commitment of staff. The first task must therefore be to try to 'reboot' to the levels seen pre-COVID. Now in 2022, as we move back into a more normal operating environment, and with a new FET strategy, Transforming Learning, in place, we have the perfect framework to plot this out and develop FET in Longford and Westmeath over the next three years.

*Liz Lavery*

**Liz Lavery**  
Chief Executive LWETB



*Andrew Brownlee*

**Andrew Brownlee**  
CEO, SOLAS



# Agreement Themes

The SOLAS and Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board Strategic Performance Agreement 2022-2024 is set out across the following areas:

01

## LWETB in Profile

Overview of the geographical and provision map of the ETB with a focus on learner profiles and infrastructure.

02

## Performance and Targets

Focus on the achievements of the ETB across 2018-2020, including reflections from the period of the pandemic and detail on strategic ambition to 2024.

03

## FET Strategy – Building Skills

LWETB strategic plans and proposed contribution to the Building Skills objective of the FET Strategy, FET Leader Case Studies and related system targets.

*Data sources: PLSS and Apprenticeship learner databases, SOLAS financial reporting, FET Estates Survey, QQI inaugural reviews of QA in ETBs, and SOLAS SLMRU analysis of population, employment/unemployment, business demography, lifelong learning and educational attainment data from CSO Census reports and CSO Labour Force Survey.*

04

## FET Strategy – Fostering Inclusion

LWETB strategic plans and proposed contribution to the Fostering Inclusion objective of the FET Strategy, FET Leader Case Studies and related system targets.

05

## FET Strategy – Creating Pathways

LWETB strategic plans and proposed contribution to the Creating Pathways objective of the FET Strategy, FET Leader Case Studies and related system targets.

06

## FET Strategy – Enabling Themes

LWETB strategic plans and proposed contribution to the Enabling Themes objective of the FET Strategy, FET Leader Case Studies and related system targets.

APPENDIX 1 – FET STRATEGY FUTURE FET OUTCOMES

APPENDIX 2 – SYSTEM TARGETS AND DEFINITIONS

APPENDIX 3 – SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE AND FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING PERFORMANCE

APPENDIX 4 – LWETB STRATEGIC AMBITION 2022-2024 AT A GLANCE



01

## LWETB in profile

**Longford** has a population of 46,634 (census 2022, preliminary data) up 5,761 (14.1% - the highest % change in the state) from 40,873 (census 2016), which itself was an increase of 1,903 persons (4.8%) since the 2011 census. Therefore, the rate of population growth in Longford between 2011 and 2022 has consistently been higher than the national average of 3.8% from 2011-2016 and 7.6% from 2016-2022. However, Longford remains the second smallest county by population at 0.9% of the total population. The 2016 population of **Westmeath** was 88,770, an increase of 3% (2,606) on 2011. This has now increased by around the national average of 7.6% (7,070) to 95,840 in 2022. Notably Westmeath has over double the population of neighbouring Longford. Together the LWETB area has grown by 12,832, or 9.9% since 2016.

### Population

142.47k

### Employment

65.8k

As the census for 2022 is completed an updated profile will be available. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the profile nationally and locally is yet to be fully determined but analysis on this has been considered, within the overall county demographics.

Of the 149,700 persons in employment in the Midlands region in quarter(Q) 1 2022, it is estimated, based on 2016 county distributions, that 44% were in either Co. Longford or Co. Westmeath, representing approximately **65,850** persons

## Midlands Employment Q3 2021

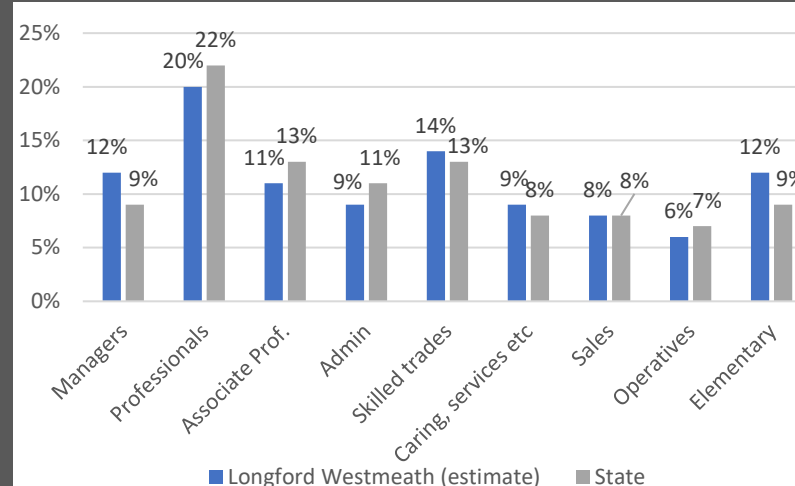
	Midlands (000s) Q3 2021	Estimated share in Longford/ Westmeath: Census 2016
Agriculture	9.5	40%
Construction	8.8	43%
Wholesale and retail	20.3	45%
Transportation and storage	7.4	40%
Accommodation and food	9.3	45%
ICT	*	54%
Professional etc. activities	5.5	46%
Admin and support services	8	43%
Public admin, defence etc	9	42%
Education	13.4	45%
Health and social work	16.8	44%
Industry	20.3	66%
Financial, insurance etc	*	44%
Other NACE activities	6.7	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>142.6</b>	<b>44%</b>

\* Figures too small to be included

Longford-Westmeath has a slightly smaller share of persons working in professional and administrative occupations than the national average, and slightly higher levels working in skilled trades, caring and personal services and elementary sectors (agriculture etc.).

In 2019 there were 1,961 active enterprises in Longford with 8,720 persons engaged, and 4,509 enterprises in Westmeath with 21,373 persons engaged.

## National Employment Analysis



## Educational Attainment

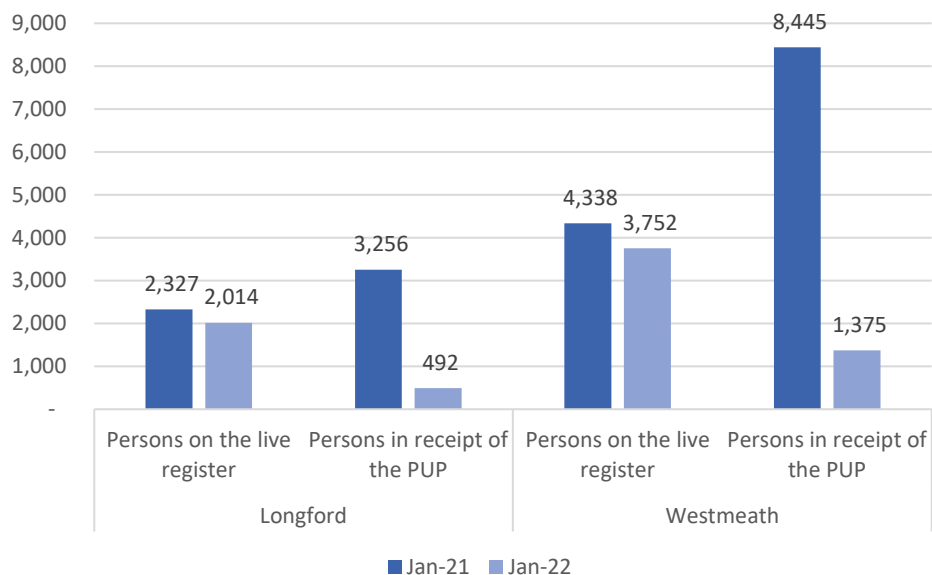
In Q2 2021, the Midlands region (along with the Mid-West region) had the highest share of persons holding FET qualifications (NFQ 4-6) at 16% compared to a national average of 14%. In contrast, the Midlands and Border regions had the lowest share of adults holding higher education qualifications.

## Lifelong Learning

In Q4 2021 around 10.1% of adults aged 25-64 years in the Midlands region had participated in learning activities in the preceding four weeks. This is well below the national average for the quarter of 13.1% (or 12% excluding the Dublin region which has the highest participation rate).



## Live Register and Pandemic Supports



## Longford

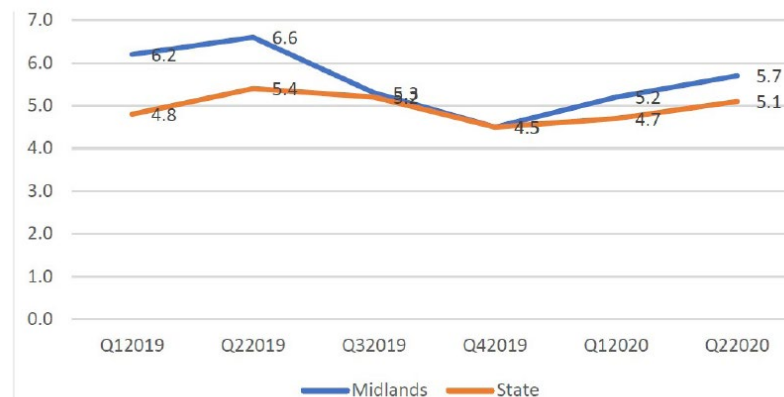
At the end of January 2022, there were 2,014 persons in Longford on the Live Register, a fall of over 300 persons on the same period in the previous year. The number of people in receipt of Pandemic Unemployment Payments (PUP) fell by over 2,700 persons over the 12-month period to approximately 500. At the end of November 2021, there were 1,365 persons in receipt of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), a decline of almost 500 persons on the same period in the previous year.

## Westmeath

At the end of January 2022, there were 3,752 persons in Westmeath on the Live Register, a fall of almost 600 on the same period in the previous year. The fall in the number of people in receipt of Pandemic Unemployment Payments (PUP) was far greater, declining by over 7,000 over the 12-month period. At the end of November 2021, there were 4,034 persons in receipt of the EWSS, which was a decline of approximately 200 on the previous year.

## Unemployment Analysis

The CSO Labour Force Survey statistics indicate that the rate of unemployment in the Midlands region was higher than the National average before the end of 2019. During the first quarter of 2019, the unemployment rate in the Midlands was 6.2% compared to 4.8% nationally. By the end of 2019, the unemployment rate in the Midlands converged to the State/National average of 4.5% and has since been above the State/National average, a significant change from the 2016 position.



## Impact of the Pandemic on Enrolments

Since the onset of the pandemic, while LWETB full-time beneficiary numbers have been resilient, increasing from 3,496 in 2019 to 3,908 in 2021 part-time beneficiaries have not recovered to the same levels, dropping from 4,281 to 2,653.



In line with the elimination of COVID-19 related supports through 2022, there was expected to be a major increase in unemployment. In contrast, Ireland is approaching full employment. Figures for Q1 2022 show a State-wide unemployment rate of 4.8%, with the Midlands region at 4.7%. While the economic situation and outlook remains volatile and risk of increased unemployment remains, this will constrain demand for some courses designed to support people back into employment.



## LWETB FET Infrastructure

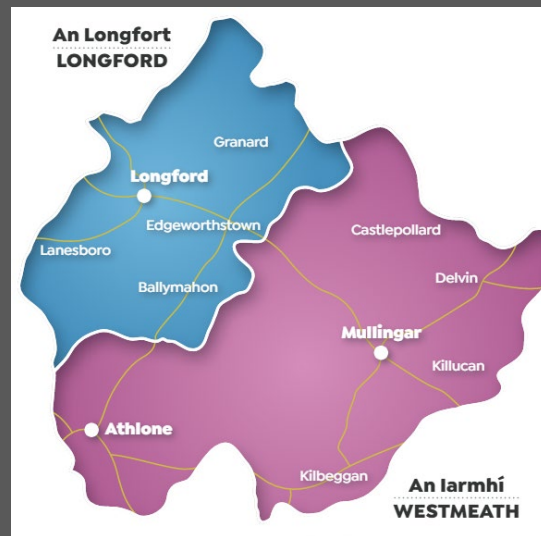
LWETB has 13 sites in total with FET provision, of varying sizes. The two largest sites are situated in the Athlone Training Centre and the Longford Campus and are made up of a number of small individual buildings. The FET provision within LWETB in July 2022 has a total space of approximately 12,666 square metres of usable space. Five of the sites are effectively owned via freehold, including Athlone Training Centre and the two dual provision schools offering FET in Mullingar and Longford. Most of the other properties are held on short term leases, with a few medium term leases up to 2030. The annual rental cost in 2021 was around €320k excluding VAT.

Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) programmes operate from two dual provision second level schools. Across the LWETB estate several buildings are of architectural or heritage significance. Many premises are co-located with other services or businesses.

In the recent FET estates survey, 5 of the 13 sites were considered highly suitable or satisfactory for their use, with a number of others considered satisfactory with some remedial works. However, there are significant infrastructure projects planned for 2022-23 including a new FET Centre in Kinnegad, renovations and additional teaching space in Athlone, and a new digital learning hub in Longford.

There is good quality Wi-Fi across most sites, although significant challenges may arise in moving to more sustainable energy sources and making all the buildings fully accessible.

The capacity of the FET facilities varies considerably, with some premises having only a couple of teaching spaces, to the Athlone Training Centre which has some classrooms which can accommodate approximately 20 learners. There are no large-scale lecture theatres across the LWETB estates portfolio. Beneficiaries served by the facilities vary from 30-50 per annum to almost 2000 per annum at the largest centre.



### LWETB FET Centres

Ballymahon FET Centre
Ballymahon Youthreach Centre
Granard FET Centre
Longford Town FET Campus
Longford Town Youthreach Centre
Templemichael College, Longford
Athlone Training Centre, Garrycastle
Athlone FET Centre, Clonown Road
Delvin Youthreach Centre
Kilbeggan Youthreach Centre
Mullingar Community College
Mullingar FET Centre, Ashe Road
Mullingar FET Centre, Marlinstown

Level 5/6 Provision  
Relative to  
Population Index

0.89

Level 5/6 Provision  
Relative to  
Employment Index

0.97

## Relative Regional FET Supply

In terms of relative Level 5 and Level 6 provision which this FET estate supports, analysis of 2019 full-time provision showed 1,541 people undertaking Phase 2 apprenticeship training, PLC or other FET provision at this level. When we consider this base of provision relative to the population and employment of the region in comparison to the concentration of FET provision across all ETB regions nationally, it produces the indices shown opposite. This suggests a slight undersupply of FET provision in the ETB area. Comparative data for 2021 is not yet available.

There is certainly a low base of PLC provision relative to most other ETB areas, yet at the same time the presence of a major training centre with extensive apprenticeship provision is a notable asset which drives other Level 5 and 6 options. It would seem that the key supply issue is around expanding the portfolio of key classroom-based and practical FET offerings in other locations to complement the many highly practical and technical courses on offer.



## Funding Profile

2021  
€30.6m

## Learner Activity

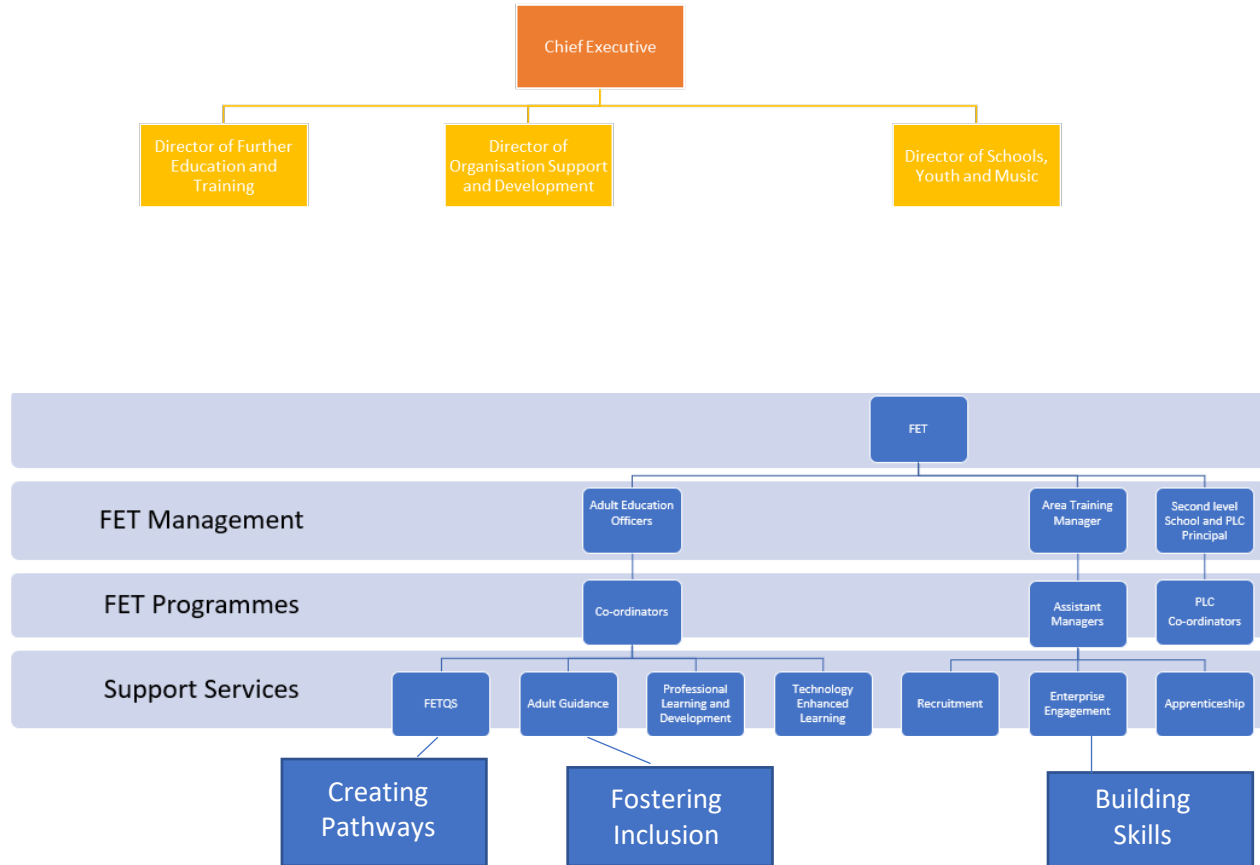
2021  
6,868

## Staffing

128  
FET  
Staff

## Staffing and Strategic Structure

The ETB senior executive structure is set out below with further detail provided on the overall FET leadership and structure



## Focus of Provision

Key areas of industry activity in which LWETB specialize include:







Built  
Environment

Health

Business  
Administration

Engineering

LWETB Apprenticeship provision focuses on:

-  Carpentry and Joinery
-  Electrical
-  Plumbing
-  Metal Fabrication
-  Mechanical Automotive Maintenance Fitter
-  Motor Mechanics





This section presents an overview of the performance against national system targets by Longford and Westmeath ETB across 2018-2021. This provides critical context in setting new targets for the period 2022-24. While the focus of some of the targets remains the same as for the previous agreement (jobs; pathways; transversal certification; lifelong learning; key skills needs) definitions have changed to break the link between targets and programme silos and think in terms of overall outcomes from an integrated FET service by the ETB. The trend information shown reflects the new definitions to better inform target setting and to facilitate longer-term analysis.

Given the nature of the pandemic, the 2019 figures will form the key baselines for performance ambition across 2022-2024, with the first aim for most ETBs to 'reboot' to these pre-pandemic levels. It is important to note that the system targets analysis relate only to certain areas of the FET system (e.g., employment outcomes refer to Level 5 and 6 provision).

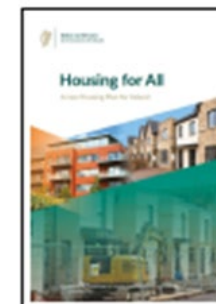
The national system targets for 2022-2024 are then presented with the indicative contribution that LWETB have committed to over the period of 2022-2024. An overview of the system targets and definitions is included in Appendix 2.

This target data is further considered in sections 3 - 6 in the context of the Future FET strategy ***Transforming Learning***, where relevant.

## National System Targets 2022-2024



Underpinned by the National Future FET Strategy with synergy to relevant national policy as highlighted below





# Performance and Targets

## 2022-2024 National FET System Targets

A range of FET system targets have been agreed with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) to reflect the objectives of the Future FET Strategy, Transforming Learning, and other key Government policy imperatives. These targets are to be met by ETBs over the period 2022-24 as set out below.

TARGET	2022	2023	2024
<b>Supporting Jobs</b>			
<b>Jobs:</b> Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	27,410	28,830	30,172
<b>Skills to Compete:</b> Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work	20,065	21,637	22,956
<b>Creating Pathways</b>			
<b>Progression within FET:</b> Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	30,219	33,419	35,958
<b>Progression from FET-HE:</b> Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by 10% by 2024	5,859	6,238	6,672
<b>Fostering Inclusion</b>			
<b>Transversal Skills:</b> Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	25,378	29,639	32,398
<b>Widening Participation:</b> Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth	16,788	18,266	19,474
<b>Adult Literacy for Life (ALL):</b> Increase provision for literacy and numeracy	59,316	64,987	70,095
<b>Upskilling Through Lifetimes &amp; Careers</b>			
<b>Lifelong Learning:</b> Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	97,325	106,176	113,605
<b>Skills to Advance:</b> Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments	14,854	18,501	22,290
<b>Targeting Key Skills Needs</b>			
<b>Key Skills Needs:</b> Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs	29,667	32,502	35,008
<b>Retrofitting Skills:</b> Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs	3,006	5,270	7,150
<b>Green Skills for All:</b> Embedding of core green skills module across FET courses	18,428	41,000	64,000

## External Dependencies

It is acknowledged that reaching some of the targets will be dependent on factors outside the ETB's control. Realising the Skills to Compete ambition will be related to the base of unemployed people available for reskilling; retrofitting skills will depend on available demand from industry; green skills will be dependent on SOLAS making an online module available via eCollege. This will be taken into account along with the volatile and rapidly changing external environment, with the appropriateness of the ETB targets continuously monitored and adjusted if required.

## Key Achievements

Strong focus on upskilling for unemployed through Skills to Compete offering

Continuing to prioritise and grow provision in areas of key skills need despite pandemic restrictions

Stabilised lifelong learning rates in 2021 after decline due to pandemic

## LWETB Performance 2018-2021

Five of the national system targets (jobs; progression within FET; transversal skills; lifelong learning; and key skills needs) were also the focus of the first strategic performance agreements, albeit with definitions set when data infrastructure was at an early stage of maturity. The definitions have been updated as set out in Appendix 2 and trend analysis against all of the targets is provided for 2018-2021 where available.

TARGET	2018	2019	2020	2021	ETB Change
<b>Supporting Jobs</b>					
<b>Jobs:</b> Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	560	532	387	Not yet available	-30.89%
<b>Skills to Compete:</b> Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work	-	-	-	1,053	-
<b>Creating Pathways</b>					
<b>Progression within FET:</b> Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	1,153	1,136	773	887	-23.07%
<b>Progression from FET-HE:</b> Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by 10% by 2024	73	59	52	Not yet available	-28.77%
<b>Fostering Inclusion</b>					
<b>Transversal Skills:</b> Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	1,221	1,352	990	687	-43.73%
<b>Widening Participation:</b> Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth	683	1,101	789	712	4.25%
<b>Adult Literacy for Life (ALL):</b> Increase provision for literacy and numeracy	1,932	2,044	1,505	1,383	-28.42%
<b>Upskilling Through Lifetimes &amp; Careers</b>					
<b>Lifelong Learning:</b> Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	3,735	3,911	2,885	2,892	-22.57%
<b>Skills to Advance:</b> Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments	-	127	111	393	-
<b>Targeting Key Skills Needs</b>					
<b>Key Skills Needs:</b> Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs	432	459	525	539	24.77%

'ETB Change' indicates percentage change between 2018 and 2022 where available. Some figures shown indicate percentage change between 2018-2021 where 2022 figures are not yet published. Figures shown in green indicate where the ETB has outperformed the average FET sector trend, red indicates where it lags behind, and amber indicates if the ETB is within 1% of the sector trend.

## LWETB Key Achievements 2018-2021

Developing an integrated **quality assurance** system for FET across the ETB, which provided a platform for engaging in its inaugural quality review by QQI.

Resilience of staff in responding to the pandemic, and now to the Ukrainian situation. The ETB is now well versed in **crisis management** which is important with such a volatile world at present.

Greater focus on ensuring the **learner voice** shapes provision, including via learner fora and learner representation on key groups.

Maintaining **apprenticeship** provision throughout the pandemic, with innovative approaches to supporting apprentices during restrictions.

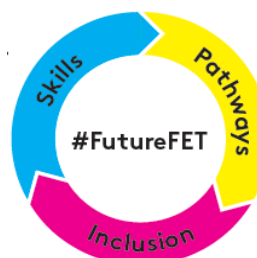
The evolving role of **adult guidance** throughout this period and flexible methods to ensure all could access the information and advice they need.



The ETB is using **Transforming Learning**, the Future FET strategy, as a central reference point in driving its development and this agreement is structured in line with this strategic framework below:

### Strategic Priorities

- New Vocational Proposition
- Upskilling the Workforce
- Delivering on Apprenticeship
- Meeting Critical Skills Needs
- Pathways from School to FET
- Pathways within FET
- Pathways from FET to HE
- Facilitating Lifelong Pathways



- Consistent Learner Support
- Literacy and Numeracy

### Enabling Themes

#### Staffing and Structures

- Future Staffing Framework
- Quality Cross-FET Provision
- Cross-FET Funding/Guidelines

#### Digital Transformation

- Learner Access and Delivery
- Data Driven
- Management Systems

#### Learner and Performance Centred

- Performance Framework
- Distance Travelled
- Learner Engagement

#### Capital Infrastructure

- Address Deficits
- Consolidate Provision
- Flagship Developments

## Performance and Targets

### LWETB Contribution to 2022-2024 FET System Targets

Given the overall national FET system targets set for 2022-24 and the trends across each of these indicators over the period 2018-2021, the following targets have been agreed between SOLAS and LWETB for delivery under this strategic performance agreement.

TARGET	2022	2023	2024
<b>Supporting Jobs</b>			
<b>Jobs:</b> Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	532	559	585
<b>Skills to Compete:</b> Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work	1,200	1,250	1,300
<b>Creating Pathways</b>			
<b>Progression within FET:</b> Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	1,000	1,153	1,270
<b>Progression from FET-HE:</b> Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by 10% by 2024	73	100	125
<b>Fostering Inclusion</b>			
<b>Transversal Skills:</b> Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	1,200	1,350	1,490
<b>Widening Participation:</b> Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth	1,101	1,175	1,250
<b>Adult Literacy for Life (ALL):</b> Increase provision for literacy and numeracy	2,044	2,150	2,250
<b>Upskilling Through Lifetimes &amp; Careers</b>			
<b>Lifelong Learning:</b> Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024	3,400	3,900	4,300
<b>Skills to Advance:</b> Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments	520	630	750
<b>Targeting Key Skills Needs</b>			
<b>Key Skills Needs:</b> Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs	550	600	660
<b>Retrofitting Skills:</b> Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs	-	-	-
<b>Green Skills for All:</b> Embedding of core green skills module across FET courses	1,000	2,000	3,000

LWETB has a long legacy of working closely with industry to deliver on skills needs across the region. With a large training centre in Athlone delivering apprenticeships and a range of other training courses, there is a platform from which to build a wider FET College of the Future which can reach a larger base of learners and engage with a larger base of employers with agile and flexible skills development responses.



### Rebooting Skills Provision

The pandemic has had a profound effect on FET across Longford and Westmeath. Overall learner numbers have fallen and employment outcomes have declined. While this is a trend that has been replicated across much of the sector, the fall does seem to have been relatively greater for LWETB. The most immediate priority therefore must be to find a way to reboot skills provision to return to 2019 pre-pandemic levels. The increased promotional potential for PLC courses via the link between FET and the CAO, and the ability to fully utilise the capacity and reputation of the training centre once more to stimulate demand and introduce new offerings, should support this. LWETB will work towards returning to 2019 levels with further growth then possible.

### Upskilling the Workforce

The future world of work, and the rapid pace of economic and societal change, will require upskilling throughout lifetimes and careers. LWETB have strong industry networks, centred around the training centre, and links with Enterprise Ireland, IDA, Chambers of Commerce and the Regional Skills Fora. Despite this Skills to Advance outcomes have been relatively low for an ETB of its scale, although there was a significant jump in 2021. LWETB commits to growing this substantially from 2022-2024

This will be facilitated by investment in enterprise engagement infrastructure, widening the focus beyond the training centre, and developing a CRM approach to target a wider enterprise base. LWETB will increase upskilling and reskilling opportunities for small and medium companies in the region using a targeted strategic approach to enterprise engagement. Shorter and more flexible upskilling opportunities will be critical, with ILM as well as QQI accreditation used to support this. It has shared labour market intelligence across staff to support understanding of skills needs. However agile programme development remains a big challenge and LWETB will work with partner ETBs to develop more efficient approaches to curriculum development. A good example of this is the recent work with other ETBs, SOLAS and QQI on a streamlined approach to developing micro qualifications.

### A New Level 5/6 Proposition

The strong profile, high quality environment and excellent facilities of Athlone Training Centre drives much of LWETB's current Level 5 and Level 6 provision. Alongside this there is a relatively small base of PLC provision in two dual provision schools in Mullingar and Longford. LWETB is committed to further development of the Level 5/6 proposition and was a lead contributor to the ETBI paper on FET in a unified tertiary system. The further integration of PLC with wider FET activity under a FET College of the Future model should be explored over the next three years. Moving existing Level 5/6 FET provision in Mullingar and Longford to dedicated FET campuses should also be a priority.

### FET Leader Case Study

The strength of focus on apprenticeship in LWETB is clear. With current capacity of 304 apprentices in 2022 in Athlone, it demonstrated its ability not only to maintain provision through the pandemic, but also to move to a three intake emergency model to help reduce waiting lists and incorporating online learning into the delivery model. LWETB's network of authorised officers are proactive in industry engagement, promoting both new and craft apprenticeships. It has rolled out the tech apprenticeships in partnership with Fastrack into IT.





## Delivering on Apprenticeship

As noted in the FET Leader case study, LWETB is a major provider of craft apprenticeship provision. In Athlone it delivers apprenticeship programmes in:

- Electrical
- Carpentry/Joinery
- Plumbing
- Motor Mechanics
- Metal Fabrication
- Mechanical automation and maintenance fitting

It has facilitated expansion in apprenticeship capacity to address the waiting lists which resulted from the pandemic. This has involved moving to an emergency 3 intake a year model (from the previous 2) and taking on additional instructors (although the tight labour market has made the latter task problematic). LWETB is committed to maintaining this approach to deal with the waiting list problem, and will expand capacity in Athlone through receipt of additional capital investment. Alongside its current involvement in the tech apprenticeships, LWETB may also seek other opportunities to deliver 2016+ apprenticeships.



## Skills for Employment

Skills to Compete was launched as an initiative to cope with the structural labour market change brought about by the pandemic, building on the programme infrastructure that exists to offer the employability, digital and sector-specific skills required by those who lost their jobs to find a pathway back into sustainable work. While the labour market impact has not yet arisen in the way envisaged, SOLAS and LWETB will work together to ensure that the legacy of a single initiative to support skills for employment is preserved, with Skills to Compete becoming the mainstream offering for those who need upskilling to find sustainable work. This will include targeting of long-term unemployed in line with FET Pathways to Work commitments. With over 1,000 enrolments in 2021, there is a good platform in LWETB in establishing a cohesive upskilling offering for the unemployed.

### Learner Voice

“Loved the practicalities of the course. It was great to learn how to design and measure on paper (mechanical drawing) and apply those principles to building a physical object.”

## Developing Skills Specialisms

One area of strength for LWETB in the last few years has been a growth in provision (outside of established apprenticeships) in designated key skills areas, where it outstripped FET sector trends and expanded by 25% from 2018-2021. LWETB has specialized in engineering and manufacturing activity, linking closely with the Midlands Engineering Cluster. It has a strong base of healthcare related provision and is rolling out the new Early Learning and Care programme in Athlone. The use of ILM accreditation is particularly important in developing agile skills responses, with the full QQI validation process sometimes inappropriate for these needs. However the new streamlined QQI process for micro qualifications could be very valuable for some skills development areas. LWETB will continue to explore opportunities to develop its specialisms and grow key skills provision by 2024

LWETB is currently pursuing differentiated validation for the new Level 4 micro qualification in Sustainability developed by the ETB sector with SOLAS and QQI. It will now upskill staff via the train the trainer resources and roll this out as a blended programme as quickly as possible. From autumn 2022, there will also be a national wholly online green skills module available via eCollege, and LWETB will encourage all learners to undertake this learning. There is also the recent announcement by Minister Simon Harris (TD) regarding the proposed establishment of a centre of excellence in electric vehicle management in Columb Barracks in Mullingar, funding will be an important step in driving green skills and Just Transition in the region. Getting this centre fully operational and expanding its footprint will be a key objective during the period of this agreement.

# 04

## FET Strategy – Fostering Inclusion

Like all ETBs, the pandemic had an impact on those learners most at risk of marginalisation, many of whom were ill-suited to purely online learning and who found the prevailing environment immensely challenging. LWETB ‘lost’ a base of these learners, and it must now target bringing participation back up to pre-COVID norms. LWETB will build on this by focusing on certification of learning outcomes, working to target the hardest to reach groups, ensuring consistent learner support for all and embedding inclusive practice across provision.



### Embedding Inclusive Practice

LWETB will continue its commitment to rolling out FET Universal Design for Learning Badges across staff in collaboration with AHEAD. It will implement all the good practice guidelines and toolkits developed by the sector around assessment and provision to meet learner needs. These include:

- Universal Design for Learning
- English for Speakers of Other Languages
- People with Intellectual Disabilities
- Literacy and Numeracy support

### Driving Community-based Approaches

Properly targeting the needs of the most vulnerable target groups requires working intensively at community level and with community-based organisations. The Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund (MAEDF) was a notable asset in making these connections and enhancing access to FET.

This is critical and LWETB is committed to maximizing the reach of the fund in future and increasing participation now that it has been mainstreamed (and rebranded as the Reach fund). It is noted that ETBs are increasingly being asked to take on a community development role and this must be carefully managed and planned with partner agencies at national and local level. Some community groups ceased to exist because of the challenges of the pandemic and they need help to ramp up learning activities again. Relationships with key community education partners will be underpinned by Memorandums of Understanding to reflect a spirit of partnership.



### Ensuring Consistent Learner Support

A Universal Design for Learning approach has been placed at the heart of FET by LWETB. Upskilling of staff in UDL has been a key priority and will continue in 2022. A plan is underway to implement consistent assessment for BTEI and the ETB will look at mainstreaming this across all programmes. A high proportion of learners cite mental health issues and LWETB is conscious of the need for a more consistent response – it will work with the sector to develop an appropriate model of access to psychological support to address this.

Bringing all this work together, LWETB will establish a central learner support office, with dedicated resources to ensure FET support. This will include the roll-out of the Fund for Students with Disabilities.

### Certifying Outcomes at Levels 1-3

One of the trends of greatest concern in LWETB has been the decline in certification of learning at NFQ Levels 1 to 3. Despite this being the focus of a specific target under the previous strategic performance agreements, certification levels dropped by 40% from 2018 to 2021, with the position significantly worsening in 2021, rather than experiencing a rebound seen in FET progression levels. Increasing certification levels back towards historic pre-pandemic levels must now be a critical focus. The reasons why such a stark decline has resulted is due to difficulties engaging learners particularly at levels 1 and 2 who normally attend in person but due to the pandemic were unable to do so. However, this has been identified and with the return to normal attendance will be addressed. While not all learners at these levels desire certification, it should be an option across all courses for all learners, as a key enabler of learning pathways.

## Prioritising Target Cohorts

With much of the two counties rural in nature, LWETB has identified a risk of inclusion in a base of older people, exacerbated by the digital divide. It is targeting support on this cohort, providing basic digital skills, although there are constraints around broadband availability.

In partnership with AHEAD, it has rolled out an upskilling initiative across staff around Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to improve the way in which learning is developed and delivered for people with disabilities. LWETB will focus on returning levels of provision to pre-COVID levels, including via Specialist Training Provision.

A similar decline in participation in key target groups including Roma, Travellers and persons seeking international protection during the pandemic will also be addressed through targeted initiatives.

### Learner Voice

“

*“I work in the disability sector and our members really appreciate classes delivered by LWETB tutors.”*

## Adult Literacy for Life (ALL)

The new ALL Strategy, launched by Government in September 2021, set out an ambitious 10-year



cross-Government and cross-society approach to addressing unmet literacy needs. ETBs have a pivotal role in the delivery of the strategy, hosting new Regional Literacy Coordinators who will drive collaboration with local stakeholders via a Regional Literacy Coalition and produce a Literacy Action Plan which will feed into a new national ALL programme office.

LWETB has a long track record in supporting literacy, numeracy and digital inclusion across its region. While a lot of support was offered to learners, the ETB has struggled to maintain levels of literacy provision through the pandemic, and a first task will be to re-engage with learners in need of support. It will aim to bridge this gap by 2023, and then focus on finding ways to target the hardest to reach who do not present to the ETB for support. It will do this by working in partnership with other agencies using the new regional infrastructure and will target growth of a further 10% in the final year of the agreement. There will be a requirement to provide English language support for Ukrainian refugees as part of this expansion, although the length of time for which such support is required remains unclear at the time of agreeing this SPA.

Specifically, LWETB is committed to the following core areas of development in literacy:

- Common assessment approach for literacy in line with national guidance
- Expansion of provision to build digital capabilities
- Working with partners, roll-out literacy awareness training in health, local government, social welfare, community development and other key public interface settings across the region
- Integration of literacy support across all programmes
- Support of literacy needs for those in employment via Skills to Advance





# 05

## FET Strategy – Creating Pathways

Creating effective pathways into FET, within FET and from FET to higher education will be critical to realising the ambition and targets set out in this agreement. LWETB has invested significantly in improving access and facilitating a more seamless learner journey through the FET it offers. The Government commitment to a unified tertiary system requires this work to be built upon by developing closer links to HE partners in the region, with putting in place a system which allows pathways into FET throughout lifetimes and careers will be essential to meet the demands of our rapidly evolving economy and society.

### The Role of Guidance in FET Pathways

The Future FET integrated approach is based on a clear strategy to facilitate progression from one FET course to another, with Learner Guidance, Literacy (learning) Support and Quality Assurance playing an important role in ensuring potential pathways are transparent from the outset.

The LWETB Adult Education Guidance and Information Service (AEGIS) offers support to learners to help overcome barriers and encourage participation. One of their functions is to provide support and advice regarding progression options and all opportunities available to learners.

The role of adult guidance was of significant importance during the period of the Pandemic and continued to be a vital key resource and support. LWETB applied innovative and engaging techniques and tools to maintain engagement with learners, as well as support practitioners. Emails and newsletters were developed, providing a different focus from week to week, to continue to engage with learners across the spectrum of provision. A range of webinars were held and will now be maintained, some featuring guest speakers to provide insights and supports within a dedicated Pathways series on topics such as help with CAO/UCAS applications. Focused sessions were also held on overall wellbeing and learner supports.

### School to FET Pathways

There are a number of post-primary schools across LWETB and the ETB puts a strong emphasis on promoting pathways into FET from them all. It also engages with a range of non-ETB second level schools both through visits to schools and by arranging tours to the training centre for second level students.

Initiatives to engage TY students is being planned with schools to focus on key areas of provision which will be effectively championed. This will include for example ICT and green skills/sustainability skills.

LWETB is cognisant of the increased interest shown by schools to FET and welcomes the invitations it receives to visit the schools to discuss and promote FET and apprenticeship options. LWETB will continue to enhance its school outreach work to increase the number of young people into FET courses. It will commit to further developing Level 5 and Level 6 programmes, including traineeship-type courses alongside classroom-based options, which can be pitched via the CAO-linked FET site designed for school leavers.

### FET Leader Case Study



LWETB participated in the RPL TOBAR project. ‘TOBAR’ is the Irish for well i.e., the well of knowledge that people have acquired throughout their lives. This pilot project between 10 ETBs and the Irish Defence Forces was to assist learners formally recognise prior learning including experiential learning. It was the duty of each ETB to map individual skills sets, experience and look at the transferable skills of individuals to integrate this into Irish life and industry outside of the defence force life. LWETB also provided career, vocational and work guidance to participants.

## Promoting Erasmus

Erasmus was noted as a key component of existing PLC provision, giving learners opportunities to study abroad. It is an often overlooked aspect of FET, with people assuming such opportunities only exist in higher education. However it enriches the learning experience and provides key skills in areas like confidence and communication which will help support future pathways and generate employment opportunities. Erasmus as part of the LWETB Level 5/6 learning experience will be explored and expanded if possible.

## Lifelong Learning Pathways

LWETB has been involved in sector initiatives to develop micro qualifications. It will continue this engagement as an important platform to facilitate the dip in, dip out FET system that will be essential to meet upskilling needs throughout lifetimes and careers. LWETB has also identified Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as a key lever to support re-engagement in education and a link to learning pathways and it is committed to developing this area over 2022-2024.



## FET to HE Pathways

Strong partnerships are in place with Higher Education institutions to support successful pathways for progression. This includes with NUIG in the area of community development with a particular focus on learners from the Traveller Community. LWETB is committed to further development potential pathways in these areas over the course of this agreement, including with the newly established TUS.

## Learner Voice

“

*“Taking on an apprenticeship has been the hardest but most rewarding decision I have made. Getting my apprenticeship in Athlone has been great, my instructor is really supportive”.*



The passion and expertise of staff in LWETB and their commitment to putting learners at the heart of everything is evident throughout its services. However for a truly strategic and integrated further education and training system, there remain numerous legacy organisational matters that need to be resolved both at ETB level and nationally. As we enter the next phase of FET Strategy Implementation these matters need to be tackled on a national basis along with a clear sense of how ETB staffing and structures should evolve to deliver future FET. LWETB will also work with SOLAS around the creation of a pipeline of capital projects and will continue as always to place a focus on service provision being learner and performance centred.

### Digital Transformation

LWETB responded well to the global pandemic in terms of innovation using digital technology. Engaging with hard to reach learners and supporting learners with making digital devices available further progressed this digital transformation.

Initiation of blended learning, as a result of the Pandemic was transformational and provided an opportunity to expand blended learning at pace. LWETB will continue to build on this progress by establishing a formal blended learning policy, built within the framework of its quality assurance infrastructure. Many courses now have a blended or online component, including Electrical & Programmable Automation and office administration. Online offerings offer an additional selling point to industry for workforce upskilling and will be a big part of the Skills to Advance portfolio.

LWETB are committed to continuing to focus on the quality of data and maintaining robust and timely PLSS, to ensure quality measurement of targets and alignment with SOLAS data.

### Staffing, Structures and Capabilities

The relatively new structure developed in LWETB aligns now with three FET Strategy Strategic pillars, building skills, fostering inclusion and creating pathways. LWETB will continue to support alignment with the strategic, integrated and transformation agenda for FET.

LWETB has identified specific needs for resources in learner support and programme and curriculum development, SOLAS will work to support this.

LWETB will also work with SOLAS and DFHERIS at a national level to advance a consistent long-term FET organisational structure, including the development and introduction of a new FET practitioner role as required, building on progress made to date in areas such as PLC. LWETB will produce baseline data for existing FET staffing levels to inform the national baseline, identify gaps across the ETBs and develop the future FET staffing structure.

A strong focus will be placed on the role of Professional Development in terms of upskilling and reskilling staff, through engagement with the Professional Learning and Development hub.

### Quality FET

LWETB has committed to an integrated system of quality assurance and underwent its inaugural QA review with QQI. It notes the importance of non-QQI accreditation options in meeting the needs of learners and employers. With an integrated QA system in place, focus will switch to how this can be used as a platform for agile programme development.



### Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

The ETB is committed to implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty in line with Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission guidance.

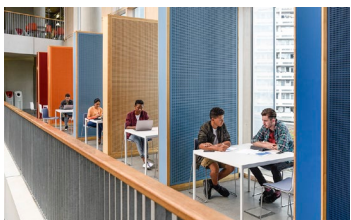


## Capital Development

LWETB is very committed to the FET College of the Future model and is seeking capital support to develop integrated and dedicated FET hubs in two of its main urban centres, Longford and Mullingar. The Athlone Training Centre is a key asset which should be further developed in line with the FET College of the Future vision. It should be considered whether further classroom-based provision could be added to the portfolio here to widen access, options and potential pathways to HE. With a major FET and major HE campus in the town, opportunities for joint development or sharing of facilities should also be explored.

In April 2022, a Strategic Overview Form regarding the **FET College of the Future** was submitted to SOLAS along with two Strategic Assessment Reports (SAR) and two Strategic Infrastructure Upgrade Fund (SIUF) applications. The development of an estate's strategy will be central to the development of a pipeline of projects for LWETB, coupled with the requirement to fully expend the annual devolved capital budget. This will also include an emphasis on divesting from the multitude of lease agreements and consolidating provision in a smaller number of buildings.

SOLAS will continue to review capital processes to try to ensure efficient decision-making and that expenditure thresholds reflect market conditions.



## Learner and Performance Centred

LWETB has a highly learner centred approach. The ETB is committed to expanding and strengthening the Learner Voice across the ETB, building on the success and impact to date, as evidenced in the QQI Quality Assurance Review. Learners are represented in the QA forum, while the ETB works with the Aontas Learner Forum to get independent qualitative feedback on the learner experience in FET. It plans to continue using these feedback mechanisms and expand use of focus groups and pilot initiatives to engage learner representatives in key decision making and advisory structures.

This performance agreement will be used as a central and ongoing reference point for key staff across the ETB. Progress against it will be regularly tracked at management meetings and via the LWETB Board.

LWETB will continue to work with SOLAS to progress a model of provision that reduces barriers to learning and will continue to enhance collaboration across education, welfare, health and community development services to facilitate a seamless journey for the most vulnerable learners and potential learners across communities.



## Learner Voice

“The person who is most surprised at how much I am enjoying my course is me and now I am applying to AIT with the help from Guidance. So happy and proud!”

## Data and Funding

Enabled data infrastructure is required from SOLAS to provide more timely outcomes information, particularly from the CSO related system targets for progression to employment and progression to higher education. It will also be important to develop PLSS to simplify data requirements for community education and literacy learners and ensure fuller records of participation.

A mechanism/dashboard will be developed by SOLAS for ETBs to track progress on national system targets 2022 - 2024.

Equally important to learner data is the need for robust cost analysis and consistent cost/funding categorization on the different aspects of FET. LWETB will support work to reform the FET funding model by feeding into key data consistency initiatives around learners, costs and funding. This will reflect the LWETB and wider FET approach to move away from programme brands and silos.

# FutureFET Outcomes 2020-2024

- FET is available in every community in Ireland, and offers a clear pathway to learners that can take them as far as they want to go *(Simplified pathways)*
- FET is transformed in its delivery and expands the portfolio of opportunities for learners at any level to further their education *(Easier access)*
- FET is for everyone and inspires people to believe in themselves to reach their potential *(Learner experience)*
- There is a greater awareness of FET and it is valued by learners, employers, Government and communities *(Powerful identity)*
- The economic and social impact of further education and training is strongly evidenced by producing a stream of graduates with the necessary skills required for the labour market *(Skills for local needs)*

## 2022-2024 Definitions and Targets



### Supporting Jobs

**Employment Outcomes:** Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024. Specific reports will be provided to the ETB by SOLAS on this target from the CSO via ISCED/Skills Cluster annually and earlier if possible. Learners can be tracked across Levels 5 and 6 and will no longer be specific to only certain types of provision, (or skills cluster) in line with the FET Strategy. Employment is defined as continuous 12 weeks employment within 12 months of exit from FET and may include multiple employers. Will include early leavers as well as completers from 2022. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 26,776 with a further 12.7% increase to 30,172 by 2024.

**Skills to Compete:** To deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work (building on the commitments set out in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2022 and the Pathways to Work Strategy). Skills to Compete, initially designed as a response to the Pandemic, is now the national FET system Initiative to support unemployed people. Learner numbers will be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard and will be defined as the agreed definitions within the Skills to Compete Implementation Guidance (July 2021) until any further guidance overrides this. As per the National Recovery and Resilience Plan the target number for 2022 includes a minimum requirement to deliver 8,900 enrolments and achieve 16,700 Skills to Compete places by the end of 2022. The target agreed for this is 22,956 by 2024.



### Creating Pathways

**Progression within FET:** Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by up to a further 10% by 2024. Includes learners who progress at the same level or higher across all provision. Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 33,675, with then an initial further 6.7% increase of 35,958 by 2024. This target will be reviewed in late 2022 to aim to increase to the national 10% target of 37,042 by 2024

**Progression from FET-HE:** Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by at least 10% by 2024, 2019 trend baseline of 5,364. Specific reports will be provided to the ETB by SOLAS on this target from the CSO annually. The FET to HE progression measure includes anyone who had a finish date in the same year, e.g., learner in FET in 2022 who enrolled in HE in 2022. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 5,364 with then a further 24% increase of 6,672 by 2024.



## 2022-2024 Definitions and Targets



### Fostering Inclusion

**Transversal Skills:** Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by at least a further 10% by 2024. Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard. Levels 1-3 completion and partial completion. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 29,328 with then a further 10.5% increase of 32,398 by 2024.

**Widening Participation:** Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 and resume growth. Includes, learners who self-declare they have a disability, are from the Roma Community, are from the Traveller Community, are a declared refugee or asylum seeker. Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new Learner dashboard. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 17,271 with then a further 12.8% increase of 19,474 by 2024.

**Adult Literacy for Life (ALL):** Increase provision for literacy and numeracy in line with the 10 year ALL Strategy. Specific targets to be measured against the indicative ALL Strategy targets. Return to 2019 levels of 60,000 and develop in line with the ALL Strategy ambition. The target for 2024 is 70,095 which is an increase of 16.8% from the baseline established in 2019.



### Upskilling Through Lifetimes and Careers

**Lifelong Learning:** Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 trend levels and grow by up to a further 10% by 2024. Age restrictions only, 25 to 64 (unique learner count). Total enrolments (starters plus those who started on a course before 1<sup>st</sup> Jan but were still on course during the next year). Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 105,783 with then a further 7.4% increase of 113,605 by 2024. This target will be reviewed in late 2022 to aim to increase to the national 10% target of 116,361 by 2024.

**Skills to Advance:** Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments based on the growth to date. Specific national targets are indicated for each year 2022-2024. Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard. The target number for 2022 is 14,934 with an increase of up to 22,290 by 2024.

## 2022-2024 Definitions and Targets

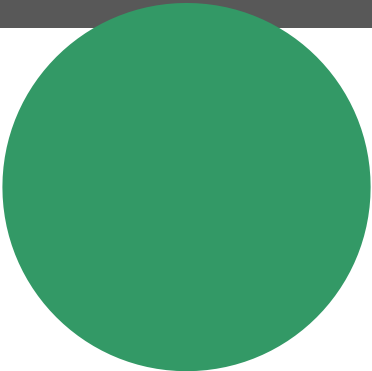


### Targeting Key Skills Needs

**Key Skills Needs:** Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs by at least 10% based on 2019 trend baseline. To include certification completions based on key skills clusters (to be revised for 2023). Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard. The initial target number is the 2019 trend baseline of 30,290 with then a further 15.6% increase of 35,008 by 2024.

**Retrofitting Skills Provision:** Stimulate industry demand to deliver NZEB/retrofitting upskilling places. To tie in with commitments in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021-2022 and the Housing for All Strategy. Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new learner dashboard. Minimum target of 2,650 registrations in 2022 in line with the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the SOLAS Green Skills Action Programme. Targets set for 2024 are 7,150.

**Green Skills for All:** Embedding of a core green skills module across FET courses. To include the new eCollege Green Skills Module to be added to PLSS in 2022 and the micro qualifications in this area. Learner numbers can be tracked from PLSS in the new Learner dashboard. Target of 60,000 learners in line with the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and the SOLAS Green Skills Action Programme. Target set of 64,000 by 2024.



# System Targets and Definitions

## 2018 – 2020 Definitions (as revised in the mid-year process)

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**Target 1, Progression to Employment** Based on specific ETB programmes and reported as ISCED and Skills Clusters and provided by the CSO. (Data tracked by the ETB to capture employment outcomes outside of the CSO data set and the 2018-2020 definitions are to be reflected in the new agreement as it progresses).

**Target 2, Progression within FET** and progression from FET to HE. Includes all programme provision for FET, measured on PLSS. Progression from FET to HE provided by the CSO. The FET to HE progression measure includes anyone who had a finish date in the same year, e.g., learner in FET in 2018 who enrolled in HE in 2018. Now includes all PLC as a progression pathway.

**Target 3, Transversal Skills** progression, measured by certification levels within specific programme categories.

**Target 4, Lifelong Learning** engagement. Revised (as had been anticipated) as over 25 year olds (in line with EU definition) participation became available from PLSS.

**Target 5, Key Skills Needs**, measured by defined skills clusters and skills certification.

**Target 6, New Models of Provision**, measured by traineeship starters. (Additional information is available on Apprenticeship progression in the ETB over the period 2018 – 2021).



# System Infrastructure and Framework for Measuring Performance

## System Infrastructure and Framework for Measuring Performance

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Good performance management requires continuous monitoring of outcomes, feedback, dissemination and learning from results. Open and constructive relationships between SOLAS and the ETBs will also lead to good performance management. SOLAS will engage with all ETBs throughout the period of these Strategic Performance Agreements both formally and informally. In turn ETBs are asked to engage all staff and their Boards in the implementation and the ambition of the Agreements as a mechanism to achieve the vision of the National FET Strategy 2020 - 2024. To achieve the desired performance all must be involved in shaping Strategic Performance Agreement enactment at local level.

The accompanying national system report to the Strategic Performance Agreements includes a detailed overview of the overall governance arrangements.

### Data Infrastructure

Also central to good performance management is data infrastructure. A live data dashboard using Tableau and the PLSS management information system will be developed so that performance data can be viewed by both SOLAS and ETBs in real time. This will support self-evaluation on the part of ETBs and allow adjustments to be made in ETB planning prior to mid term review of the Agreements and closing off Agreements at a later date.

### Review Mechanisms

The mid term review is scheduled for Q4 2023, this will provide an opportunity to review targets and national and local ambition.

# System Infrastructure and Framework for Measuring Performance

## Enabling Infrastructure & Design

Governance, monitoring, data sets, proposed infrastructure to enable success as well as provide a clear process for revision, review and possible performance oversight and action



# LWETB Ambition 2022-2024 at a glance



Explore widening the focus of Athlone Training Centre under a new FET College of the Future model with more Level 5/6 classroom based offerings.



Develop a migration plan to move PLC from dual provision school settings to dedicated FET college locations in Longford and Mullingar which can consolidate FET provision in one site in these towns which will be facilitated by progressing the national sectoral organisation design.



Invest in more extensive sustainable employer engagement, which is sufficiently resourced to align with the ambition of the strategy of LWETB. outside of the direct links established by the training centre and ramp up Skills to Advance activity considerably.



Prioritise the building of links with TUS to ensure much more substantive FET-HE pathways that expand beyond existing PLC courses in line with the government ambition for a unified tertiary third level infrastructure.



Develop stronger pathways into FET by expanding the CAO-linked LWETB offering for school leavers, including the potential to develop Transition Year taster modules, in collaboration with other ETBs for roll-out to schools and investing in school outreach activities.



Conduct a full review of the FET staffing structure in LWETB to move away from programme-based roles to more strategic responsibilities in line with Transforming Learning.



Substantially increase the level of certification for all learning at Levels 1-3 on the National Framework of Qualifications.



Build a centralized and consistent approach to learner support across all FET provision, including common assessment approaches and the roll-out of the Fund for Students with Disabilities outside PLC in line with the needs identified for resourcing in this area.



Support enhanced pathways through FET by reviewing potential for programme harmonization in areas like Youthreach/CTC, adult literacy and Level 5/6 provision.



Embed a new approach to addressing unmet literacy needs by coordinating the regional delivery of the ALL strategy and targeting the hardest to reach and expanding provision.



# Glossary

<b>ALL</b>	Adult Literacy for Life	<b>NZEB</b>	Near Zero Energy Building Standard
<b>CAO</b>	Central Applications Office	<b>PLC</b>	Post Leaving Certificate
<b>CSCS</b>	Construction Skills Certification Scheme	<b>PLD</b>	Professional Learning and Development
<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistics Office	<b>PLSS</b>	Programme and Learner Support System
<b>CTC</b>	Community Training Centre	<b>PWD</b>	Persons with a Disability
<b>DFHERIS</b>	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science	<b>Q1</b>	Quarter 1
<b>DSP</b>	Department of Social Protection	<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>ETB</b>	Education and Training Board	<b>QQI</b>	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
<b>EWSS</b>	Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme	<b>QSCS</b>	Quarries Skills Certification Scheme
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training	<b>RPL</b>	Recognition of Prior Learning
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education	<b>RPCL</b>	Recognition of Prior Certified Learning
<b>HEA</b>	Higher Education Authority	<b>RPEL</b>	Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning
<b>ISCED</b>	International Standard Classification of Education	<b>SLMRU</b>	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicators	<b>SOLAS</b>	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh Agus Scileanna
<b>MAEDF</b>	Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund	<b>SPA</b>	Strategic Performance Agreement
<b>NFQ</b>	National Framework of Qualifications	<b>TU</b>	Technological University
<b>NRRP</b>	National Recovery and Resilience Plan	<b>TY</b>	Transition Year
<b>NTF</b>	National Training Fund	<b>UDL</b>	Universal Design for Learning



***lwethb***

*Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
an Longfoirt agus na hIarmhí*  
Longford and Westmeath  
Education and Training Board