



# Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board Provider Profile

May 2021



**kcetb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach  
*Kilkenny and Carlow  
Education and Training Board*



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## Foreword

In 2021 Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board will engage in an Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). This review will provide an external view of the quality assurance process within the Further Education and Training Services of Kilkenny and Carlow ETB.

As part of the reflections and preparation for the formal process later in the year this Provider Profile has been developed to set out the context for the further education and training activities within Kilkenny and Carlow ETB.

The Provider Profile sets out the organisational background which led to the establishment of the ETB, its governance and management structures and the place of the Further Education and Training Service within the organisation. A key aspect of the document details the quality assurance framework within KCETB and how that has evolved over the years.

In addition, it sets out the profile of service provision and engagement within KCETB as well as outlining the nature of the support services available. It places all this within the context of the socio-economic profile of the ETB area and its location in the South East region and outlines how the Further Education and Training Service has responded to these local and regional needs. This Provider Profile give a comprehensive overview of the broad range of provision within the Further Education and Training Service and its reach across Kilkenny and Carlow as well as outlining the importance placed on quality assurance within the service.

In Kilkenny and Carlow ETB all our efforts are focused on ensuring that the learner is at the centre of all that we do. We look forward to the further engagement which the review process will bring in the period ahead and any benefits which may ensue for our learners.

**Eileen Curtis**  
Chief Executive

## Background

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB) was established on 1st July 2013 under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013. It is one of 16 ETBs and was established following the amalgamation of Kilkenny and Carlow Vocational Education Committees each of whom provided post-primary, adult and community education in their respective areas. During 2016 KCETB formally took over all the former FÁS training functions in Kilkenny and Carlow. A Training Services Unit was established as part of Further Education and Training (FET) provision in KCETB and continues to offer the programmes previously run under the auspices of FÁS.

KCETB provide a broad range of services in Second Level Education and Further Education and Training as well as other supports and services which include Youth Work and Music Education. All provision is designed to meet the needs of young people and adults throughout the region.

The focus of the work of KCETB is on the following groups:

- Students and their parents/guardians
- Adult learners
- Employers
- Local Communities
- Young people and volunteers
- Community and Voluntary Organisations

The FET Service in KCETB is responsible for the management and operation of 17 QQI registered centres across 13 FET centres and 30 community-based outreach locations throughout Kilkenny and Carlow, as outlined in Figure 1. During 2020, 6466 individual learners commenced a programme at a FET centre in Kilkenny or Carlow. There are 21 distinct full-time, part-time and support programmes funded through SOLAS, with other initiatives for young people funded through Department of Children Equality Diversity Inclusion and Youth (DCEDIY) and Department of Education (DE).

The programmes offered by the FET Service are accredited by QQI, City and Guilds, CIDESCO, ITEC and other awarding bodies. KCETB is a QQI legacy provider and currently operates under two Quality Assurance Agreements with QQI. The KCETB FET service is currently in transition and developing a best practice framework to ensure the delivery of a Quality Assured learner experience for all those who engage in our FET services. Our ambition is to create positive learning environments and experiences to all stages of lifelong learning and to ensure that these meet the highest standards of quality.

*“The programmes offered by the FET Service are accredited by QQI, City and Guilds, CIDESCO, ITEC and other awarding bodies”*



- Adult Education Programmes
- PLC
- Training Services (Apprenticeship, Traineeship & SST)
- Local Training Initiative
- Community Training Centres
- Youthreach
- KCETB Offices



**Mission, Values,  
Strategic Focus and  
Key Performance  
Indicators**





## Mission, Values, Strategic Focus and Key Performance Indicators

Following its establishment Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board commenced work on the creation of a strategic framework which would inform its work and set a direction for its activities in the years ahead. The first [Statement of Strategy for Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board \(KCETB\) was published in 2017 covering the period 2017-2021](#). This publication set out the vision, mission and values that shaped the work of KCETB, as well as the specific goals and objectives from 2017 to 2021. The strategy was based on an analysis of the external policy environment, the social and economic profile of the two counties and a review of services.

### KCETB Vision

#### **Our ambition for the future is to:**

Lead the development of education and training opportunities throughout our two counties by engaging with learners and communities, creating positive learning environments and experiences for people at all stages of lifelong learning, and contributing to social and economic development. In everything we do, we aim to be “the education and training service that others use as a benchmark of excellence.”

*“The first Statement of Strategy for Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB) was published in 2017 covering the period 2017-2021.”*

## KCETB Mission

To enable learners to achieve their full potential and contribute to the social, cultural and economic development our area and of the country.

These are underpinned by our core values:

- We value learning and recognise its role in the development, cohesion and wellbeing of society. Everything we do is guided by serving the best interests of learners and putting their voice at the core.
- We aim for excellence and are committed to continuous improvement throughout the organisation. We value relationships and working in collaboration within the education and training sector and with the wider community.
- As a public service organisation, KCETB has a culture of accountability, integrity, fairness, openness and respect.
- We adopt high standards of professionalism, honesty, objectivity and quality, which are central to serving all learners. We embrace diversity and are open to new ideas.

*To enable learners to achieve their full potential and contribute to the social, cultural and economic development our area and of the country*

The FET Service in KCETB is committed to supporting this vision and mission by developing and leading the integrated delivery of a high-quality learner centred further education and training service across the ETB area. It espouses:

- the value of learning
- the ambition for excellence
- the commitment to continuous improvement
- the adoption of high standards of quality



## Strategic Goals

The work of the FET Service is driven and underpinned by 3 key goals and associated actions set out in the Statement of Strategy 2017-2021. This strategic focus is shared across all our services and guides our FET Colleges, Centres and Support Services to ensure that they place the learner at the heart of everything we do. These goals have shaped FET over the last 5 years, and align to national policies including the FET Strategy 2020 - 2024, SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreements and the Action Plan for Education with targets monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Three major themes were identified for the KCETB 2017-2021 strategy and strategic goals were identified for each theme. The following reflects relevant aspects of progress across the 3 goals:

### Theme 1: Teaching and Learning

**Strategic Goal 1: Improve the learning experience and outcomes for all learners**

#### Key milestones reflecting the implementation of Strategic Goal 1:

Putting the learner at the heart of everything KCETB does has been a key priority over the last number of years. The development of high standards of teaching and learning was underpinned by the roll out of ETB wide professional development opportunities to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

A cross directorate approach saw training on the Magenta Principles offered to teaching staff across schools and centres during 2019. This professional development initiative enhanced teaching and learning; fostered learners' reflection and promoted critical thinking in the context of curriculum delivery. Other professional development opportunities that have been undertaken by staff include Level 6, 7 and 8 qualifications in Technology Enhanced Learning, Level 8 qualifications in Change Management and a Level 9 qualification in Recognition of Prior Learning. The focused development of a Professional Development Portal in 2020 has further enhanced the range and accessibility of PD opportunities available to staff. In 2020 a total of 90 training events were organised centrally through this portal, with an attendance of 3460 staff across a diverse range of courses. 10,494 visits have been registered on the Professional Development Portal since April 2020.

The opportunities afforded through the focused introduction of technology into the learning environment have been further embedded through the development of the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) infrastructure, new pedagogical approaches and ongoing professional development opportunities. Central to the pedagogical and creation of learning content and the sharing of best practice. Underpinned by the [TEL Strategy 2016-2019](#), new technology has been purchased for centres, training has been provided in each centre and the appointment of Digital Leaders in each centre will further develop the approach to technology enhanced learning. This was supported with increased investment in resources and the appointment of a TEL and PD Co-ordinator in 2020. The progress made has been reviewed and a [KCETB TEL Action Plan](#) detailing key priorities for the development of TEL for 2021 and beyond has been developed.

*The strategic focus of FET provision is also driven by the key priorities set out in the three-year Strategic Performance Agreement which KCETB signed with SOLAS in 2018.*



## Theme 2: Quality Services

Goal 2: Ensure that all our Education and Training Services meet high quality standards

### Key milestones reflecting the implementation of Strategic Goal 2

A strong, robust governance structure was seen as central to the progress of all FET provision in KCETB. Following the Executive Self Evaluation Report (ESER) process in 2017 KCETB established and developed a Quality Assurance governance structure in line with the [QQI Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the ETBs](#) (see Approach to Quality). The formation of the Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC) and associated working groups has supported the transition from 9 legacy agreements towards 1 core QA system within KCETB. The development of a FET wide [Assessment Policy](#), [Blended Learning Policy](#) and [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) have all assisted in ensuring centres are working towards consistent common standards.

The creation of a quality learning and working environment for our learners and our staff has progressed significantly over the lifetime of the Statement of Strategy. In 2018 Training Services opened a new training facility at Purcellsinch Industrial Estate in Kilkenny. While primarily used for phase 2 electrical apprentices, this facility has been fitted out to support further education and training programmes particularly those with an IT or blended focus. KCETB has submitted a business case to SOLAS seeking the future development of facilities.

In 2019 Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training opened the doors of its new purpose-built college at Mortarstown, Carlow. This campus is designed to cater for 1,000 learners and offers specialist training facilities in Make Up Artistry, Professional Cookery and also Performing Arts. The state of the art facilities in the new college will ensure that it can provide high quality learning opportunities for those seeking career opportunities across a broad spectrum of disciplines.

*The state of the art facilities in the new college will ensure that it can provide high quality learning opportunities for those seeking career opportunities across a broad spectrum of disciplines.*

## Theme 3: External Partnerships and Linkages

### Goal 3: Strengthen our links with the wider community.

#### Key milestones reflecting the implementation of Strategic Goal 3

KCETB has established strong links with communities throughout Kilkenny and Carlow in a diverse range of locations to ensure those most marginalised in society have the opportunity to actively participate in education. The development of family learning programmes in line with core [Family Literacy Guidelines](#), Adult Literacy programmes, Community Education courses and Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) accredited programmes in the heart of local communities has brought opportunities to a diverse range of learners across the two counties.

The development of employee targeted programmes offered to employers in Kilkenny and Carlow provides reskilling opportunities to those who have lower skill levels and who needed additional opportunities to advance in their working lives. EXPLORE, Skills for Work and Skills to Advance programmes offer specific skills courses for the workforce in Kilkenny and Carlow. Skills to Advance continued to grow during 2020 and offered upskilling opportunities in a range of areas including Leadership and Management, Microsoft Office Core and Expert with Confectionary and Patisserie being offered on a part-time basis. The Engineering sector is one of the core employers in the KCETB area and strong links have been forged with many of the companies in the area.

Collaboration with other ETBs to ensure a diverse range of opportunities for learners in the region is a key priority. The Step Up and Grow Management Development Programme was developed in 2020 as a regional collaboration with Waterford and Wexford ETB and Tipperary ETB. Our focus for this programme is aimed at the upskilling or reskilling needs of the Engineering and Manufacturing sector. The benchmarking tool used as part of the programme has identified and supported a number of SME's in Kilkenny and Carlow to undertake an audit of their training needs.

In 2018 KCETB commenced delivery of the Commis Chef Apprenticeship programme. This apprenticeship is a 2-year programme which involves 3 or 4 days per week on-the-job training, and 1 or 2 days per week off-the-job, depending on the time of year. The apprenticeship co-ordinated by Kerry ETB is delivered in a range of collaborating ETB locations, including KCETB. 11 apprentices from Kilkenny and Carlow hotels and restaurants commenced this Level 6 award in 2018.

Under the DSP protocol arrangement both KCETB and DSP (Kilkenny and Carlow offices) participate in a framework to facilitate the exchange of data between both organisations and the referral of clients to suitable education and training opportunities provided by KCETB. The objective is to provide DSP clients with the knowledge, skills, competences and supports to assist them in sourcing employment or progressing to further education and training as appropriate.

## SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreements

The strategic focus of FET provision is also driven by the key priorities set out in the three-year Strategic Performance Agreement which KCETB signed with SOLAS in 2018. This national framework establishes a strategic dialogue, informs the targets and benchmarking in our three-year [Strategic Performance Agreement \(SPA\)](#). This agreement details KCETB's commitment to the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant to the area and identifies key risks and challenges which need to be mitigated in order to deliver on the six core performance indicators set down in the agreement. The agreement also outlines KCETB's continued commitment to supporting the implementation of a range of national policies and strategies relevant to FET provision in line with the core targets detailed in Figure 2.

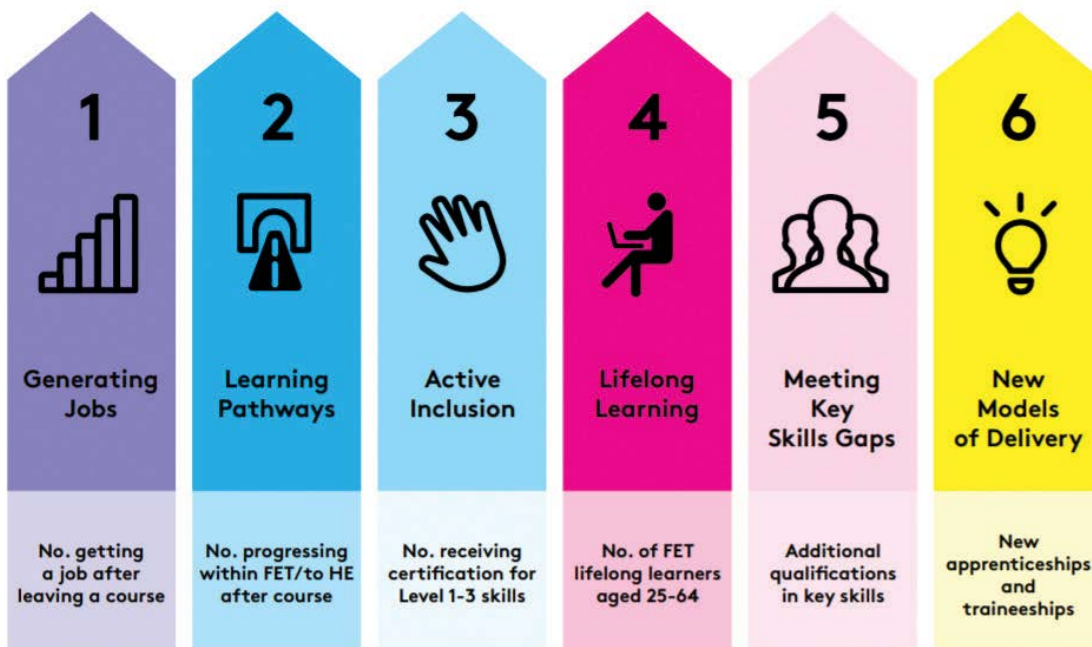


Figure 2 SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreements Targets

Each year key targets are identified for FET centres in line with the performance indicators and a review of the implementation of the agreement as well as a discussion around the key risks and challenges takes place. Since 2018, two Strategic Performance dialogue meetings have taken place with SOLAS and were attended by the Chief Executive (CE), the Director of Further Education and Training (DFET) and the Senior FET Management Team. Through this agreement, KCETB is contributing to the achievement of the national FET sectoral goals and was particularly commended for its range of provision, the growth in certification at lower levels on the National Framework of Qualifications, as well as developing provision to support those in employment. The dialogue process has provided an opportunity to discuss progress to date and to identify priorities for the future.

# Governance and Management Structures

## Governance and Management Structures

The Chief Executive of KCETB is ultimately responsible for the oversight and management of KCETB. The Chief Executive is accountable to the Board which consists of 21 members for the performance of the ETB's executive functions. KCETB has a corporate structure which is made up of a democratically appointed Board and an executive management team. The membership of the board is set out in Figure 3.

The functions of the Board are outlined in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, and all local boards of management and sub-committees report to the KCETB Board. The following committees are in place to support the Board in its functions:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Finance Committee
- School Boards of Management
- Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC)
- Youth Work Committee

In line with the QQI Sector - Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards KCETB "take account of the overall corporate responsibility of the ETB, vested in the Chief Executive and supported by the senior management of the ETB, in all aspects of the strategy, governance and management of quality assurance throughout the corporate entity"<sup>1</sup>.

The CE and Director of FET are ultimately responsible for the oversight of all Quality Assurance policies and procedures and are accountable to the KCETB Board in that regard. The Quality Assurance system is supported by the QAOC and associated working groups which ensures a robust governance and management system is in place in relation to QA across all FET provision in KCETB (see Approach to Quality).

### KCETB Management Structure

The executive functions of KCETB relate to service provision in education and training and to corporate and operational matters. The work of KCETB is structured across three pillars as detailed in Figure 4. *The links between these divisions ensure that the QA processes and procedures for the governance and management of FET programmes is operated at "many levels of the organisation and throughout the different layers of the organisation"*<sup>2</sup> in line with the QQI Sector- Specific Guidelines for Education and Training Boards.

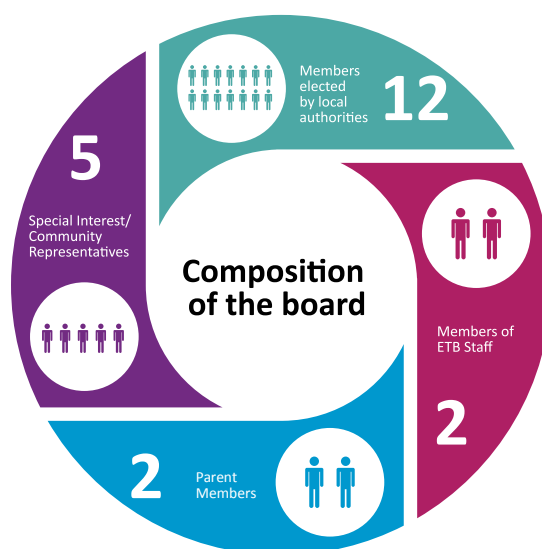


Figure 3 Composition of KCETB Board

*KCETB "take account of the overall corporate responsibility of the ETB, vested in the Chief Executive and supported by the senior management of the ETB, in all aspects of the strategy, governance and management of quality assurance throughout the corporate entity".*

<sup>1</sup>QQI (2017) Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards, page 5

<sup>2</sup>QQI (2017) Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards, page 5



The Organisation Support and Development pillar has responsibility for four sections, operating across two locations, Carlow (the Head Office) and Kilkenny. The Schools pillar is responsible for the management and operation of thirteen Post-Primary schools throughout Kilkenny and Carlow. The Further Education and Training pillar is responsible for the management and operation of the Further Education and Training Service.

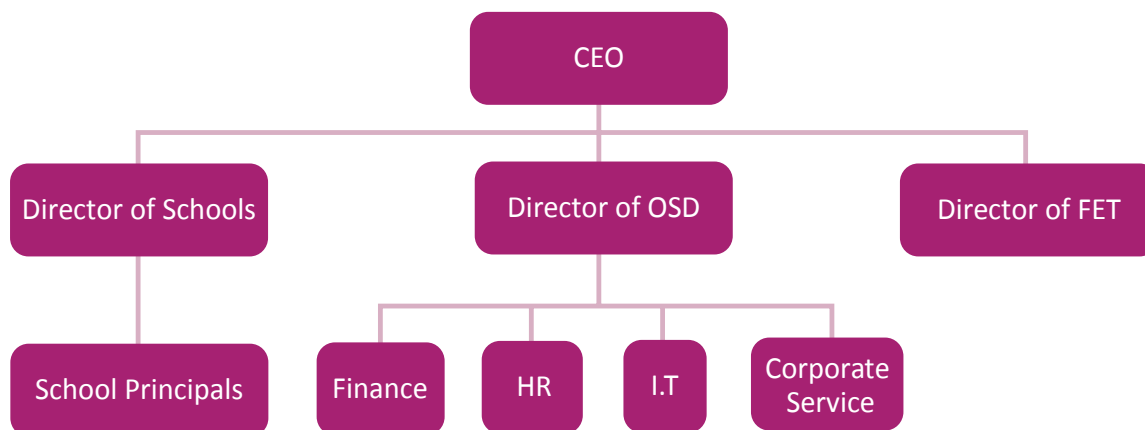


Figure 4 Executive Governance and Oversight Structure of KCETB.

The Executive Management Team comprising of the CE and the three directors meet monthly to discuss progress and developments and to set strategic direction for the ETB. The Director of FET reports on progress and developments within the FET service. The Director of FET reports to the CE, who reports to the board of KCETB on a bi-monthly basis.

**Further Education and Training Services**

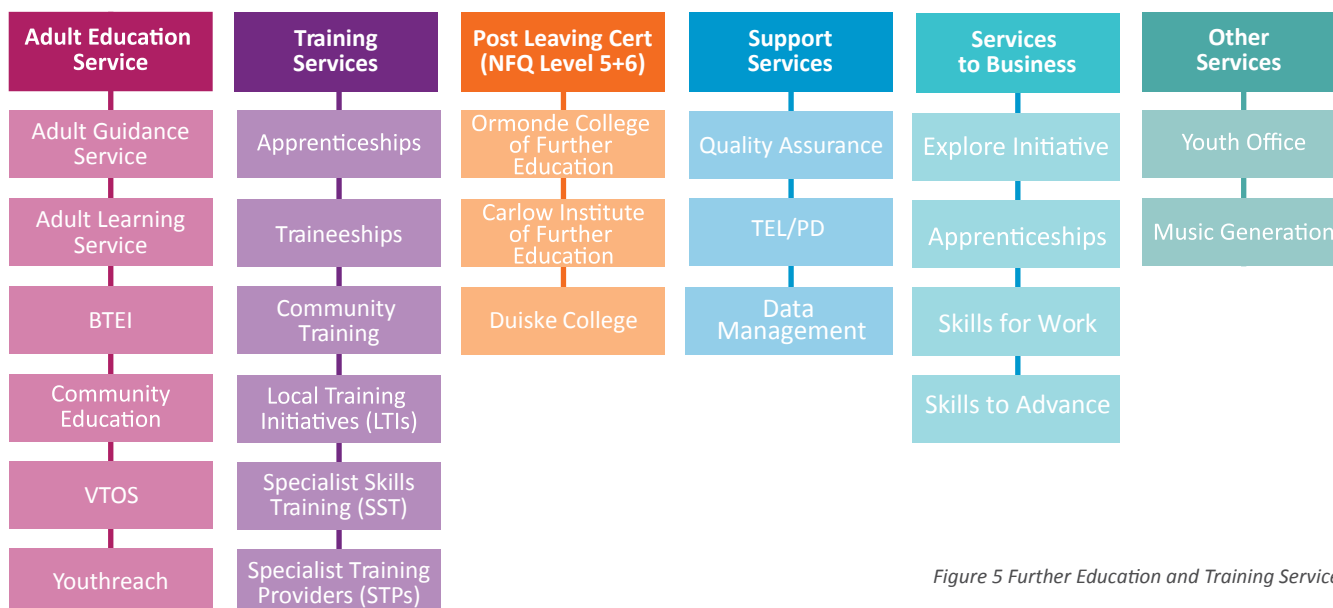


Figure 5 Further Education and Training Services



Figure 6 FET Structure

**FET Management Structure**

The Director of Further Education and Training (DFET) has responsibility for 21 separate programmes and a number of associated services across Kilkenny and Carlow as detailed in Figure 5. The FET Senior Management Team (SMT) comprises of the three AEOs, the Training Services Manager and Assistant Manager and a FET Principal and meets bi-monthly. Each of the AEOs has responsibility for specific overarching areas as well as a number of programmes within FET. The CE attends the FET Senior Management Team meetings. Monthly meetings are held with all FET Co-ordinators to ensure oversight and support for staff across all provision by senior managers and all FET Co-ordinators have regular meetings with their staff groups.

The FET Forum which comprises of all FET Senior Managers including Centre Co-ordinators, a PLC Principal and Deputy Principals, is chaired by the Director of Further Education and Training and is held at key intervals throughout the year to update all staff on critical strategic areas. The Chief Executive also attends these meetings.

*The Director of Further Education and Training (DFET) has responsibility for 21 separate programmes and a number of associated services across Kilkenny and Carlow*

**Quality Assurance Governance Structure**

The QQI Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for the ETBs, states that QA procedures for governance and management ‘take account of the overall corporate responsibility of the ETB’, vested in the Chief Executive and supported by the senior management team of the ETB<sup>3</sup>. The function of Quality Assurance in FET is delegated by the Chief Executive to the Director of FET, who leads the associated structure for Quality Assurance as detailed in Figure 6. The Director of Further Education and Training reports to the Chief Executive of the ETB and is responsible for the governance and management of quality in KCETBs FET service. The Director of FET leads the associated structure for Quality Assurance as detailed in Figure 6. This ensures a consistency of message and approach to the governance and management of QA throughout KCETB provision.

*“The Director of Further Education and Training reports to the Chief Executive of the ETB and is responsible for the governance and management of quality in KCETBs FET service.”*

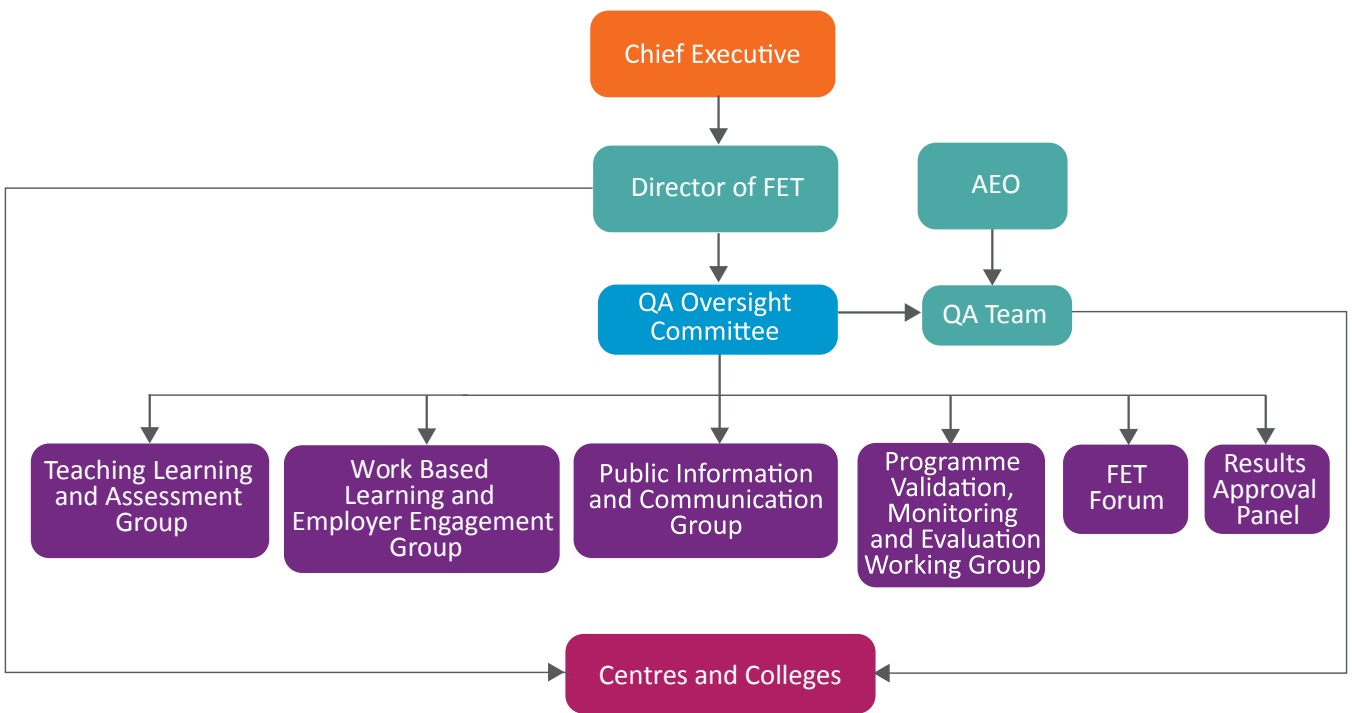


Figure 7 Governance Structure for Quality Assurance and Associated Subgroups

Terms of reference for Groups:
<a href="#">Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC)</a>
The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Working Group evolved from the <a href="#">The Assessment Working Group</a>
<a href="#">The Work Based Learning &amp; Employer Engagement Working Group</a>
<a href="#">The Public Information and Communications Group (formerly the Policy and Procedure Group)</a>
<a href="#">Programme Validation Working Group</a>
Results Approval Panel (RAP)

<sup>3</sup>QQI (2017) Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for ETB's, page 5

# Approach to Quality

### The Quality Assurance Journey in FET

Following the establishment of KCETB in 2013 and the amalgamation of Kilkenny VEC and Carlow VEC consideration was given to the QA procedures in place in both counties. Centres in both counties continued to work to their own QA arrangements from 2013-2018 when KCETB re-engaged with QQI. An extensive [Executive Self Evaluation \(ESER\) process took place in 2017](#) which involved a comprehensive review of the QA processes in place across all FET provision and it resulted in the setting out a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in 2018 with associated actions to enhance and monitor quality over the coming years.

The following sets out the key actions and milestones on the KCETB journey towards a new quality assurance framework:

REPORT TITLE	KEY ACTIONS
<p><b>Executive Self-Evaluation Report for Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board</b> 20th April 2018</p>	<p>The ESER report set out 16 actions aimed at addressing the priority areas identified in the report. These actions were set out with lead personnel, deadlines, resourcing requirements, outcomes and KPIs.</p> <p>The core aim of the report was to enhance the existing structures and support a culture of continuous improvement.</p> <p>The core objectives set out to ensure this aim was achieved were the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establishment of a robust QA governance structure</li> <li>• one development of working groups to progress key priorities</li> <li>• the development of cohesive QA policies and processes to embed a culture of quality.</li> <li>• enhancement of authentication processes through Internal Verification, External Verification and Results Approval supports and systems</li> <li>• supporting Learner Access, Transfer and Progression.</li> </ul>

As a first step the QA Oversight Committee (QAOC) was set up in early 2018 to support the establishment of a robust governance structure for QA across all FET provision. This committee was created at the time when the SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement with KCETB was being introduced and both processes ensured that quality was to the fore in all aspects of FET provision. The committee structure was formalised in September 2018, meets a minimum of 4 times a year and is chaired by the DFET with the CE also attending. The composition of the QAOC is set out in Figure 8. The group directs and monitors the work of all the working groups, recommends programmes for validation and sets the strategic direction for quality assurance in KCETB. The key focus initially for the committee was to establish the various working groups to progress the review of existing policies and the development of consistent FET wide processes which would be embedded across the FET Service in KCETB.



Figure 8 QA Oversight Committee Composition

The communication and understanding of this governance structure across the FET Service was deemed pivotal to its success and briefing workshops for senior management and centre co-ordinators were held in September 2018. This deliberate communications strategy and focus was designed to raise awareness, stimulate dialogue and set standards for quality assurance throughout the FET service. A series of workshops took place on the new governance structure and its roll out set the foundations for a shared understanding among all management staff regarding the importance of governance in QA under these revised structures. This key message was then relayed by management to teaching staff at centre level to enhance understanding and to ensure a strong foundation for the structure was being developed.

The QA Oversight Committee and the working groups form the key quality assurance governance structure in KCETB. These groups provide oversight of quality assurance activities and the segregation of those staff developing quality assurance policies and procedures from those who review and approve them. These groups have broad representation from all Further Education and Training programmes (see Figure 9). The diversity in membership has assisted greatly in the consistent communication of the quality message and has ensured that the policies developed are fit for purpose across FET provision. The work of these working groups is guided, monitored and approved by the QA Oversight Committee.

*The QA Oversight Committee (QAOC) and the working groups form the key quality assurance governance structure in KCETB.*

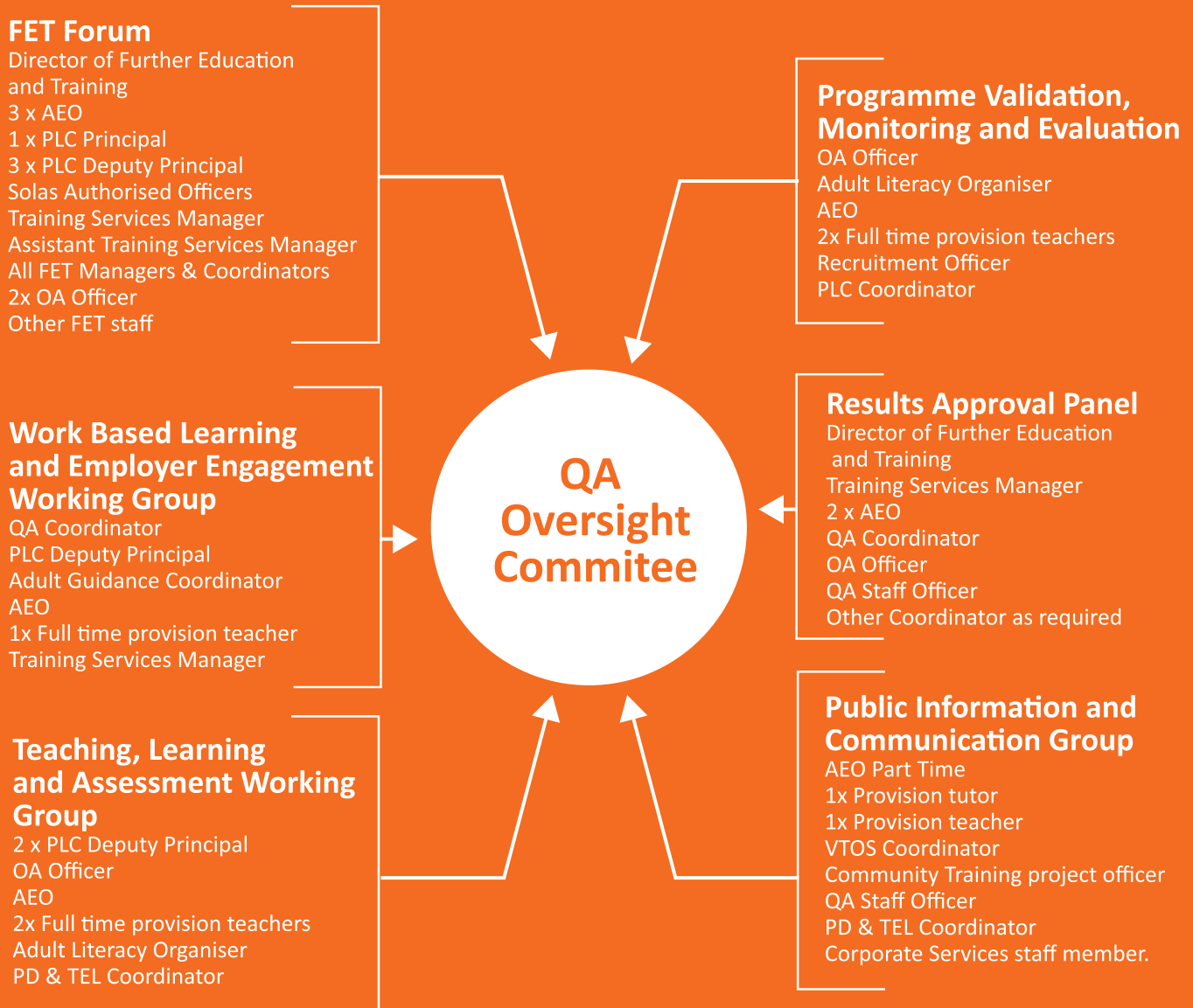


Figure 9 Composition of Working Groups and Reporting structure

The activities of the QAOC and the working groups are reviewed, monitored and evaluated annually through the Quality Improvement Plan process. Key areas that were prioritised in the initial Self Evaluation Report in 2018 have been progressed through the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) process with priorities set annually.

REPORT TITLE	KEY ACTIONS
<p><a href="#"><u>Quality Improvement Plan – Progress Reporting and Planning 2019 29th March 2019</u></a></p>	<p>Summary of progress on Key Actions In 2018, 10 of the 17 priorities were progressed, with others either commencing or delayed due to national factors.</p> <p>The key QA developments during this time included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QA Oversight Committee established</li> <li>• FET Forum incorporated into structure to ensure clear information and communication between management and centres</li> <li>• Assessment Working Group established and tasked with developing one Assessment Policy for all FET provision.</li> <li>• Work Based Learning Group established to create a policy for employer engagement and work experience</li> <li>• Public Information and Communication groups established tasked with creating a Learner Code of Conduct, Learner Handbook and RPL policy.</li> </ul>

REPORT TITLE	KEY ACTIONS
<p><a href="#"><u>Quality Improvement Plan – Progress Reporting and Planning 2020 27th March 2020</u></a></p>	<p>Summary of progress on Key Actions During 2019 10 of the 17 priorities were completed, 5 were on track/ ongoing and 2 were delayed.</p> <p>The key QA developments during this time were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validation Working Group established</li> <li>• Results Approval Group established with the first combined PLC Results Approval Panel taking place in May 2019.</li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Assessment policy</u></a> completed and implemented</li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>RPL &amp; Blended Learning Policies</u></a> developed</li> <li>• A QA Coordinator and Staff Officer were appointed in January 2020 to support the existing QA Officer.</li> <li>• Evaluation of Healthcare programmes took place in early 2020</li> </ul>



At the time of submitting the 2020 QIP in March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic was impacting on all KCETB FET schools and centres. With the move to emergency remote learning priorities were reviewed and amended to ensure as smooth a transition for staff and learners to online learning as possible. The QA office disseminated support documentation to centres initially through the QA Portal and subsequently on the website ([See the COVID-19 website here](#)) to assist centres and learners in respect of assessment procedures and processes in the new environment. Following the issuing of guidance documents a number of online briefings were held to ensure that the systems that had been developed in the preceding years could be monitored and were able to respond to the emergency.

As part of the Self Evaluation Report for the Inaugural Review Process in May 2020 all FET centres were required to conduct a Self-Evaluation review of their QA processes and procedures. This review was supported by an analysis of the Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats (SCOT) for their centre. A series of support visits took place between November 2020 and February 2021 where the SCOT analysis was reviewed. The key points prioritised were presented back to the centres for further consideration and the core themes form part of the QA priorities for 2021.

#### Management of Quality Assurance

*“The quality assurance procedures established by ETBs should strike a balance between the corporate responsibility of an ETB and one which respects the significant roles and accountabilities of the various centres, divisions and institutions on the frontline of education and training provision”<sup>4</sup>.*

A culture of quality is embedded across all levels of KCETB’s work and the [Annual Report](#) details the internal controls which are in place in terms of the governance and financial monitoring of the ETB. The FET Service in its management of QA strives to ensure the processes and procedures developed meet the corporate responsibility for accountability and transparency and also afford due regard to the diverse range of services and learners that FET serves across both counties.

#### Quality Assurance Oversight Committee (QAOC)

The management of QA is multi-layered placing the learner at the core with clear distinct layers of oversight which ensure a separation of duties between those who develop policy at the QA Team and Working Group level, those who approve policy at QAOC level and those who implement policy at centre level (Figure 10). The needs of the learner is at the core of this system and ensuring that a fair, equitable and transparent framework is in place, and is implemented uniformly across all provision in all centres is key.

*“The quality assurance procedures established by ETBs should strike a balance between the corporate responsibility of an ETB and one which respects the significant roles and accountabilities of the various centres, divisions and institutions on the frontline of education and training provision” .*

<sup>4</sup> QQI (2017) Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for ETBs, page 5

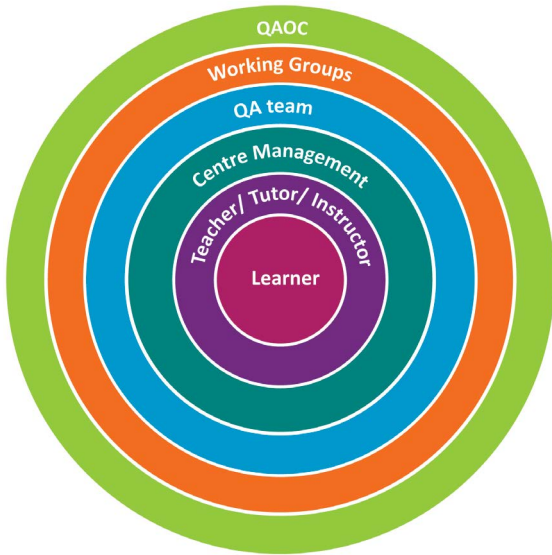


Figure 10 Approach to Quality Assurance

**Learner:** Receives feedback, submits assessment, receives results and certification.

**Teacher/ Tutor/ Instructor:** Implements policies, communication, instruction, teaching, assessment briefs, marking schemes, assessment, feedback, portfolio preparation and submission.

**Centre management:** Supports implementation of policies, provides feedback on policies, Selection, Recruitment, Induction, Assessment planning, portfolio receipt, QBS entry, Internal Verification management, External Authentication co-ordination, Learner results notification, Appeals, staff allocation and development, self-evaluation.

**QA team:** Develops, implements, manages, supports all FET provision, monitoring, reviewing and improving quality of service and provision. Programme development, Communities of Practice, central appeals, common EA panel, facilitate RAP, CPD schedule, Self-Evaluation process, Monitoring and self-evaluation

**Working Groups:** Develop policies, consult with stakeholders, review and evaluation implementation of policies.

**QAOC:** Strategic direction, governance and oversight.

The structures for the management of Quality and the separation of responsibilities within it are outlined in Figures 10 and 11. The ultimate oversight responsibility for QA in KCETB FET lies with the QAOC. This group chaired by the Director of Further Education and Training drives the strategic direction for QA across all FET provision. The QAOC also oversees the work of the QA Team and the Working Groups and exercises an approval role in relation to policies and processes.

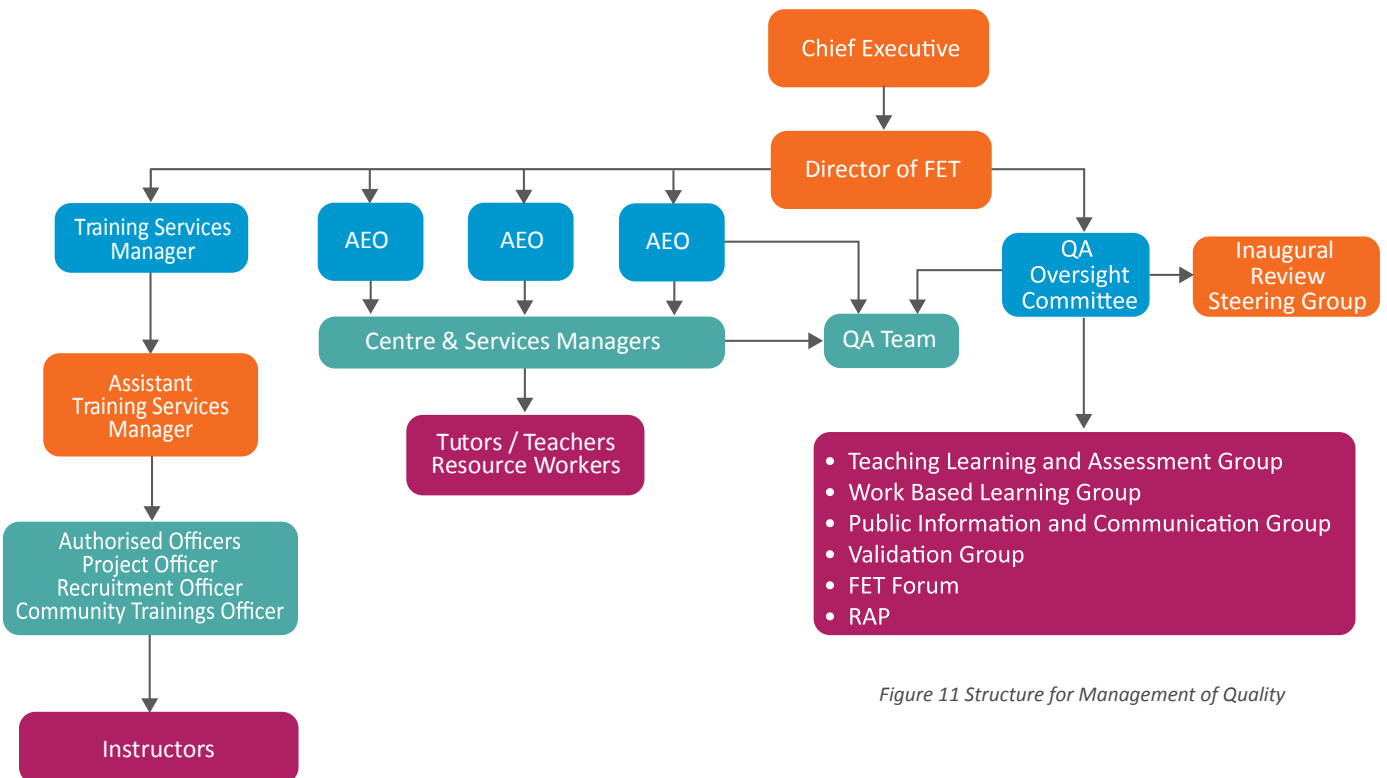


Figure 11 Structure for Management of Quality

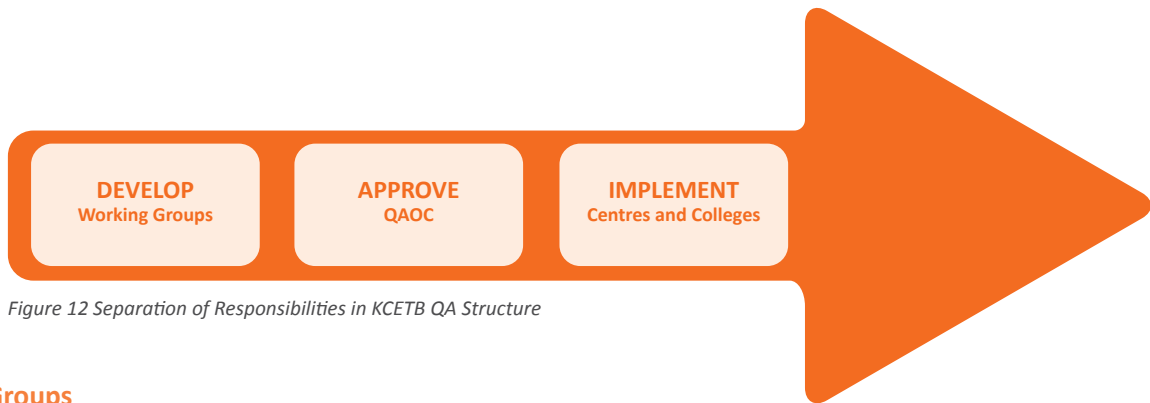


Figure 12 Separation of Responsibilities in KCETB QA Structure

### Working Groups

The establishment of the working groups in line with the ESER in 2018 saw the creation of a new layer in the QA structure. These working groups have taken on the role of policy development under the direction of the QAOC. The diversity in membership in these groupings has meant that policies “respect the significant roles and accountabilities of the various centres, divisions and institutions on the frontline of education and training provision”<sup>5</sup> and has played a significant role in the development of consistent policies and procedures across all FET provision.

### The Quality Assurance Team

The development of a Quality Assurance Team within KCETB has been a key priority to support management and staff since the initial appointment of a Quality Assurance (QA) Officer in 2016. The team was further enhanced in January 2020 when a QA Co-ordinator and Staff Officer were appointed to the team. This team is managed by an AEO who has responsibility for QA and other areas of FET Provision. The QA team oversee the development, implementation and co-ordination of KCETB’s FET Quality Assurance policies and procedures under the direction of the Director of FET and the QA Oversight Committee. The QA Team ensure that the Core and Sector Specific QQI QA Guidelines along with the Statutory QA Guidelines are fully integrated into the QA procedures and that they are implemented consistently across all provision. As detailed in Figure 11, the QA team plays an active role in terms of the oversight and management of QA. The team works closely with the centres to implement policy, support provision, provide professional development and collaboration opportunities and attend to authentication processes across all provision.

*The QA team oversee the development, implementation and coordination of KCETB’s FET Quality Assurance policies and procedures under the direction of the Director of FET and the QA Oversight Committee.*

This move towards a centralised consistent approach to QA has developed incrementally since the establishment of the QAOC in 2018.

Key milestones in the process have been:

- The implementation of a centralised EA booking system in 2019
- The implementation of the Assessment Policy in 2020
- The establishment of a combined Results Approval Panel (RAP) which extended to all FET provision in 2020.
- The development of a QA website and a staff specific QA portal, both of which house policies, procedures and centre specific materials ensuring a consistency in resources used across all FET provision in 2020.

Significant professional development has also been undertaken in the area of QA both at centre and service wide level. In 2020 470 staff attended 22 CPD events across a wide variety of training opportunities. These events, together with support visits and briefings undertaken by the QA team, have ensured a consistency of approach and support across all FET provision.

<sup>4</sup> QQI (2017) Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for ETBs, page 5

### Centre Management

Centre managers play a strong role in the QA process. Centre managers and their teaching staff inform and implement QA processes, policies and procedures in their own centre. The QA Team support the centres in this role and through communication and collaboration assist in creating, monitoring and maintaining consistent standards of quality across the service. Centre managers also play a key role on the various working groups.

### Teaching Staff

Teachers are central to the QA process. They are usually the first point of contact for learners for ongoing communications, teaching, learning and assessment, and are the key personnel who implement policies and procedures. The QA Team support the teaching staff through regular communication, QA methodologies and by offering professional development opportunities to support their practice. Members of teaching staff also make a key contribution to the working groups.

### Awarding Bodies

While QQI certification accounts for up to 90% of all certification awarded in any given year in KCETB, the QA team ensure that the QA requirements of all other awarding bodies are integrated and implemented into KCETB QA procedures. The policies developed are cognisant of the requirements of these awarding bodies and provide a robust oversight of all processes and procedures. The other awarding bodies KCETB engages with include, City and Guilds, Pearson, ITEC, CIDESCO, UL / NCEF, the British Horse Society and the DES Senior and Junior Trades (see Figure 13).



Figure 13 Other Awarding bodies with whom KCETB engage



# Regional Profile





Kilkenny and Carlow are strategically located in the South East of Ireland and have excellent access to transport infrastructure through its location on the M9 Dublin Waterford motorway, the Dublin Waterford main rail line and the N80 national road linking Rosslare Europort to the Midlands. Both counties are regional centres within the South East Region for education, public services, shopping, arts, culture, leisure, tourism, heritage, recreation and sport.

### Population Profile

Kilkenny and Carlow have a combined population of 156,164 people (Census 2016). Kilkenny City and Carlow Town are the main urban centres of population with the next largest towns being the Ferrybank area in south Kilkenny (adjacent to Waterford City), and the district towns of Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh, Tullow and Bagenalstown. The geographic area is bordered by Waterford, Wexford, Laois and Tipperary. Both Kilkenny and Carlow recorded a population increase of 3.9% for the period from 2011 to 2016 with Carlow reporting an increase of 2,263 (4.1%) and Kilkenny reporting an increase of 3,813 (4%) over the period recorded in the 2011 Census. The cohort under 18 years of age in both counties is 26.1% while 13.7% are aged 65 and older. Carlow has a younger age profile than Ireland as a whole with the county having proportionately more persons in all five-year age cohorts up to age 24. On the other hand, Kilkenny had a lower birth rate and has experienced an increase in the population cohorts from 45-64 and 65+ in the last Census. In the 2016 Census, 50.1% (78,166) of Kilkenny and Carlow's population was female and 49.9% (77,998) was male.

*Both Kilkenny and Carlow recorded a population increase of 3.9% for the period from 2011 to 2016 with Carlow reporting an increase of 2,263 (4.1%) and Kilkenny reporting an increase of 3,813 (4%) over the period recorded in the 2011 Census.*





## Employment Profile

Prior to Covid 19 the South East accounted for 8.4% of employment in Ireland. The number of employees in Kilkenny and Carlow is approximately 64,348 employees (source Census 2016) across 7487 employers (source CSO 2018). By early 2020, in excess of 190,000 people were employed in the South Eastern Region. This had expanded by 35,000 or 22%, between 2012 and 2020. The increase in employment in the South East made the region the 6th fastest growing region in Europe in terms of job creation and the 7th fastest growing in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) per person. The region has seen over 6,000 new jobs being created in the South East and unemployment has fallen continuously year on year since 2012, dropping from 11.1% to 6.8%<sup>6</sup>. Despite this reduction the South East continued to have a higher than average unemployment rate.

*By early 2020, in excess of 190,000 people were employed in the South Eastern Region*

The impact of COVID-19 has further impacted on the regional and local labour markets during 2020. The onset of the challenges caused by Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in unemployment payments rising significantly. The COVID-19 adjusted unemployment rate for December 2020 was 20.4% for all persons (including those on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment<sup>7</sup>)

Up to this period, the South East accounted for 8.4% of employment in Ireland. SOLAS and the South East Regional Skills Forum have detailed the sectors with the highest total employed in each sector:

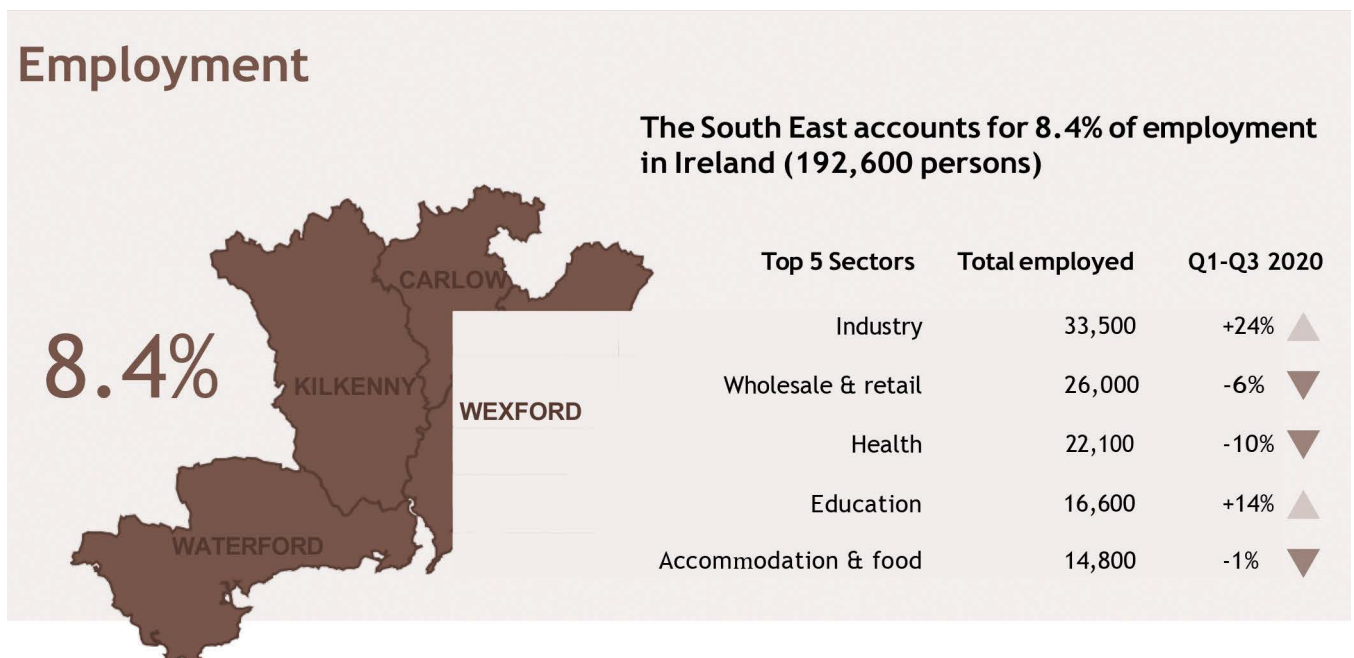


Figure 14 Key Industries in South East Region 2020

Despite this significant reduction, there were opportunities for growth and some companies continued to advertise vacancies throughout 2020 including UNUM Carlow, UPMC Group Kilkenny, and Entegro Kilkenny

<sup>6</sup>SOLAS, Impact of COVID-19 on South East Region, 2020 ([https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/d838625ec5/solas\\_slmru\\_info\\_2020\\_southeast.pdf](https://www.solas.ie/f/70398/x/d838625ec5/solas_slmru_info_2020_southeast.pdf))

The KCETB geographic area never experienced the full extent of the employment boom which occurred in the rest of the country. There is one identified unemployment blackspot in the KCETB area in Urlingford, Kilkenny which has an unemployment figure of 25.5%, compared to a county average of 12.9% of the total population in Urlingford, 19.2% have up to Primary level education, 41% have Second level education, 21.9%<sup>8</sup> have up to Level 6 on the NFQ and 13.3% have third level education. KCETB has responded to this need and has extensive provision in the area ranging from ESOL and Basic Literacy provision to accredited provision through BTEI and an LTI programme designed to meet specific local needs.

### Enterprise Base

The main employment sectors in the KCETB area are Industry, Wholesale and Retail, Education, ICT, Agriculture, Accommodation and Food, and Construction. The overall population of the South East in employment is 192,600 with a breakdown of the top 5 sectors set out in Figure 15 with Figure 16 identifying the key professions in Kilkenny and Carlow.

Traditionally, the economy of the two counties has been characterised by public service, education, engineering, product and food manufacturing, based on commodities produced in the rich agricultural hinterland. The two counties primarily have a rural base and have more residents working in agriculture, forestry, and fishing than the national average (8.1% compared to 4.4%). The industrial base is slowly expanding and is now made up of a wider variety of industries ranging from multi-national enterprises employing skilled workforces to smaller indigenous enterprises serving local and international markets. There is a growing cluster of financial services companies in the South East providing career opportunities for those with business and financial education and training.

KCETB has strategically aligned its FET provision to the core enterprise base in Kilkenny and Carlow. There has been a particular focus in provision in the areas of Hospitality, Engineering, Health, Family and other Social Services and the Built Environment. More recently the Training Services Unit has commenced offering certification aimed at those wishing to enter or currently working in the Financial Services industry. There has been a strategic focus on creating pathways through all FET Services to support learners with progression options in education, training and employment within the industry specific cluster areas of Financial Services, Hospitality and ICT sectors.

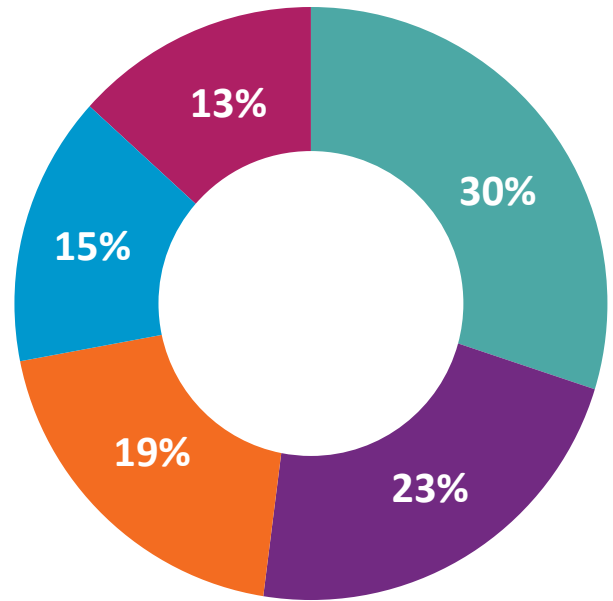


Figure 15 Top 5 Sectors in Southeast

- Industry
- Wholesale & Retail
- Health
- Education
- Accommodation & Food



Figure 16 Key professions in Kilkenny and Carlow

<sup>8</sup>[https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/newsevents/documents/census2016summaryresultspart2/Chapter\\_2\\_Unemployment.pdf](https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/newsevents/documents/census2016summaryresultspart2/Chapter_2_Unemployment.pdf)

# The Key employers in Kilkenny and Carlow



Figure 17 Key Employers in Kilkenny and Carlow

# Provision Profile

Since KCETB was established on the 1st of July 2013 it has endeavoured to provide a wide range of educational provision and training to meet the diverse and ever changing needs of learners. In any one year KCETB will have 24,000 learners attending its schools and FET centres. As approximately 50% of the population live in villages or small towns of less than 1500 people (or in the countryside) the learners attending courses are a mix of those from urban and rural areas.

The variety of programmes offered by KCETB FET provide options to school leavers and adults throughout Kilkenny and Carlow. KCETB FET offers 21 different programmes including support services and unaccredited programmes to qualifications at level 1-6 on the NQF. This includes Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, VTOS, Youthreach, Back to Education Initiative, Community and Adult Education provision, as well as core literacy and numeracy services offered through the Adult Learning Services. The accessibility of FET, the range of opportunities provided for learners, and the progression to employment or higher education, are key drivers of KCETB's further education and training provision. The overall features are as outlined in Figure 18.



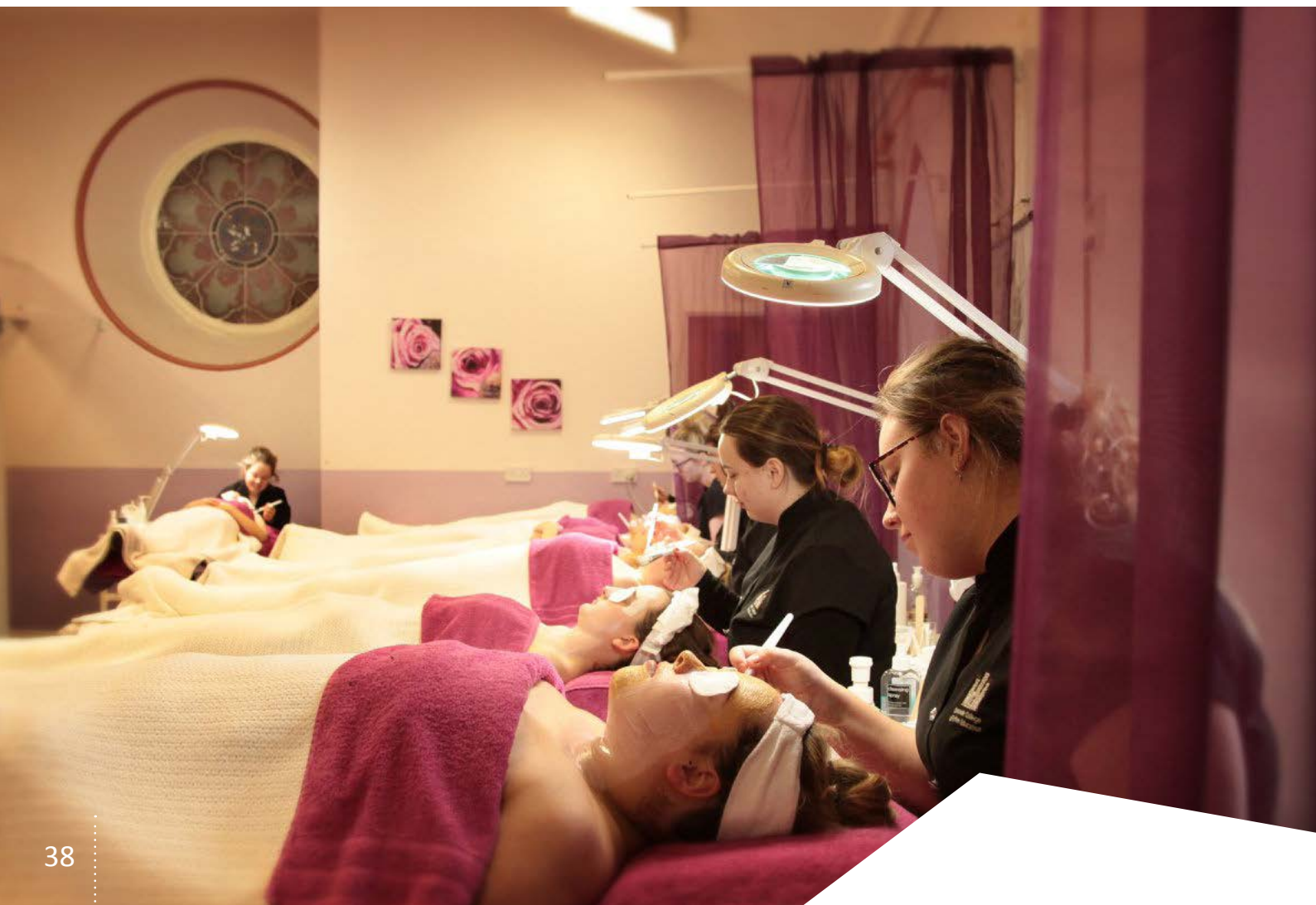
Figure 18 KCETB FET in Numbers 2020



## KCETB FET QQI Centres

CENTRE NAME	CENTRE NUMBER	PROVISION TYPE
Community Education Kilkenny	38901D	Part-Time
Community Education Carlow	38902F	Part-Time
Back To Education Carlow	42422N	Part-Time
Back To Education Kilkenny	42332M	Part-Time
Adult Literacy Kilkenny	40847M	Part-Time
Adult Literacy Carlow	41047I	Part-Time
Training Apprenticeships	38817O	Full-Time
Training Community	38819S	Full-Time
Training Contracted	38818Q	Full and Part-Time
Youthreach Carlow	38797L	Full-Time
Youthreach Kilkenny	40820P	Full-Time
Ormonde College	70610W	Full-Time
Carlow Institute of Further Education	70420R	Full-Time
Duiske College	70590T	Full-Time
Grennan College	70640I	Full-Time
VTOS Kilkenny	40038C	Full-Time
VTOS Carlow	40007O	Full-Time

Table 1 KCETB FET QQI Centres



# KCETB Centres



Figure 19 Provision Locations and Learner Numbers by Location in Kilkenny



<b>1</b>	<b>BALLYHALE</b> Community Education	7		
<b>2</b>	<b>BALLYRAGGET</b> Community Education FET Cooperation Hours	15 107		
<b>3</b>	<b>BENNETTSBRIDGE</b> Community Education	12		
<b>4</b>	<b>CALLAN</b> Adult Literacy Groups BTEI Groups Community Education FET Cooperation Hours Refugee Resettlement Skills for Work	11 71 49 21 10 11		
<b>5</b>	<b>CASTLECOMER</b> Adult Literacy Groups Bridging and Foundation Training BTEI Groups Community Education FET Cooperation Hours	10 20 38 11 11		
<b>6</b>	<b>CLOGH</b> Adult Literacy Groups Community Education FET Cooperation Hours	15 9 3		
<b>7</b>	<b>FERRYBANK</b> Adult Literacy Groups BTEI Groups FET Cooperation Hours ITABE Local Training Initiatives Refugee Resettlement	14 66 22 8 14 7		
<b>8</b>	<b>GORESBRIDGE</b> Adult Literacy Groups	41		
<b>9</b>	<b>GOWRAN</b> Skills to Advance	9		
<b>10</b>	<b>GRAIGUENAMANAGH</b> Adult Literacy Groups Community Education PLC	10 8 17		
<b>11</b>	<b>INISTIOGE</b> Community Education	45		
<b>12</b>	<b>JOHNSTOWN</b> Skills to Advance	14		
	<b>KILKENNY CITY</b> Adult Literacy Groups Blended Training BTEI Groups Community Education Community Training Centres ESOL FET Cooperation Hours ITABE Libraries Training Local Training Initiatives Other Funding PLC Skills for Work Skills to Advance Specialist Training Providers Specific Skills Training Voluntary Literacy Tuition VTOS Core Youthreach	247 8 586 402 41 28 195 45 8 14 141 224 47 142 10 43 19 110 13	<b>13</b>	
	<b>KILKENNY COUNTY</b> Community Education Community Training Centres ESOL PLC Refugee Resettlement Traineeship Training	33 7 6 18 14 7	<b>14</b>	
	<b>PILTOWN</b> BTEI Groups Community Education ITABE Refugee Resettlement	86 31 7 6	<b>15</b>	
	<b>ROSBERCON</b> Community Education ESOL Refugee Resettlement	11 6 7	<b>16</b>	
	<b>STONEFYORD</b> Adult Literacy Groups Community Education FET Cooperation Hours	6 27 10	<b>17</b>	
	<b>THOMASTOWN</b> Adult Literacy Groups Community Education ESOL FET Cooperation Hours ITABE PLC Refugee Resettlement	28 22 5 7 26 19 12	<b>18</b>	
	<b>URLINGFORD</b> Adult Literacy Groups BTEI Groups Community Education ESOL Local Training Initiatives	9 64 17 9 14	<b>19</b>	
	<b>WINDGAP</b> Community Education	35	<b>20</b>	



Figure 20 Provision Locations and Learner Numbers by Location in Carlow

<b>BALLON</b>		
①	BTEI Groups	69
	Community Education	93
	FET Cooperation Hours	10

<b>BALLYCONNELL - CARLOW COUNTY</b>		
②	Community Education	40

<b>BORRIS</b>		
③	Community Education	56

<b>CARLOW COUNTY</b>		
④	Adult Literacy Groups	20
	Community Education	20
	Community Training Centres	10
	ESOL	12
	FET Cooperation Hours	6
	Other Funding	16
	Refugee Resettlement	6
Specialist Training Providers	7	

<b>CARLOW TOWN</b>		
⑤	Adult Literacy Groups	111
	BTEI Groups	412
	Community Education	111
	ESOL	63
	FET Cooperation Hours	147
	Local Training Initiatives	32
	Other Funding	6
	PLC	751
	Skills to Advance	10
	Specific Skills Training	7
	Traineeship Training	15
	VTOS Core	35
	Youthreach	17

<b>CARLOW TOWN ENVIRONS</b>		
⑥	Environs Adult Literacy Groups	10
	Community Education	29
	Community Training Centres	29
	FET Cooperation Hours	40
	Specific Skills Training	69

<b>HACKETSTOWN</b>		
⑦	Community Education	28
	Other Funding	52

<b>LEIGHLINBRIDGE</b>		
⑧	Community Education	43

<b>MUINE BHEAG/ BAGENALSTOWN</b>		
⑨	Adult Literacy Groups	9
	Community Education	31
	FET Cooperation Hours	14
	Refugee Resettlement	14

<b>MYSHALL</b>		
⑩	Community Education	59

<b>TINRYLAND</b>		
⑪	Community Education	13

<b>TULLOW</b>		
⑫	Adult Literacy Groups	3
	BTEI Groups	34
	Community Education	175
	ESOL	22
	FET Cooperation Hours	115
Refugee Resettlement	17	

KCETB offer a wide range of full-time and part-time programmes from Levels 1 – 6 on the NFQ throughout the urban and rural areas of both counties, as detailed in Figures 19 and 20. Unaccredited provision forms a large component of Core Personal and General Learning provision for learners in rural areas who are returning to education after many years. Central to supporting this FET provision is the Adult Information and Guidance Service which is offered in both Kilkenny and Carlow. The range of Further Education provision at KCETB is detailed below (Further programme details are outlined in Appendix 1).

### KCETB FET Centre Learner Numbers

NAME OF CENTRE	CENTRE TYPE	F/T LEARNERS (2020)		P/T LEARNERS (2020)		TOTAL LEARNERS (2020)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adult Literacy Kilkenny	Adult Literacy			738	11.4	738	11.4
Adult Literacy Carlow	Adult Literacy			287	4.4	287	4.4
BTEI Kilkenny	Adult Education			911	14	911	14
BTEI Carlow	Adult Education			515	7.9	515	7.96
Community Education Kilkenny	Adult Education			945	14.6	945	14.6
Community Education Carlow	Adult Education			1030	15.9	1030	15.9
Carlow Institute of Further Education	College of Further Ed / PLC	751	11.6			751	11.6
Ormonde College of Further Ed (including Grennan Equestrian and Grennan Mill)	College of Further Ed / PLC	261	4.03			261	4.03
Duiske College	PLC (Dual Provision)	17	.26			17	2.6
Evening Class Provision (Colaiste Eoin and Kilkenny City Vocational School)	Self Financing			75	1.1	75	1.1
Aiséirí (Aislínn) Kilkenny	FET Cooperation Hours			107	1.65	107	1.65
Training Carlow (including contracted and external)	Training	195	3.01			195	3.01
Training Kilkenny (including contracted and external)	Training	335	5.1			335	5.1
VTOS Kilkenny	Adult Education	110	1.7			110	1.7
VTOS Carlow	Adult Education	35	.54			35	.54
Other (Adult Guidance Referrals)	Adult Education			215	3.32	215	3.32
Youthreach Kilkenny*	Adult Education	13	.2			13	.2
Youthreach Carlow*	Adult Education	17	.26			17	.26
<b>Total</b>						<b>6466</b>	

Table 2 FET Centre Learner numbers

\*Note: Youthreach Kilkenny and Carlow are 25 place centres. The numbers represented above demonstrate new starters to the programme in 2020.

\*Actual starters on programme as opposed to beneficiaries.

In addition to these core programmes KCETB also provided opportunities to 332 apprentices in Carlow who were placed with 127 employers and a further 398 apprentices in Kilkenny who were placed with 181 employers. Of this cohort 23 apprentices participated in the post 2016 Apprenticeship programmes.

## Breakdown by gender of 2020 actual starters by Programme

	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
Adult Literacy Groups	327	217	544
Blended Training	8		8
Bridging and Foundation Training	8	12	20
BTEI Groups	1,048	378	1,426
Community Education	1,246	186	1,432
Community Training Centres	42	45	87
ESOL	101	50	151
FET Cooperation Hours	268	440	708
ITABE	62	24	86
Libraries Training	3	5	8
Local Training Initiatives	37	37	74
Other Funding	134	81	215
PLC	674	355	1,029
Refugee Resettlement	60	33	93
Skills for Work	41	17	58
Skills to Advance	119	56	175
Specialist Training Providers	4	13	17
Specific Skills Training	48	71	119
Traineeship Training	14	8	22
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	9	10	19
VTOS Core	93	52	145
Youthreach	19	11	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,365</b>	<b>2,101</b>	<b>6,466</b>

Table 3 Breakdown by gender 2020 actual starters by Programme

Service	Description
<b>Adult Guidance and Information</b>	<p>Kilkenny and Carlow Adult Educational Guidance Service provides individuals and groups with an opportunity to identify, explore and review educational and career options. The services are located in Kilkenny City and Carlow town with outreach provision in Tullow and endeavour to support individuals and enable them to make decisions for their future learning and/or career progression.</p> <p>The service is an integral part of the Further Education and Training Service of KCETB and an educational guidance service is provided to learners participating on FET programmes.</p> <p>Adults referred by the local DSP office can avail of one-to-one guidance appointments. Adults can access the Adult Educational Guidance Service for the purposes of up to date, impartial adult educational information.</p> <p>The Services provided include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-to-one and group guidance counselling on options for learning and/or career progression, as well as skills training and education required for specific fields of employment.</li> <li>• Exploration of interests and aptitudes using guidance tools.</li> <li>• Assistance with C.V. preparation, application forms and interview techniques.</li> <li>• Comprehensive and up to date information on education and training courses.</li> <li>• Career Information library including computer facilities.</li> <li>• Information on funding and grants for education.</li> </ul>

The key elements of service provision to learners is detailed in Figure 21.



Figure 21 KCETB Adult Guidance Service 2020

Service	Description
<b>Counselling (Youthreach)</b>	Due to the vulnerable nature of a number of learners who present with a broad range of mental health issues, learner health and wellbeing is one of the key priorities for Youthreach. Counselling services, Art therapy and reflexology are among a range of supports provided to learners.
<b>Technology Enhanced Learning and Professional Development</b>	The FET Technology Enhanced Learning & Professional Development Office is led by the Professional Development and Technology Enhanced Learning Officer and seeks to build on the commitment, expertise and professionalism of FET staff to develop a strong learning culture within the organisation. In 2020, a total of 90 training events were organised centrally with an attendance of 3460 staff with a further 10,494 visits to the Professional Development Portal. The PD &TEL Officer also supports centre and staff to embrace new and emerging technologies to deliver the highest quality learning opportunities to all our learners. It focuses on four key areas: 1. ICT Infrastructure 2. On-going professional development 3. Learning Content and Programme Design and 4. Organisational structure. The sudden onset of COVID 19 led to the setting up of emergency remote teaching and learning with increased investment in resources and CPD. The Progress has been reviewed and a <a href="#">KCETB TEL Action Plan</a> detailing the key priorities for TEL in 2021 and beyond has been developed. The key milestones for this service are set out in Figure 22.

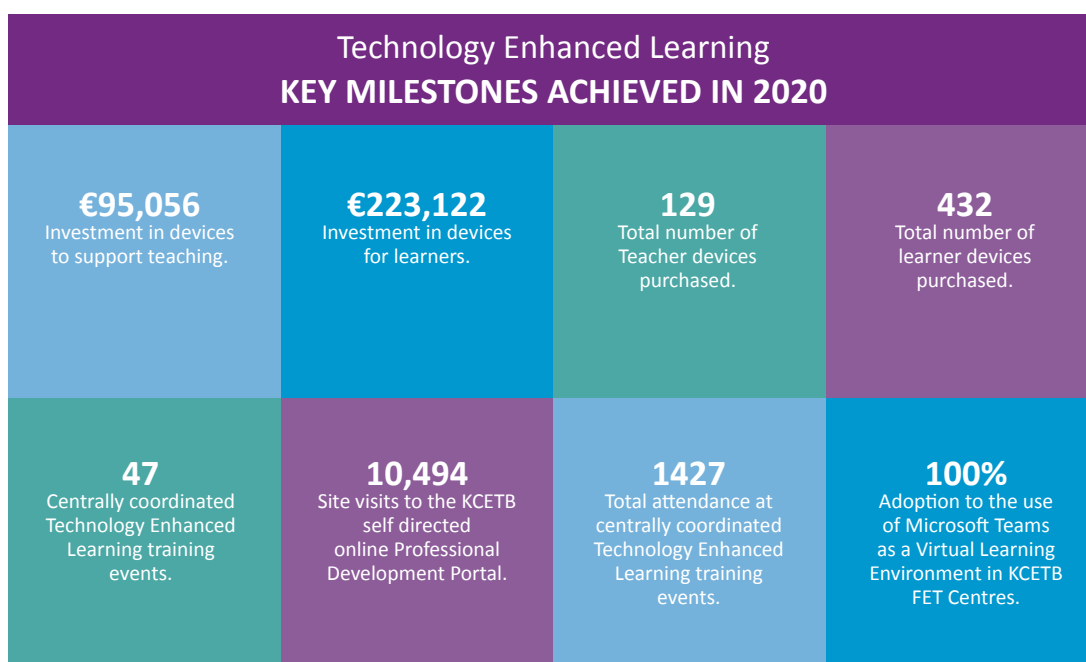


Figure 22 Key Milestones for TEL 2020

Service	Description
<b>Youth Office</b>	<p>ETBs have a legislative responsibility in relation to youth work in Ireland as set out in the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, which is to support the provision, co-ordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in its functional area and to provide such information as may be requested by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs in relation to such support; and to assess whether the manner in which it performs its functions is economical, efficient and effective.</p> <p>ETBs report to the DCEDIY in relation to their youth work functions. The DCEDIY strategic and operational objectives and the work of the ETB in relation to Youth Work are informed by Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures National Policy Framework 2014-2020, the National Youth Strategy, 2015 – 2020, The Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes 2014, the National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-making, 2015-2020, National Quality Standards Initiatives and Directives and circulars pertaining to public accounts procedures and by needs identified locally. KCETB provides governance, oversight and administration of all DECDIY funded projects in Kilkenny and Carlow.</p>
<b>Music Generation</b>	<p>Music Generation is Ireland’s national music education programme, initiated by Music Network and co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Local Music Education Partnerships. ‘Music Generation Carlow was one of the ‘Phase 1’ Music Generation projects established in 2013 and annually has up to 3,500 participants. Music Generation Kilkenny was established in ‘Phase 2’ in 2019 and has up to 2,000 participants annually. Both programmes offer opportunities for children and young people to engage in high-quality, subsidised performance music education across a diverse range of programmes in all musical genres and styles. It offers trad, jazz, rock, pop, hip-hop, samba drumming, brass band, choral and orchestral programmes, and is continually developing.</p>

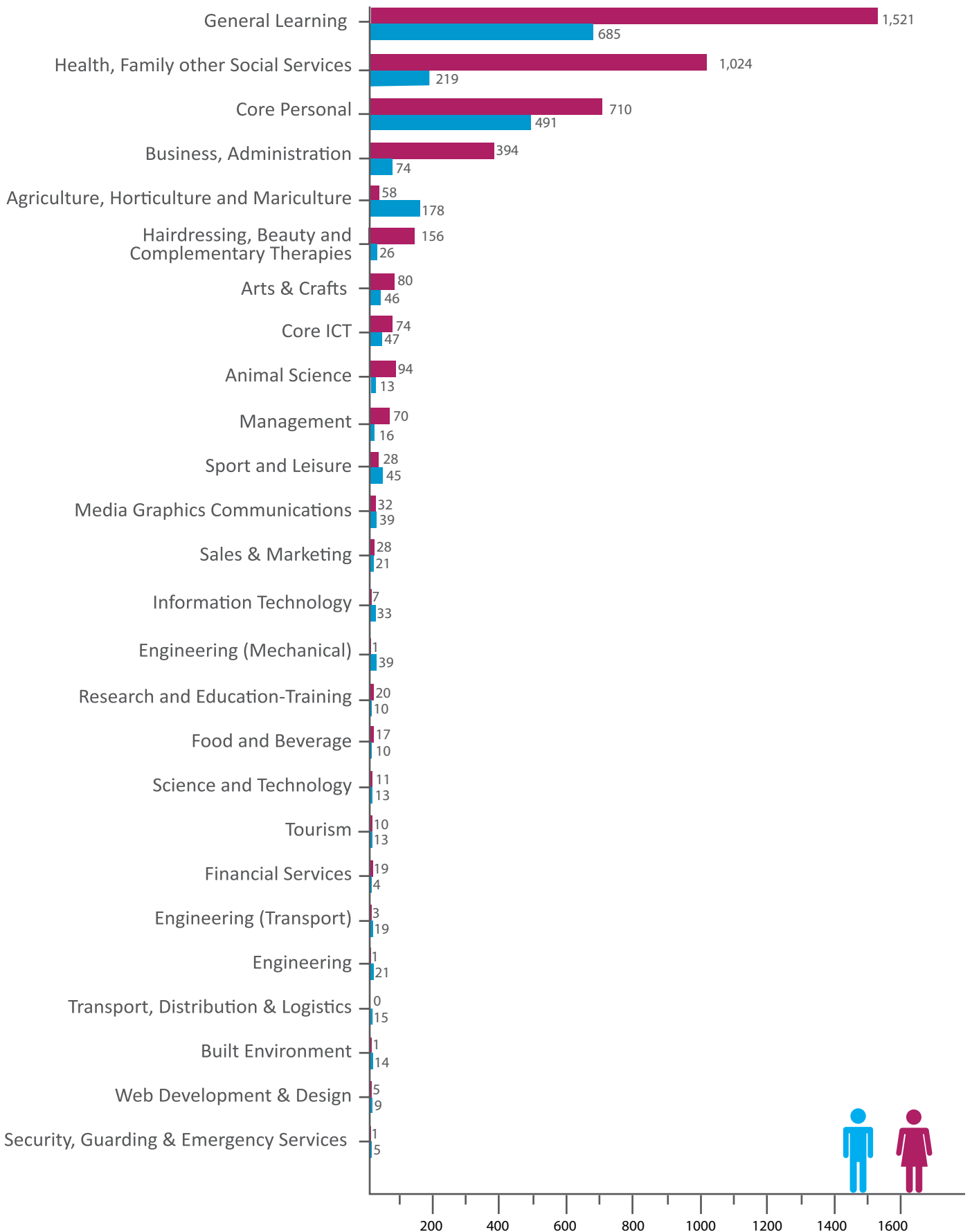


Figure 23 Breakdown of Fields of Learning by Learner Gender



### Fields of Learning by Skills Cluster 2019-2020

Fields of Learning	2018	2019	2020
Agriculture, Horticulture and Mariculture	92	102	232
Animal Science	108	96	107
Arts & Crafts	128	152	126
Built Environment	26	12	15
Business, Administration	279	335	468
Engineering	20	24	22
Engineering (Mechanical)	44	46	40
Engineering (Transport)	11	18	22
Financial Services	0	23	23
Food and Beverage	130	45	27
General Learning	3278	3716	2206
Hairdressing, Beauty and Complementary Therapies	179	185	182
Health, Family other Social Services	745	957	1243
Information Technology	7	95	40
Management	0	48	86
Manufacturing	16	0	0
Media, Graphics, Communications	71	74	71
Research and Education-Training	0	52	30
Sales & Marketing	61	72	49
Science and Technology	0	19	24
Security, Guarding & Emergency Services	9	6	6
Sport and Leisure	77	78	73
Tourism	29	40	23
Transport, Distribution & Logistics	61	132	15
Web Development & Design	33	30	14
Core Personal	1642	1920	1201
Core ICT	92	79	121
<b>Total</b>	<b>7048</b>	<b>8356*</b>	<b>6466*</b>

Table 4 Fields of Learning by Skills Cluster 2019- 2020  
 \*Actual starters on programme as opposed to beneficiaries.



Figure 24 ETB Provision by NFQ Level QQI Awards

### KCETB FET Provision by NFQ Level QQI Awards

NFQ Level	Beneficiaries 2018	Beneficiaries 2019	Beneficiaries 2020
1	21	17	52
2	31	70	55
3	507	618	375
4	964	1525	765
5	3036	3162	2744
6	343	425	487
<b>Total</b>	<b>4902</b>	<b>5817</b>	<b>4478</b>

Table 5 FET Provision by NFQ QQI Awards

### Awarding Bodies 2018-2020

AWARDING BODY	AWARDS 2018		AWARDS 2019		AWARDS 2020	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
QQI	4907	91.37%	5826	88.20%	4481	90%
City & Guilds	81	1.5%	518	7.84%	222	4.5%
British Horse Society	19	.35%	17	.25%	8	.06%
NCEF	13	.24%	7	0.1%		
ITEC	242	4.50%	143	2.16%	57	1.15%
DES Junior & Senior Trades	29	.54%	27	0.4%	0	0
CIDESCO	28	.52%	25	0.37%	19	.39%
(BABTAC) CIBTAC	32	.59%	22	.33%	22	.46%
Leaving Certificate	11	.20%	13	0.19%	21	.43%
Junior Certificate	8	.14%	7	.01%	0	
RTITB Road Transport Industry Training Board					45	.91%
EN Certification (ISO: European Standard for Welding)					38	.77%
RSA (Road Safety Authority)					26	.53%
Microsoft Technology Associate					7	.14%
MOS (Microsoft Office Specialist)					3	.06%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5370</b>		<b>6605</b>		<b>4928</b>	

Table 6 Awarding Bodies 2018-2020

# Learner Profile

## Gender Profile

Learner Gender	2018	2019	2020
Female	46499	4373	4365
Male	2399	2456	2101
Other/Not Specified	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7048</b>	<b>6829</b>	<b>6466</b>

Table 7 Learner Gender Profile

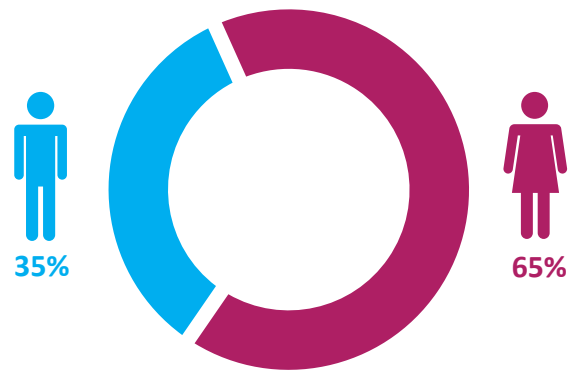


Figure 25 Gender Profile

## Learner Age Profile 2018-2020

Learner Age	2018	2019	2020
15-24	1590	1889	1602
25-44	2324	2849	2378
45-64	2125	2448	1779
64+	1009	1170	707
<b>Total</b>	<b>7048</b>	<b>8356 actuals</b>	<b>6466 actuals</b>

Table 8 Learner Age Profile 2018-2020

## Learner Age Profile by Gender 2020

Age Group	Female	Male	Total
15-24	860	742	1,602
25-44	1,615	763	2,378
45-64	1,314	465	1,779
Over 64	576	131	707
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4365</b>	<b>2101</b>	<b>6466</b>

Table 9 Learner Age profile by gender 2020

## Nationality Profile

The proportion of Irish and non-Irish nationals respectively residing in Kilkenny and Carlow are consistent with those seen nationally in the 2016 census at 89.6% of the usually resident population stating their nationality as Irish. All European nationalities attend FET programmes and data from SOLAS indicates that both North and South American learners as well as Asian and Australian learners also attended in 2019 and 2020.

Nationality	Kilkenny & Carlow
Irish	89.6%
British	2.1%
Polish	3.0%
Lithuanian	0.4%
Other EU	2.3%
Rest of the World	1.3%
Not Stated	1.2%

Table 10 Nationality profile for Kilkenny and Carlow

# Staffing Profile

## Staffing Overview

KCETB Further Education and Training Staff	2020	2019
Director of FET	1	1
Training Services Manager	1	1
Adult Education Officers (including 1 Ass Training Services Manager)	3	3
Co-ordinators/Facilitators	14	12
Guidance Counsellors	5	5
Youth Officers	2	2
Music Generation Development Officers	2	2
Resource Workers	10	10
Part-time Tutors (Paid and Voluntary)	100	100
Teachers (wte)	99	105
Principals	1	1
Deputy Principals	3	3
Information Officer	2	2
Instructors	3	3
Administrators Grade 3	16	14
Administrators Grade 4	5	3
Administrators Grade 5	3	1
Authorised Officers	2	2
Project Officers	4	4

Table 11 Staffing Overview

## Teacher: Learner Ratio

General guidance on learner/teacher ratios is provided by some FET provision operational guidelines:

- Vocational and Employee Skills Development:
  - Level 3/4 = 1: 7/12
  - Level 5 = 1: 10/14
- Core Skills: 6: 1 for group classes and 1: 1
- Hospitality Education and Training Centre: 1: 10
- PLC: 1: 19 However, this can vary as some provision offered can sometimes restrict numbers e.g. Specific Practical Instruction in Horsemanship 1: 6; Nursing/Healthcare 1: 15
- VTOS: 1: 10
- Youthreach: 1: 5/10

# Collaborations and Partnerships

## Collaborations and Partnerships

KCETB FET Service has formed solid working relationships with many statutory, non-statutory agencies and stakeholders at both local and national levels and with a variety of employers, voluntary providers and community groups.

Kilkenny and Carlow ETB has Memoranda of Understanding with the DSP, Local Enterprise Offices, Local Libraries and is represented on, and engaged with, a wide range of organisations such as Leader Groups, Local Community Development Committees, Ireland Southeast Action Plan for Jobs, South East Regional Skills Forum, County Childcare Committees, Family Resource Centres, Chambers of Commerce and each Local Drugs Task Force, with whom we collaborate to identify and address local employment and educational needs. Other provider relationships exist through the contracted training provision undertaken on behalf of the Training Services, and funding agreements are in place with Community Training Centres, Local Training Initiatives and the National Learning Network.

One of KCETBs strategic priorities is to work in partnership with key stakeholders in the Kilkenny and Carlow region and at national level. To this end, KCETB's FET Service is involved with an extensive network of partners at national and regional levels and collaborates with a range of local public bodies, voluntary and community organisations.

### National Agencies

**SOLAS:** Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board FET is funded by SOLAS annually, and has significant regular engagement with SOLAS - the state organisation with responsibility for funding, planning and coordinating Further Education and Training. The relationship is articulated in its Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA) with KCETB which commenced in 2018.

**QQI:** In 2018, the QQI PAEC (Programmes and Awards Executive Committee) approved the KCETB FET Section QA procedures, in line with QQI 2014 policy "Re-engagement with QQI, Overarching Policy for All Providers". The agreed re-engagement process required each ETB to develop an Executive Self Evaluation Report (ESER) addressing QQI's Core Statutory QA (Quality Assurance) guidelines and other QA guidelines as appropriate; and also to develop a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). KCETB has to submit annual reports on this initial ESER in the form of Quality Improvement Plans since 2019.

**Department of Social Protection (DSP):** An inter-agency framework (Protocol Agreement) is in place between KCETB and the Department of Social Protection (DSP). The KCETB/DSP Area Liaison Group allows greater collaboration with DSP through annual strategic meetings, in addition the Local Liaison Group meets quarterly to ensure key priorities are being met. This has helped identify DSP priority cohorts, in particular the Long-Term Unemployed (LTU), and the appropriate responses required by local FET provision and services. The ETB's FET Service also delivers provision in partnership with local Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) providers. These partnerships and ensuing referrals have led to the introduction of specific provision.

*KCETB's FET Section is involved with an extensive network of partners at national and regional levels and collaborates with a range of local public bodies, voluntary and community organisations.*



**ETBI:** Education and Training Boards Ireland is the national representative association for Ireland’s 16 Education and Training Boards - providing a range of co-ordination and professional supports and facilitating collaboration between ETBs. ETBI co-ordinates a number of groups, which assist ETBs to develop Quality Assurance policy and enhance practice:

- Chief Executives Forum
- Directors Forum
- Directors of FET QA Strategy Group
- Quality Network
- New Apprenticeship Development Group

**NALA:** KCETB work closely with NALA to promote the learners’ voice and build capacity around literacy and numeracy issues, as well as to support the ETB sector through specific national initiatives. A number of KCETB learners have and continue to sit on the board of NALA. KCETB tutors have provided practical inputs to NALA training and positive relationships continue to be developed though collaboration on research projects carried out by NALA.

**AONTAS:** KCETB works closely with AONTAS to promote the learners’ voice. In 2021, the FET Service worked closely with AONTAS to capture FET learners’ feedback on the quality of their learning experience, as part of the consultation for the Inaugural Review of QA.



Figure 26 National Agencies

**Regional Partnerships**

KCETB has built solid relationships with regional partners across the two counties. These linkages range from higher education institutions, statutory agencies and employers. These partnerships are supported through staff representation on key community groups such as Children and Young People’s Services Committee (CYPSC) or the Local Community Development Committees (LCDC) and through funding arrangements with partners such as the Youth Services. The graphic below gives a sense of the range and breath of regional partners with whom KCETB is engaged.



Figure 27 Regional Partnerships

### Community Partnerships

Kilkenny and Carlow have a primarily rural base and in order to ensure those most distanced from education are afforded educational opportunities in their local community strong links have been developed with a diverse range of community partners. The graphic below gives a flavour of the range of community partners with whom KCETB is engaged.



Figure 28 Community Partnerships

### References

South East Regional Skills Forum (2020) Impact of COVID-19 on the South East region (from Q1 2020 to Q3 2020)  
 Kilkenny County Council (2021) Kilkenny City and Draft Development Plan 2021-2027  
 Carlow County Council (2020) Carlow County Development Plan 2022- 2028.  
 QQI (2017) Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for ETB's

# Appendix

# Appendix 1: Further Education Provision

## Full-Time Provision

PLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PLC Courses at QQI Levels 5 and 6 are available for learners with Leaving Certificate standard of education (or equivalent) in Kilkenny and Carlow. PLC courses are offered in a range of areas including business, tourism, creative arts, humanities, social and health, service industry, technology and science. Accreditation is also available from other awarding bodies including City &amp; Guilds, the British Horse Society, ITEC and CIBTAC.</li><li>• In the last number of years, on foot of recommendations from the PLC evaluation report KCETB has reconfigured aspects of its PLC provision to its current concentration of three centres (Carlow Institute, Duiske College and Ormonde College of Further Education) across four locations. This was in the context of three centres which were classed as small scale centres, (small numbers of students) and was carried out within a framework of delivering improved resource utilisation, operational efficiencies, student supports and employer engagement</li></ul>
VTOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First established in 1989 VTOS consists of core and dispersed places in Kilkenny and Carlow.</li><li>• VTOS is a full-time programme which offers a range of course designed to meet the education and training needs of unemployed people over the age of 21. Courses include a one year Leaving Certificate, QQI levels 3 – 6 in Office Administration, Information Technology, eBusiness, General Learning and Creative Arts and Crafts.</li></ul>
YOUTHREACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youthreach is a full-time programme offering second chance education to early school leavers aged 16-20. Courses offered include Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied and QQI Level 4 in General Learning.</li><li>• Both Youthreach Centres have been commended for the Gaisce Awards and Eco Unesco projects.</li><li>• Youthreach has strong progression links with PLC and local employers.</li></ul>
COMMUNITY TRAINING CENTRES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Community Training Centres in both Carlow and Kilkenny continue to provide training for early school leavers aged between sixteen and twenty-one.</li><li>• Kilkenny Employment for Youth (KEY) and Carlow Youth Training (CYT) offer training in QQI Level 3, Level 4 and VTCT awards.</li></ul>
LTIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KCETB Training Services currently fund a number of Local Training Initiatives (LTI) across Kilkenny and Carlow.</li><li>• All LTIs work closely with their local to offer a range of person centre services to assist local learners to develop thskills to enter or re-enter the labour market.</li><li>• Each LTI is coordinated by a sponsorship body such as St Catherine’s Community Services, Carlow, Waterford Area Partnership, THE Mill Family Resource Centre, Urlinford and The Young Irish Film Makers, Kilkenny.</li></ul>

## TRAINEESHIPS

- Traineeships are managed through Training Services. The work-based learning phase of each traineeship is significant, with a minimum of 30% of each course spent with the host employer. This focus on work placement supports trainees to progress into employment with their host employers
- During the 2018-2020 period Traineeships were offered in Healthcare, Office Administration, Hospitality, Professional Bus & Coach, Culinary Skills and Engineering.
- The IT Technology & Software Development Traineeship was developed in collaboration with Carlow IOT. On successful completion of the QQI Level 6 Award in IT Technology & Software Development, applicants will be able to design, develop and test software components and systems in a workplace environment. Learners can apply for direct entry to Year 2 of the Bachelor of Science Degree in Carlow IOT.

## SPECIALIST TRAINING PROVISION

- The National Learning Networks in Kilkenny and Carlow offer personalised training courses and specialist learning supports to people who need extra support to improve their quality of life, to get a job or continue to further education or training.
- NLN Carlow offer a QQI Level 4 Major award in Retail Skills, whilst NLN Kilkenny offer training in QQI Level 4 Employment Skills.
- Highlights over the past years have included many successful work placements where the NLN have worked hard to secure appropriate opportunities for each individual learner.

## Full-Time Provision

### ADULT LEARNING

- The Adult Learning Service offers assistance with reading, writing, spelling, maths and English language provision (ESOL).
- Other provision offered includes Family Learning Programmes, assistance with driver theory tests and supports for businesses such as Skills for Work.
- All courses offered are designed to meet the needs of adult learners on a part time basis on Levels 1-3 on the NFQ. The Adult Learning Service also supports learners across other programmes who need literacy supports such as VTOS, BTEI and Apprenticeships.
- Adult Learning has a number of programmes within such as ESOL, ITABE, Family Literacy, Refugee Protection Programme and TOBAR / RPL.

### BTEI

- BTEI provides part time accredited further education programmes at QQI Level 4, 5 and 6 for young people and adults.
- The programme was established in both counties in 2003 and aims to give participants an opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities.
- Programmes are offered in Kilkenny and Carlow and outreach community locations across both counties.

### BRIDGING AND FOUNDATION

- Bridging and Foundation programmes are aimed at offering learners an overview of the skills required to work in a specific setting and equip learners with general life skills.
- These courses are run in partnership with key partners and primarily run over a ten week period. Previous programmes that have been delivered include D.I.Y and Retail Pharmacy (Bagenalstown), Outdoor Activities and the Workplace (Graigenamanagh)

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Community Education is a process of learning and change. It takes place within the community and is based on the needs of individuals and their communities. It provides part time flexible, learning options for people in their local areas. Both Community Education Services were established in 2002 and reaches out to Women's Groups, Men's Sheds, Older People's Groups, Disability Groups, Groups working with people with Mental Health Difficulties, People with Substance Mis-use issues and the Homeless.
- Courses include Flower Arranging, Drumming, Digital Photography, Digital Literacy, Painting, Stained Glass Art, Exercise classes, exercise for the elder community, Drama, Gardening, Music Appreciation. Mindfulness, Basket Making, sculpture and Ceramics. A small number of accredited courses are run in Childcare levels 5 & 6. Maths and Personal Effectiveness Level 4, Personal Effectiveness and Recovery in Mental Health are also facilitated to groups who request this

## SPECIFIC SKILLS TRAINING

- The Specific Skills Training programmes continued to offer tailored, short courses to those seeking a range of employability related skills and formal vocational qualifications. Programmes are offered over a 3 to 10-week period, and are designed to meet the needs of those seeking employment and/or wishing to upskill within their current employment. The SST programmes were offered during 2018 - 2020: Heavy Goods Vehicle Driving, Forklift, Safepass & Manual Handling and Basic & Intermediate Welding.

## SKILLS TO ADVANCE

- Skills to Advance offers upskilling and reskilling opportunities to employees, at (NFQ) Level 5 and Level 6. Through a number of eligibility routes, it can benefit employees and SMEs through education and training, as well as SMEs in identifying their training needs and provide training to their workforce.
- Skills to Advance is managed through Training Services and aims to equip employees with the skills to progress in their current job, or to take advantage of new job opportunities. It also offers assistance to employers in developing their workforce

## APPRENTICESHIP

### APPRENTICESHIP

- KCETB have two SOLAS Authorised Officers who oversee the work/training of all apprentices registered to employers with a business address in Kilkenny and Carlow. In addition the Phase 2 of the Craft based Apprenticeship Electrician is offered at the Training Hub at Purcellsinch and the Training Services are also charged with oversight of Phase 4 and 6 training of the following Craft based Apprenticeships at Carlow Institute of Technology:
- Instrumentation (Phases 4 & 6); Carpentry & Joinery (Phases 4 & 6); Electrical Instrumentation (Phases 4 & 6)

### APPRENTICESHIP POST 2016+

- The Commis Chef is one of the new style apprenticeships (2016+) offered since November 2018.
- This new apprenticeship is coordinated by Kerry ETB and KCETB is a collaborating provider. It is a starting point for a career as a professional chef.
- Employers release and pay for their apprentices to attend a number of days training per week with the ETB.





**kcetb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach  
*Kilkenny and Carlow  
Education and Training Board*