



Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board

Strategic Performance Agreement 2022-2024

Introduction from Laois and Offaly ETB and SOLAS

“

“Learning with LOETB was the first step for me in changing my entire outlook for the future, it helped me to start a whole new journey which has led to successful employment and really benefited everyone across my whole family.”

LOETB 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 Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB). 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.

Despite this, LOETB was remarkably resilient, and managed to continue to grow its outcomes and impact, as highlighted opposite. Now in 2022, as we seem to be moving back into a more normal operating environment, and with a new FET strategy, Transforming Learning, in place from 2020, we have the perfect framework to plot out the development of FET in Laois and Offaly over the next three years.



Joe Cunningham
Chief Executive, LOETB



Andrew Brownlee
CEO, SOLAS



Agreement Themes

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

01

LOETB 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

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

04

FET Strategy – Fostering Inclusion

LOETB 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

LOETB 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

LOETB strategic plans and proposed contribution to the Enabling Themes 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.

APPENDIX 1 – FET STRATEGY FUTURE FET OUTCOMES

APPENDIX 2 – SYSTEM TARGETS AND DEFINITIONS

APPENDIX 3 – SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE AND FRAMEWORK FOR MEASURING PERFORMANCE

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

01

LOETB in profile

Offaly is a predominantly rural county with a population of 82,668 (census 2022, provisional data), an increase of 4,707 (6%) since the 2016 census, which in turn had been an increase of 1,314 (1.7%) since 2011. Although the rate of population growth in Offaly between 2011 and 2016 was less than half of that of the State as a whole, between 2016 and 2022 it was closer to the national average of 7.6%. The provisional 2022 population of **Laois** is 91,657, an increase of 8.2% on the 2016 population of 84,697 which was an increase of 5.2% (4,138) from 2011. The increase from 2016 to 2022 was close to the national average of 7.6% while the 2011-2016 increase was above the national increase of 3.7%. Taken together the area served by LOETB grew in population by 7.17%, close to the national average of 7.6%. Laois accounts for close to 1.8% of the national population, with Offaly making up just over 1.6%.

Population
174.3k
Employment
83.8k

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 Q1 2022, it is estimated, based on 2016 county distributions, that 56% were in either Co. Offaly or Co. Laois, representing approximately **83,800** persons

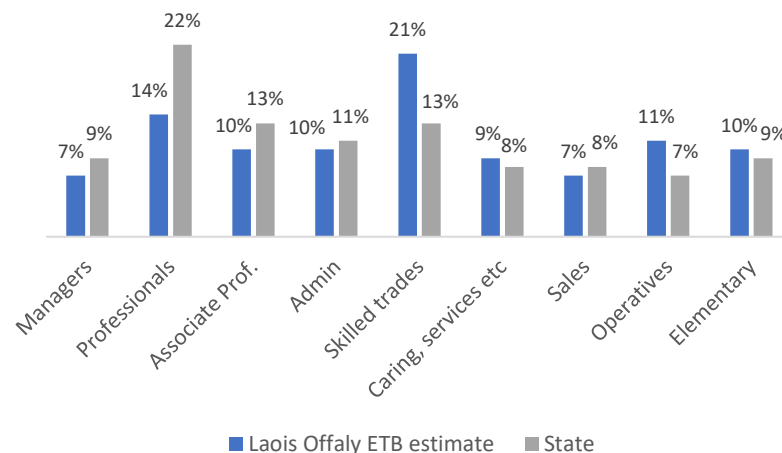
Midlands Employment Q3 2021

| Sector | Midlands (000s) | Estimated share in Laois/Offaly: Census 2016 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Agriculture | 9.5 | 60% |
| Construction | 8.8 | 57% |
| Wholesale/retail | 20.3 | 55% |
| Transport/storage | 7.4 | 60% |
| Accommodation/food | 9.3 | 55% |
| ICT | * | 46% |
| Professional Services | 5.5 | 54% |
| Admin and support | 8 | 57% |
| Public admin and defence | 9 | 58% |
| Education | 13.4 | 55% |
| Health, Social Work | 16.8 | 56% |
| Industry | 20.3 | 54% |
| Finance, Insurance | * | 56% |
| Other NACE | 6.7 | 56% |
| Total | 142.6 | 56% |

**Numbers too small to report*

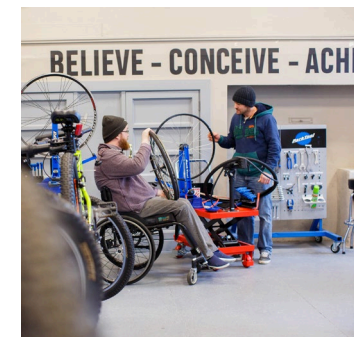
Laois-Offaly has a comparatively smaller share of persons working in professional occupations (14% in Laois-Offaly compared to 22% nationally), due to comparatively smaller shares in science, engineering and IT occupations and in business-related occupations. On the other hand, the area has a comparatively higher share of persons working in skilled trades occupations (20% in Laois-Offaly compared to just 13% nationally).

National Employment Analysis



Educational Attainment

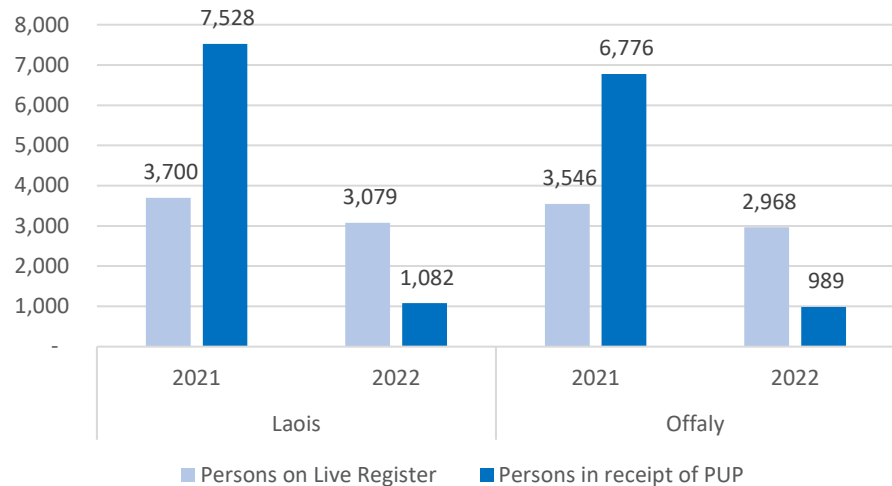
In Q2 2021, the Midlands region (along with the Mid-West region) had the highest share of persons holding FET qualifications (NFQ Levels 4-6) at 16% compared to a national average of 14%. In contrast, the Midlands and Border regions had the lowest share of adults holding higher education qualifications.



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



Laois

At the end of January 2022, there were 3,079 persons in Laois on the Live Register, a fall of 621 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 6,446 over the 12-month period. At the end of November 2021 there were 3,409 persons in receipt of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS) administered by Revenue, approximately 300 less than the previous year.

Offaly

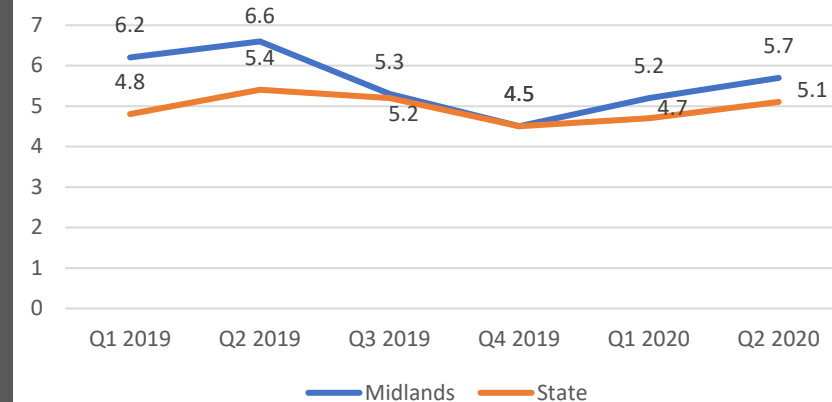
There were 2,968 persons in Offaly on the Live Register at the end of January 2022, a fall of 578 on the same period in the previous year. The number of people in receipt of Pandemic Unemployment Payments (PUP) fell by almost 5,800 over the 12-month period to 989. At the end of November 2021 there were 3,015 persons in receipt of the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme (EWSS), approximately 100 less than the previous year.

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 (which includes Laois and Offaly) 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.



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, LOETB enrolments evidence significant resilience, including increased enrolments at Level 5 and Level 6 courses: the number of learners enrolled in Level 5 courses increased from 1,882 to 2,057 and Level 6 courses increased from 369 to 607 in 2020 vis a vis 2018. These figures compare favourably to the national picture, where for example Level 5 enrolments decreased by 8.5%.

LOETB FET Infrastructure

LOETB has 15 FET locations in total, including two Centres on the Midlands Prison campus (Portlaoise Education Centre and Midlands Education Centre), Birr Outdoor Education Centre and the National Construction Training Centre, Mount Lucas.

At present, six of these FET centres are located in former vocational school buildings, which require significant maintenance to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose given the changes in Health and Safety legislation. Despite this, in the recent FET estates survey, 14 of the 15 sites were of good quality and suitable for current use with just one requiring limited renovation (the Outdoor Education Centre).

Of the 15 LOETB FET Centres, 8 are owned by LOETB via either freehold or leasehold agreements and the remaining 7 are leased, with agreements in place of varying durations, This is well below the national average of 42% of buildings leased. There is good quality Wi-Fi across all facilities bar one.

LOETB has adopted quite a robust approach to the integration of different types of FET provision on single FET centre sites with all FET centres offering a range of provision directly linked to the needs of the local community. LOETB has a clear ethos of moving away from individual *programme labels* but there are remaining challenges around the integration of PLC with other Level 5 and 6 provision and this should be a goal of its estates strategy over the next three years.

The capacity of the FET facilities varies considerably, with around 50 beneficiaries accommodated in Clara, to over 3,700 in the Tullamore FET Centre. The Outdoor Education Centre in Birr actually hosts 8,000 per annum, although this is largely driven by second-level school day visits.



| LOETB FET Centres |
|--|
| Abbylax FET Centre |
| Banagher FET Centre |
| Birr FET Centre |
| Birr Outdoor Education & Training Centre |
| Clara FET Centre |
| Edenderry FET Centre |
| Midlands Skills Centre |
| Mountmellick FET Centre |
| National Construction Training Centre, Mount Lucas |
| Portlaoise FET Centre |
| Portlaoise Institute |
| Tullamore FET Centre |

Relative Regional FET Supply

SOLAS has undertaken analysis on FET provision at Level 5 and Level 6 within each ETB area relative to estimated population and employment in each area. This is to help identify regional gaps in FET provision across the country and help guide future capital investment strategy. While this can only serve as a proxy indicator which is dependent on those population and employment estimates and the robustness of Level 5 and Level 6 data recorded by ETBs, it does nonetheless provide a useful guide which reinforces some of the known FET investment requirements in different regions.

SOLAS turned this analysis into an index, where overall national FET provision relative to national population and employment produced an index of 1.0, with the equivalent position for each individual ETB then calculated relative to this index. For LOETB, analysis of 2019 full-time provision showed 1,879 learners undertaking Phase 2 apprenticeship training, PLC and other FET provision at this level. Using the methodology deployed by SOLAS to identify an index of relative FET provision, this analysis produced indices for LOETB of 0.94 relative to employment and 0.86 relative to provision. This reflects the increase in population in the area and bears out plans by the ETB to further develop the Level 5 and 6 provision across the region, with a particular focus on development of the National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas and an expansion of offerings to serve the construction industry. This is further supported by the fact there is a potential supply of learners from Laois and Offaly to the neighbouring midlands country, Longford Westmeath ETB, driven by the presence of a large training centre. Plans for the future for LOETB also include a focus on embedding modern methods of construction in delivery of Housing for All, with development of demonstration facilities onsite.

Funding Profile

2021
€33.1m

Learner Activity

2021
12,105

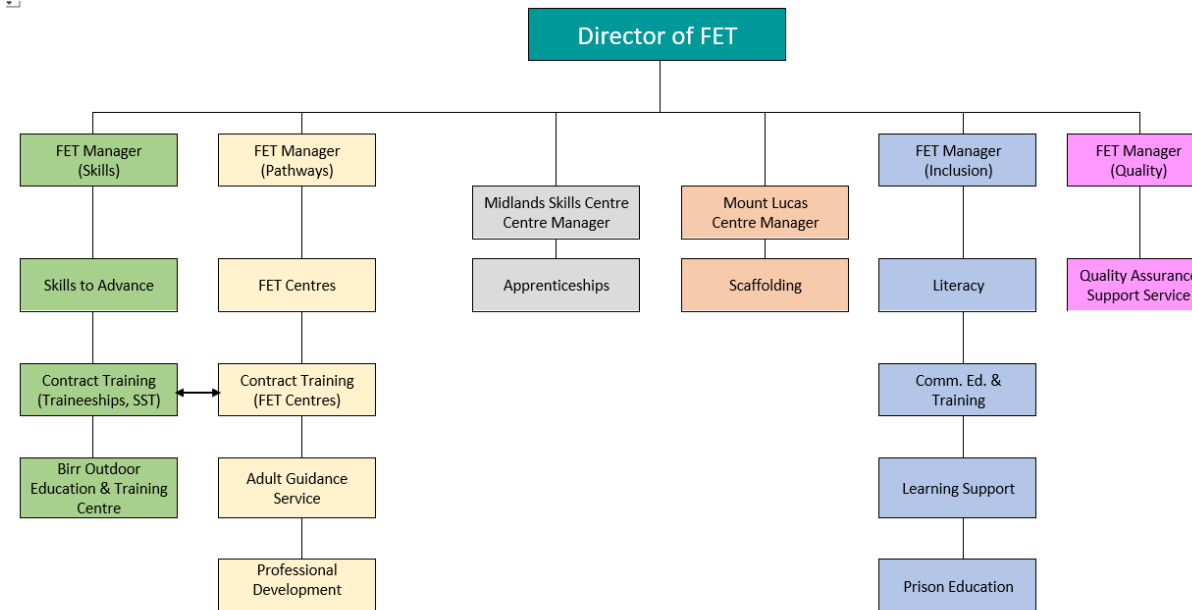
Staffing

360+
FET
Staff

Staffing and Strategic Structure

The LOETB Further Education and Training Service has evolved into an integrated structure in line with the FET Strategy, Transforming Learning. This structure prioritises responsibility at FET Senior Management level for programmes/services based on key themes, regardless of the origin of the programme or service.

As highlighted in the diagram below, the structure ensures senior responsibility for driving development in each of the three key pillars of the FET Strategy - Building Skills, Fostering Inclusion and Creating Pathways. An additional manager has overall responsibility for quality assurance, a critical enabler of the next step in FET development.



Focus of Provision

Key areas of industry activity in which LOETB specialize include:

Health

Construction

Engineering

Business

Services

Hospitality

There is also a strong and growing focus on green skills with areas of focus including:

- Retrofit
- Renewable Energy
- Fossil Fuel Transition
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Future Green Skills
- BIM
- Lean and Agile Management
- Sustainability



This section presents an overview of the performance against national system targets by Laois and Offaly 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).

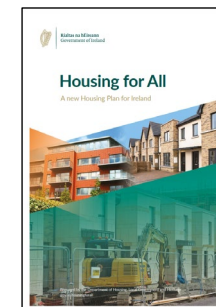
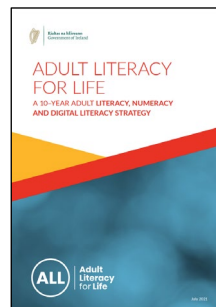
The national system targets for 2022-2024 are then presented with the indicative contribution that LOETB have committed to over the period of 2022-2024. An overview of the system targets and definitions is included in Appendix 2.

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 |
|--|--------|---------|---------|
| Supporting Jobs | | | |
| Jobs: Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 27,410 | 28,830 | 30,172 |
| Skills to Compete: 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 |
| Creating Pathways | | | |
| Progression within FET: Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 30,219 | 33,419 | 35,958 |
| Progression from FET-HE: Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by 10% by 2024 | 5,859 | 6,238 | 6,672 |
| Fostering Inclusion | | | |
| Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 25,378 | 29,639 | 32,398 |
| Widening Participation: Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth | 16,788 | 18,266 | 19,474 |
| Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Increase provision for literacy and numeracy | 59,316 | 64,987 | 70,095 |
| Upskilling Through Lifetimes & Careers | | | |
| Lifelong Learning: Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 97,325 | 106,176 | 113,605 |
| Skills to Advance: Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments | 14,854 | 18,501 | 22,290 |
| Targeting Key Skills Needs | | | |
| Key Skills Needs: Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs | 29,667 | 32,502 | 35,008 |
| Retrofitting Skills: Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs | 3,006 | 5,270 | 7,150 |
| Green Skills for All: 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

Continuing growth across FET despite COVID-19 restrictions, with notable 'rebound' in 2022

Significant success in driving employment outcomes and focusing on key skills needs despite economic challenges

Impressive contributions to new initiatives Skills to Advance and Skills to Compete relative to the overall scale of the ETB

LOETB 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 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| Supporting Jobs | | | | |
| Jobs: Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 761 | 730 | 499 | Not yet available* |
| Skills to Compete: Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work | - | - | - | 1,035 |
| Creating Pathways | | | | |
| Progression within FET: Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 1,248 | 1,676 | 1,460 | 1,441 |
| Progression from FET-HE: Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by 10% by 2024 | 124 | 113 | 119 | Not yet available |
| Fostering Inclusion | | | | |
| Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 988 | 1617 | 1602 | 1433 |
| Widening Participation: Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth | 849 | 1131 | 945 | 880 |
| Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Increase provision for literacy and numeracy | 1,739 | 1,926 | 1,724 | 2,122 |
| Upskilling Through Lifetimes & Careers | | | | |
| Lifelong Learning: Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 4,058 | 3,996 | 3,767 | 4,453 |
| Skills to Advance: Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments | | 651 | 793 | 1174 |
| Targeting Key Skills Needs | | | | |
| Key Skills Needs: Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs | 1438 | 1384 | 1603 | 1695 |
| Retrofitting Skills: Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs | - | - | - | 252 |
| Green Skills for All: Embedding of core green skills module across FET courses | - | - | - | - |

*new definition in place for Jobs relating to CSO data as per definitions set out in Appendix 2

LOETB Key Achievements 2018-2021

LOETB have restructured to align with the key pillars of the National Future FET Strategy Transforming Learning Future FET 2020-2024.

Most significant achievement during this period is the **consistency of support** provided to learners. Ambition to be a progressive ETB.

Strong and focused commitment to **Quality Assurance** and the independent QA process with QQI in 2021.

LOETB came through the pandemic, **digitally transformed** – it was a catalyst for a more modular approach to provision which now can adapt to different upskilling needs.

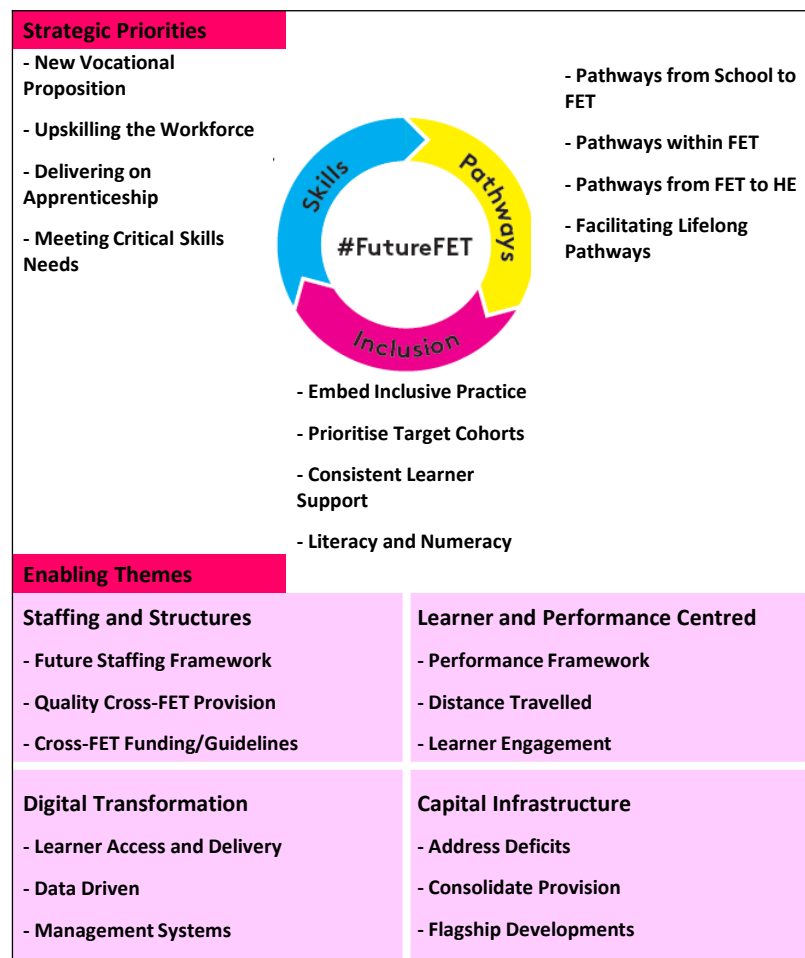
There is a really improved focus on **data infrastructure** – PLSS is used as a real management tool now, providing sufficient level of evidence for local planning.

In terms of 'lost learners' - participation by key target groups is down, this is recognised, and areas of good practice and innovation acknowledged.

LOETB have led on apprenticeship – with the expansion of craft and the development of the new scaffolding **apprenticeship** – apprentice numbers moved from 56 p.a. to 262 in 2021. This also tied in with development of Mount Lucas as a centre of excellence for the **construction** industry.



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:



Performance and Targets

LOETB 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 LOETB for delivery under this strategic performance agreement.

| TARGET | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|
| Supporting Jobs | | | |
| Jobs: Return employment outcomes to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 2,087 | 2,149 | 2,215 |
| Skills to Compete: Deliver 50,000 places to support those who lost their job to find a pathway back to sustainable work | 1,066 | 1,098 | 1,150 |
| Creating Pathways | | | |
| Progression within FET: Return progression movements within FET to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 1,676 | 1,750 | 1,850 |
| Progression from FET-HE: Grow levels of progression from FET-HE by 10% by 2024 | 185 | 191 | 200 |
| Fostering Inclusion | | | |
| Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 1,600 | 1,700 | 1,800 |
| Widening Participation: Return participation levels by key target groups to 2019 levels and resume growth | 1,101 | 1,175 | 1,250 |
| Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Increase provision for literacy and numeracy | 6,371 | 6,562 | 6,780 |
| Upskilling Through Lifetimes & Careers | | | |
| Lifelong Learning: Return engagement in lifelong learning to 2019 levels and grow by a further 10% by 2024 | 4,600 | 4,800 | 5,000 |
| Skills to Advance: Continue to grow workforce upskilling enrolments | 1,350 | 1,650 | 2,000 |
| Targeting Key Skills Needs | | | |
| Key Skills Needs: Grow the number of places addressing key skills needs | 550 | 600 | 660 |
| Retrofitting Skills: Expansion of reskilling provision to meet retrofitting needs | 1,150 | 1,500 | 2,000 |
| Green Skills for All: Embedding of core green skills module across FET courses | 2,178 | 3,000 | 4,000 |

As one of the five of 16 ETBs which did not inherit training centre infrastructure from FÁS, LOETB has had to be creative in developing a FET portfolio that can respond and evolve in line with the rapidly changing skills needs of the region. By continuing to consolidate and scale up provision, and specialise in key areas of economic need, there is potential to position LOETB as the ‘go to’ skills development resource in the region.



A New Level 5/6 Proposition

LOETB has made significant progress in the last few years in removing programme labels from the way in which FET is developed, organised and promoted in the region. Over the period of this agreement, it will seek to move away from the remaining PLC provision in dual (FET/school) settings and look to integrate this within a consolidate FET College of the Future in Portlaoise. This FET College will offer a Level 5/6 proposition which will offer pathways either directly into careers or into further study in higher education, and also include apprenticeship training onsite. This will further build on LOETB’s recent success in growing employment outcomes and focusing on key skills needs.

Learner Voice – Remote Work Ready

“After the course I found a job working from home and the course really helped me to get a good start in this new role. My day to day job is exactly like the practical work we did in the course so I have been able to apply what I learned. I’m really enjoying it.” **Kavitha**

Upskilling the Workforce

The future world of work, and the rapid pace of economic and societal change, will require upskilling throughout lifetimes and careers. LOETB have driven significant efforts around workforce upskilling and are contributing a significant share of Skills to Advance outcomes, with substantial growth as we have seen earlier in this document. LOETB has led out innovative upskilling initiatives around LEAN, digital skills, remote leadership and working and sustainable agriculture, tailoring them to meet the needs of the relatively large proportion of microenterprises in the region. It will continue to play a leadership role in this over the next three years, continuing to expand its Skills to Advance offering, and building on its ability to develop flexible online and blended offerings.

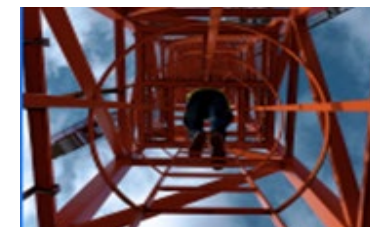
The enterprise engagement infrastructure built up by LOETB will be a key resource, and it will build on this by using the sectoral CRM tool to strategically manage this activity. LOETB will increase upskilling and reskilling opportunities for small and medium companies in the region using a targeted strategic approach to enterprise engagement. A mix of short and medium course durations will ensure a range of relevant upskilling opportunities for employers and provide labour market currency for employees. LOETB will continue to deploy its strategic promotions approach to raise awareness among employees and employers of how Skills to Advance opportunities can assist with economic challenges

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 LOETB 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

FET Leader Case Study

The development of the National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas in recent years has been a major success story for LOETB. Through incremental development in partnership with industry, the Centre has a portfolio of construction schemes training (including CSCS and QSCS), hosts a new apprenticeship in scaffolding and a new traineeship in utilities, and a range of construction vehicle courses, including those learning on its famous crane! It was designated as the second Centre of Excellence for NZEB/Retrofitting, with demonstration facilities built onsite, and over 1,000 expected to be upskilled in these critical green skills in 2022. It has been identified as a key resource in delivery of Housing for All, with scope to expand the site to take on the role of a Demonstration Park. It is a perfect example of an ETB developing a specialist facility in an area of national relevance and importance, with over 2,000 learners each year ensuring a vibrant college environment with state of the art facilities.



Delivering on Apprenticeship

Although a relative newcomer to apprenticeship provision, LOETB has been fully committed to developing its role in both craft and 2016+ programmes. In craft, LOETB now provide training to apprentices in electrical; carpentry and joinery; plumbing; motor mechanics; and metal fabrication. In electrical the ETB has developed particular expertise, embarking on a strategic partnership with ESB at their Portlaoise Training Centre, and targeting substantial expansion of wider capacity to help address waiting list issues.

LOETB are an established coordinating provider for the scaffolding apprenticeship, developed in partnership with the CIF, and it will ramp this up over the next three years. LOETB also intends to roll out the new sales apprenticeship. By 2024 LOETB hope to train over 300 apprentices a year in Laois and Offaly.

Enhanced Sectoral Collaboration

One of LOETB's key strengths has been its capacity to respond to regional needs, exemplified by its primary role in Just Transition, as evidenced on pages 20 and 21 of the Just Transition Commissioner's Final Report, December 2021. It possesses the potential to contribute to the FET sector's development of agile responses to national skills needs. LOETB's role in the ETB Construction Working and Development Group, a network of the ETB's approved for the development of NZEB Centres of Excellence is a fine example of this collaboration as the sector ensures avoidance of duplication in approaches to meeting key skills needs.

A Leader in Construction

LOETB will continue to develop Mount Lucas as a centre of excellence in construction. There will be a major expansion of NZEB/retrofitting activity and it will work with the other three existing and three pending centres of excellence to ensure a coordinated national response to meeting NZEB and retrofit requirements around meeting Housing for All targets.

It will continue to expand construction education and training on this site and across the wider ETB. This will include further evolution of scaffolding and utilities provision, and development of courses that can embed digital construction and modern methods of construction across industry. around the country. The ETB will also examine potential for introducing craft apprenticeships to the Mount Lucas site.

Alongside the training portfolio at Mount Lucas, LOETB will expand the site to encompass a Demonstration Park, a key deliverable under Housing for All. An advisory group will ensure cross-Government and industry buy-in and allow them to shape and renew the facility. It will work with Enterprise Ireland and the new Housing for All sister initiative the Construction Technology Centre to ensure a strong link between new innovation, demonstration of new methods and technology in housing, and the provision of cutting edge future focused construction skills training.

Learner Voice

“I recently completed the Retrofit Insulation Skills course in The National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas along with one of my employees. I found the course extremely beneficial to my company and the course content was excellent. The instructors were superb and had a great knowledge of the subject matter in addition to a practical grounding in construction. I left with a better understanding of the theoretical side of Retrofit along with the practical application during training and assessments.”

Cristian Stef, Managing Director Kildare Retrofit Company

Developing Green Skills

LOETB is fully committed to being a key driver of green skills and just transition in Laois and Offaly. Its partnership with Bord na Mona in supporting upskilling in sustainable occupations for redundant workers is a prime example of this. Alongside the NZEB/retrofitting capability noted elsewhere, LOETB has invested, and will continue to commit to, upskilling all staff in sustainability awareness. LOETB upskilled staff by developing a bespoke Digital Badge in Sustainability. To date over 300 staff have been trained. As part of the sectoral pledge to ensure that all FET learners have access to green skills development during their courses, LOETB will pursue differentiated validation for the new Level 4 micro qualification in Sustainability, upskill staff via the train the trainer resources and roll this out as a blended programme. From autumn 2022, there will also be a national wholly online green skills module available via eCollege, and LOETB will encourage all learners to undertake this learning.

Evolving the Skills Development Model

The lack of a historical skilled training instructor staff base has meant that much of LOETB's work in recent years to develop skills provision has relied on a contracted training model or by working with external partners like Grow Remote and Teagasc. This has facilitated agile skills responses and will remain central to the ETB approach.

However to ensure a sustainable long-term approach, LOETB should further develop an internal base of expertise, through recruitment and upskilling, to deliver on some of the regional skills needs. This can focus on the development of construction skills given LOETB's national remit, or in other key future skills needs like AI and green technology

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. LOETB ‘lost’ a base of these learners, but there are positive signs of re-engagement in 2021 which brought participation back up to pre-COVID norms. LOETB will build on this by working to target the hardest to reach groups, ensuring consistent learner support for all and embedding inclusive practice across provision.



Embedding Inclusive Practice

LOETB 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
- I.T. support and access to devices
- Reasonable Accommodation
- TEL/Assistive Technology
- Learner Support Workers

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 LOETB 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.

Targeting Priority Cohorts

The age profile of the catchment area of LOETB is relatively old. As a result the ETB has put a lot of focus into addressing the risk of isolation and tackling the digital divide for **older residents**. It will continue to focus initiatives on this target group.

Participation by Roma and **Traveller** learners has declined during the pandemic and LOETB will focus on reengaging with those learners. The ETB has a long legacy of delivering prison education but this work was restricted during COVID-19 and the emphasis will be on returning this to 2019 levels and looking at how this can link to wider FET pathways while in **prison** and for **ex-offenders**.

LOETB will also explore a more integrated approach across Youthreach and Community Training Centre learning and support for **early school leavers**. It would be willing to support a pilot examining more joined-up delivery to this cohort.

Ensuring Consistent Learner Support

LOETB has put a major focus on ensuring that all FET learners have access to the same learning environment and same level of support regardless of facility or programme. It will continue to develop the approach to consistent learner support. This will include enhanced support for mental health, with the ETB committed to exploring how psychological support can be secured for learners from other agencies when required.

FET Leader Case Study



LOETB has developed two Information Hubs in its capital towns that provide attractive one stop shops for prospective FET learners. It is anticipated that these facilities will greatly raise general awareness of LOETB opportunities and improve access to FET in the region. They are designed as drop-in facilities where people can access information and advice from the ETB's adult guidance team, gain access to information on education and training options and funding supports and a greater understanding of progression options available through FET in LOETB with links to third level colleges. They can also research course options independently or with support and reserve a space to study, research or attend online classes

Pathways for People with Disabilities

The number of people with disabilities accessing FET with LOETB declined from 828 in 2019 to 662 in 2021, as COVID-19 related restrictions prevented delivery of the onsite learning and support required by some learners. LOETB is committed to ramping this back up to previous levels and then ramping up participation further. It is to the credit of the ETB that considerable growth is evident in this area to date in 2022. 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.

Over the next three years, a major priority will be to improve pathways through FET for people with disabilities. A focus of development will be working with the National Learning Network to ensure that learners starting out with them as part of the Specialist Training Provision initiative have clear integrated pathways from the outset. The Tullamore FET campus will drive this work initially.

Learner Voice

“As a young person with a physical disability, I have a number of barriers to accessing education and training. Thanks to the community education tutors coming to the disability service I attend, I am able to receive both literacy one to one supports and take part in QQI certified training in baking. I am now hopeful that I will be able to reach my educational goals and move to employment.”

Tim, Wheelchair user, aged 21.

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.



LOETB has a long track record in supporting literacy, numeracy and digital inclusion across its region. While other ETBs have struggled to maintain levels of literacy provision through the pandemic, LOETB rebounded significantly in 2021 after a fall in 2020 and levels are almost back to pre-pandemic provision. Over the course of this agreement, it will grow this by a further 10%,



contributing to the overall expansion of literacy investment and provision sought in the ALL strategy. 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.

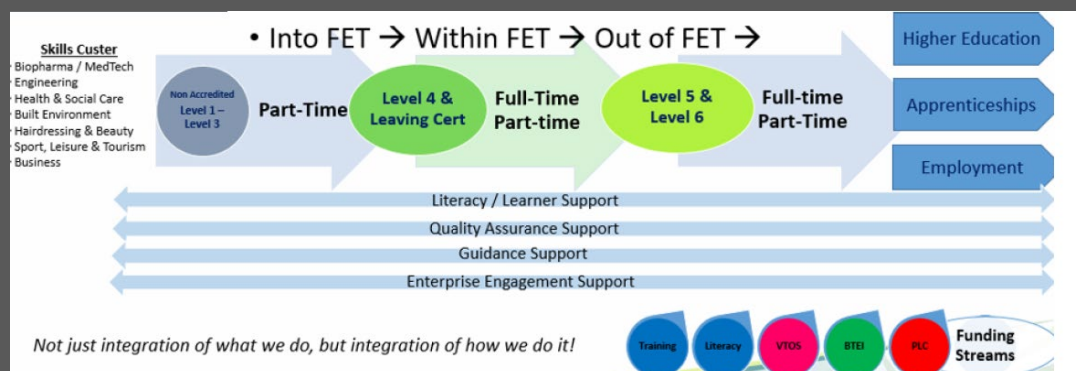
Specifically, LOETB is committed to the following core areas of development in literacy:

- Common assessment approach for literacy in line with national guidance and development of *distance travelled* tool to measure the informal learning journey
- Expansion of provision to build digital capabilities
- Working with partners, continue to expand literacy awareness training in health, local government, social welfare, community development and other key public interface settings across the region
- Integration of literacy support with provision at NFQ Levels 4-6
- Support of literacy needs of those in employment via Skills to Advance
- Continue to promote Family Learning
- Universal Design for Learning Staff development initiative
- A range of Learner Supports as outlined on the previous page

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. LOETB 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.

Integrated FET Pathways

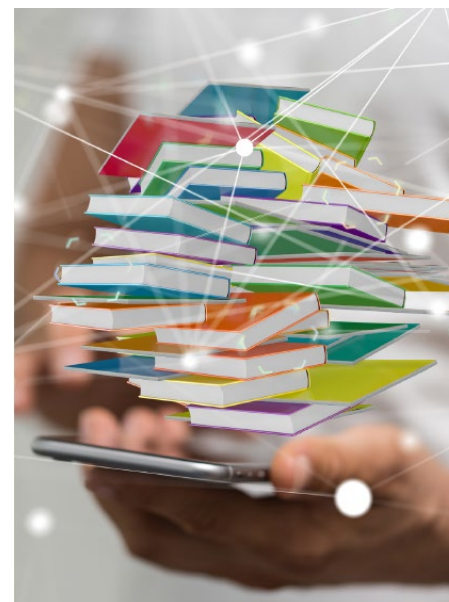
The Future FET integrated approach is based on a clear strategy to facilitate progression from one FET programme to another, with Learner Guidance, Literacy (learning) Support and Quality Assurance playing an important role in ensuring potential pathways are transparent from the outset. Each Centre and Service has progressed from a single core programme offering, to an integrated service that includes literacy and learning supports, career guidance and a combination of provision that includes both full-time and part-time provision. The success of the integrated model is evidenced by an average retention rate of over 90% on adult education courses in LOETB Integrated FET Centres.



School to FET Pathways

LOETB are piloting vocational taster programmes in areas including healthcare and digital. This involves bringing Transition Year students in one day a week onsite. It will mainstream these throughout a wider base of schools over the course of this agreement. LOETB is also exploring a taster module in electrical engineering.

LOETB report a change in attitude in schools, which now proactively invite the ETB to come and talk to them about FET and apprenticeships. LOETB will continue to ramp up its school outreach work to increase the pipeline of young people into FET courses. It will commit to developing an offering of all types of Level 5 and Level 6 programmes which can be pitched via the CAO-linked FET site designed for school leavers.



FET-HE Pathways

LOETB has quite a small base of PLC places relative to other ETBs, meaning progression levels to HE are also low, although they have been growing. This is supported by active partnership pathways for learners in place with the Technological University of the Shannon in areas including Science, Computer Systems, Engineering and Hospitality.

LOETB will develop more such pathways over the period of this agreement, hoping to almost double the last recorded progression levels from 2020. The integration of PLC with other Level 5 and 6 offerings should be an ambition of LOETB and should facilitate growth in these pathways. All Level 5/6 provision with a progression to HE focus will be mapped by 2024.

Learner Voice – Nursing Studies

"I studied QQI Level 5 Nursing Studies in Abbeylax after my Leaving Certificate in 2015. I decided to do this course to gain greater insight into my career in nursing. I really enjoyed my year studying in Abbeylax, the staff were very supportive and encouraged all students. I completed work experience as part of my course which helped me decide that Nursing was for me. I then went on to study Adult Nursing in University of Stirling, Scotland. I am now a qualified nurse working in the midlands and love my career. I would really recommend this course to anyone who may be interested in Nursing."

Megan Carter,
Nursing Studies 2015/2016

Integrated FET Pathways

LOETB have moved away from structuring its FET operations or promoting distinct programmes like PLC or traineeship. The focus is now on the NFQ level, the discipline and the outcome. Significant progress has been made in bringing together what were formerly two very different Quality Assurance systems (one for further education and one for training) into one single integrated QA system overseen by a senior manager. This will help to embed real integrated pathways.

LOETB plan to develop the model of community hubs offering courses at NFQ levels 1-3 which then link to larger urban FET colleges focused on Levels 4-6 followed and progression to employment or HE. The ETB is also considering the potential to link Youthreach and CTC to FET pathways with modules within the National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas.

As shown in the adjacent table, LOETB evidences strong progression rates within FET as well as positive outcomes for learners. Progression can be viewed at completion and certification level, advancing to higher levels in FET, to HE or employment, or in terms of more softer outcomes. It is accepted more qualitative models are needed at a national level.



*Based on the joint work carried out by SOLAS in collaboration with the CSO, the learners who have completed their course during 2019 in health and welfare, engineering, manufacturing and construction, business administration and services accounted for over 90% of the learners who were in substantial employment within 12 months.**

| ISCED Description | 2019 | Cluster | 2019 |
|---|------|---|-------|
| Arts and Humanities | 1% | Arts & Crafts | 0.0% |
| | | Media Graphics Communications | 0.9% |
| Business and administration and law | 16% | Business Administration | 14.2% |
| | | Financial services | 1.9% |
| | | Sales & Marketing | 0.0% |
| | | Research and Education – Training | 3.3% |
| Education | 3% | Built Environment | 18.1% |
| Engineering, manufacturing and construction | 32% | Engineering | 1.9% |
| | | Engineering (Electrical) | 0.5% |
| | | Engineering (Mechanical) | 7.3% |
| | | Engineering (Transport) | 0.8% |
| | | Manufacturing | 3.3% |
| | | Health, Family, other Social Services | 30.1% |
| | | Information Technology | 2% |
| | | Science and Technology | 3% |
| Health and welfare | 30% | Food and Beverage | 8.3% |
| Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) | 2% | Security, Guarding & Emergency Services | 0.6% |
| Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics | 3% | Sport and Leisure | 3.9% |
| | | Transport, Distribution & Logistics | 0.2% |
| | | | |
| Services | 13% | | |

**This table is based on the analysis that was carried out within the CSO using Target 1 employment definitions for the Strategic Performance Agreements.*

Learner Voice

“Community Education eased me back into education in a fun relaxed way. It removed the mental barriers I had, such as being too old to return as I had not been in any formal education setting in over 30 years, it gave me the confidence to return to education and pursue my Level 3 in Horticulture.”

LOETB Learner

Lifelong Learning Pathways

Work-based learning is a critical component of LOETB provision. Further engagement will take place on a collaborative model with industry to embed this further. Strong growth and positive outcomes for traineeships over this period are planned.

This is part of LOETB's efforts to create an agile and flexible offering which will meet the needs of people in the region throughout their lifetimes and careers. They will explore opportunities for developing and rolling out micro qualifications to facilitate a dip in, dip out system.

LOETB has developed its Skills to Advance portfolio expeditiously since its introduction and it is planned to continue the impressive growth rate; 2019 – 616 learners; 2020 – 606 learners; 2021 – 1,182 learners; 2022 – 1,500 learners by mid year.

Learner Voice – Skills to Advance

“The Construction Lean Management Programme with LOETB has transformed the company in many ways. We have implemented many new initiatives within the company that have enhanced a positive work environment whilst also making the company a more competitive and profitable organisation.”

Gerard McIntyre,
Leamore Construction

The passion and expertise of staff in LOETB and their commitment to putting learners at the heart of everything is evident throughout its services. Whilst some progress has been achieved by engaging with staff to expand their remit delivering integrated service provision, there remain numerous legacy design matters that need to be resolved nationally. As we enter the next phase of FET Strategy Implementation these matters need to be tackled along with a clear sense of how ETB staffing and structures should evolve to deliver future FET. LOETB will work with SOLAS around the creation of a pipeline of capital projects and continue to place a focus on service provision being learner and performance centred.

Staffing, Structures and Capabilities

LOETB will work with SOLAS and DFHERIS at a national level to advance a FET management structure that reflects priorities set out in the FET Strategy. This new structure will have to allow for flexibility around re-assignment of roles based on service need and LOETB will support the introduction of a FET practitioner role as required.

LOETB will produce baseline data for existing FET staffing levels to inform the national baseline, identify gaps across the ETBs and to 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 and the provision of green skills training for all LOETB staff. LOETB's commitment to staff development is evident with over 200 staff enrolled on a Sust Hub Digital Badge Programme and almost 50 staff supported to participate on a variety of Masters Programmes modules.

LOETB will support work to reform the FET funding model. It reflects LOETBs existing approach to move away from programme brands and silos, and it is willing to help pilot any new funding model approaches.

Staffing, Structures and Capabilities

LOETB 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. LOETB will continue to build on this progress by establishing a formal blended learning policy.

LOETB is 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.

Enabled data infrastructure is required from SOLAS to provide more timely outcomes data, particularly from the CSO related system targets for progression to employment and progression to higher education.

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

Quality FET

LOETB has invested considerably in quality assurance and successfully came through its inaugural review with QQI. Allocating senior management responsibility for QA was an important step, and it will now use this infrastructure as a driver of agile curriculum development in collaboration with partner ETBs.

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.



FET Leader Case Study

LOETB is the first ETB to reflect the three core strategic priorities of the Transforming Learning FET strategy: Building Skills; Creating Pathways; and Fostering Inclusion in its FET organisational structure. A senior manager has been designated responsibility for overseeing each area and directing ETB activities in support of strategy delivery. It sits above any specific programme structures or responsibilities.

Capital Development

LOETB will continue its programme of investment in FET capital infrastructure to ensure that all FET settings have the same look and feel no matter what FET centre the learner enters.

The development of an estates strategy will be central to the development of a pipeline of projects for LOETB, coupled with the requirement to fully expend the annual devolved capital budget.

A specific focus will be placed on developing Mount Lucas into a large-scale centre of excellence in construction skills and embedding modern methods of construction across industry.

The launch of distinct FET College of the Future identities around key LOETB urban hubs is also an essential part of the development process

SOLAS will continue to develop capital processes to ensure application of the public spending code along with a clear process for capital funding streams and application and approval processes to support LOETB in this regard.



Learner and Performance Centred

The Learner continues to drive everything LOETB does. LOETB 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.

Both the value of the Aontas independent learner voice - the FET Learner Forum is recognised, as well as the LOETB learner feedback mechanisms and activities. Both will continue over the course of this agreement. National activity will continue to be supported by SOLAS. LOETB will engage with any new initiatives introduced in relation to further enhancement of strengthening the learner voice across the ETB sector.

LOETB 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 and welfare services locally.

SOLAS will provide the necessary support for curriculum development which has been identified as a key enabler for Future FET.



Stakeholder Voice

“

Maura Kearney, The Acorn Project.

"The Acorn Project has an excellent working relationship with LOETB. The partnership allows the Project to work with a group to identify its needs and effectively respond to those needs. The learners gain crucial skills and build confidence with the aim of progressing to further education and training or becoming a more active citizen within their own community. The programmes allow the project target and work with the most disadvantaged learners in the community and truly respond to their needs. Without this partnership, learners would be left at a disadvantage in terms of accessing and progressing through education as transport is a real barrier for our learners. Thanks to our relationship with LOETB, we can offer real progression options through certified programmes in our community."



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)*

System Targets and Definitions

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

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).

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 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 have 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). 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 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 a further 6.7% increase of 35,958 by 2024. This target will be reviewed in late 2022 with the aim of increasing 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 baseline of 5,608. 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 baseline trend of 5,364 with a further 24% increase by 2024.

2022-2024 Definitions and Targets



Fostering Inclusion

Transversal Skills: Return certification at NFQ Levels 1-3 to 2019 levels and grow by 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 baseline of 29,328 with a further 10.5% increase 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 baseline of 17,271 with 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 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 1st 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 a further 7.4% increase of 113,605 by 2024. This target will be reviewed in late 2022 aiming 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

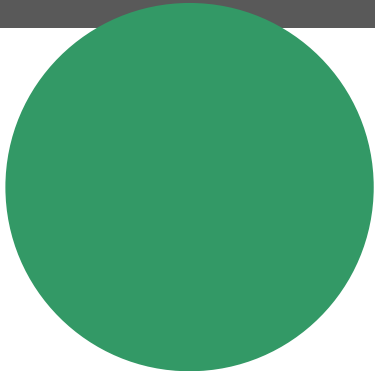


Targeting Key Skills Needs

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 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. 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 for 64,000 by 2024.



System Infrastructure and Framework for Measuring Performance

System Infrastructure and Framework for Measuring Performance

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



LOETB Ambition 2022-2024 at a glance

-  Further develop Mount Lucas as a centre of excellence for the construction industry, including its hosting of the Housing for All Demonstration Park.
-  At least double the LOETB apprenticeship footprint, expanding craft provision, with particular specialisation in electrical, ramping up its scaffolding apprenticeship.
-  Develop a community hub and FET College of the Future model, with major colleges in Portlaoise and Tullamore.
-  Continue to expand FET as a resource for enterprise, expanding upskilling in key areas like management, LEAN, sustainability and digital skills.
-  Develop school-FET pathways by mainstreaming and expanding TY modules in schools, and offering a wide range of Level 5/6 options via the CAO linked site.
-  LOETB will continue to take a lead role in the development of national programmes supporting enterprise and employers.
-  LOETB will continue to play a lead sectoral and regional role in Green Skills and Sustainability provision.
-  Raise participation of key target groups including Roma, Travellers and People with Disabilities, and work with NLN to integrate STP more seamlessly with wider FET pathways.
-  Be one of the key leaders in the sector to drive the success of the ALL strategy and expand literacy provision.
-  Use the capacity built up in quality assurance to drive agile programme development in partnership with industry and other ETBs.
-  Provide analysis of full FET staffing base to feed into national work on future staffing framework and work to define and pilot future FET practitioner role.
-  LOETB will map all Level 5/6 HE focused provision by 2024 utilising dual provision models which begin in FET and culminate in HE through 1+2 and 2+2 approaches.

Glossary

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

