



Dungarvan College
Coláiste Dhún Garbh



wwetb
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board

QQI INAUGURAL REVIEW OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARDS

WWETB SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Foreword

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) is committed to the highest quality teaching and learning and Further Education and Training services as outlined in our 'Strategy Statement - 2018-2022'.

This requires that we fulfill our 'Vision' of aiming to lead learning through the delivery of high quality, inclusive, responsive, and innovative education and training services in our community. We achieve this through our 'Core Values' of Respect', 'Accountability', 'Learner Focus' and 'Quality'. This report serves as a reflection of our adherence to all of those values. The pandemic and the changing educational landscape, including the establishment of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the SOLAS FET Strategy 2020-2024, requires us to be innovative, flexible, and responsive in how we meet the evolving needs of our learners, the future world of work and the evolving needs of the economy and society. Providing the highest quality Further Education and Training (FET) services that are continuously improving, adapting, and innovating will be critical to our post-pandemic recovery.

It is with great pleasure therefore, that we introduce the 'WWETB Self-Evaluation Report' as part of the 'QQI Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance.'

For the 'Self-Evaluation Report' we have conducted a forensic and thorough examination of the design and planning approaches of our existing internal quality processes and their consistency with QQI's core, sector-specific and topic-specific 'Quality Assurance' guidelines as well as other policies, procedures, and legislation.

We welcome this evaluation of the effectiveness of our internal quality assurance procedures for the purposes of detailing, maintaining, and improving the quality of FET and related services in WWETB.

The 'Self-Evaluation Report' has enabled us to reflect on our achievements to date, to identify the perceived gaps in the internal quality assurance mechanisms and to detail the necessary measures to address and resolve them.

We are truly committed to the quality management cycle of effective planning, high-quality delivery, monitoring, evaluation, and ongoing continuous improvement. This report is an important cornerstone in the drive for continuous improvement in our quality assurance systems.

We would like to thank the WWETB Quality Assurance Steering Group, FET Management Team, the Inaugural Review Steering Group, the WWETB Quality Assurance team and all the learners, managers, staff, and stakeholders who have participated in this collaborative, consultative and intensive process. We are particularly cognisant of the feedback from learners as we work to ensure that WWETB continues to provide the quality education and training they expect and deserve.

Finally, we would like to thank our Quality Assurance Manager, Alan O Gorman for his leadership and his team for their dedication and expertise in coordinating and compiling the 'WWETB Self-Evaluation Report'.



KEVIN LEWIS

Chief Executive



KEN WHYTE

Director of Further Education and
Training

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WWETB THE ORGANISATION

The 1st July 2013, saw the establishment of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB), an amalgamation of City of Waterford VEC, County Waterford VEC and Wexford VEC. Subsequently, on 1st January 2014 WWETB officially welcomed the addition of Waterford and Wexford Training Centres (formerly the FÁS/SOLAS Training Centres), to its range of services.

Upon the foundation of WWETB, seven separate provider agreements existed with the Further Education Training Awards Council (FETAC) across the two counties' further education and training provision. WWETB partook in a process of re-engagement with QQI, in line with the Education & Training Boards Act to establish one new provider agreement.

WWETB provides a comprehensive range of education and training services throughout Waterford and Wexford and is the largest education and training provider in counties Waterford and Wexford.

Geographically, the counties of Waterford and Wexford account for about 6% of the area of the Republic of Ireland and their combined population accounts for approximately 6% of the nation's total. Their combined population in 2016 was 265,898 with Waterford at 116,176 and Wexford at 149,722. The population of the South-East rose by nearly 6% between 2011 and 2016 with further population growth expected to show in the next census.



Figure A: WWETB Provision Map

Post-Primary & PLC Education

- Bridgetown College
- Bunclody College
- Coláiste Abbáin
- Coláiste an Átha
- Creagh College
- Enniscorthy
- Vocational College
- Kennedy College
- Selskar College
- St Declan's
- Community College
- Dungarvan College-
- Coláiste Dhún
- Garbhán
- Meánscoil San
- Nioclás
- St Paul's Community
- College

Further Education & Training Centres

- Bunclody
- Cappoquin
- Dungarvan
- Enniscorthy
- Gorey
- Kilmacthomas
- New Ross
- Tramore
- Waterford City
- Wexford

Community Schools (where WWETB are joint patrons)

- Blackwater Community School
- Gorey Community School
- Ramsgrange Community
- School

Youthreach Centres

- Dungarvan
- Enniscorthy
- Gorey
- Subla Centre
- Tramore
- Waterford
- Wexford
- New Ross

Outdoor Education & Training

- Shielbaggan OETC

Community National Schools

- Kilnamanagh CNS

Administration Centres:

Head Office, Ardcahan, Wexford; Dungarvan, Co. Waterford; Waterford Training Centre



21,520

STUDENTS & LEARNERS



1,621
STAFF



2,152
COURSES

24

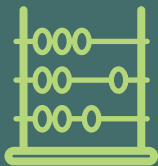
FURTHER
EDUCATION/
TRAINING
CENTRES

13

POST PRIMARY
COLLEGES
(INCL 1 PLC
COLLEGE)

3

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
UNDER WWETB PATRONAGE



€100m

ANNUAL
BUDGET



392

COMPANIES
SUPPORTED



30

APPRENTICESHIPS
SUPPORTED
(INCL 13 IN-HOUSE)



VISION

WWETB aims to lead learning through the delivery of high quality, inclusive, responsive and innovative education and training services in our community.



MISSION

WWETB's mission is to provide a wide range of education and training programmes, services and supports for children, young people and adults across the Waterford-Wexford region.

WWETB Core Values



Figure C: WWETB Core Values

WWETB Strategic Goals & Priorities

1

Provide high-quality education and training programmes for our students and learners.

This will be achieved by ensuring accessibility and the provision of opportunities for our community to avail of excellence in teaching and learning.

2

Development of Organisation Services:

This will be achieved by ensuring we provide the highest quality leadership, executive and administrative supports to a motivated and highly skilled workforce enabling a high-quality teaching and learning experience for learners and students.

3

Our people working together:

Create a positive working environment where well-qualified staff contribute to their maximum potential for the benefit of students and learners with due regard to the values of WWETB. This is centred on a culture of equality, respect and dignity in the workplace, continuous professional development, a 'can-do' attitude and an openness towards and respect for parents/guardians and co-operating external partners.

4

To foster and develop lasting partnerships and collaborations:

By being represented, and working well at national, regional and local level with relevant statutory bodies, agencies, business interests, trade unions, community groups and the voluntary sector.

5

To develop effective internal and external communication:

This will be achieved by providing a clear strategy, supported by a dedicated Communications Team, appropriate resources and development and awareness of the WWETB brand.

Programme, Learner and Staff Summary

In 2020 WWETB delivered almost 2,000 individual courses to FET 15,387 learners. This learner figure was down from a total of 18,840 in 2019 and can be largely explained by a decrease in applications for placements due to the COVID-19 crisis. Our FET learners achieved 9,282 QQI awards and many more awards from other awarding bodies including City & Guilds, ITEC and CIBTAC. Even with the reduced enrolments our QQI awards rose slightly from a figure of 9,217 in 2019.

WWETB has 795 FET staff including 600 Learning Practitioners. It has 29 Further Education and Training Centres, one dedicated PLC College, five dual provision schools offering FET courses and a total yearly budget of €66,500,000 for 2020. A full breakdown of programme, learner and staff details can be found in the Provider Profile.

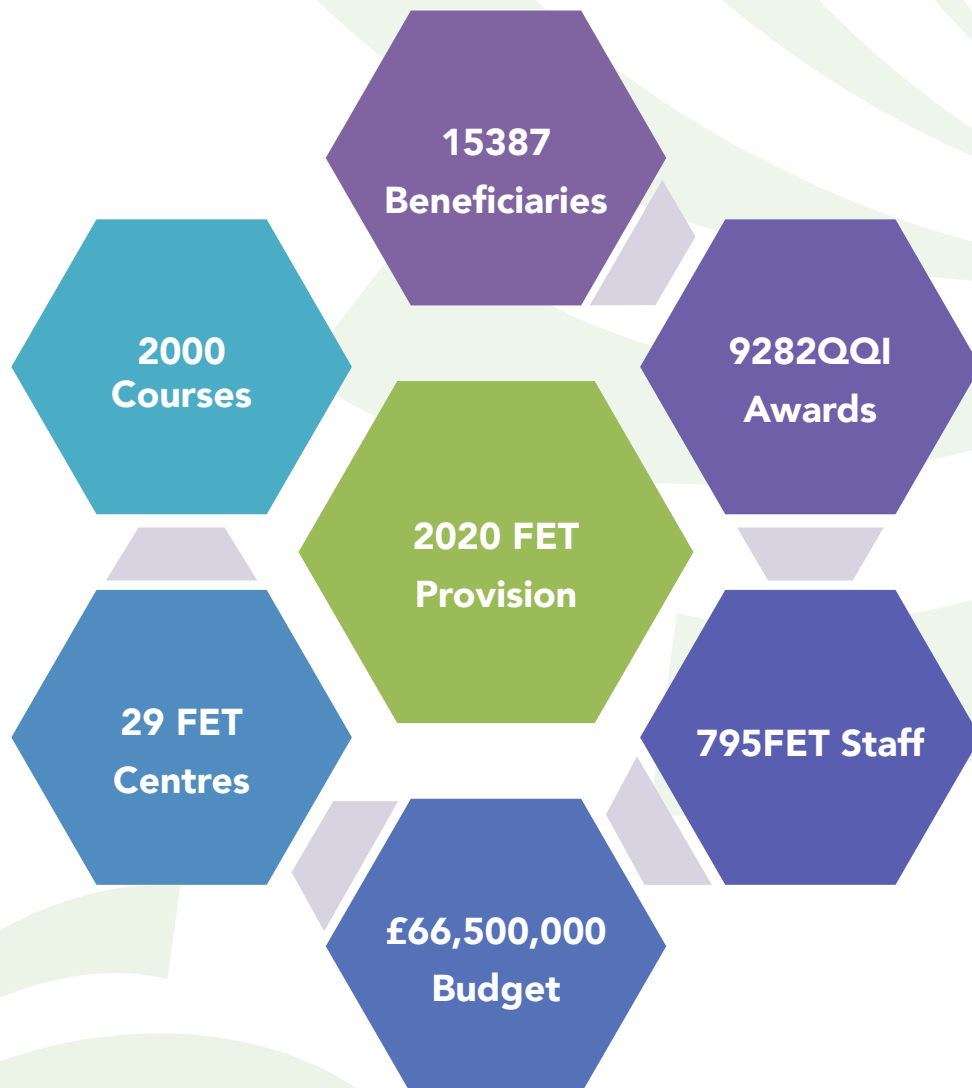


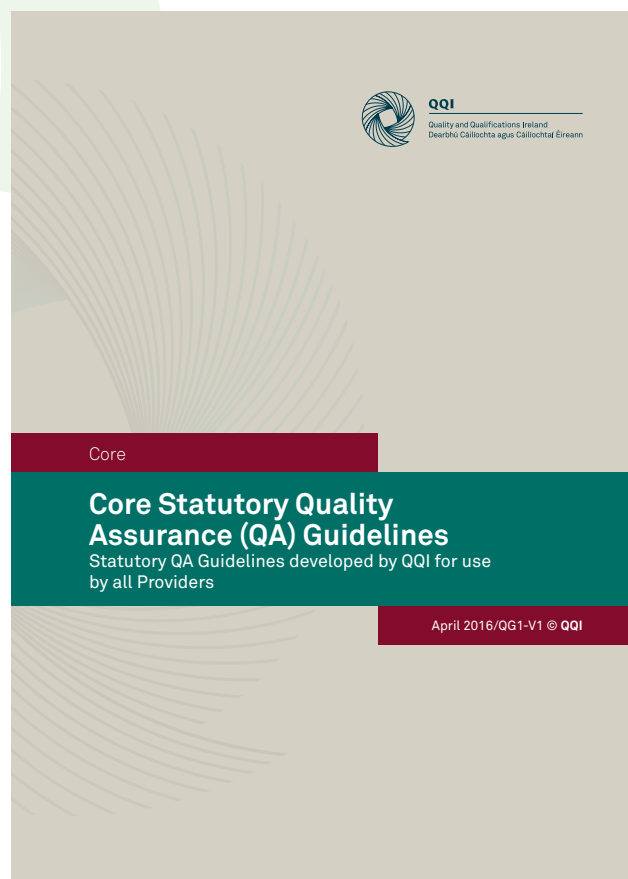
Figure D: WWETB 2020 FET Provision in Numbers

Approach to Quality Assurance

Post-amalgamation WWETB inherited seven separate legacy provider QA agreements across the two counties' further education and training provision. WWETB continues to work towards one overarching Quality Assurance Framework, with consistency at policy level, consistency at procedural level where possible but with different procedures at programme level as required. A lot of work has been done towards this framework with complete consistency in a number of key areas, large-scale consistency within FE provision and within our Training provision. Further review is still required in some areas and across both Further Education and Training provision.

In 2016 WWETB made the early decision to amalgamate Further Education Quality Assurance with our Training Standards Unit creating one central Quality Assurance Team. This approach has been a great success for WWETB in providing a central driver for the quality culture of the organisation. The Quality Team has been greatly supported by Senior Management and has grown to 13 dedicated staff members supporting all areas of FET provision, including a dedicated PLSS coordinator and Data Analyst.

WWETB's QA system is guided by the eleven areas of QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), along with QQI's Sector-Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards and Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes (2016). WWETB is also directed by the QA requirements of other awarding bodies such as; City and Guilds, ITEC, CIBTAC etc. The development of our QA system is broadly guided by the EQAVET Quality Cycle and we are actively investigating data-based quality indicators as a means to further review and inform our practices. WWETB Quality Governance Structures are detailed in the Provider Profile.



THE QUALITY CYCLE

of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training

1. Purpose and Plan

Set up clear, appropriate and measurable goals and objectives in terms of policies, procedures, task and human resources.

2. Implementation

Establish procedures to ensure the achievement of goals and objectives (e.g. development of stakeholders, allocation of resources, and organisational or operational procedures).



4. Review

Develop procedures in order to achieve the targeted outcomes and/or new objectives; after processing feedback, key stakeholders conduct discussion and analysis in order to devise procedures for change.

Figure E: EQAVET Quality Cycle

3. Assessment and Evaluation

Design mechanisms for the evaluation of achievements and outcomes by collecting and processing data in order to make informed assessment.

In 2018 WWETB completed its re-engagement process with QQI, leading to one formal QA agreement with QQI and the lapse of the seven legacy agreements. WWETB is committed to ongoing monitoring, evaluation, development and improvement of our QA System. Annual Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) and Status Reports are submitted to QQI and WWETB engage in annual dialogue meetings with QQI to review progress. The combination of the Re-Engagement Executive Self-Evaluation Report, annual QIPs, monitoring and review, and the External Review process provides the external dimensions to our quality system.

WWETB SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

At the commencement of the project WWETB put together a small development team of Alan O’Gorman (AEO/QA Manager) as the Review Coordinator, Alan Larkin (QA Officer) as the SER developer and Jon Ishaque (Data Analyst), in order to undertake the self-evaluation process and complete the development of the Provider Profile and Self-Evaluation Report.

A Self-Evaluation Steering Group SESG was formed, chaired by the WWETB FET Director Ken Whyte. The make-up of the SESG was guided by QQI’s review handbook and included the following;

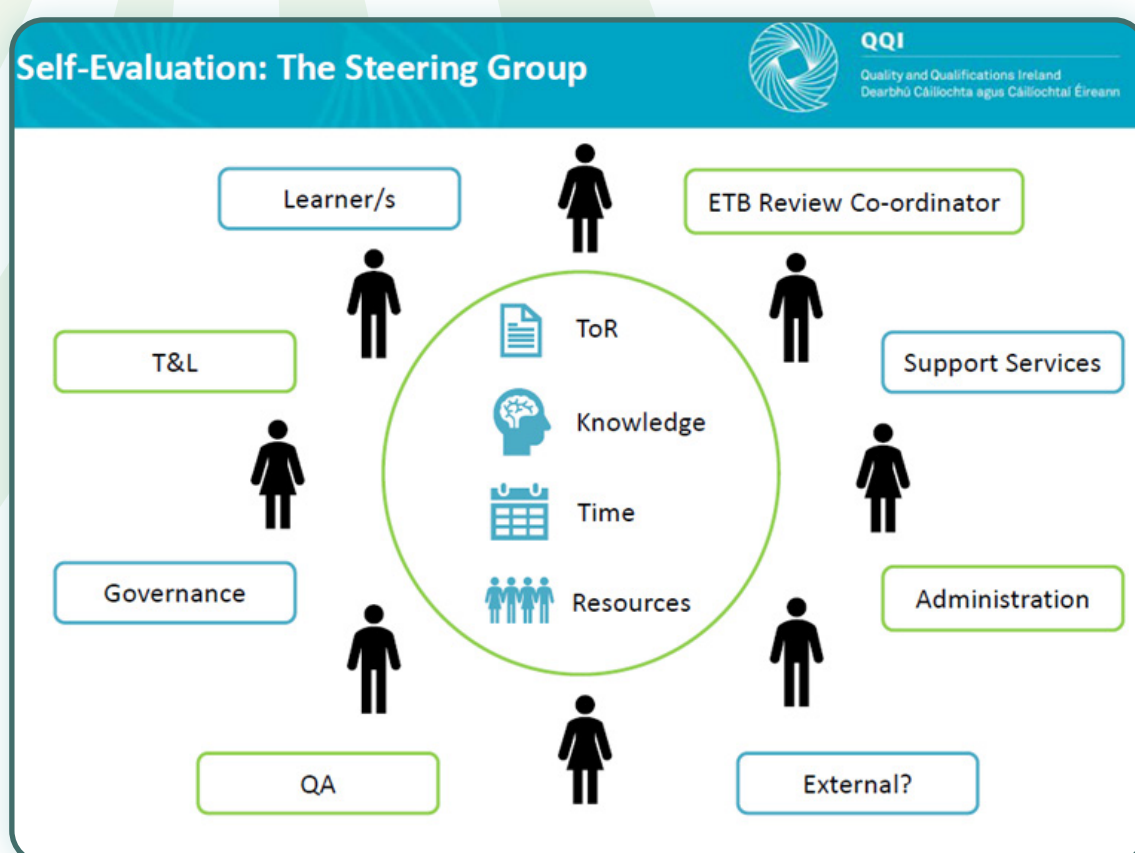


Figure F: QQI Infographic - Guide to Steering Group Composition

WWETB Self-evaluation Steering Group (SESG)

Area	#	Name	Role/Representing
Governance	1	Ken Whyte (Chair)	FET Director (SESG Chair)
QA	2	Alan O'Gorman	AEO / Quality Manager /ETB Review Coordinator
	3	Alan Larkin	QA Officer / Self-Evaluation Lead
	4	Colin McCarthy	Training Standards Officer
	5	Jon Ishaque	Data Analytics
Teaching & Learning	6	Fran Kennedy	AEO / Part-time Programmes / QA Steering Group
	7	Sally-Ann Cunningham	FE Teacher
	8	Gary Weldon	Instructor
Learners	9	Frank Murphy	Full-time Learner
	10	Patricia Butler	Part-time Learner
Support Services	11	Joann Power	Learner Support / Skills for Work
	12	Peter Lucey	Guidance
Admin	13	Dr. Karina Daly	OSD Director / HR & Communications
External	14	Dr. Richard Hayes (WIT)	HEI & External
	15	Pat Logan (TEVA)	Employer Rep

The SESG met six times in total on a monthly basis, prior to submission of the self-evaluation report (SER). Further details on the SESG can be found in the Review Steering Group - TOR Context and Information – Appendix 7.

During the process, briefings were delivered on the Inaugural Review to WWETB staff groups including the FET Forum (on two occasions), FET Management Team, Senior Management Team and WWETB Board. All FET practitioners were informed of the review by email and review information was outlined on the WWETB Intranet and in the WWETB newsletter.

After some initial meetings with QQI and ETBI, WWETB set about determining the review process and consultation process that would be undertaken. It was decided from the outset that this was not to be a predominantly descriptive report, but rather an analytical report, based on evidence. This evidence was to be compiled in either one of three forms; data, documentation or consultation. A gap-analysis model was chosen as being the most appropriate methodology for self-evaluation. Accordingly, key-statements were developed and subsequently supported by the three forms of evidence where possible. This evidential support of the statement allowed the identification of gaps or areas for improvement and also, areas of strength and good practice. The outcomes of the SER will drive Quality Improvement Plans and actions for the coming year(s).

Our initial research was guided by QQI's QA Guidelines and Inaugural Review Handbook. Using these documents as reference points we developed a Review Areas Breakdown working document and determined a number of aspirational key statements under each section of QQI's QA Guidelines and the 15 sections of the Inaugural Review. These key statements are the cornerstone of our review methodology.

The review areas breakdown plan included;

- The key areas QQI stated could be examined under each section of the review
- The type of questions that could be asked to investigate these areas.
- The key statements or points the organisation would like to make
- Data and documentation relating to each key statement
- Who to consult for each key statement and how to do so
- Who had governance or responsibility relating to each key statement
- Known gaps relating to each key statement

Prior to wide-scale stakeholder engagement, several internal consultation meetings were held (Governance, OSD, HR, Admin, Training, Learner Supports)

in order to further develop the approach and guide the review team to data or documentation that could fundamentally support an organisational position and determine gaps.

Based on these key statements and review sections, key stakeholder groups were determined and the most appropriate method to consult with these groups. As part of our initial Pre-COVID plan it was envisaged that a number of large-scale stakeholder events and workshops would be held and that the annual Learner FET forum facilitated by AONTAS could be adapted to inform the self-evaluation elements of the review. This would no longer be possible and we had to plan for a fully remote or virtual consultation process. Six key stakeholder survey groups and four stakeholder focus groups were established in order to carry out remote consultation.



Figure G: Self-Evaluation Consultation Groups

SURVEY CONSULTATION STAKEHOLDER GROUPS	FOCUS GROUP CONSULTATION STAKEHOLDER GROUPS
Learner Survey Group: Comprising Full-time and Part-time learners across FET provision types.	Learner Focus Group: Learners representing WWETB provision types.
Practitioner & Centre Admin Survey Group: Comprising full-time and part-time practitioners across FET provision types and FET Centre Administrative personnel.	Practitioner Focus Group: Practitioners representing WWETB provision types.
FET Manager Survey Group: FET Centre Coordinators, FET Principals, FET Managers.	FET Manager Focus Group: FET Coordinators representing WWETB provision types.
Training Providers Survey Group: Community Training Managers.	Admin and Special Function Focus Group:
Work Experience Providers Survey Group: Active FET Work Experience Providers.	
Employers Survey Group: Local employers with active or previous links.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Human Resource • Digital Learning • Information Technology • Data Analysis • PLSS • Professional Learning & Development

The survey questions associated with each section of the review were then developed to investigate whether key statements could be supported - the premise being, that if we could support these statements by either data, documentation or positive consultation results, it could be asserted with confidence that these were areas of good practice based on evidence. Statements that were more difficult to support with one or more of the three forms of evidence reflected areas that may contain gaps in terms of formalisation or areas requiring improvement in some way.

On completion of the stakeholder review process, a first draft of the SER was produced, and a consultation process began. After the issuing of the first draft, further focused consultation sessions took place with other functional areas in WWETB, this was to specifically review the sections of the SER not under direct governance of the Quality Team (HR, PLD, Learner Support, STB, Contracted

and Community Training). A second draft of the SER was then issued for final consultation. Based on the feedback from the SER consultation process the SER was finalised and approved by the SESG and the quality governance structures of the QA Steering Group, FET Management Team, Senior Management Team and Chief Executive.

The layout of the Self-Evaluation Report follows the format guide as outlined in the Review Handbook.

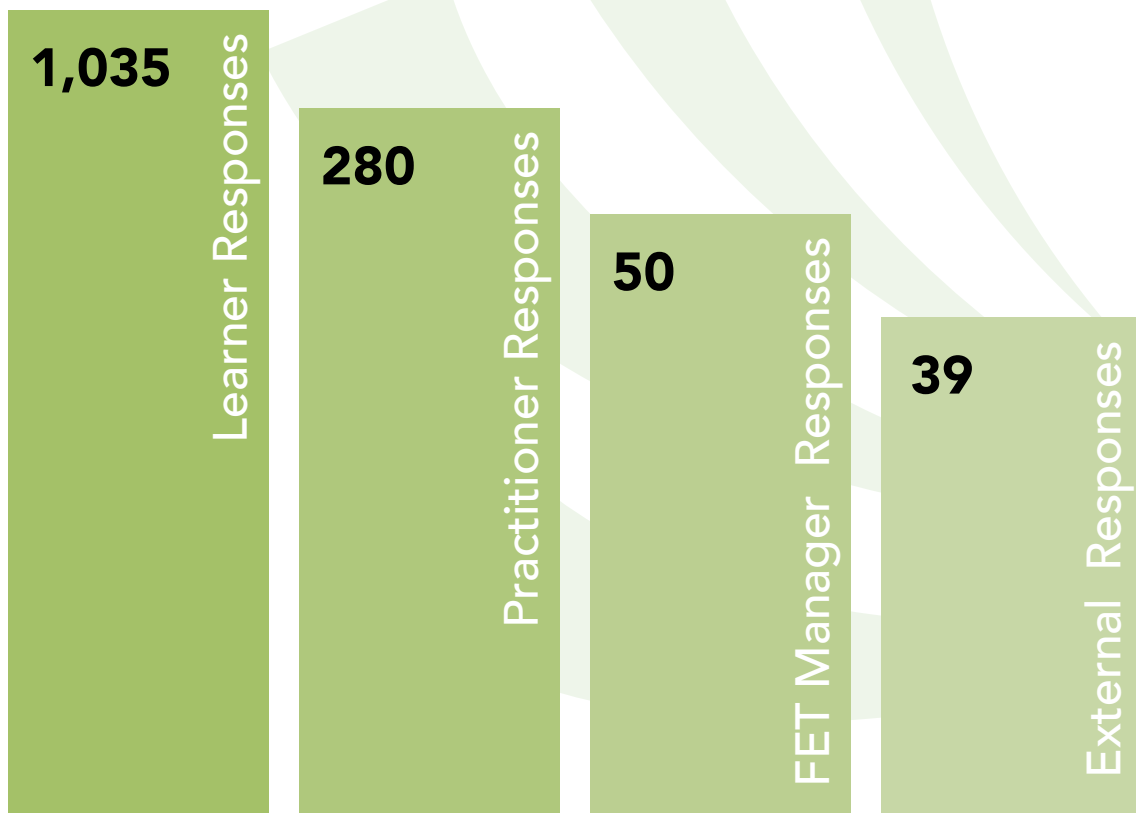


Figure H: Consultation Response in Numbers

STATEMENT ON COVID-19


WWETB's Self-Evaluation process had initially commenced in December 2019 with the first meeting of the Self-Evaluation Steering Group (SESG) on the 24th February 2020. WWETB FET centres closed soon after on the 12th March and QQI put the Inaugural Review Process on hold for approximately six months. The revised review schedule was received in September 2021, with the review process recommencing in November and the WWETB SESG reconvened on the 2nd December 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on how our FET provision has operated since March 2020. With many of our programmes moving to Emergency Remote Teaching Learning and Assessment (ERTLA), indeed many of our learners who joined programmes in September 2020 would only have experienced ERTLA practices. These ERTLA practices have been successfully implemented across FET provision.

Extensive contingency plans were approved and implemented to govern any move to ERTLA by centres and programmes. In collaboration with ETBI & QQI many award and programme-level modifications and adaptations we approved. WWETB QA governance structures ensured that all programmes were delivered to the same quality standard. Widespread supports were given to both learners and staff to ensure a successful implementation of any adaptations.

Extensive contingency plans were approved and implemented to govern any move to ERTLA by centres and programmes. In collaboration with ETBI & QQI many award and programme-level modifications and adaptations were approved. WWETB QA governance structures ensured that all programmes were delivered to the same quality standard, however, it is important to note the distinction between emergency remote teaching and learning and blended-learning practices. Further wide-scale research is required by the sector regarding any prospective movement towards more standardised blended modes of delivery. Widespread supports were given to both learners and staff to ensure a successful implementation of any adaptations.

The extensive resources required to support and maintain quality provision, while undertaking a widespread review was a considerable challenge. There was also a concern that stakeholders may be 'COVID fatigued,' and their views and opinions affected by the COVID situation. In particular, some of our



learners would only have experienced modified ERTLA practices and not what we would consider standard TLA practices. However, there is much satisfaction across the management structures of the organisation with the positive responses received from our stakeholders as part of the consultation process.

In producing this report an effort has been made to evaluate our provision without extensive reference to COVID-19. However, this is unavoidable in parts particularly in the context of the learner consultations.

1. WWETB'S MISSION AND STRATEGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (A) Mission and Strategy- Key Statements

- A1). WWETB has in place a mission statement and strategies for FET that reflect the values and aspirations of the organisation and its development was supported by key stakeholder groups.**
- A2). There is a discernible link between WWETB's Mission Statement and Strategy documents.**
- A3). There is a discernible correlation between WWETB's Strategy Statements and the QA Core Guidelines**
- A4). WWETB's staff are aware of the main thrust and values listed in the Strategy Statement.**

WWETB Vision:

'WWETB aims to lead learning through the delivery of high quality, inclusive, responsive and innovative education and training services in our community.'

WWETB Mission:

'WWETB's mission is to provide a wide range of education and training programmes, services and supports for children, young people and adults across the Waterford-Wexford region.'

The manner in which WWETB as an organisation carries out its fundamental responsibilities finds its foundation in the carefully considered organisational Vision and Mission statements. Both are robust and appropriately connotative of the main values of the organisation. WWETB Strategy Statement 2018-2022 sets down the organisations key aims and goals aligned with achieving the organisational vision and mission. The Strategy Statement is a culmination of almost a year of consultation across a wide group of stakeholders including staff, parents/guardians, learners, Boards of Management, Board members, local and national statutory bodies, industry, business representatives and other education partners. The annual Service Plan details the yearly framework and context for the realisation of the Strategy Statement.

Strategic goals are aligned with national policies such as the Department of Education Action Plan for Education Framework 2016-2019 and the associated annual plans, SOLAS Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019, and the SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017-2019. The strategic plan sets out as a priority (Strategic Priority 1.3.4)- the development of the WWETB Quality Assurance Unit in order to support course development, innovation, data analytics and quality assurance across WWETB and, in conjunction with QQI: prepare an Executive Self- Evaluation Report (ESER) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which will support the development of a WWETB Quality Assurance Governance Board.

1.2 WHAT IS WORKING

As part of our work for this report, the Quality Assurance Team carried out an exercise to ascertain the level of congruence between WWETB’s vision, WWETB’s Strategy Statement, and the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016). The resulting **‘Mapping’** Spreadsheet demonstrates the high-level of congruence between all three keystone documents. This illustrates that the strategy elements that serve as the propellant for WWETB FET provision are in line with the guidelines for providers as set down by QQI.

Our self-evaluation process illustrates that the WWETB FET staff body feel that they are aware of the main values of the organisation (94% of teaching practitioners and 100% of FET Managers and Coordinators). This awareness diminished somewhat among our training partner providers where 11% of respondents felt that they were not aware of the main values of the organisation.

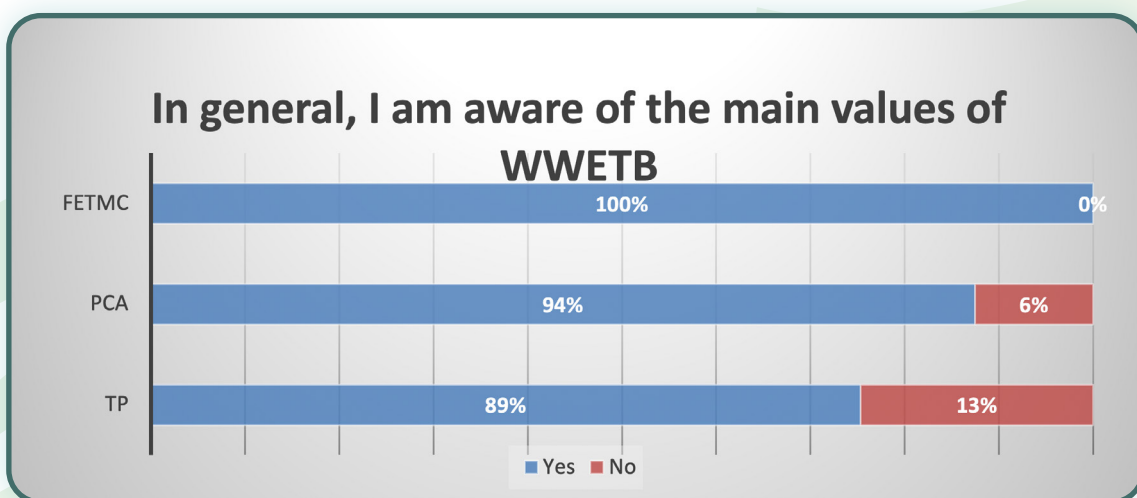


Figure 1.1: G.M.Q. A4

The prevalence and realisation of the organisation’s core vision is also borne out through learner responses, with 94% of respondents recognising the organisation as synonymous with Quality, 86% seeing the organisation as Innovative and 93% responding that Diversity is catered for across our entire FET provision. Local employers and work experience providers affirmed their view of WWETB as a high-quality provider of education and training.

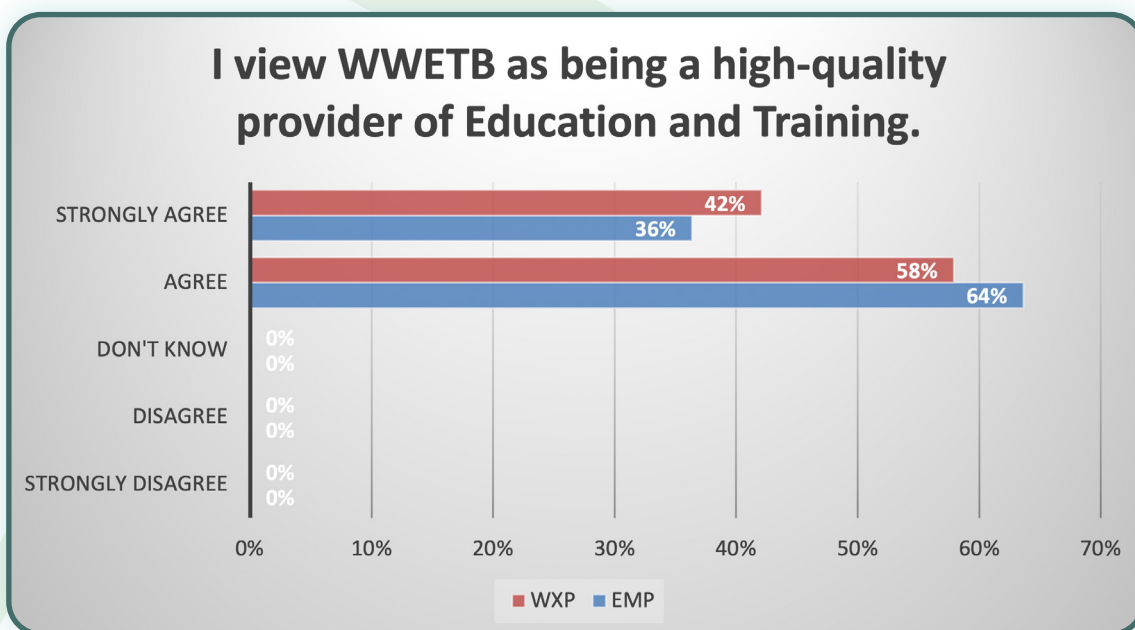


Figure 1.2: G.M.Q. A1 (a)

As per WWETB’s Strategy Statement document (Strategic Priority 1.3.4), the Quality Assurance Team’s development continues and WWETB’s Quality Improvement Plans and ongoing monitoring and review are managed by the Quality Assurance Unit.

1.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

While WWETB’s Mission and Strategy are shown to be suitably robust and reflected in our day to day business (as recognised by our key stakeholders), aspirations to achieve *Quality, Inclusivity, Responsiveness & Innovation* is an ongoing objective and coupled with the effort to achieve aims and values is the immense comparable effort to maintain them. WWETB’s Strategic Statement for 2023-2027 will outline the Senior Management Team’s assessment of how the organisation is performing in this effort and will then in turn, detail what actions and priorities are needed in order to achieve and maintain the organisational mission and associated strategy. The SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement, a process in which WWETB contributes to, may

very well need to be revised in light of the COVID-19 crisis and a subsequent reassessment of aims and goals for the National FET community as a whole may be required. WWETB will need to adjust and be responsive to these revised goals.

WWETB strives to be innovative in its approach to the provision of further education and training and respond intuitively to the skills needs of our economy and our learning cohort. A small contingent of our work experience providers felt that the organisation is not responding adequately to this challenge. Further Investigation into work experience provider’s perspective on the organisation’s responsiveness to employer’s/industry needs.

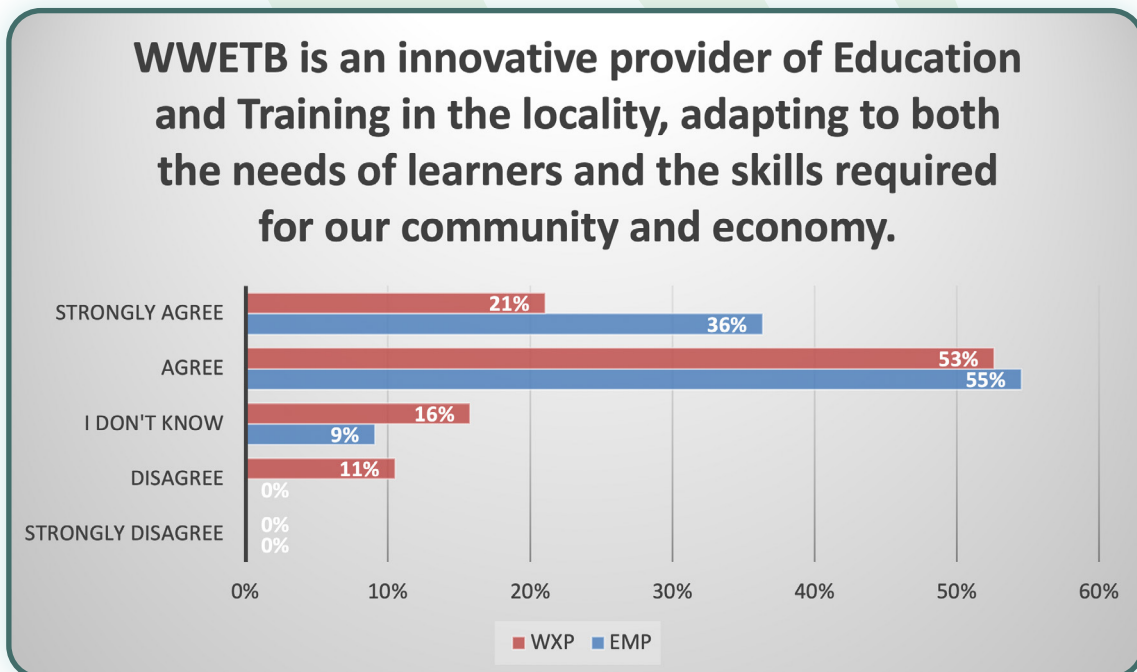


Figure 1.3: G.M.Q. A1 (c)

1.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

- IDENTIFIED ACTION**
- The continuance of the actions and research required to produce the next WWETB Strategy Statement due to be published in Quarter 1 of 2023
 - Participate in the development and implementation of the SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement
 - Further Investigation into employers’ and work experience providers’ perspective on the organisation’s responsiveness to employer’s/ industry needs.
 - Implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan for 2021

1.5 SUMMARY POINTS

The WWETB Mission and strategic goals endeavour to serve as an appropriate foundation for the organisation's core business, being established through consultation with key stakeholder groups. Moreover, WWETB's strategy is in line with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and the key aspirational concepts with WWETB's vision are shown to be evident in the day to day running of operations as confirmed via the widespread consultation with key stakeholder groups including; Learners, Practitioners, FET Managers, Second-Providers and Local Employers and Work Experience Providers.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A strong sense of the main values of the organisation amongst key stakeholder groups.
- A highly discernible link between the organisational values and the key strategy documents.
- A highly discernible link between the key strategy documents and the QQI Core guidelines.

2. STRUCTURES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (B) Structures and Terms of Reference for the Governance and Management of Quality Assurance

- B1). WWETB has in place a Quality Assurance Governance structure with appropriate representation and oversight***
- B2). The QA Governance structure is effective, transparent and fit for purpose***
- B3). The understanding of quality assurance responsibility and accountability is understood from CE and right through the organisation.***
- B4). There is appropriate separation of QA Oversight group functions, e.g. programme approvals input and oversight, QA procedure approval input and oversight, etc.***
- B5). There are procedures in place for the management of risk in terms of the integrity of the organisation, the avoidance of fraud associated with services and planning, ensuring appropriate provision to numbers and types of learners.***

WWETB has established formal and clearly defined structures of governance. These structures are illustrated in figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. All of these governance bodies have full-membership and appropriate representation of key-stakeholder groups. Each governance structure functions in line with formal terms of reference and there is a continuum of records associated with the work

of each group within the governance structure. In the case of WWETB's Board, minutes of all meetings are available to the public via the WWETB website.

2.1.1 WWETB Board

WWETB is governed by a board comprising of twenty-one members. This includes twelve representatives from the local City and County Councils of Waterford and Wexford; two members elected from staff; two parent/guardian representatives; five members with a specific knowledge of education and training, including a learner representative and a business representative. The work of the organisation is further supported by boards of management in each of WWETB's thirteen colleges. In accordance with the reserved functions set out under Section 12(i) of the Act, WWETB has established a number of committees to support its work. These are:

- Finance Committee
- Audit and Risk Committee
- Youthreach Committee
- Youth Work Committee
- Three Area Committees: Waterford City & County Area, South Wexford and North Wexford.

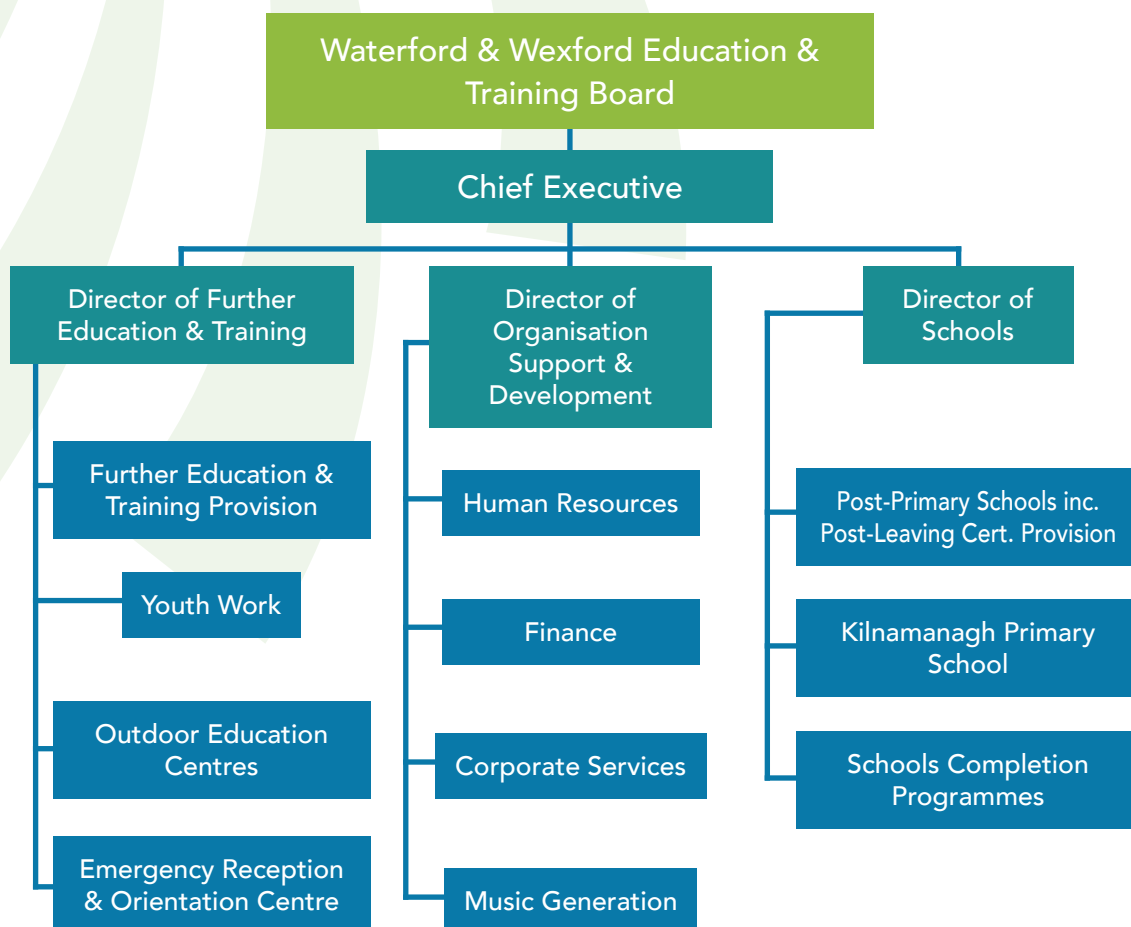


Figure 2.1: WWETB's Organisational Governance Structure

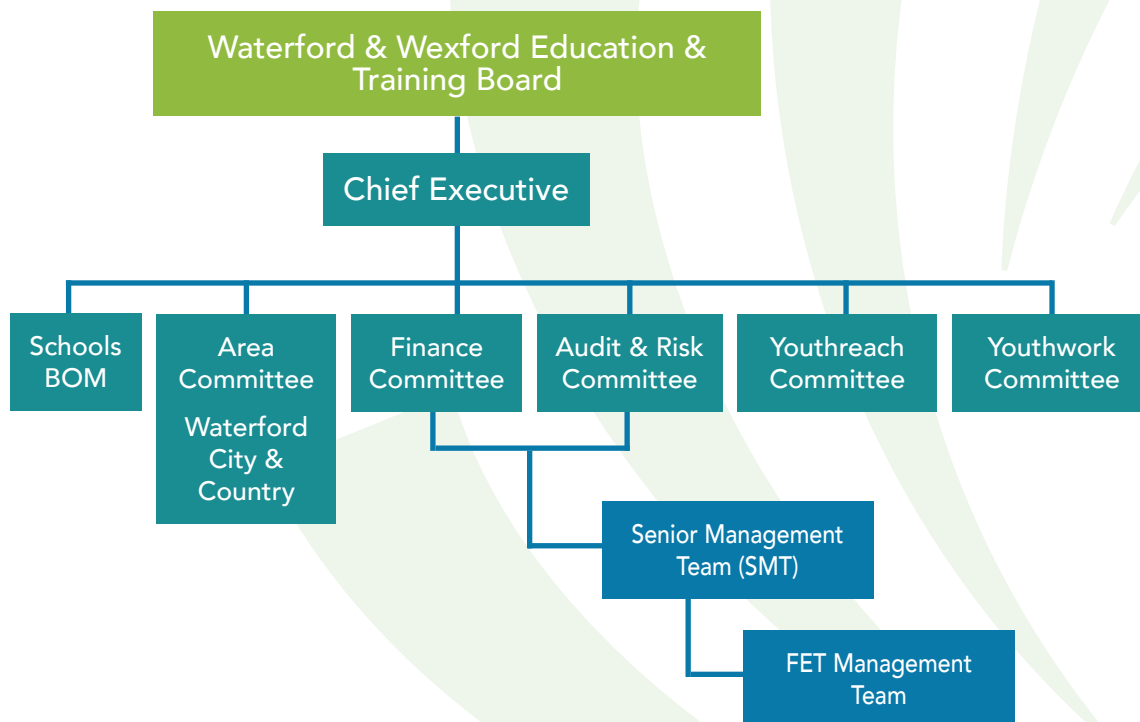


Figure 2.2: WWETB's Further Education & Training Governance Structure

2.1.2 Senior Management Team

The WWETB Senior Management Team consists of the Chief Executive, Director of FET, Director of Schools, Director of OSD, HR Manager, Finance Manager, Corporate Services Manager and Innovation and Development Manager.

2.1.3 FET Management Team

The FET Management Team consists of the Director of FET, five Adult Education Officers, Training Centre Manager, four Training Assistant Managers, Innovation and Development Manager, Service to Business Manager and two PLC Principals. This team meets monthly to review strategic and operational issues including quality assurance.

2.1.4 Quality Assurance Steering Group

Responsibility for the governance and oversight of FET quality assurance currently resides with the Quality Assurance Steering Group (QASG). This groups includes representatives from all provision types within WWETB. It is chaired by the Quality Manager and reports to the FET Management Team.

The QA Steering Group currently consists of the Quality Assurance Manager, Quality Assurance Officer, two Training Standards Officers, and Management/Coordinator level representation from:

- Adult Literacy
- BTEI
- Community Education
- PLC
- Training Services
- VTOS
- Youthreach

The QA Steering Group has responsibility for the approval and oversight of the development of quality assurance policy and processes, programme development, delivery, assessment and review, approval of centres to deliver programmes, and results approval.

2.1.5 Programme Approval Committee

The Programme Approval Committee (PAC) function is performed by the FET Management Team. There are three PAC meetings per year as standard and additional meetings scheduled where necessary.

2.1.6 QA/QQI Coordinators Forum

The QA/QQI Coordinators Forum is a communications group of individuals with QA or QQI responsibility for their centre or programme. This group acts as a consultative and communication forum for all QA or QQI issues, consultations or updates. This forum meets once a year as a QA workshop where current and pertinent QA items are discussed.

2.1.7 FET Forum

This forum is made up of programme or centre managers and coordinators from both further education and training. This forum meets on a quarterly basis to review current and appropriate FET strategic and operational items which may include quality assurance.

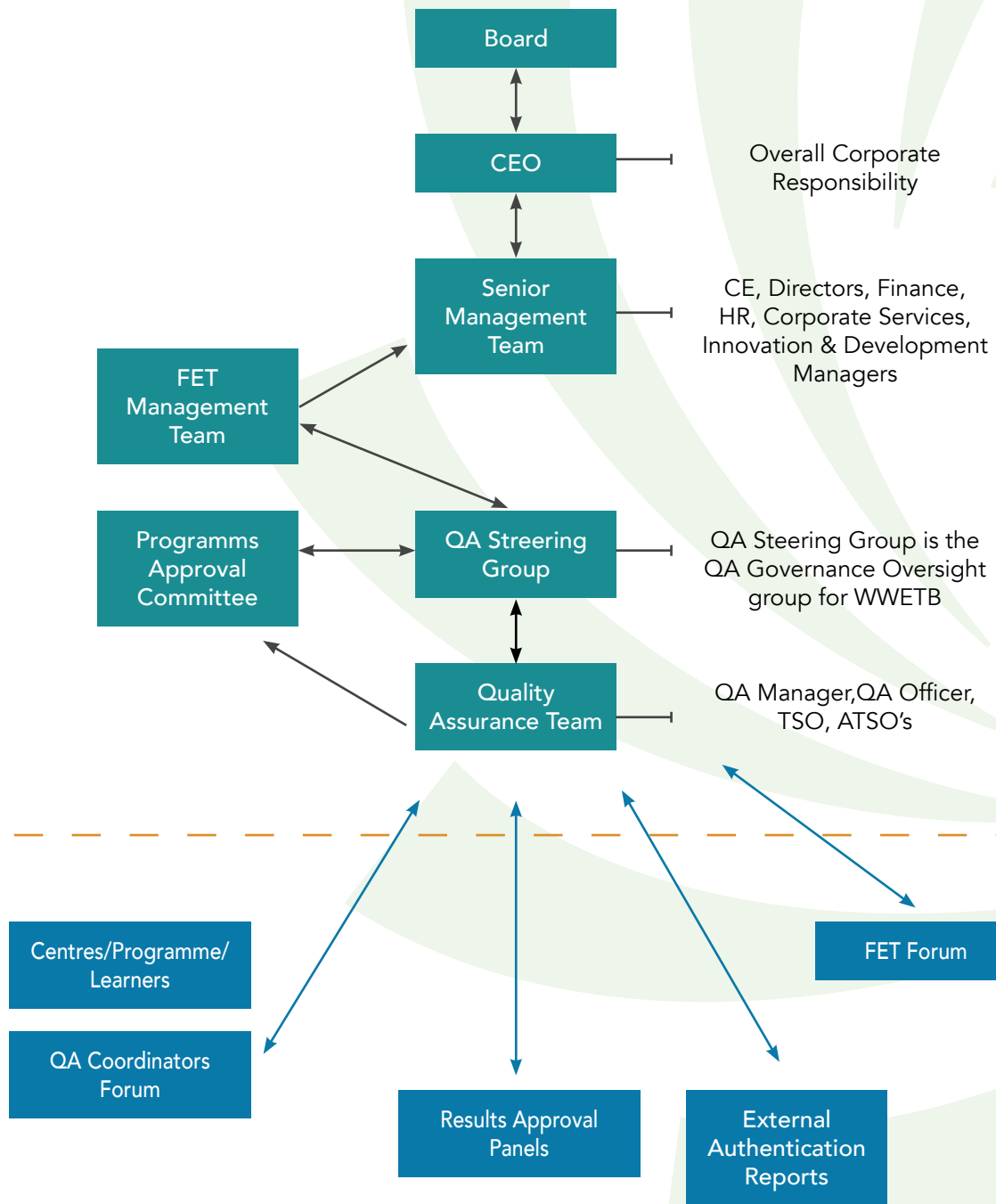


Figure 2.3: WWETB QA Governance Structure

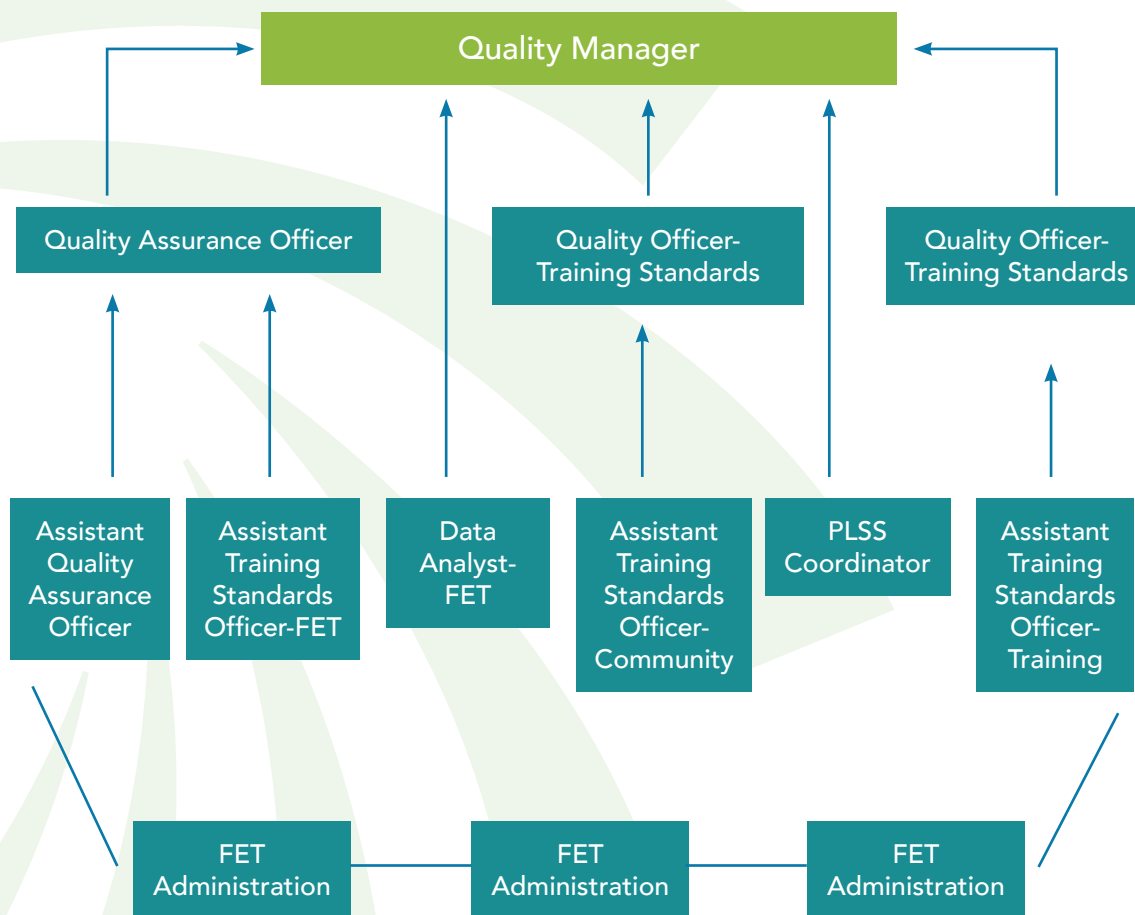


Figure 2.4: WWETB QA Team

2.2 WHAT IS WORKING

WWETB has in place a robust governance structure incorporating the management and governance of Quality Assurance. There are sub-committees of the board in place with responsibility for the oversight of specific functions of ETB business to mitigate against risk and the prospect of any activity which may be construed as fraudulent in nature.

WWETB's QA governance structure enables appropriate input and oversight and this structure is well-known to WWETB FET personnel. **98% of FET Managers** responded that *'WWETB has in place a Quality Assurance Governance structure with appropriate representation and oversight'*. **96% of FET Managers** surveyed agreed that *'The QA Governance structure is effective, transparent and fit for purpose'*.

The knowledge of the responsibility and accountability associated with provision of Quality Assurance through respective policies and procedures is high among FET Managers and Contracted Training Providers and 84% of FET Managers were satisfied that; *'There is appropriate separation of QA*

oversight group functions. E.g. Programme approvals input and oversight, QA procedure approval input and oversight, etc.' (14% IDK).

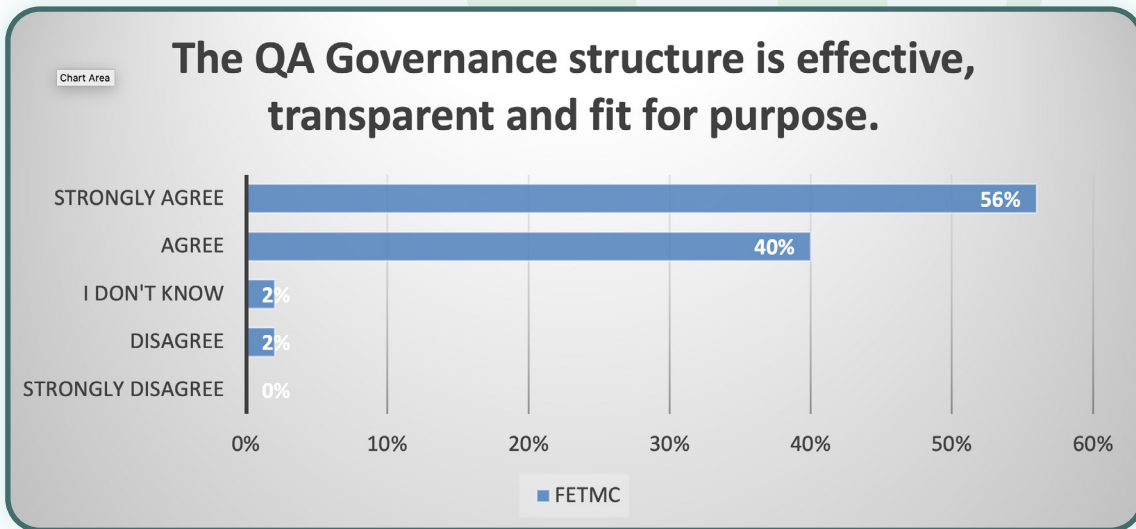


Figure 2.5: G.M.Q. (B2)

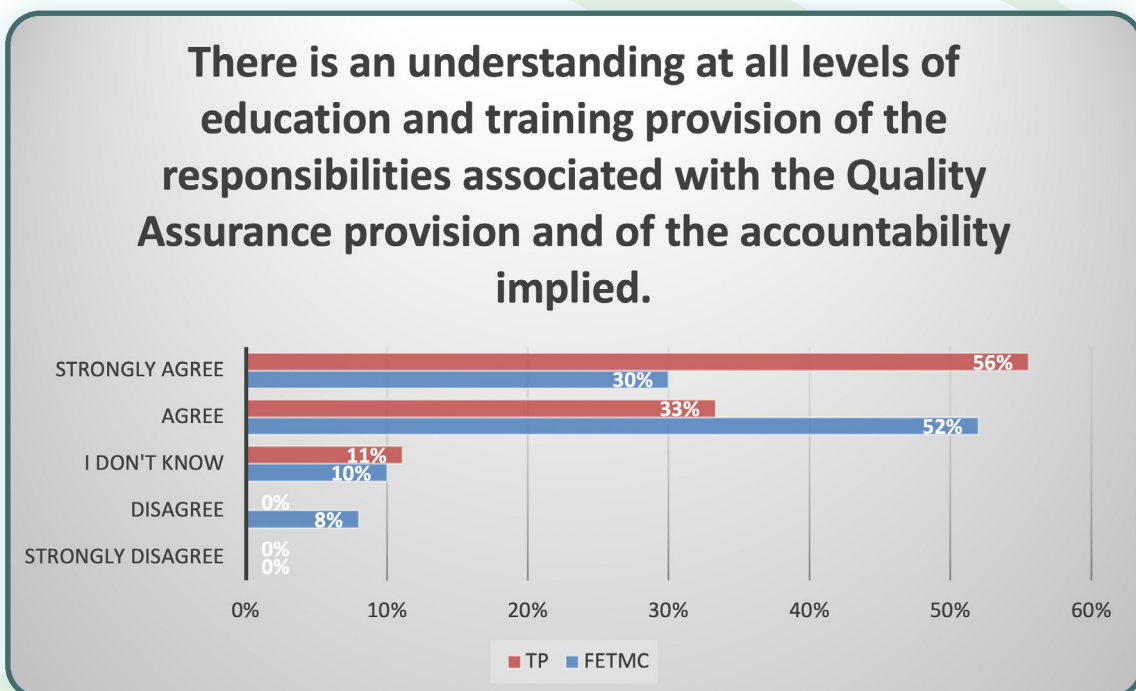


Figure 2.6: G.M.Q. (B3)

The Quality Assurance system was recently stress-tested by way of the COVID-19 crisis. Quality-assured and coordinated responses were required following centre and office closures. Timely and effective contingency plans were developed, approved and rolled out across FET provision. Quality and academic integrity was maintained indicating the effectiveness of quality assurance governance and oversight structures.

FET practitioners are aware of the role that the Quality Assurance Team fulfils within the organisation. This was well-indicated in the Focus Group of Practitioners.

2.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

WWETB is satisfied that the structure and composition of its oversight and governance bodies are appropriate in terms of input and representation. Many of the constituent members have much experience on oversight groups other than their WWETB responsibilities. Equally, there are members of WWETB oversight groups that have extensive professional knowledge and experience but have less experience on governance and oversight groups. WWETB will commit to extending its governance training programme to all oversight groups.

2.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Schedule governance training for all members of WWETB governance and oversight groups.

2.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB has put in place a clear and robustly functioning structure of oversight and governance. Constituent to this is a clearly defined structure for the management and oversight of quality assurance. The functions of the Quality Assurance Team, and that of the quality assurance oversight groups such as the Quality Assurance Steering Group and the Programme Approval Committee are understood by programme managers and these structures are deemed appropriate by surveyed groups. Practitioners are aware of the role and function of the QA Team and their feedback acknowledges support from the Quality Assurance Team in relation to their own roles and responsibilities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- A high awareness of the QA governance structure and endorsement of the appropriateness of the representation and oversight functions by FET Managers and Coordinators
- Strong endorsement of the effectiveness and transparency of the QA governance structure by FET Managers and Coordinators.

3. DOCUMENTATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (C) Documentation of Quality Assurance

- C1). *WWETB's Quality Assurance System is documented.*** Area for Improvement
- C2). *There is a discernible link to the QA system and WWETB's commitment to quality in terms of programme provision***
- C3). *The arrangements for review and improvement are a documented part of the WWETB QA system.***
- C4). *WWETB QA policies and procedures are effective and fit for purpose***
- C5). *Quality assurance procedures are regularly self-monitored to ensure ongoing effectiveness.*** Area for Improvement
- C6). *WWETB Policies and procedures are: Available to the Public, available to staff and other users in usable formats.*** Area for Improvement
- C7). *Policies and Procedures are: informed by QQI Quality Assurance Guidelines.***
- C8). *Policies and procedures are fit for purpose and appropriate to the provider context.***
- C9). *Policies and procedures have formal standing within the provider and form part of strategic management.***
- C10). *Policies and procedure include a role for learners and other stakeholders.*** Area for Improvement
- C11). *Policies and procedures promote a culture of quality.***
- C12). *Policies and procedures facilitate diversity.***
- C13). *Policies and procedures facilitate Innovation.***
- C14). *Policies and procedures are reviewed periodically to ensure they are fit for purpose and remain effective.*** Area for Improvement
- C15). *Policies and procedures are consistent with the requirements of relevant legislation.***

WWETB's Quality assurance system emanates from the assimilation of seven separate legacy Provider agreements that were in existence at the time of formation of the new Education and Training Board.

- Co. Waterford VEC
- Co. Wexford VEC
- SOLAS (FÁS) TQAS Over Arching Quality Assurance Manual for Training Services
- Waterford City – Adult Education Service
- Waterford City – St Paul's Community College
- Waterford City – VTOS, Durands Court
- Waterford College of Further Education

The Quality Assurance Team has worked systematically over the past years to develop the policy and procedure documents that feed into a standardised quality assurance system for the organisation. Priority in this regard has been given to areas of greatest need and areas where there was inherent commonality or least complexity. This work is ongoing and as such some elements of legacy systems are still part of the QA system as it exists today but only where these elements were functional and in line with WWETB's Quality Framework Statements and the QQI Core Guidelines <http://waterfordwexford.etb.ie/quality-assurance/>. An example of this would be the Transitional Quality Assurance System (TQAS). While many elements of this have been re-developed to suit the newer organisational context, work is ongoing in this regard.

The team has established a Microsoft SharePoint site that contains key QA documents including policies, procedures, guides and templates as well as a space for practitioners to share resources. This also serves as the location for all the WWETB Programme and Module Descriptors and many of the briefing presentations that are given by the QA Team are available for reference or review. The training documentation for second-providers is accessed on the WWETB Training website.

The WWETB QA department is committed to the development of a comprehensive and integrated Quality Assurance Framework that will contain all QA policies, associated procedures and guides that will function appropriately for all further education and training provision. It is the assertion of the WWETB QA Team that when it is fully realised, the QA Framework will be a managed digital space (an enhanced version of the QA SharePoint site) and not a published handbook. This is to accommodate the complexity of FET provision while maintaining the flexibility required to run efficient and responsive programmes. Quality Assurance should be a dynamic force within an organisation with the ability to adapt and respond adequately to the external forces that influence and interact with the FET Sector. It is felt that

the production of a 'handbook' type document may only serve to stagnate the process of Quality Assurance or at the very least serve to contribute to a state of evolving slower than the services that require dynamic input.

To this end, the 2021 Quality Improvement Plan (Appendix 3) includes the action to review the legacy agreements as part of the process of the development of the WWETB QA Framework. Legacy policies and procedures will be reviewed and will help form the building-blocks for policy areas that will be reviewed and developed by the QA Team.

3.2 WHAT IS WORKING

As indicated in the previous section of the report, the oversight for Quality Assurance activity is comprehensive and effective. There is representation across the full range of FET services and procedural developments have to be ratified accordingly by this oversight group.

While the current WWETB QA system could be described as a hybrid of legacy agreements and newly developed policy and procedures, great effort has been made to ensure that the organisation's Quality Assurance procedures are understood and functioning in a cohesive and standardised manner across the organisation. Training Standards personnel and Further Education QA personnel work side by side as a cohesive quality unit with a designated Quality Manager. This QA team works collaboratively to ensure that the organisation's QA objectives are met and QA review processes such as the Quality Improvement Plan are reflective of the overarching unity of approach in terms of Training and Further Education.

The Quality Assurance Team endeavours to be a proactive unit within the organisation as illustrated by the schedule of QA briefings that take place each year in the organisation (Appendix 4). The briefings serve to impart key information to practitioners and Managers alike on the quality-assured procedures contributing to a standardised approach to key elements of provision across the sector. This is borne out by the response from FET Managers/Coordinators, of whom 96% responded when surveyed that **'WWETB's QA procedures are known at programme level and they are effective and fit for purpose'**. 98% of the same respondents said that **'The QA procedures have a standing in WWETB FET provision and there is a conscious effort to adhere to them by staff'**. 98% of these FET Managers know where to find all key Quality Assurance documentation. When asked if these policies and procedures contribute to a **'culture of quality'**, 91%(average) of FET staff responded that they do.

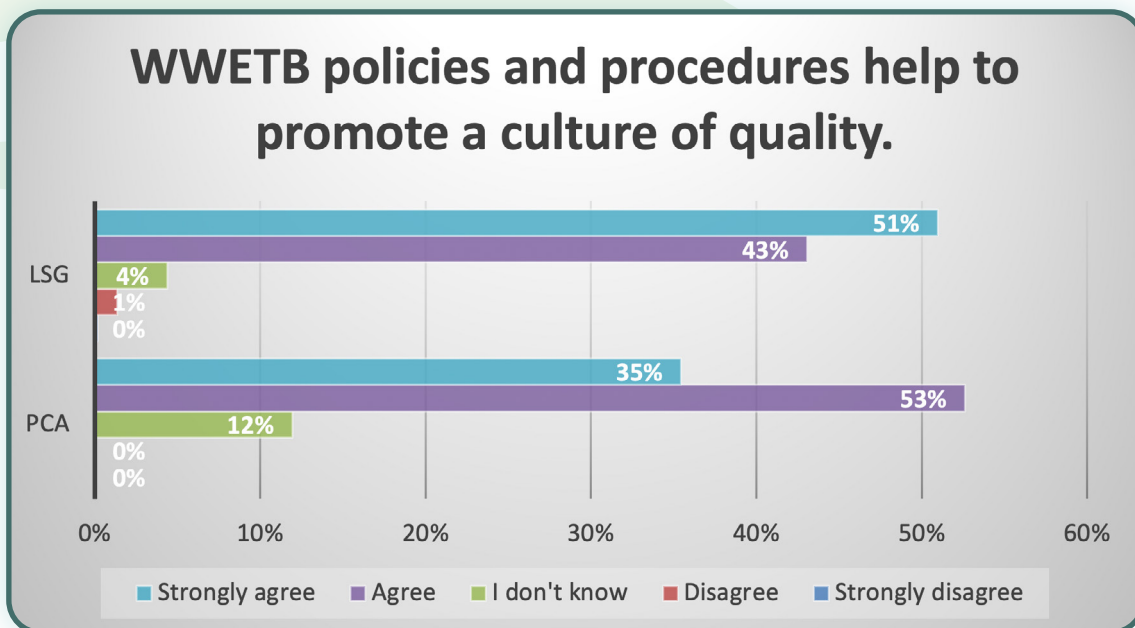


Figure 3.1: G.M.Q. (C11)

In addition to this, it was important to see that innovation and catering for diversity is highly evident within our provision as attested by the survey results.

3.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

The development of the formal WWETB Quality Assurance Framework forms part of the ongoing work of the QA Team. A structured plan is in place and there are actions associated with this in our Quality Improvement Plan. The establishment of a new and formal QA framework is an action that has merited much consideration by WWETB’s FET Director and Quality Manager. The QA Team has been expanded recently, with the establishment of an Assistant Quality Assurance Officer position, which will facilitate greater momentum in this work.

As part of this framework, the development of a policy framework is an important action. There is currently no systematic process for the review of policies and procedures. It is however an action that has been commenced by the Governance and Compliance team and one which requires collaboration with the Quality Assurance team.

Providers in the ETB sector have each taken their own distinct organisational approaches to the amalgamation of Further Education Quality Assurance and Training Standards, with some keeping a separation between the quality assurance of FE and Training. WWETB made an early and committed decision to amalgamate FE Quality Assurance and Training Standards. This amalgamated QA Unit has been a success for WWTEB and contributes to

a coordinated and synergetic approach to quality assuring FET provision. Further work is required to fully establish a single identity for the unit. Often referred to by legacy titles of 'Trainings Standards' or 'Curriculum' by training practitioners, the unit also now includes PLSS coordination, data analysis, training and programme development. The scope of the unit is now much wider than Quality 'Assurance' and a singular identity of 'Quality' needs deliberation. This singular identity is linked to the singular Quality Framework that the WWETB QA Team is working towards

WWETB publicly displays all overarching QA statements and legacy agreements on the WWETB website. The QA section on the website however, needs further development and updating. The intended WWETB QA Framework will be publicly displayed and available to key stakeholders as appropriate upon further development.

While WWETB has a well-established and very effective structure of Governance for Quality Assurance, it is noted by the QA Team and the Self-Evaluation Steering Group that there is an absence of learner representation on the QA oversight bodies. It is accepted by the aforementioned QA groups that there are great benefits to having this key-stakeholder group represented as part of the WWETB QA oversight bodies. However, this may present challenges in terms of the amount of time learners are with the organisation, the specific competencies required to effectively represent the stakeholder group and the potential narrowed perspective or input if just one or two FET programmes were represented. The WWETB QA Team and SESG would welcome the Review Team's input in this regard.

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Wholesale systematic review of the constituent legacy elements of the QA system with a view to redevelopment in the context of a conclusive WWETB QA Framework.
- QA Team to work towards the development of a QA Policy Framework that would set down the established process for policy development, dissemination, implementation and review.
- Public display/dissemination of these policies via the WWETB Website the WWETB Intranet and via other means where appropriate.
- The further development of the Quality Assurance section on the WWETB Intranet site.
- The continued development of the WWETB Quality Assurance Framework.
- Consult with FET Management Group on the potential for Learner representation on the QA Steering Group.

3.5 SUMMARY POINTS

The Quality Assurance unit has established itself as a key functional department within FET. Much work has gone into the development of documentation associated with Quality Assurance but more importantly, much effort has been expended to embed the QA practices contained within these documents into our FET provision. While there is further work to do in terms of the development of the formal WWETB QA Framework, we are satisfied that the priority of establishing a service-wide understanding of the Quality Assurance constituent of the organisation has been successful. The Quality Assurance unit are an integral part of FET provision with the unit's input evident in the way each service and centre carries out their business. This is borne out in our primary research findings.

HIGHLIGHTS

Quality Assurance SharePoint Site

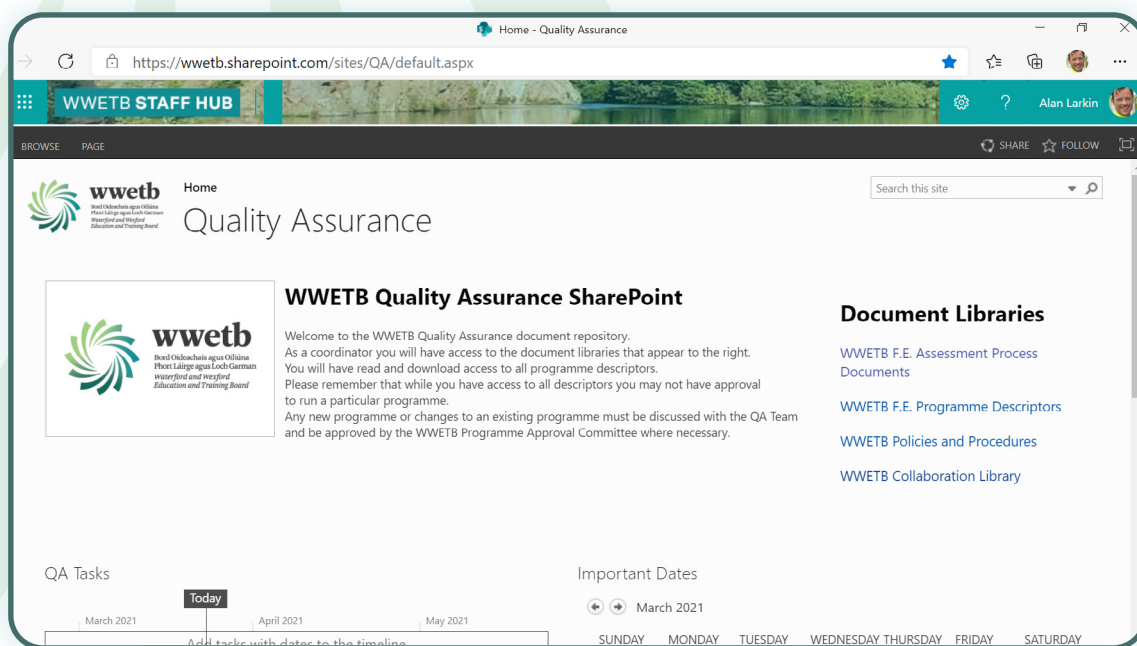


Figure 3.2: WWETB QA SharePoint Site Interface

As reflected in the survey results and qualified by the practitioner Focus group, the Quality Assurance SharePoint site has proven to be a successful platform for the arrangement and presentation of documentation associated with Quality Assurance. The advantages of the SharePoint site are:

- Simplicity and usability
- Integration with MS Platforms (favoured by ETB's).
- Security
- Administrative rights function
- The SharePoint site coupled with organisational-wide QA briefings has proved an effective method of promoting key QA policies and procedures and making easily available all the guides and templates that centres and practitioners require to standardise and quality assure provision.

"...session delivered by QA was very beneficial and changed my perspective on how to deliver a quality course for the students"

"Access to assessment documentation/templates on SharePoint is very useful"

"Great QQI coordinators within centres and excellent support from the QA Team."

(Practitioner Focus Group)

INNOVATION - HIGHLIGHT AND KEY CONCERN

3.5.1 Innovation

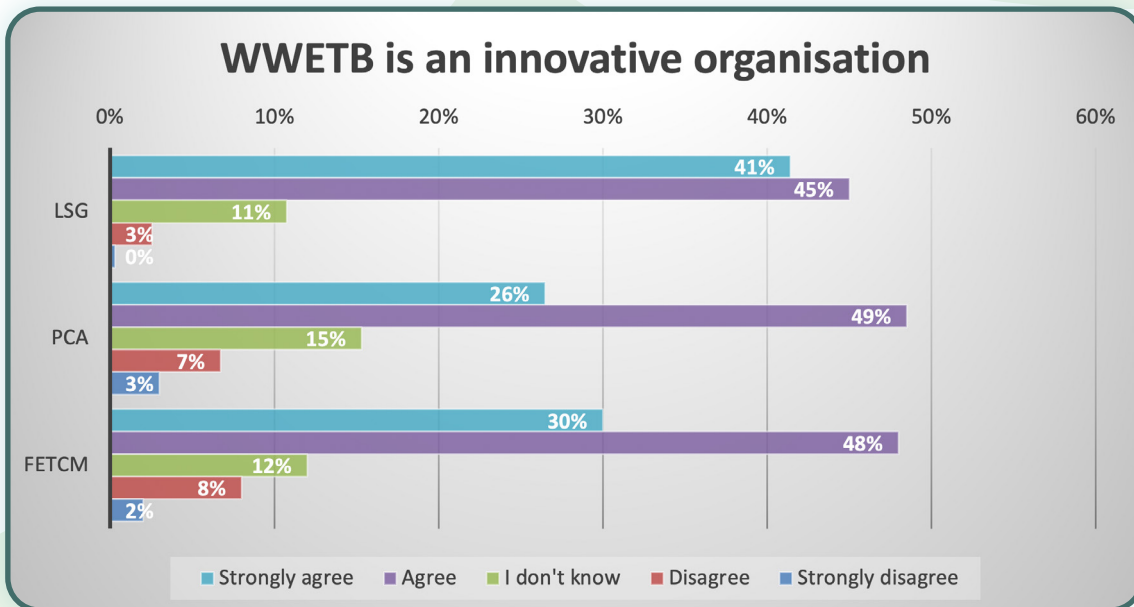


Figure 3.3: G.M.Q. (C13)

Our principle stakeholders were queried about the organisation in terms of innovation. Practitioners were asked if they felt the organisation promotes innovation and learners were asked if they viewed the organisation as being innovative. The response was very positive, with an average of 80% of those

respondents correlating WWETB with innovation. Feedback from our focus group with FET Managers somewhat belied this survey response. The later task of refining all the consultation information and data has resulted in the following assertion in relation to WWETB fostering and promoting innovative approaches. It is an area of some considerable strength for the organisation but also with some apparent room for improvement.

INNOVATION HIGHLIGHTS

WWETB's stated vision is to be a provider of high-quality, inclusive, responsive and innovative programmes. The role of Innovation and Development Manager, a member of the Senior Management Team, is a designated role within the organisation for a number of years now.

The NZEB project was developed in 2018 to respond to a clearly identified need of the construction industry to address the need to upskill those in the construction sector in high-performance housing and the changes in the building regulations.

In 2019, WWETB applied for and received funding under the SOLAS programme 'Innovation Through Collaboration Fund'. The selected innovation projects are cultivating strategic alliances across ETBs, industry partners and enterprise stakeholders, covering innovative design and delivery and enterprise engagement. The three key objectives of the project are on track for achievement:

- Development of a Train the Trainer special award, to address the shortage of NZEB trainers. This action is complete.
- Conversion of the 3-day trades courses to 2-days blended and 1 day in the training centre, to make it easier for tradespeople to be released by their employer for training. Action is complete and currently in pilot phase.
- Explore the use of Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality and Cross Reality to enhance WWETB's retrofit training.

WWETB Training Services are investing in technology within Apprenticeship and Adult training courses to ensure learners are exposed to the most modern equipment, including:

- **Cleanroom and Packaging and Pharmaceutical Manufacturing;** The SIF-400 training system simulates a highly automated smart factory, including Industry 4.0 technologies, advanced manufacturing concepts and the reality of the connected enterprise.
- **Virtual Reality;** including Virtual Reality Integrated Weld Training, Classic Car Restoration Virtual Reality Spray painting and training simulator, and development

of a Virtual Reality Training package for the delivery of NZEB Retrofit.

- **Sheet Metal;** The introduction of a CNC Punch Press and CNC Press Brake to meet the requirements of delivering V4 of the apprenticeship curriculum.
- **Mechanical Automation Maintenance Fitter;** the introduction of CNC Milling, CNC Lathe machines, mechanical drive training system provides participants with hardware allowing for hands-on experience.
- **National Standards Authority Ireland (NSAI) Airflow Measurement:** As part of our collaboration and innovation with industry, WWETB worked with NSAI on the request for proficiency testing and certification for airflow measuring devices. WWETB now offers this test in our Training Centre in Enniscorthy. The Certificate is a WWETB/NSAI certificate. WWETB has a number of new projects in development including:
 - Collaborating with Screen Ireland with regard to developing training programmes to compliment the development of a new multi-film studio in Wexford.
 - 3D food design through the FabLabs in Enniscorthy and New Ross. (see Section 10 Highlights)
 - Building Information Modelling for NZEB in collaboration with Limerick IT
 - Collaboration with IT Carlow on joint-programme leading to level 6 certificate in Design and Manufacturing Programming.
 - Collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on the development of high-performance building training through the membership of the Network of UN International Centres of Excellence (NICE).

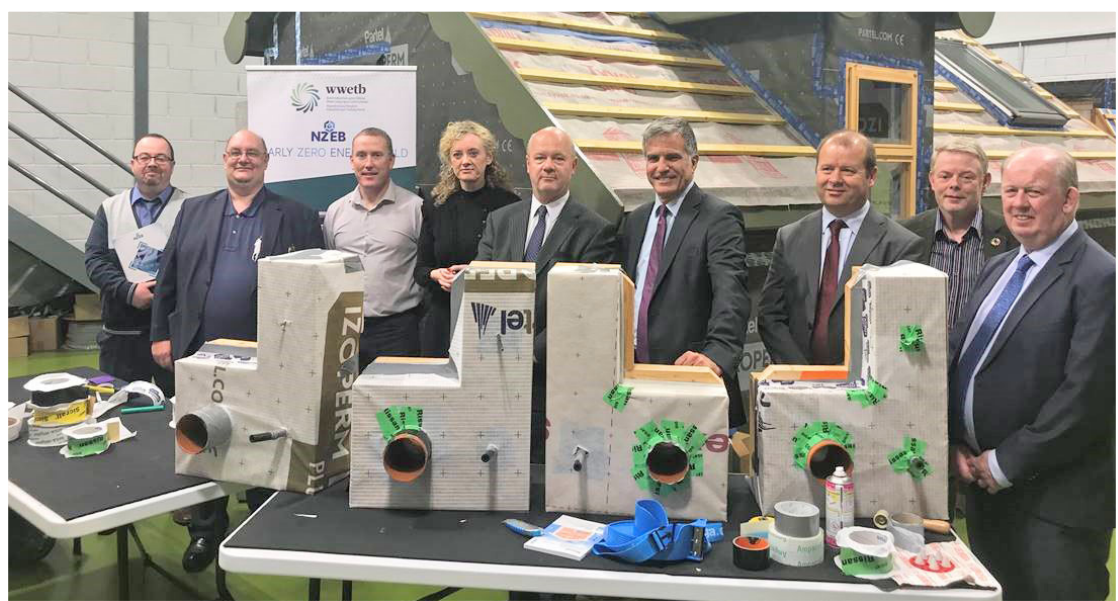




Figure 3.4: Innovation in WWETB- Images

INNOVATION CONCERN

There are many examples of innovative approaches to teaching and learning across all forms of WWETB FET provision, including the initiatives highlighted above. As a parallel however, what merits stating in this report, is a reflection of the barriers to innovation that also occur within the FET sector.

QQI awards in use are more than ten years old. Feedback received during the consultation process suggested that a number of these awards are outdated to some degree and that a review of awards by QQI with a view to updating is required.

AISs and QQI Module Descriptors are inextricably linked to awards in terms of assessment mapping etc. This is contributing to further inflexibility in terms of change or implementing innovated approaches to delivery and assessment.

QQI Programme Development and Validation while well-structured by QQI requires a substantial investment of resources by the provider. Other certification bodies have rigorous but less onerous processes in place. An example of this would be WWETB's attempt to put a Cloud Computing course in place. Respective QQI awards were too inflexible to efficiently facilitate this.

Communities of Practice for the most part serve to promote quality, innovation and help to ensure a standard in the practitioner communities connected. Establishing or even engaging in a community of practice with fellow colleagues often falls down at two substantial hurdles; time and incentive. Many full-time and in particular, part-time WWETB employees have such limited time on the job day to day (and no two schedules are the same) meaning that time for meaningful engagement with peers in other centres is very limited. In addition to this, the effort to engage, modify, review and report back on practice to a Community of Practice can often be seen as overly burdensome unless there is a clear incentive for the practitioner.

4. STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (D) Staff Recruitment, Management & Development

- D1). WWETB ensures itself as to the competence of its staff prior to employment and that they have appropriate expertise and experience to fulfil their roles.**
- D2). There is a systematic approach to the fair and transparent recruitment of staff .**
- D3). WWETB Procedures for recruitment address: -responsibilities and WWETB Code of Conduct**
- D4). WWETB Policy and procedures address academic and professional standards for all FET staff and how these are maintained and enhanced**
- D5). There are procedures in place for the collection and use of regular and timely learner and other relevant feedback on teaching staff.** Area for Improvement
- D6). A mechanism is in place to impart feedback to staff members on their strengths and on areas requiring improvement (performance management).** Area for Improvement
- D7). WWETB staff members have access to support and opportunities for development based on a systematic approach to the identification of their continuing professional training and development needs.** Area for Improvement

4.1.1 Staff Recruitment

WWETB is committed to fairness, equality and transparency in respect of all recruitment processes. The process is aligned to best practice and meets all legislative requirements (Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and Disability

Act 2005), including Garda vetting. WWETB has developed an Equality policy and adheres to this in all recruitment activity. The Recruitment and Selection policies and procedures comply with Irish public sector recruitment and appointment procedures, and apply to all instances of recruitment. WWETB fulfils its statutory obligation to advertise all positions and opportunities appropriately. All HR recruitment and staff development procedures ensure that FET learning practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced for their roles, with either Teaching Council registration, or academic/professional qualifications as appropriate. In Contracted Training provision (or with second providers e.g. Specialist Training Programmes (STPs) or Community Training Centres (CTCs), staff are recruited directly by these external bodies, having first met with the minimum staffing requirements as set out by the ETB.

Applicants called to interview are required to submit referee details prior to interview, and subsequent offers of employment are subject to receipt of satisfactory references. Prior to taking up an offered position, the successful candidate must submit evidence (original copies) of professional or technical qualifications.

4.1.2 Staff Management

All WWETB staff are employed on the basis of a contract. Contracts are in line with Department circulars. WWETB liaises with all relevant unions on a regular basis. All recruited staff are invited to an induction event incorporating the following induction themes:

- Introduction to WWETB- Chief Executive
- Vision and Mission
- Core Values
- Strategic Goals
- Governance and Management
- Codes of Conduct
- Methodologies

- Child Protection
- Safety, Health and Welfare
- Organisational Support
- Corporate Services
- Contracts and Absences
- Employee Assistance
- Finance & Pay

WWETB FET Management and QA has initiated the development of a pilot induction programme for FET managers and coordinators. Recruited staff are made aware of their line-manager and reporting structures as appropriate to the position. WWETB does not currently have a formal performance management and development system (PMDS) in place. The lack of a performance management and development system is consistent across the sector. ETBs, co-ordinated through ETBI, have recently established a

working group to put together a framework for performance management and development. Much consultation will be carried out with staff and staff representative bodies before a PMDS system is approved for the sector.

4.1.3 Staff Development

WWETB is hugely dedicated to the development of all staff in line with the strategic commitment to quality provision across all services. A Professional Learning Development policy was approved in April 2021. The organisation has a designated FET Professional Learning and Development Coordinator (PLD) with responsibilities for:

- Assessing development needs across the FET provision
- Organising and coordinating FET training events and upskilling opportunities
- Supporting WWETB FET staff wishing to partake in further studies and advanced qualifications

In addition to this, WWETB is responsive to the digital evolution of the education and training sector in line with stimulus of global industry and there is a designated Digital Learning Team in place coordinating the upskilling requirements of FET staff. The Digital Learning Team provide a training, support, and consultation service. The services provided ensures all teachers and tutors have access to training and support for the Office 365 platform, one of the supported platforms used in WWETB.

Training and support is provided in a variety of ways:

- Scheduled bespoke training.
- Scheduled support.
- One-to-one bookings for support and training available to all
- Webinars.
- Resources, videos and guidelines.
- Regular newsletters.

4.2 WHAT IS WORKING

WWETB's recruitment processes are conducive to a professional and appropriately capable staff cohort. The allocation of resources and personnel into the enhancement of FET professional development and upskilling has made FET Professional Learning & Development (PLD) an area of relative strength for WWETB. 87% of WWETB staff surveyed agreed with the statement that **'WWETB offers opportunities for (FET) staff members to upskill in a range of areas depending on their need'**.

WWETB offers opportunities for staff members to upskill in a range of areas depending on need.

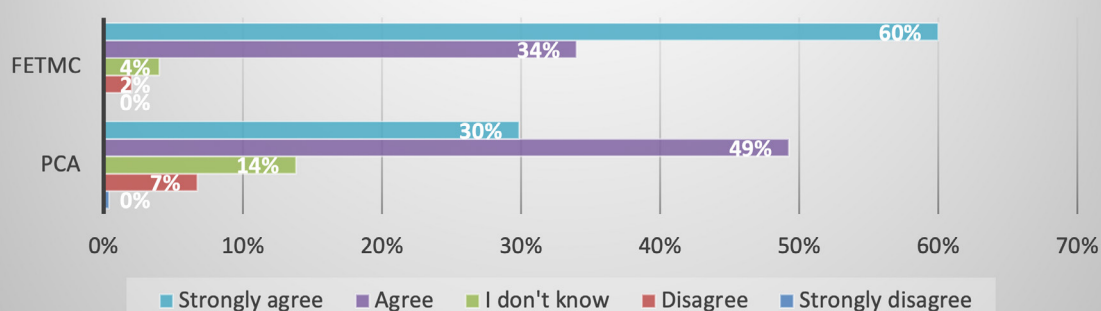


Figure 4.1: G.M.Q. (D7)

The WWETB PLD SharePoint and Teams sites were established in April 2020 to serve as hubs for information and effective dissemination of FET PLD opportunities and news. They also serve to increase the visibility of PLD, further promoting a culture of continuous professional learning. There are over 440 members of the FET Professional Development Team. The PLD Coordinator liaises with all centres regarding perceived training needs and opportunities, and engagement with the site and beneficiaries to training information is reported to the FET Director. Training opportunities have also recently been extended to secondary providers which would have been uncommon heretofore.

The organisation prides itself on being learner focussed and this can only happen through regular consultation with the learner cohort. One method of this is by way of end of course evaluations. Currently, learners provide feedback on their experiences of courses via course evaluation forms which are completed at or near the end of courses. These evaluations are locally devised, and while they are largely similar, there are variations. This flexibility allows Course Managers to garner the information they need to improve and refine courses. In most instances, learners are invited to give their feedback on their experience of the teaching in terms of the variance and effectiveness of methodologies used, how organised they felt the practitioner was, how approachable/supportive they were etc. This information allows the addressing of obvious issues that might be evident with regard to a practitioner's performance.

4.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

While there are adequate procedures in place, the recruitment process is an organisational function that is being formally reviewed as part of a larger review of Human Resources (HR). WWETB has initiated this HR review – carried out by Grant Thornton staff which will support the HR department in standardising processes and procedures for the benefit of managers. This review post-dates the evaluative work associated with the QOI Inaugural Review. What is shown by the information arising from WWETB staff as part of the QA review is that the review of Human Resources is timely and necessary. Our staff surveys suggested a need for further development of some aspects of the recruitment process and this was qualified in our focus group meetings with Practitioners and FET Coordinators. **'There is a systematic approach to the fair and transparent recruitment of staff'** 23% IDK, 11.5% Disagree.

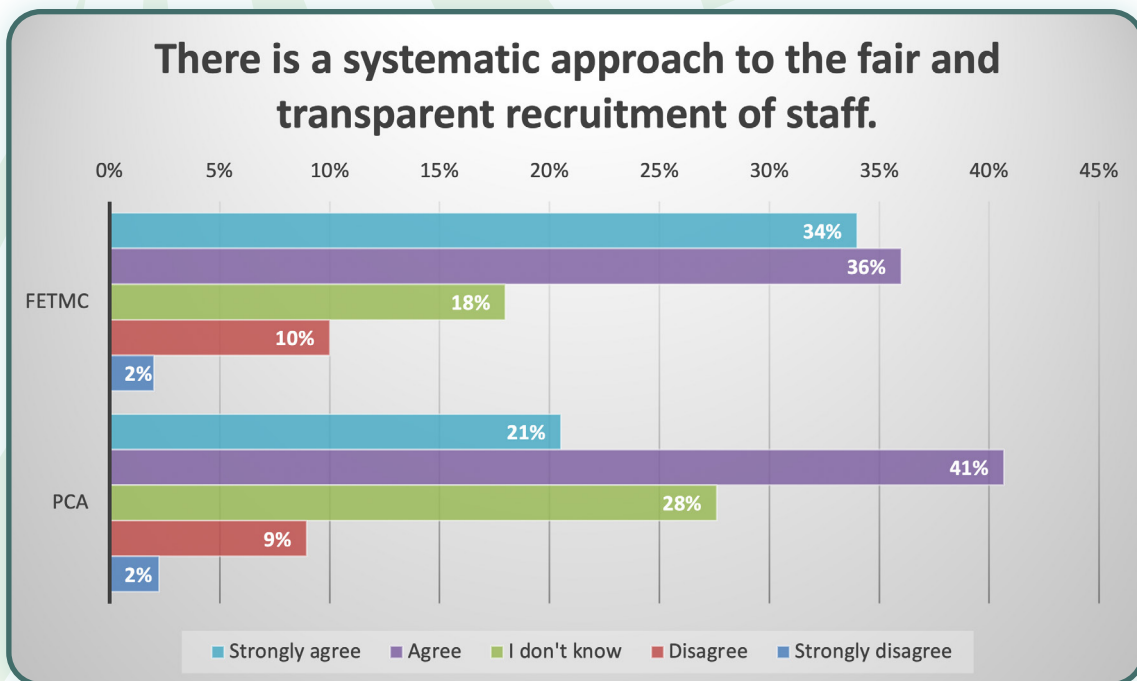


Figure 4.2: G.M.Q. (D2)

Our Focus group sessions with Practitioners and FET Managers helped us to understand that there are perceived inconsistencies in the recruitment and post-recruitment phases, which may be problematic in achieving efficiency and best outcomes in the recruiting and retaining of staff. Key concerns that arose in initial internal consultation meetings with HR and then again in our FET Manager focus group include the following barriers and challenges:

Legacy contracts and roles: The current set of grades and posts in the sector needs to be reviewed. Current grades and posts are not fully in line with the needs of the sector. An example of this would be the obligatory use of Community Education Facilitator contracts for new roles that may not be related in any way to the provision or organising of community education the provision or organising of community education.

Changing Roles within FET: Moving from one role to another similar role within FET but within a different programme type can often mean that a recruit may lose increments and have to start at point one of a different scale. There is often a lack of clarity around this for FET staff and consequent reluctance to change roles.

Attracting Industry Experts into Practitioner Positions: The inflexible nature of these legacy roles and grades can be a barrier to attracting industry experts into practitioner positions as there is no scope to remunerate relevant industry expertise.

Varying contract types and terms for similar roles: There are instances of personnel carrying out similar roles or functions with different terms. There are situations where full-time further education type contracts are working alongside teaching contracts etc. where there is great disparity in hours per-year and summer leave etc.

Job description inconsistencies: Instances of job descriptions or role responsibilities apparently changing during the recruitment process or soon after. For example, a job being advertised, withdrawn then re-advertised with a different job description.

Delay in issuing of contracts: There can be delays in receiving contracts. (The impending implementation of a new 'Part-time teacher system' may expedite issuing of staff contracts).

Many of these issues are caused by sectoral-level procedures and governing circulars (from DFHERIS, DOE & DPER). A sectoral organisational design project needs completion by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), and further redress of some of the aforementioned issues and inflexibilities in a manner that is fair and transparent.

These issues can sometimes be a barrier to recruitment and retention of industry experts, and more generally to building the FET division's capability to achieve workforce planning in line with the needs of the future. Actions to minimise these difficulties have to be led by the DFHERIS in conjunction with the relevant bodies and stakeholder representatives.

Our research shows that the organisation is performing well in terms of the provision of opportunities for staff to upskill and that centres and services have input into the type of training that is made available. This quality provision could be further developed so that individual practitioners could identify opportunities to upskill based on a model set of skills and proficiencies that the organisation promotes. While performance management could be seen as an area of underdevelopment, there are opportunities to upskill in order to be equipped with the necessary skills to assist with the delivery of quality education.

In addition to this, the focus group with FET Coordinators suggested that there could be opportunities to promote engagement with PLD by showcasing the impact of instances of PLD as they have happened within various centres or services. This would serve to advertise more effective practice and also assist in promoting the benefits of professional development to all WWETB staff. Strategies such as these could be explored further as part of the work associated with the development of WWETB's Strategic Statement 2023-2027.

4.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Implementation of the actions arising from the organisational led review of Human Resource processes and procedures.
- Further capitalisation on the progress of WWETB's PLD provision including Digital Learning. New goals to be considered for same as part of the development of WWETB's Strategic Statement 2023-2027
- Explore further collaboration between QA, PLD and Digital Learning.
- Further discussion and exploration at Senior Management level into the possibilities around performance management from a policy perspective.
- Development of an organisation-wide induction programme, a priority project under the HR Review.
- Continued implementation and review of the newly developed Induction Programme for FET managers and coordinators.

4.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB satisfies itself as to the competence and professionalism of its staff via the rigour of the recruitment process. There is an induction process and new staff are introduced to the values, systems and supports that WWETB implements. There is a well-developed system for professional learning and development in operation and there is a healthy uptake on upskilling opportunities by WWETB FET staff ensuring a constantly evolving practitioner workforce and a growing culture of excellence and innovation.

HIGHLIGHTS

PLD SharePoint- WWETB Intranet

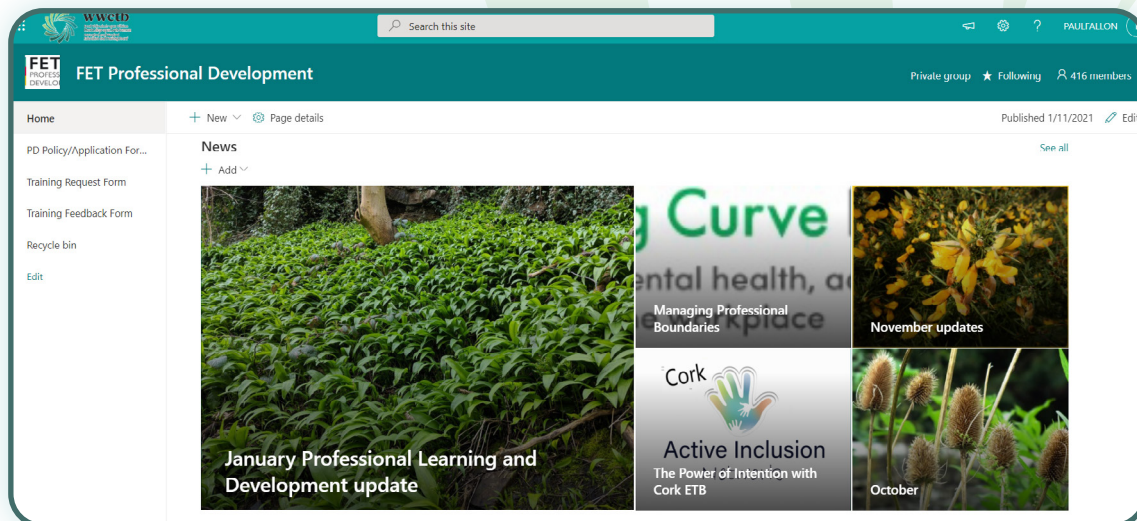


Figure 4.3: PLD SharePoint Interface

WWETB's PLD SharePoint site is an example of how the organisation is endeavouring to create an efficient and effective process for the dissemination of upskilling events and opportunities to FET staff. The Teams SharePoint site sits on the WWETB Intranet. It acts as a visual organiser of professional learning and development materials. It has a 'News' function, with a cover page through which the full news post can then be selected and accessed. The site contains other highlighted content and resources, including documents such as the FET Individual Support funding policy and application form. There were 257 beneficiaries in relation to training events that happened in 2020 and a further 27 practitioners were financially supported in engaging with higher education courses for the purposes of professional development.

Digital Learning Development- Training Roadmap

The structured Training Roadmap recommended to centres was effective in supporting staff to achieve digital competency using Teams, online meetings and digital portfolios during 20/21. The framework became particularly useful during COVID-19 restrictions where the need for training and support increased substantially. The organisation ensured through these supports that quality remote learning and online classes were a possibility for schools and FET programmes.

Training Roadmap

2020 - 2021

Getting Started with Teams

- Manage Teams
- Create channels
- Manage learners
- Team Settings
- Posts and Communication
- Files
- Customise - Add tabs & apps



Teams Assignments

- Create/Assign/Correct
- Return/Feedback/Analysis
- Student Work
- Export data



Preparing for EA

- File Management
- Transfer to EA Document library



Online Classes and Recordings

- Pre-Meeting - Schedule, Meeting Options Prepare resources. poll
- During Meeting - @mention in chat to announce meeting, poll questions, Attendance report
- Share Screen – System Audio
- Record PowerPoint
- Screen Recording



Class Notebooks

- Overview
- Demo using sample notebooks
- Assignments and Notebooks
- Maths features in notebooks
- Recording for languages
- Differentiating for learners
- Integration with apps – Flipgrid



Figure 4.4: Digital Learning Roadmap 2020-2021

5. PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND VALIDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (E) Programme Development, Approval & Validation

- E1). *WWETB has programme development and approval policies and procedures in place.*** Area for Improvement
- E2). *The policy for Programme Development and Approval ensures that: programmes for development are in line with the Provider Strategy.***
- E3). *Programmes are developed in line with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications and associated policies and procedures on Access, Transfer and Progression.***
- E4). *Programmes are designed with the involvement of learners and other stakeholders and benefit from external expertise and reference points to ensure they fulfil vocational needs where appropriate and are compliant with internal and other regulatory or professional policies and requirements.***
- E5). *Programmes are designed to enable smooth progression for learners within and between programmes and define the expected learner workload.***
- E6). *Programmes have procedures for coordinating provision at faculty (Centre) level.***
- E7). *Programmes are subject to formal internal provider approval processes against defined criteria.***
- E8). *Programmes are subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review***

WWETB's Programme Development, Delivery and Validation Policy was the first Quality Assurance policy developed subsequent to the amalgamation

of Waterford and Wexford VECs. WWETB (in partnership with Galway & Roscommon Education and Training Board and Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim Education & Training Board) also developed the first programmes to go through QQI's new programme validation policy and procedures. These programmes lead to two major and one special purpose award namely; 5M20454 Agriculture, 6M20486 Agriculture and 6S20487 Farming.

WWETB has been involved in the development of many other programmes in conjunction with the respective certification body. Such programmes include:

- Digital Assisted Eco Driving (Special Purpose Award)- QQI (with (MSLETB)
- NZEB- City & Guilds- 10 courses.
- The new Early Learning & Childcare award- QQI (with all providers- DDLETB Lead Provider).
- Polyethylene Electro Fusion Welding – METLAB- EN Standard 13067

WWETB has established a procedure for programme approval and an oversight group for governance of same. The Programme Approval Committee is a function of the FET Management Team. The FET Management Team assess a summary of the programme approval applications submitted by centres and services to offer programmes and awards prior to their delivery. The following graphic illustrates the procedure for programme approval:

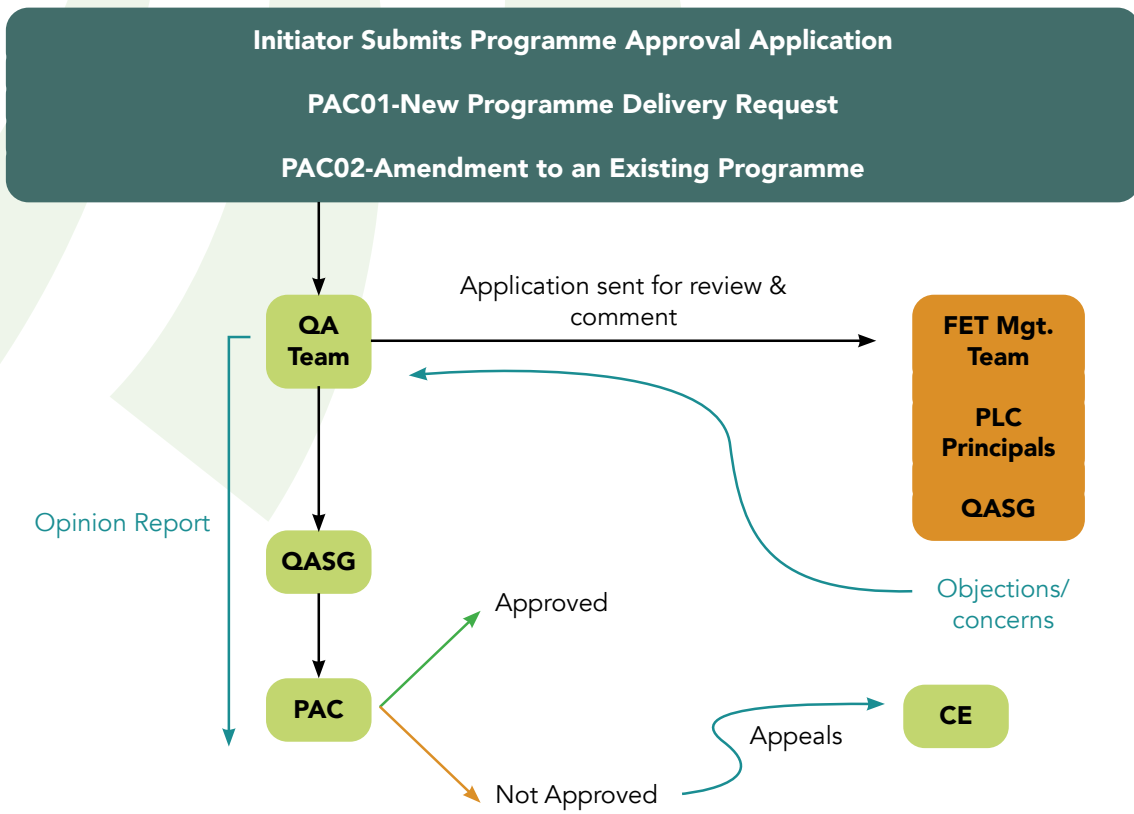


Figure 5.1: Programme Approval Workflow

The application process includes three forms of programme approval applications, namely:

- PAC 01 – Application to deliver a programme.
- PAC 02- Application to add modules to a programme (QQI 20% ruling).
- PAC ERTLA- Application to deliver in a remote/blended format in line with COVID 19 restrictions.

There are three programme approval meetings per year each held as part of designated FET Management meetings in line with the governance procedure.

The only exceptions to the WWETB PAC process are:

- Short courses made up of a small number of modules. There could be various reasons for such provision; bridging-type programmes, or preparative activity for a major-award offering etc.
- Community Education courses that are unaccredited or not leading to major awards. In these instances, Community Education facilitators process applications from community interests. The AEO with responsibility for Community Education releases the appropriate funding and/or tutor hours. There is a service-level agreement for the provision. Monthly reports and end of project reports are written and are subject to audit.

5.2 WHAT IS WORKING

The documentation associated with WWETB's Programme development, validation and approval procedures serve as evidence that the processes are in line with the Provider strategy and National Framework of Qualifications. There are procedures for quality assurance of programme provision at faculty(Centre) level. This is aptly illustrated in the Agriculture programmes process documentation, as the faculty involved with the courses was integral to the programme development process. This process documentation also illustrates that access, transfer and progression are key considerations associated with programme development, validation and approval. The organisation engages in meaningful stakeholder consultation as part of programme development procedures. Employers surveyed responded that they are consulted for their input on WWETB provision (82%) and that WWETB-run programmes conform with regulatory and professional standards required for their respective industries (100%).

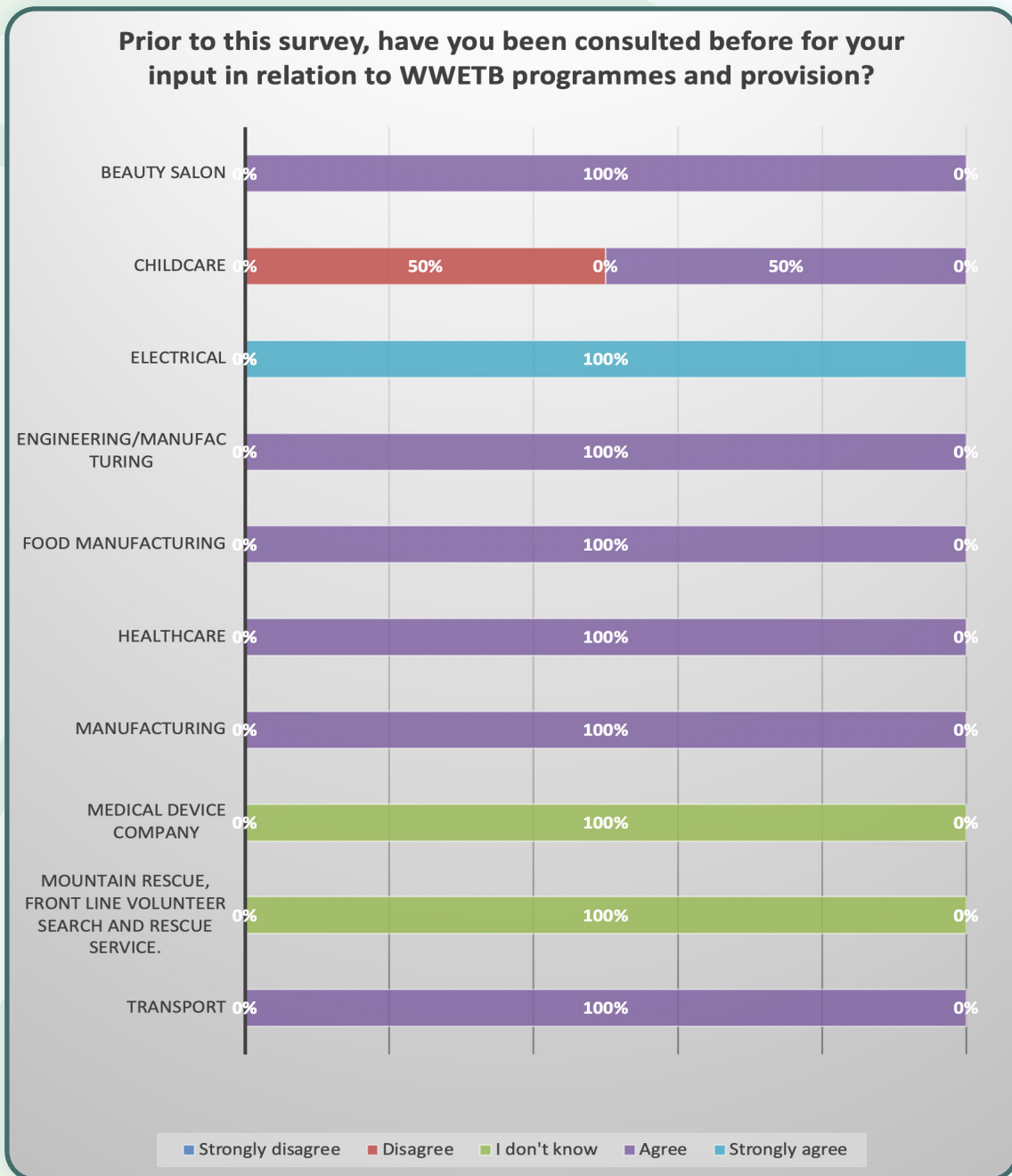


Figure 5.2: GMQ E4(a)

The programme approval process is systematically robust with a transparent and effective oversight process. The process enables FET Management to plan provision efficiently (and in accordance with WWETB strategy) so that localised need is catered for and the potential for competition between FET programmes is greatly reduced. The various stages of the programme approval process provides structure and clarity around course & programme options and enables a complimentary regional provision.

5.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Programme development and validation was a policy area addressed early in the formation of WWETB policies and procedures and while the policy is long established, it is also in need of review and redevelopment.

Prior to the review of the Programme Development and Validation policy, some thought and consideration will have to be given to the development of a process by which all delivered programmes can be reviewed. The QA Team regularly updates and recirculates QQI module descriptors where there have been errors identified or elements have become out-dated or irrelevant. Issues with descriptors are generally identified by Tutors who pass them on to the QA Team to address. While this practice keeps our QQI modules and awards relatively up-to date, it does present a more fundamental challenge to the ETB with regard to the intended learning outcomes of all further education and training courses we deliver. Are they being adequately reviewed? What is the process for liaising with each of the certification bodies we work with to ensure that our course delivery is based on the most up-to-date and industry relevant course structures? This presents as an area for further development.

5.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Review and redevelopment of Programme Development and Validation Policy.
- Explore the opportunities and challenges associated with formal organisational programme review with a view to developing a programme review policy.
- Explore the possibility of creating a specific programme development unit as part of the QA Team

5.5 SUMMARY POINTS

Much work has been done in order to quality-assure WWETB's approach to programme development, validation and approval and the organisation has the benefit of experienced personnel and mature procedures in this regard. This has enabled the development of many new and innovative programmes ensuring WWETB's provision is able to evolve and keep pace with industry (see highlights for this section). There are actions for quality assurance with this section, mainly centred on review and refinement of practice.

HIGHLIGHTS



WWETB is Ireland's Premier Provider of Near Zero Energy-rated Building (NZEB) Training.

WWETB has developed a number of training courses that are designed to provide learners with knowledge of the principles and practices that help achieve the NZEB standard and WWETB Quality Assurance has played a key role in this. These courses are the first trade specific NZEB courses being delivered in Europe. There are ten NZEB training courses being offered in both Waterford and Wexford. The courses were recently featured on RTE's (Ireland's National Broadcaster) 'ECO EYE', a primetime television show which features environmental initiatives and issues.

<http://waterfordwexford.etb.ie/latest-news/eco-eye-team-visit-waterford-training-service-retrofit-training/>



Figure 5.3: RTÉ's Duncan Stuart features the WWETB NZEB Programme on 'Eco-Eye'



6. ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (F) Access Transfer & Progression

- F1). WWETB has a policy and appropriate procedures to facilitate learner access to, transfer between and progression from WWETB run programmes. These procedures are fit for purpose.** Area for Improvement
- F2). There is induction as standard for learners into the organisation and onto their respective programmes.**
- F3). WWETB has processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on learner progression and completion rates.**
- F4). WWETB implements fair recognition of education and training qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.** Area for Improvement
- F5). There is co-operation with other providers and agencies as appropriate. In particular, there is co-operation with QQI.**

WWETB is committed to a transparent and fair approach to the enrolment of learners onto our FET programmes. Accessing WWETB run programmes begins with programme/course promotion and awareness. Programmes and courses are promoted by WWETB in a number of ways:

- WWETB's Official Website and Training Website.
- WWETB's Facebook Page.
- WWETB's Official Twitter page
- The National Further Education and Training Course Hub (Fetch website)
- Programme promotional material e.g. leaflets, flyers, posters etc.
- WWETB Information & Guidance Service
- Occasional media opportunities e.g. radio, local print media, T.V. etc.
- Local INTREO Offices
- Centre run social media platforms

The management of a prospective learner application is a centre-managed process. Entry requirements are in-line with the national criteria as set down for each provision type and in line with the entry criteria as proposed by the certifying body. Prospective learners can apply to courses by means of the FETCH website, by filling out an application form available from their preferred centre, or by simply giving their details to a WWETB staff member either in person or via phone or e-mail. WWETB uses interviews as the first point of access for each prospective learner, carried out by centre management or the Training Recruitment Service as appropriate. The exceptions to this would be for 'direct call' courses such as apprenticeships. Following on from access onto a course is the induction procedure.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) for admission to a course is managed at centre-level and supported by the QA Team. Similarly, the transfer of learners either between services or from one provider to another is managed by centres or Training Services Recruitment and subject to the same fair scrutiny, transparency and fairness as the application process and RPL process.

As part of the programme approval application process, centre managers are requested to provide specific information on the progression options for learners. Suitable progression options are a factor in the consideration of approval to run a programme. WWETB collects data on learner progression within WWETB provision and data of progression to the higher education courses where collaborative progression arrangements exist.

Formal associations have been formed with local technological institutions such as Waterford Institute of Technology, Carlow Institute of Technology and Carlow College (St. Patrick's) to enable cooperative and efficient progression of WWETB learners onto relevant Higher Education courses.

6.2 WHAT IS WORKING

WWETB's Strategy Statement 2018-2022 committed to the following goals in this area:

- ***'Focus on access and develop strategies that reduce barriers to participation in education and training and ensure equality of opportunity for all learners'.***
- ***'Ensure equality of opportunity, experience and outcome for learners with additional learning needs, special educational needs or disabilities, so that they can avail of the full range of education and training opportunities that WWETB offers'.***

In line with the strategic commitments outlined above, WWETB appointed in January 2021 an Access and Disability Officer, a new position within the organisation’s FET provision. The Access and Disability Officer (FET), has a specific remit for active inclusion. Much of the focus of the role is supporting FET Provision in the widening of participation; including learners from underrepresented groups, persons with a disability, individuals experiencing disadvantage, mature learners, and learners from diverse and minority backgrounds. Participation reports are developed for priority cohorts using PLSS Data, WWETB and SOLAS analytics and case studies. The Access and Disability Officer also sits on the WWETB Equality and Human Rights Public Sector Duty implementation committee.

There exists an organisational awareness of being in a position to meet the requirements for public providers of Education & Training of ‘Part M’ (2010) of the 2005 Disability Act by January 2022. The QA Team will continue to work closely with the Access & Disability Officer to ensure a quality-assured approach to FET access and that practices in this regard are as inclusive as is practicable.

Primary research shows that WWETB FET services are extremely strong on the induction of learners onto courses. 93% of learners surveyed responded that they were inducted onto their respective courses and received all necessary information. See graph below.

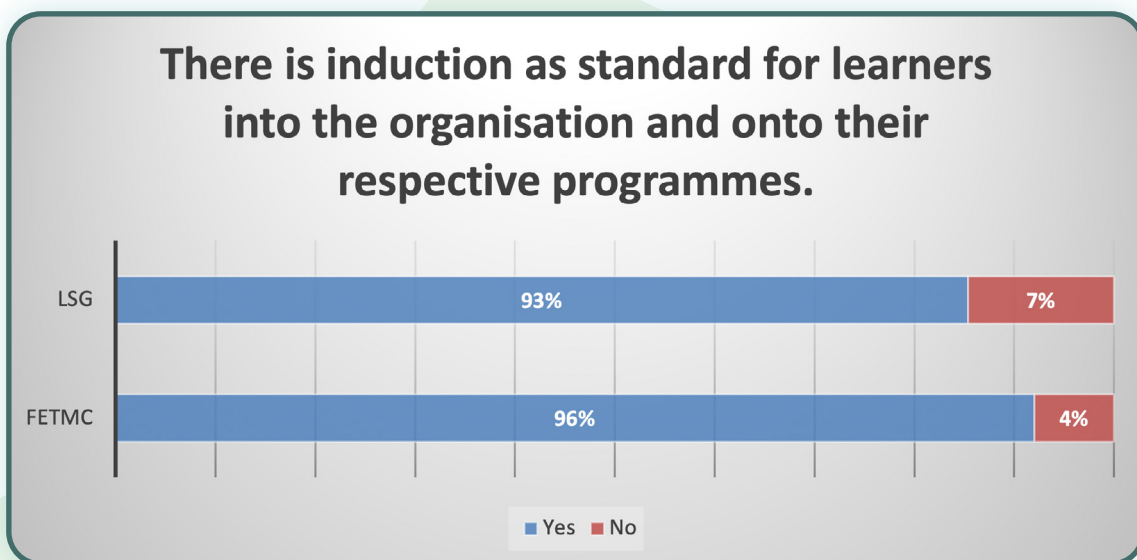


Figure 6.1: G.M.Q. (F2)

Collaboration with other agencies is another area of strength for WWETB. As previously stated, WWETB has developed robust professional relationships with several higher education institutes to strengthen progression options for WWETB graduates. The QA Manager maintains a robust collaborative relationship with ETBI and QQI on behalf of the organisation and there have

been many instances of specific RPL requests from QQI representatives that WWETB have collaboratively facilitated. Similarly, strong working relationships exist with other certification bodies that WWETB is in partnership with.

WWETB collaborates extensively with the Department of Social Protection to support applicants from the live register in upskilling or re-entering education. WWETB upholds a collaborative relationship with SOLAS. In particular, representatives of SOLAS work closely with the organisation on developing strategies for the effective collection and use of data as this is an area of relative strength for WWETB by virtue of the fact that there is data analysis expertise within the organisation. WWETB maintains strong relationships with secondary providers. Transfer to and from WWETB primary and secondary provision functions well. This is reflected in the survey responses from training partners.

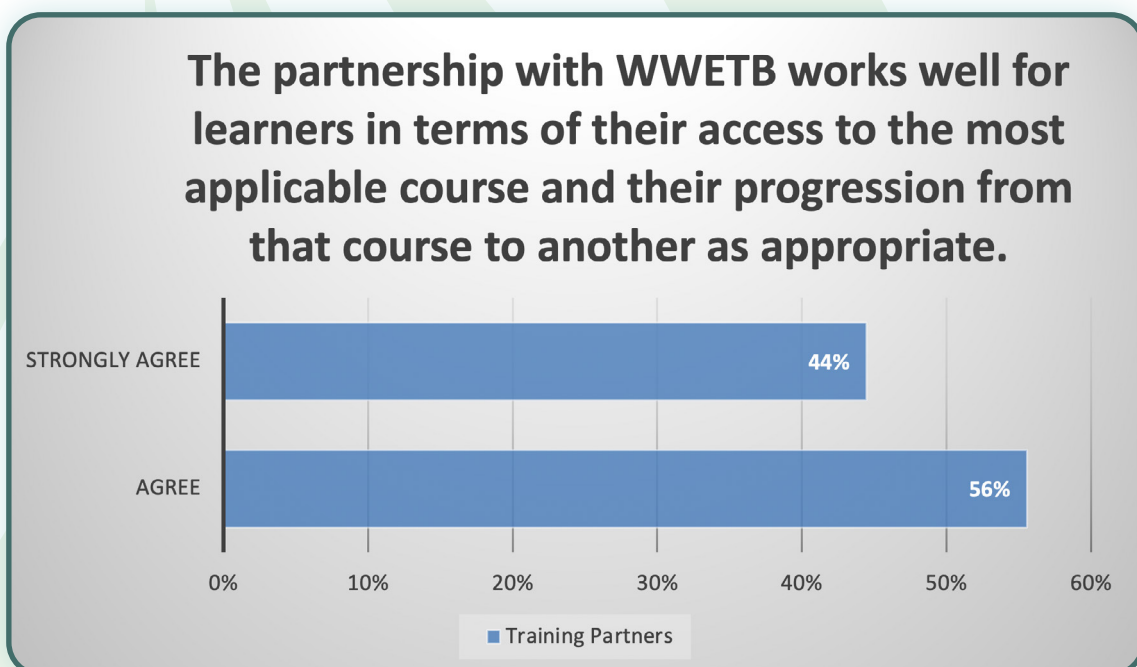


Figure 6.2: G.M.Q. (F5)

6.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

WWETB endeavours to cater for all potential learners in the region seeking further education and training. The organisation is satisfied that access, transfer and progression practices are fair and consistent. While the organisation has legacy policies in operation in this area (such as the Access, Transfer Policy in the TQAS), an overarching policy on access, transfer and progression is a key document that needs to be developed so that standardised procedures can be quality-assured. In this instance an overarching policy may not alter current practice in terms of the 'rules' around access, transfer and progression but it may assist with a quality-assured approach to any exceptions to the rules as

they might occur.

Recognition of prior learning is a practice that is supported by the QA Team when necessary, predominantly in terms of access to courses. Learners can receive formal exemptions on components based on their prior acquisition of certification comparable to the award they may be eligible to an exemption for. An outstanding action for the QA Team is to review the current policy and procedure which governs recognition of prior learning for certification and access.

Some programmes implement an initial assessment of Learners with the function of establishing the correct course level (where more than one level is offered) or to assess for potential learner supports required. In the survey of FET Managers (representational of all WWETB FET programmes) the following statement was proffered for response: **'Learners are systematically assessed upon their application to a programme where appropriate to ensure the programme can meet their needs?'** 64% agreed with the statement and 28% disagreed with 8% 'N/A.' Currently, there is no standardised approach to initial assessment for learners. There may be different approaches within the same provision. This is an area that needs further investigation in association with the Access and Disability Officer.

WWETB has the capacity to collect data associated with provision and to do so with an educated sense of the data's reliability and versatility. Progression information is one of the data sets which the ETB hopes to systematically and periodically gather and review. While the process of collecting and collating data is relatively easy to formalise, the process of making strategic judgements based on this data is more difficult as the sector is complex and nuanced. The QA Team is in the process of developing a policy in this area and input from the Review Team is welcomed in this regard.

6.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- QA Team to collaborate on a FET Inclusion Policy and redevelop the Access, Transfer and Progression policy.
- Plan a review of the current Recognition of Prior Learning and procedures with a view to incorporating RPL for certification
- QA Team and Access & Disability Officer to review initial assessment practices with a view to development of a more standardised approach
- Continued preparation for the New Disability Act 2023.
- Continued preparation for meeting the requirements of 'Part M' (2010) of 2005 Disability Act.

6.5 SUMMARY POINTS

Access to, transfer between and progression from WWETB programmes works well and our consultation and research provided no evidence of deficiencies that contravenes the ETB's commitment to fair and equitable practice in this regard. Some elements of practice require more formalisation and this will form part of the continued work of the WWETB QA Team.

HIGHLIGHTS

Access and Transfer- Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre (EROC)
WWETB is delighted to be involved in the welcoming of and provision of supports to refugee families that have arrived to our communities in recent years. Clonea Strand, Dungarvan serves as one of only two such 'EROCs' in the country, the other being in Ballaghadreen in Co. Roscommon. WWETB has worked closely with programme managers/coordinators in receiving ETBs when families resettle into towns and villages throughout Ireland. This entails the management and correspondence of all necessary details that would allow families to seamlessly engage in continued educational support appropriate to the associated needs and circumstances in a fitting and humanistic way.

The processes associated with this collaborative method of access to education and transfer of learners is illustrative of WWETB's overall quality-assured approach to access, transfer and progression of learners.



7. INTEGRITY AND APPROVAL OF RESULTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (G) Integrity & Approval of Results

- G1). WWETB has and implements key assessment based policies that help to ensure integrity of assessment across all courses.**
- G2). WWETB has standard and related assessment procedures and documentation.**
- G3). WWETB Practitioners can avail of regular support and information around integrity of assessment.**
- G4). WWETB has a robust and consistent authentication and appeals process for certification of learners.**
- G5). WWETB does a formal review of EA reports and items of note form part of feedback and support by QA Team and QA Briefings.**
- G6). WWETB has procedures to address malpractice or suspected malpractice in Assessment.**
- G7). WWETB has a policy and process of Reasonable Accommodation so learners with specific difficulties or disabilities are able to learn and demonstrate their learning and ability in a valid and fair manner.** Area for Improvement
- G8). WWETB has a formal system for collecting and reviewing grades distribution across all FET services and using this data to flag any certification anomalies.** Area for Improvement

WWETB is committed to integrity in assessment of learners and approval of all results. Key policies and procedures have been developed by the QA Team to ensure that assessment happens in a fair, consistent and transparent manner. The QA Team has also developed guidelines and support documentation accessible to all FET staff via the QA SharePoint site. QA briefings focus on the procedures associated with assessment and are delivered by service, region or centre where appropriate. The QA Team delivers briefing sessions each year for new practitioners. Many of these briefing presentations are saved on the QA SharePoint site for reference. A schedule of QA briefings is included in appendix 4.

The integrity of the assessment process is monitored by way of the results approval process incorporating internal verification (IV), external authentication and the results approval panel. There is a standardised approach in both further education and training for internal verification, external authentication and results approval (although the process between the two is slightly different).

The QA Team liaises with centre coordinators/principals and designated QQI-QA personnel in each further education centre in all matters pertaining to submission for certification. This group is notified about deadlines for returning certification estimates for up-coming certification periods. The QA personnel schedule external authenticators based on the certification estimates and there is 3-way communication clarity between the QA Team personnel, the centre QA contact and the external authenticator to schedule the centre visit/online visit.

External Authenticators are selected from a list of trained personnel based on their area of expertise at appropriate NFO level. The QA Team has developed an internal list of authenticators comprising of contacts that have been processed as WWETB staff (for payment). All authenticators in use by WWETB feature on the ETBI External Authenticator Directory.

On foot of the external authentication process follows the results approval panel process. A Results Approval Panel meeting is held shortly after the EA report has been issued to the centre and the WWETB QA person. The Results Approval Panel consists of the programme coordinator and centre QA person (optional), any tutors that the centre coordinator may designate as appropriate and the QA Officer and Assistant QA Officer or Assistant Training Standards Officer. The panel considers the Internal Verification, External Authentication processes and reports. Recommended grade changes are considered by this panel. The report is then finalised and issued to the Centre Coordinator/Manager.

For Training, this process is managed by the Training Standards Officers of the QA Team. Tutors/Instructors submit the assessment schedule at the beginning of the course. The QA Team organise the assessment material as appropriate and assist the tutor/instructor in maintaining security of assessment. The QA Team provide a Peer-Reviewer where appropriate and schedule the external authenticator. Learner assessment material is collected by the QA Team who submit results to the RCCRS system subsequent to the Results Approval Panel Meeting and proceed to manage Learner Appeals.

The QA Team has established a policy and procedures around Examinations and Assessment Malpractice to ensure consistency and fairness. 88% of FET Managers and Coordinators reported that they are aware that these are in place. Policies and procedures on Short-term Extensions and Compassionate Consideration have also been developed so that learners are supported in assessment in a way that is consistent and fair and upholds the integrity of the assessment process.

7.2 WHAT IS WORKING

Integrity in assessment has been a keen focus of the QA Team and the development of assessment policies and procedures coupled with the effort that has gone into standardising approaches across provision has paid dividends in this regard. Feedback from our survey groups indicates that integrity, consistency and security in assessment procedures is an area of strength.

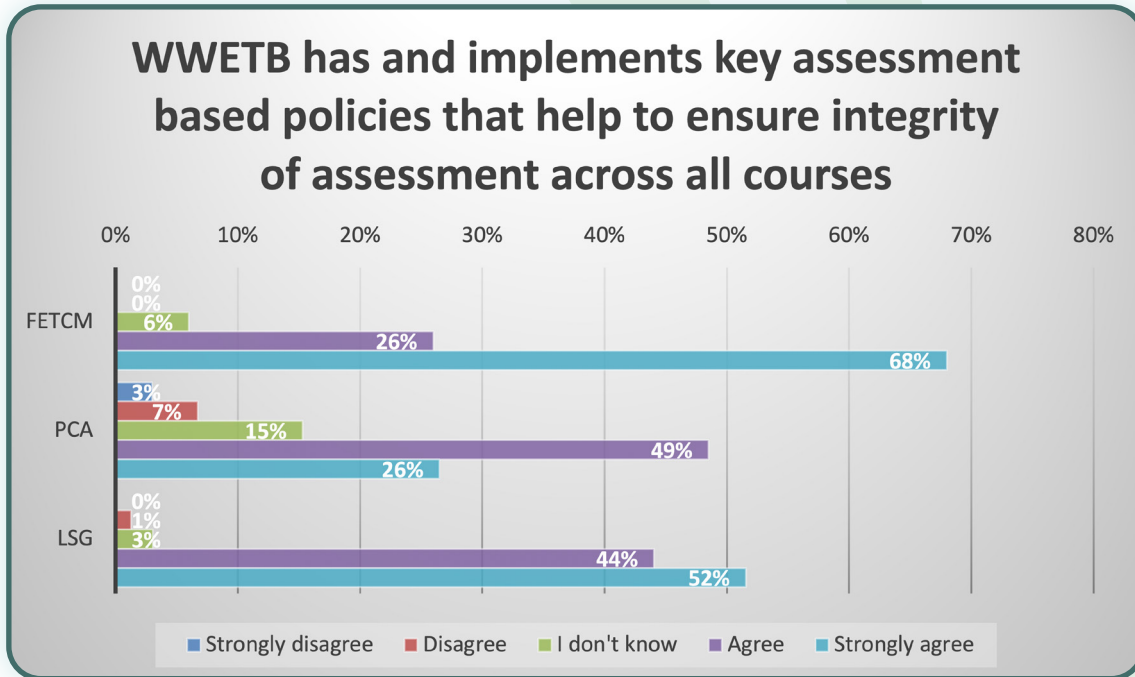


Figure 7.1: G.M.Q. (G1)

The investment of the QA team assessment-related briefings has contributed to the use of standardised documentation and formats for presentation of assessment material. 98% of Practitioners surveyed indicated that **'there are standard procedures and documentation in place relating to assessment'**. In addition to this the briefings have engendered an understanding across provision of the role of Quality Assurance and a familiarity with the personnel on the QA team. This has helped the development of the QA Team towards being a support unit within FET and there is frequent consultation with the unit from practitioners and coordinators alike seeking clarification or guidance where there is uncertainty or anomalies related to assessment. In the survey of practitioners, it was indicated that they know where they can seek clarification for any queries pertaining to assessment.

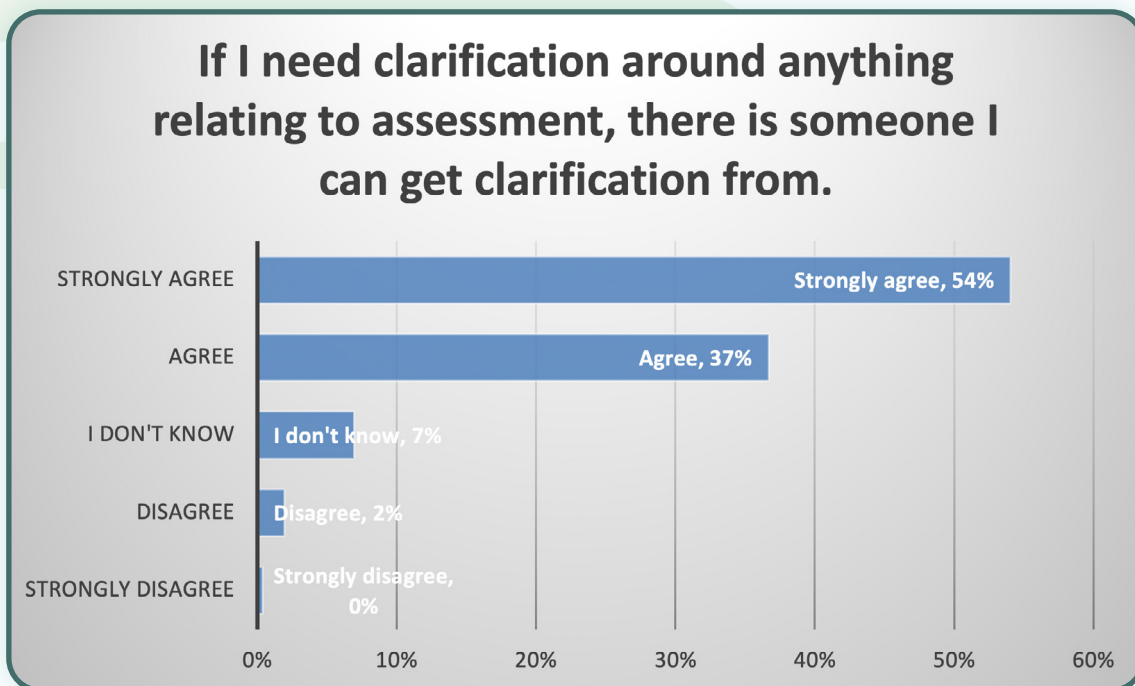


Figure 7.2: G.M.Q. (G3)

The QA Team produces an internal report annually based on the review of all EA reports for that year. This report enables the QA Team to assess areas of systematic good practice or any recurring issues or patterns of systematic under-performance. One example of this would be the 2019 report in which there was a slight recurrence of EA comments relating to deficiencies in referencing for some courses. For the following year, QA briefings addressed referencing and plagiarism in assessment and reinforced the implementation of the ETBI Referencing Handbook as the guide for referencing for WWETB FET provision (WWETB QA personnel were involved in the initial development of this resource). This QA internal review of EA reports and more so, the EA reports themselves, serve as an independent endorsement of the WWETB assessment and IV processes.

WWETB has developed a common Appeals Policy for FET provision and there are robust procedures associated with this. Practitioners surveyed reported that **'the authentication of results process is consistent and fair'** - 93% and **'there is a fair and consistent appeals process'** (87% -12.6% were IDK likely representing programmes where appeals are a rarity).

7.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

There is a robust Reasonable Accommodation Policy and associated procedures in place for SOLAS-supported training programmes and these are fairly and consistently implemented. The WWETB QA Team is reviewing

the overarching Reasonable Accommodation Policy and while there are reasonable accommodation practices in place across our further education provision (verified by FETMC survey -92%), there are variances and there is not yet a standardised organisational approach. Some of the difficulties with setting down reasonable accommodation procedures stems from infrastructural difficulties in the further education sector. In training and for programmes such as the Leaving Certificate Applied, there are clear procedures (emanating from the department of Further and Higher Education oversight agencies) for contracting a reader or scribe and remunerating same. There is no such process in further education. The Reasonable Accommodation policy has formed part of the agenda for QA Steering group meetings and the QA Team is proceeding with the review of the policy.

WWETB has in place a Data Analyst and the position is under the oversight of the QA Manager. The data analyst and QA personnel are working collaboratively in the formation of a FET Programme Data Management policy. One of the data sets that will be systematically gathered and reviewed will be grade analysis. Further work is required to establish an intuitive benchmarking methodology as part of data review. In addition to this, while data collation in itself is a complex process, the distillation of the data into information and the subsequent interpretation and dissemination of this information is complex and nuanced and requires a considered and conscientious approach.

The QA Team enjoys a communicative and effective working relationship with designated QQI-QA personnel appointed in each further education centre. The QQI-QA role is not a formalised role and for the most part, forms part of the responsibilities of a Resource Person or the Coordinator of each centre. The exception to this is in PLC colleges, where the role can form part of a Post of Responsibility for a member of the teaching staff. There are no current issues with regard to the role associated with QQI-QA personnel and it is managed locally within centres but the lack of formalisation of role and functions leaves a greater risk of the mitigation of quality and merits further exploration and discussion at management level.

7.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Continued development of the Reasonable Accommodation process for further education and training provision.
- Continued development of FET Programme Data Management Policy. Grade distribution to form one of the key data indicator sets.
- Explore the approaches to in-centre 'QA personnel' with a view to standardisation as appropriate.

7.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB has robust policies and procedures in place for the authentication process associated with assessment and certification. Feedback from stakeholders indicates that there is high awareness of, and confidence in the associated procedures. It is noteworthy that learners surveyed responded overwhelmingly that assessment procedures are fair. WWETB places high value on the learning from the input of External Authenticators and there is a process by which this learning is refined and fed back at centre-level by the QA Team. Standardised reasonable accommodation processes that will continue to uphold the efficiency and integrity of the assessment and authentication process are under development.

HIGHLIGHTS

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in contingency internal verification and external authentication plans being put in place by the QA Team. This process and the smooth implementation of adapted procedures, including remote external authentication in some instances, is a good indicator of the effectiveness of WWETB assessment and authentication procedures.

Where centres opted for a remote external authentication process, the QA Team conducted a review of the processes by consulting with Centre Management, Practitioners and associated External Authenticators. The review in turn resulted in the development of a 'Guide to Remote External Authentication' by the QA Team. QA and the WWETB Digital-Learning Lead then collaborated to roll out training for all FET staff incorporating on-line assessment of learners and preparation for an online authentication process.

8. INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

8.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (H) Information & Data Management

- H1). WWETB has a system for collating reliable information and data for informed decision-making and to ensure the provider knows what is working well and what needs attention.** Area for Improvement
- H2). Appropriate, quantitative and qualitative measures are identified which can be used as benchmarks or key performance indicators.**
- H3). The learner information management system used by WWETB is fit for purpose, robust and comprehensive.**
- H4). WWETB ensures that PLSS data is as accurate as possible and reflects programme activity appropriately.** Area for Improvement
- H5). WWETB complies with General Data Protection Regulation and WWETB information systems and procedures safeguard against data breaches.**
- H6). WWETB complies with FOI legislation and requests.**

WWETB FET Management is keenly aware of the important role that data plays in the information process that feeds into quality-assured services and provision. Data and statistics play an integral role in the funding process associated with FET and have a key part to play in the high-level review and evaluation of programmes. WWETB uses a management information system known as the Programme and Learner Support System (PLSS). PLSS is a national SOLAS/ETBI initiative and data is hosted by SOLAS. PLSS is used to manage course information, learner records and reporting, providing the key data on FET course outputs and outcomes. PLSS provides a secure sharing, collecting and use of data system through four- portals:

- **National Programme Database (NPD)**- repository of FET programmes being delivered nationally.

- **National Course Calendar (NCC)** –schedule of programmes. Data in the NCC is transferred to the Further Education Training Course Hub (FETCH) website fetchcourses.ie – allowing applicants to search, view and apply for courses online.
- **Learner Database** – Data from FETCH online applications is transferred into the Learner Database. Further data entered at ETB level for enrolled learners creates a secure learner record.
- **Funding Allocation Requests and Reporting System (FARR)** - Funding Allocations Requests and Reporting (FARR) system was developed for utilisation in the 2015 planning and funding process. FARR is a web application linked to a database which has the capacity to capture quantitative data in a questionnaire format. WWETB’s rollout of PLSS means that centres plan courses annually in a linked system known as FARR. Data from both the NCC and Learner Database is transferred to the Funding Allocation Requests and Reporting System (FARR) and is used in SOLAS reports.

Some of the personal information that is secured by the organisation is input onto information systems managed by other agencies such as certification providers. In these instances, WWETB is not the data owner. Platforms in use for the recording of learner data required for the processing of results and certification include:

- The **Apprenticeship Client Services System** is in place to record apprentice achievement on Apprenticeship Programmes. (Other platforms are also in use, such as HairApp.ie for the new hairdressing apprenticeship).
- The Results Capture and Certification Request System (**RCCRS**) is used to record information pertaining to certification for all training courses other than Apprenticeships.
- City and Guilds certification, the **City & Guilds Walled Garden** platform is used. WWETB is a designated ‘Super-user’ provider of City & Guilds certification.
- Information required for RTITB certification is managed via the **NORS system**.
- ICDL certification (formerly ECDL) is managed using a secure online platform via **ICS Skills**.
- ITEC certification results and certification information is managed using **ITEC World**.
- Time and attendance for participants on training courses eligible for specific payments is done via the Trainee Apprentice Clocking System (**TACS**).

WWETB has in place a Data Protection Policy which asserts the types of information that WWETB collects and the manner in which this information is used. The policy also outlines the rights and responsibilities of the individual and WWETB as the Data controller. There is a Data Protection Officer in place and a Governance and Compliance team. The organisation's IT department ensure that all IT platforms in use across WWETB provision are adequately robust in terms of security. Data breaches are managed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

WWETB is fully compliant with the Freedom of Information Act 2014. There is policy and procedures in place for the processing of freedom of information (FOI) requests. There are designated personnel in place to manage FOI requests. Records are kept of all FOI requests and the data forms part of the CE's report to the WWETB Board.

8.2 WHAT IS WORKING WELL

WWETB has key personnel in place to manage and oversee the appropriate and secure collection and use of data and information. Data Protection and Freedom of Information requests are handled by Corporate Services personnel to ensure compliance with the relevant acts. At Practitioner level, the survey response showed that there is confidence in the awareness of the responsibilities associated with data protection.

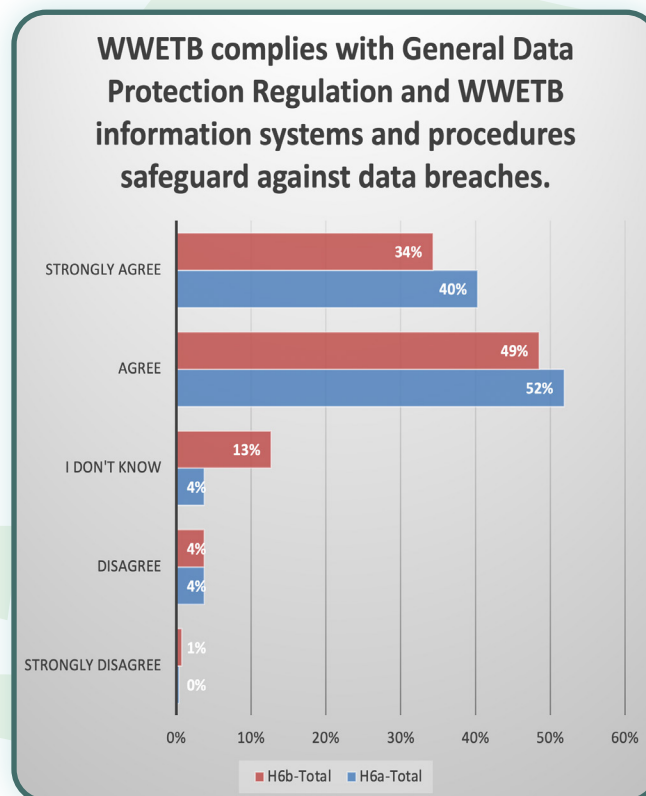


Figure 8.1: GMQ-(H6)

The organisation's IT Manager and IT department have robust procedures in place to ensure that our information systems are secure and appropriately tested and maintained. There is a process in place for the procurement of IT software and hardware and this is also managed by the IT department to ensure that the most appropriate and secure products are purchased in compliance with our procurement policy.

Members of the WWETB QA Team include a PLSS Coordinator whose role is to assist Managers with ensuring that PLSS data is entered correctly and that back-end data accuracy is ensured in as much as possible. PLSS data is integral to funding and while there are still improvements to be made in ensuring the accuracy of PLSS data, it is a process that is progressing well. Also part of the QA Team is a designated Data Analyst. The Data Analyst works closely with the PLSS coordinator in the process of ensuring data accuracy and is involved in the collation and presentation of data and information required for formal reporting to SOLAS, ETBI, the WWETB Board and other agencies as appropriate.

The QA Manager and the Data Analyst are working to develop WWETB's programme data management policy for FET. The organisation has the capacity to gather a multitude of varying data sets and to then refine these sets by course, centre, provision, area, time period etc. creating a raft of information. The policy will define the process for the use of data for review and establish what information types will be systematically collated as part of a performance review process for FET.

8.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

The organisation is making every effort to ensure data reliability in the use of PLSS. Centre management personnel and the PLSS Coordinator are working continuously in the improvement of data accuracy. Initial training was rolled out to data inputters and this was effective. A fresh wave of training, tailored to provision types will be developed and rolled out for the next academic year. In conjunction with this, it is intended that standard operating procedures will be developed by the QA Team to support data inputters in achieving optimum accuracy in the use of PLSS.

Primary research for the self-evaluation process enabled the gleaning of FET Manager confidence in the appropriateness of PLSS for capturing course outcomes accurately. Our survey of FET Managers showed a 44% lack of support for the associated statement.

PLSS enables the recording of all course activity and outcomes appropriately.

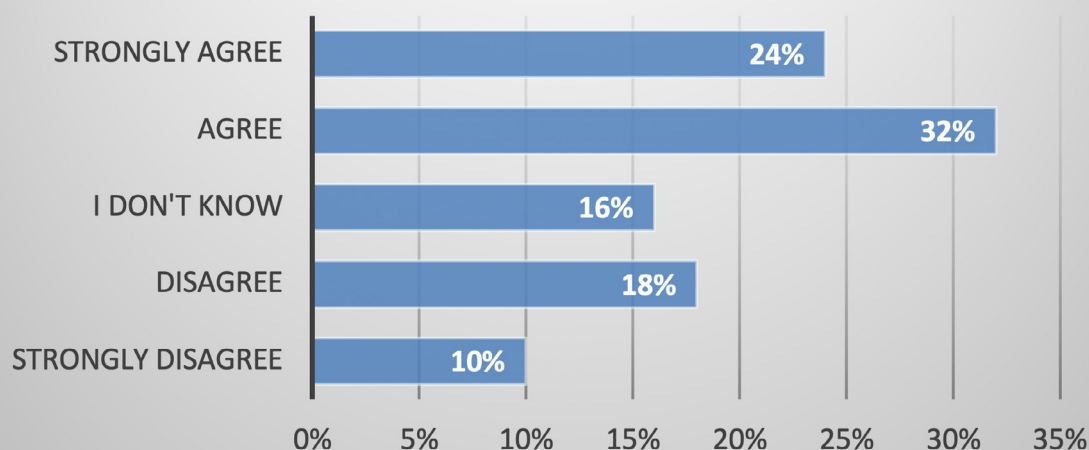


Figure 8.2: GMQ-H4(b)

Further exploration of this with our FET Coordinator Focus Group elicited the following perceived issues with PLSS:

- The disjointedness of PLSS and QBS makes data inputting a much more onerous task for Centre Managers and can contribute to inaccuracies in input activity. A more integrated system would be more appropriate.
- There are concerns about the use of certification data as being the predominant measurement tool by which funding agencies are viewing the success of FET courses. There are hugely significant 'soft outcomes' from engagement with FET that are not present in beneficiary data but that are crucial outcomes nonetheless for individuals, communities and society in general. It is imperative that the respective funding agencies invest effort into assuaging the fears of many FET practitioners with regard to the perception of funding body values, as a possible impact of not doing so is a shift in the values of programmes to a less client-centred approach and to a more quantitative one where certification outcomes take precedence over fundamental learner needs.
- Centres are asked to record progression outcomes for learners on PLSS. It is felt by some that learner progression is a continuum and that the impact of a course in terms of learner progression is frequently a mid-term rather than a short-term one but that there is little value placed by funding bodies on the more mid-term and long-term progression outcomes.

WWETB is satisfied that it has the necessary facilities and personnel to capture and review data and the development of a FET Programme Data Management Policy will make this a systematic process for the organisation. An aspect of this policy development which is cause for much consideration is the possible implementation of benchmarks which would serve as performance indicators. Another aspect for consideration is the prospect of dissemination of information to FET Managers and Practitioners that may be construed as an indicator of performance. FET provision is shaped and impacted by many factors, some are local or regional, some are transitory. There are varying possible benefits and detriments to sharing quantitative information at each level in the organisation, especially in a comparative fashion. It is an area that requires further consideration by the QA Team and FET Management and the Review Panel's input on this is welcomed.

A consistent systematic approach to document retention across all FET provision and centres needs to be developed. The varying approaches have meant that substantial work is required for the preparation for audits. This is particularly evident in the context of European Social Fund (ESF) audits, where the specificity and amounts of documentation required is particularly onerous. A complete list of course and learner documentation as required for ESF audits is needed, along with standard operating procedures and the engagement of a document storage company. A scoping document has been developed to outline the project requirements.

8.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Develop Standard Operating Procedures for PLSS data input.
- Investigate the further resourcing of the PLSS support function.
- Continued development of FET Programme Data Management Policy. Further consideration of the establishment of 'key-performance indicators'.
- Complete Document Retention Project including tender for an engagement of document storage company.

8.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB is adhering to its Data Protection and Freedom of Information responsibilities in accordance with the relevant acts and the survey response has shown that the responsibilities in relation to data protection are known at practitioner level. The organisation has robust IT systems in place to maximise the security of information that is collected and shared. Input accuracy is an improving process in terms of the learner management system (PLSS) and there

are plans in place to further this improvement. WWETB has a keen focus on the capturing and use of data as a key tool in developing FET provision and much has been done in the establishment of a programme data management policy and procedures for FET.

HIGHLIGHTS

Area Development - Bunclody Local Education and Training Planning (LETP)

In 2018 WWETB developed a Local Education and Training Development Plan for Bunclody, Co. Wexford. Information to support the plan was collected from a range of sources and stakeholders. A comprehensive data report was written based on CSO 2016, POBAL HP Deprivation Index, POBAL Maps (Oct 2018) to gain an understanding of the local demography and expected changes to that in the future. PLSS data was used to view localised FET engagement and outcomes. WWETB FET services operating in the area were surveyed as to the reach and effectiveness of programmes in relation to specific target groups.

The collation and review of this data by FET Management led to the identification of eight key actions and the formation of an LETP Team, with the goal of providing a more tailored FET offering in Bunclody, with particular focus on increasing engagement with the identified specific target groups. The plan was submitted to SOLAS and was included in FAR 4 for consideration under Innovation (Dec 2018). The innovation funding for the initiatives that are based on the eight identified actions was confirmed in May 2019 and heralded the implementation phase which was reviewed in October and December by the LETP Team.

Benefits to Programme	Unexpected Benefits	Challenges	Lessons for next plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 new computers • Introduced on line learning • Additional funding (signage/advertising) • Making links with other programmes • Joined up thinking • Progression pathways between FET • Joint brochure/marketing • Training future community workers • Opportunity to meet with DEASP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre is busier • More awareness of other FET programmes • Concentrated effort in one area • My programme had to prioritise in planning • Working with programmes that may not have worked with before • Awareness and networking with other prog • Knowledge to refer people to other programmes • Working with colleagues & characteristics of each prog • Working together as a FET Team • Confirmation that local advertising works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment for full time programme difficult • Increasing awareness of the centre in the area • Competition from other programmes • Staff time for the plan and being present for meetings and in between • Not enough time in the area to do what I want to do • Linking with un/under represented area • Not enough time to focus more on an area in this way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how all FET programmes could benefit from a LETP • Be clear of purpose and remit • Be clear on actions; who responsible and timeframe • Be realistic on actions and resources required to implement • Approach as a team and try think outside of your programme • Not about individual programmes • WWETB Action Days • Be focused on end goal • Build on what is there • Don't underestimate the value of local focus • Some actions eg Assessment of all FET learners needs org approach

The initiatives which were based on consultation and data have proven very effective in addressing the education and training deficit that existed in the area and this model for tailoring education and training provision to help maximise engagement is a model that is subsequently being used for a number of areas in the region where there is specific need. Identified areas include; Dungarvan, North Wexford (Kilmuckridge/Riverchapel), and North Waterford.

9. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

G.M.Q. (I) Public Information & Communication

- 11). WWETB has a Customer Charter which outlines its procedures for displaying and disseminating public information, ensuring that it is clear, accurate, up to date and easily accessible.**
- 12). WWETB ensures that it publicly advertises information about its Quality Assurance procedures, information for access, transfer and progression, information for enrolled learners, the list of centres and their programmes/awards and information about non-accredited programmes**
- 13). WWETB learners are made aware of; whether or not their programme leads to an award, the name of the awarding body, the title of the award and the NFQ level and the course entry requirements.**
- 14). The key information arising from executive self-evaluation reports and quality improvement plans are made accessible to the public.**

As a public provider of education and training, WWETB has full awareness of the importance of effective internal and external communication practices. Effective communication stands as one of the expressed commitments of the organisation's Strategy Statements and there are twenty-one associated goals set down to outline plans for structures, mechanisms and standards that help aid WWETB in achieving its aim for effectiveness in communication.

The organisation is committed to publishing and communicating accurate, objective, up-to-date and timely information on its structures, activities, FET programmes and services, its QA system and the findings of QA evaluations. In doing so, it ensures this information is easily accessible to all stakeholders.

WWETB has in place a Communications Steering Group, Communications Team and Customer Charter, which is the organisation's commitment to multiple methods of communication and the promptness by which communication via those methods will be managed. WWETB prides itself on being an accessible and welcoming organisation and to this end, offices and centres have managed receptions where practicable, and operated phone-lines during business hours.

WWETB utilises various media and platforms in the publication and promotion of information that provides clarity and transparency around services and provision. The predominant platform for this is the WWETB website. The website contains:

- Information on Governance and Corporate Services. Policies, public reports, and strategy documents as well as all WWETB Board minutes are available in downloadable format.
- A 'News' and updates section. The Communications unit produce a public Newsletter triannually.
- A FET QA Section detailing the approach to quality assurance in FET provision.
- Health & Welfare information and contact details for queries.
- Programme and course information inclusive of access criteria and contact details. There is also information provided on qualifications, the National framework and international equivalence to same.
- Information on our training provision and apprenticeship. The landing page for training hyperlinks to a supplementary website associated with details of our training courses and provision; WWETBtraining.ie
- Information about vacancies for employment within the organisation.
- A general contact page inclusive of an online contact form.

The organisation uses other methods to disseminate information to the public. WWETB has a presence on popular platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to increase visibility. These are managed pages, current and up to date. An online Newsletter is published three times per year containing news of WWETB events and initiatives.

WWETB-run services and provision is publicised through numerous ancillary websites. Our PLC provision is advertised via associated college websites and most programmes manage commercial Facebook pages for news items and promotion. FET provision is promoted through various national websites such as [FETCH \(fetchcourses.ie\)](http://FETCH(fetchcourses.ie)) and other authorised information web pages.

Internal communication happens mainly via our organisational Microsoft Office 365 platform and WWETB Intranet site which are managed and supported by our IT department. Contracts are procured with telecommunications companies to support organisational mobile devices so contact can be immediate and verbal as required.

9.2 WHAT IS WORKING

WWETB's Customer Charter is a commitment to be responsive and accessible. WWETB is extremely mindful of the importance of creating positive impressions, particularly in instances of 'first-contact' and not to replicate the overly automated communication procedures employed by some large organisations and companies. Consultation with the Learner Focus group relayed very positive first-contact experiences with the organisation and the success of events such as open-days and the availability of WWETB course information at INTREO Offices and other locations.

The organisation has formed a Communications Steering Committee and has a designated Communications Officer whose role supports the ETB in its appropriate public presentation. The 'WWETB Brand Identity Guidelines' have been developed to set down a standard approach to the application and communication of the WWETB identity.

Programmes and courses are appropriately advertised and promoted. There are WWETB QA guidelines around the naming of courses, and ensuring the award name is present in the course title is one of the functions of the programme approval process. Our survey of learners showed that award names and levels are known, as illustrated by the graph in figure 9.1. A qualifying question associated with the statement below asked learners to select the appropriate certifying body for their award.

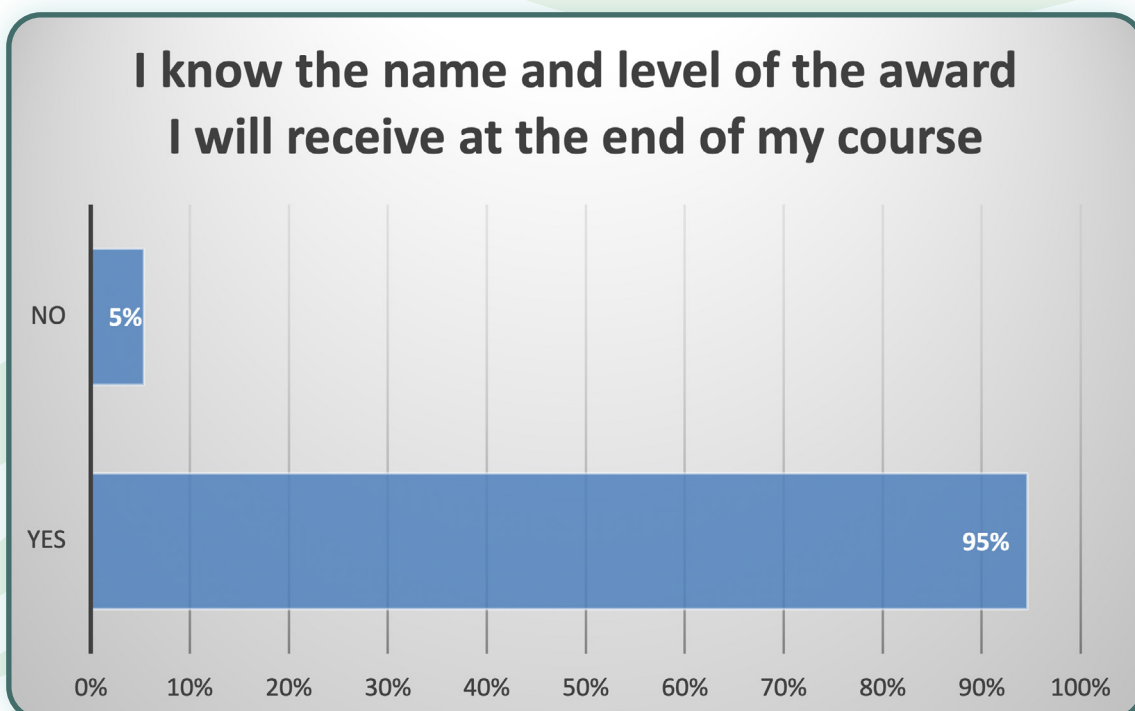


Figure 9.1: GMQ-13(a)

The Focus group of Practitioners were extremely positive about the efficiency and level of communication across the organisation. There was particular mention of the support from the IT Department, QA Team and Digital-Learning Lead about the responsiveness to the challenge of COVID-19 in terms of efficient communication and supporting the challenges brought about by a different communication context.

WWETB has recently launched an organisational intranet site to serve as an internal information and communication platform for all employees. This will be an efficient and intuitive communication space and serve as an information-organiser so that most relevant information is accessible, as appropriate for the individual staff user. At the point of writing this report it is too early to gather user feedback on the intranet site however, an implementation plan and communications plan for the intranet is being developed.

9.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

While the Focus group gave very positive feedback as to their experiences of first-contact with the organisation, the session also revealed a perceived issue that is information-related. It was suggested by one participant that there may not be enough information appropriate for non-Irish nationals about courses. In addition, it was felt that there was not enough information given about the international recognition of some awards, English as a Second or Other Language for example (ESOL). ESOL does not carry sufficient recognition as a valid English language qualification outside of Ireland.

WWETB is working toward the development of a new website in 2021.

9.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Further investigation into the most appropriate means of promoting courses for non-English speakers.
- Complete development of new WWETB Website

9.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB is a public organisation committed to providing easily accessible information, transparency and clarity in relation to all provision and services. Appropriate structures and procedures are in place to this end. Consultation with key stakeholders shows a satisfaction with the information and communication practices both within the organisation and externally. There are certain elements that require some attention in order to improve and refine. These are noted by management and will be addressed.

HIGHLIGHTS

Dungarvan College hosts virtual meeting with Minister Simon Harris - Ms Teams, Facebook and Twitter

On the 22nd of March, Dungarvan College – Coláiste Dhún Garbhán was delighted to host a virtual meeting with Simon Harris- Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to discuss the innovative one-year PLC course in Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Operations which is delivered by Dungarvan College.

The partnership originated following a collaboration between Dungarvan College, GSK, Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber of Commerce, South East Regional Skills Forum and the ETB. WWETB CE Kevin Lewis and WWETB Further Education and Training Director Ken Whyte also joined the virtual meeting with Minister Harris along with staff from Dungarvan College. Representing GSK at the meeting was Ann Kingston, Learning & Development Advisor, Conor Tolan, the site Director, and a former student of Dungarvan College, Una Mulligan. Una spoke highly of the benefits of the course. Her comments were echoed by Dawn O’Shea, who is currently studying the course. Conor Tolan, Site Director, GSK Dungarvan said “GSK is lucky to be part of the fabric of the Dungarvan community. We hugely value the capability of the talent in Waterford. Dungarvan College - is a key component in the development of this talent. Our partnership with the college has delivered us many valued employees over the years. Recently, students from the college have been a great support to us as we continue to manage our way through the COVID-19 pandemic. We are delighted to be in a position to offer excellent opportunities to our employees in a fast-paced consumer focused environment. I look forward to continuing our partnership with Dungarvan College long into the future”.



The progression rate of students from this course into employment is outstanding. There is huge potential for manufacturing jobs throughout the South East of Ireland. Many Dungarvan College past students are now working in GSK. Many other past students have taken up employment in companies such as West Pharmaceutical, Abbott Vascular, MSD, Apple, Jamil and Kerrygold. The WWETB Training Centre was pivotal in establishing this one-year full time course. The course is unique as it is the only Pharma PLC course in Ireland. Students on this course have the fantastic opportunity of being able to carry out their work experience in GSK Dungarvan. Teachers on the course have worked in the manufacturing industry previously and pass their real-life experiences onto the students.

Following his visit Minister Harris added "I was really thrilled to pay a virtual visit today and to see the really important work taking place in Dungarvan College. I also had the chance to speak to some of the learners and hear first-hand the invaluable role the College has played for them. I look forward to visiting the College in person soon."

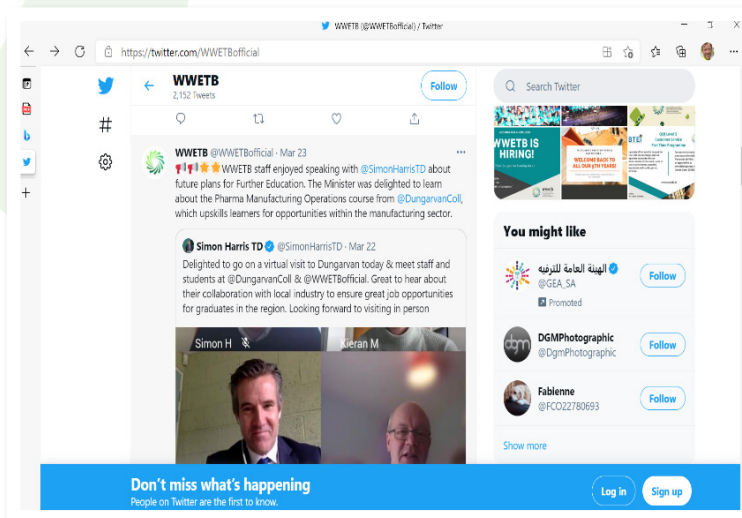
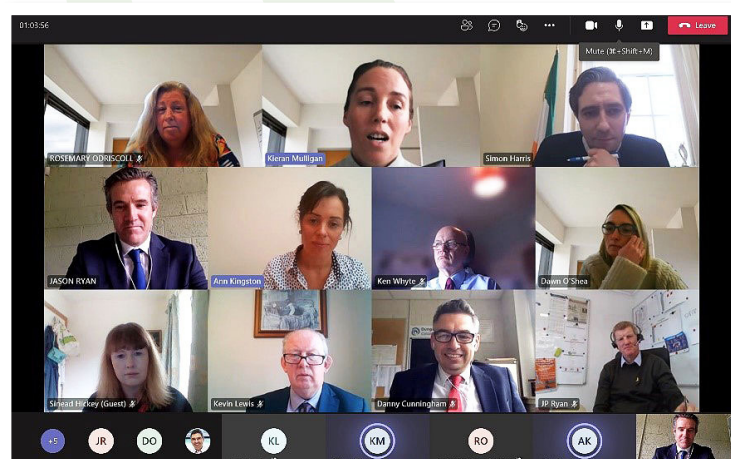


Figure 9.2: Promotion of Pharmaceutical course and meeting with Minister Harris

10. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

10.1 INTRODUCTION

T.L.A. (A) The Learning Environment

A1). WWETB Learning Environments are suitably equipped in terms of:

- **Appropriate Premises**
- **Specialist equipment and appropriate technical know-how to maintain same.**
- **Appropriate and accessible reference resources and technology.**

A2). WWETB supports both the learner and provider in work experience arrangements. Placements are suitable for the learner and course and are monitored.

Central to WWETB's FET provision is the establishment of high-quality and fit-for-purpose facilities for learners and staff. In addition to this, the furnishing of these facilities with the highest quality ICT infrastructure, including high-speed broadband, wireless networks, cloud-based storage, internet usage protocols and policies, are expressed commitments of the organisation in the Strategy Statement 2018-2022.

Buildings and refurbishments are managed by the WWETB Buildings and Services Team. The organisation invests substantially in the building infrastructure to ensure fit-for purpose facilities across both county's provision. Details of spends on building and infrastructure is reported to the WWETB Board and formally to SOLAS and the Department of Education as appropriate and these spends are audited by the Central Auditor to ensure compliance with procurement legislation.

WWETB has a designated Health and Safety Advisor and there are procedures in place across the organisation to ensure that working and learning environments are safe and comfortable for the users.

There is a Work Experience Policy in place for learners who are required to enter the premises of other companies and associated procedures in place so that all parties are suitably aware of their responsibilities and are protected appropriately by way of insurance.

10.2 WHAT IS WORKING

Consultation with stakeholders illustrated a very positive response with regard to the rating of premises, general facilities and IT facilities across all services and provision.

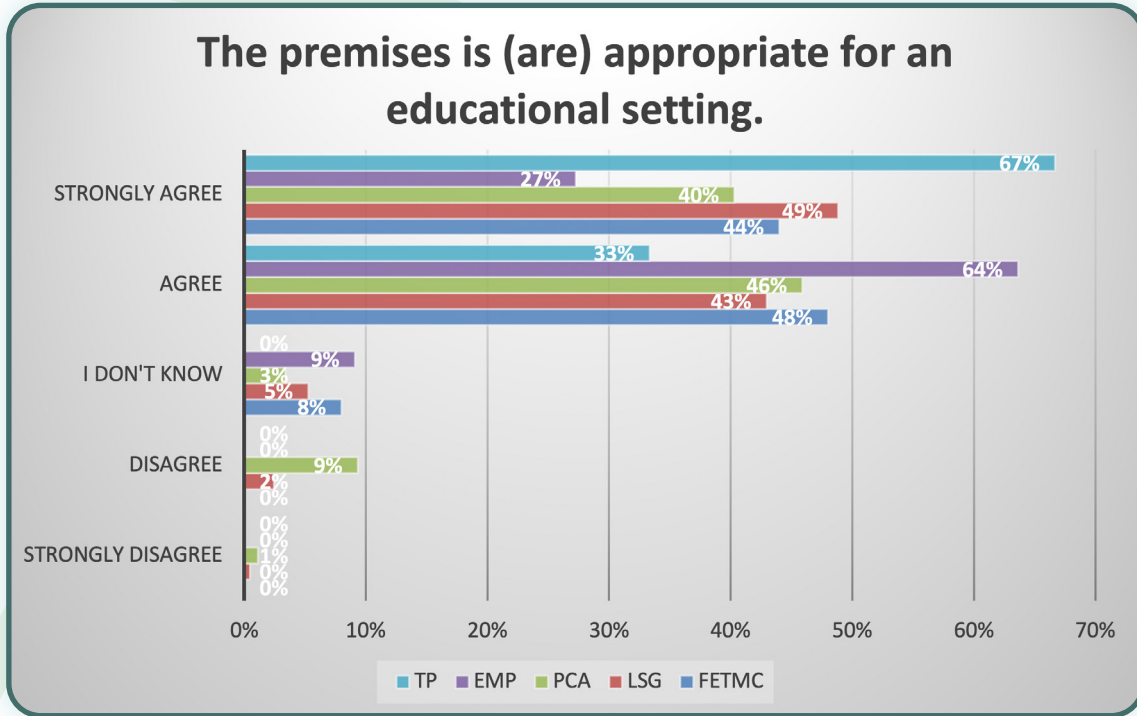


Figure 10.1: TLA-A1 (a)

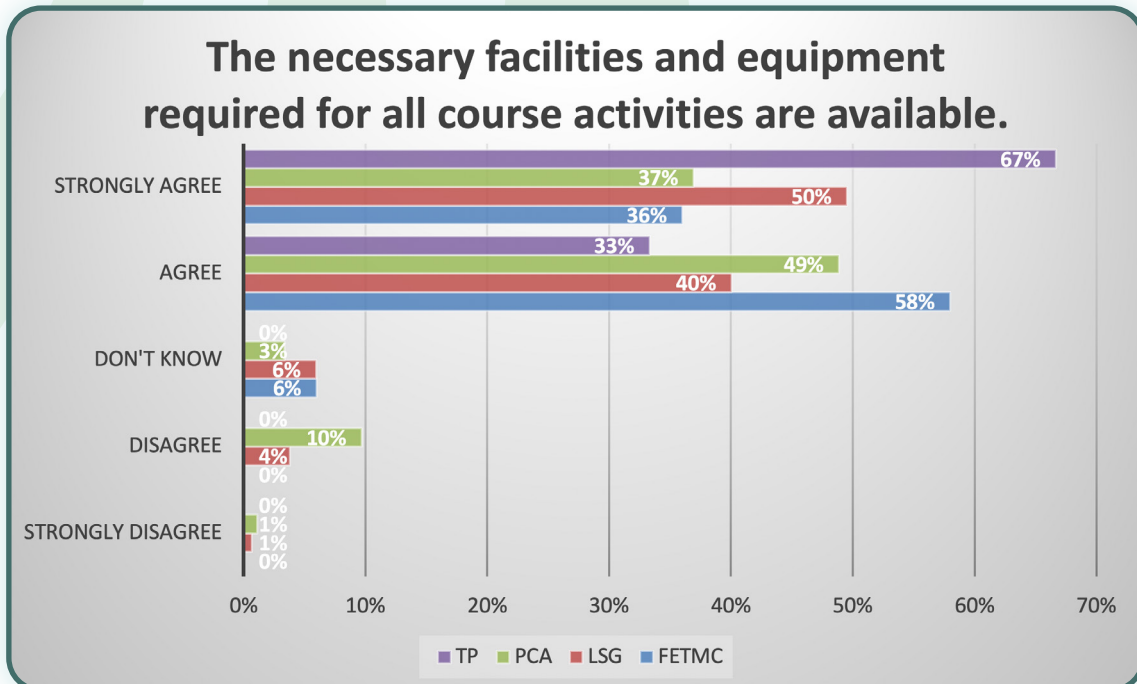


Figure 10.2: TLA-A1 (b)

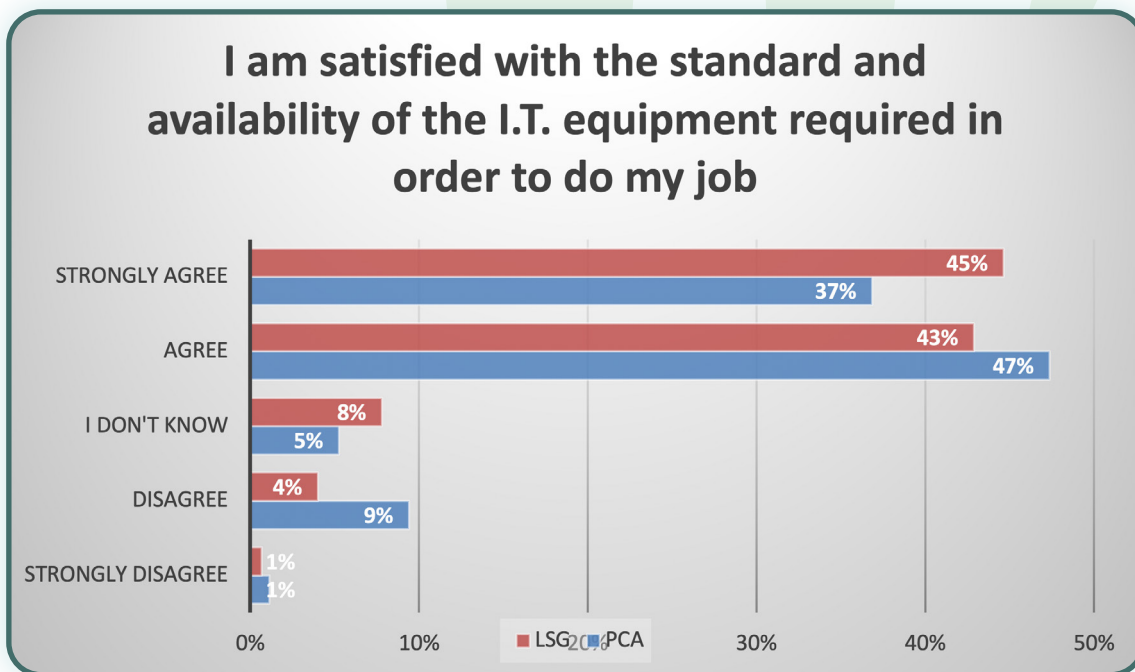


Figure 10.3: TLA-A1 (c)

While it can be said that there is overall satisfaction in this regard, it is worth noting that there are localised issues that have been fed back via the comments that serve to show that there is always room for improvement in the provision and maintenance of quality premises, facilities and IT infrastructure. Issues such as classroom sizes, ventilation of rooms, heating and parking are mentioned and there are a number of comments in relation to practitioner acquisition of an organisational laptop during COVID-19 lockdown periods with some reporting that this did not happen quickly enough. The following comments from practitioners are an example of the types of comments that were received in relation to premises, facilities and I.T.

“ WWETB has been very supportive with regard to the acquisition of appropriate equipment and we are thankful for that support. It is vital that the learning environments are to the highest standard.”

“No lift for wheelchair users. Overhead projectors frequently don’t work properly and only two rooms have smart-TVs. Learners cannot access the centre’s Wi-Fi while in class which creates a barrier to integrating tech. into learning.”

"...please note that the laptop boxes showed that they were received by the WWETB in Ardcavan in October but weren't distributed to our students until January. When asked, the technician stated that he was only able to get about 10 laptops a week ready for dispersal...It seems that more support was required to ensure more efficient rollout to the students. This deficiency was not identified in time to ensure a more efficient rollout.

The national restrictions associated with COVID-19 posed substantial challenges for the organisation, particularly with regard to migration from a service that focalises around centres of education to a remote service for nearly 800 FET staff and 6,000 FET learners. The organisation procured emergency funding for the purchase of new laptops for learners to enable them to continue to engage in their education and training courses. €308,000 in funds was spent in the procurement of 569 additional laptops. The organisation complemented this with additional financial support from internal resources. A total of 1460 laptops were purchased within the latter part of 2020. These laptops were subsequently imaged, prepared for distribution and distributed to centres by the WWETB IT department. At this time calls for IT support to the IT Helpdesk had increased from approximately 400 per week to 1000. The FET Management and IT response was effective and efficient considering the scale of the challenge.

Work experience is a requirement of the majority of major awards from level 4 through to level 6 awards and some level 3 learners complete the module. There is policy and procedures in place across all provision for the facilitation of work experience placements. Learners secure placements within the industries associated with their award or based on their career interests as appropriate. A designated person in each centre facilitates the formalising of the placement and the work experience provider representative is provided with formal documentation detailing how the placement should proceed and each party's responsibilities ahead of learner commencement on placement. The Work Experience provider formally signs a Work Placement Agreement form. Feedback from External Authenticators on Work Experience modules indicates an effective approach to the module across all awards and levels. Appeals of grades associated with the Work Experience modules accounts for just 10% of overall appeals and 22% of those grade appeals have been successful.

Consultation with FET Managers showed that 80% agree that learners are well-supported while on placement and 86% reflected the suitability of placements. (There were 16% and 14% 'I don't know' for these statements possibly reflecting some separation from the process such as AEOs or Managers of larger centres/ colleges where there is delegation of oversight for this process). When surveyed,

work experience providers were happy that Learners which they provided placement for were supported by the organisation.

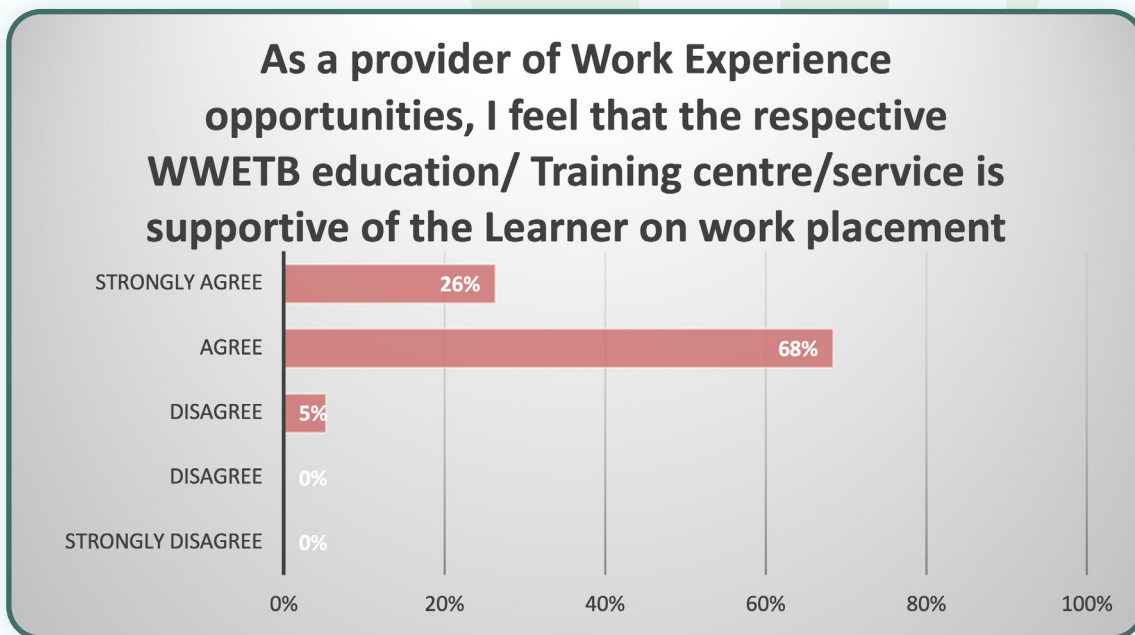


Figure 10.4: TLA-A2

10.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Primary research for the review process indicates overall satisfaction across key stakeholder groups with the appropriateness of learning/working environments. The organisation continues to commit funding to the development of FET facilities and centres. Further Education and Training provision often takes place in long-term leased buildings, a sectoral reality with pros and cons. While these buildings are refurbished to a high degree in order to modify them into learning environments, the adaptations required to accommodate users with mobility issues are often not in place. This is often because such modification either requires cost-preclusive investment to put them in place (prospective end of lease may incur the responsibility to take out such refurbishment and restoring the building to original layouts), or works would render the remaining space less suitable to general educational use in terms of size or facilities. WWETB is committed to the facilitation of all applicable learners in as inclusive a way as possible and solutions to these issues require discussion within the organisation and externally with our funding bodies. WWETB has an obligation to be compliant with 'Part M' (2010) of the Disability Act 2005, and this will bring challenges for WWETB in terms of ensuring that all of its buildings are compliant.

WWETB strives to accommodate learners who may have additional needs or impairments. Many centres have purchased various forms of equipment to assist learners with impairments or with specific difficulties. This has happened on a localised basis heretofore, and a new policy is required to inform this practice so that procedures can be generated that will make it as seamless as possible for centres to support all of their learners. There are also limitations to the supports that each facet of FET can offer as cost and expertise are limiting factors, often requiring time to overcome. This forms part of the brief of the WWETB Access & Disability Officer supported by the QA Team for the coming years.

Work experience is an important constituent of most major awards and certification, particularly where the industries they lead to are highly vocational. WWETB work placement arrangements are formal and standardised across FET provision and require collaboration with local companies and businesses in order for the learner to receive an appropriate opportunity to learn and perform at a level commensurate with the level and nature of their award. Work experience providers were consulted about their perception of the support given to them by the organisation in their provision of placement for learners and there was a positive response to this. Further investigation into the procedures for work experience and in particular work placement with the FET Managers Focus Group highlighted areas for improvement here. Focus groups participants felt that the responsibilities around employer engagement are not defined clearly enough and that scale of provision can impact greatly on the level of engagement with work experience providers.

While all work placements for major awards are expected to be vocationally relevant, a point of note is the generic nature of the work experience module itself. This can occasionally arise as an issue in guaranteeing confidence in all graduates of a vocational award where they might have gained the generic work experience component award on a different course. This is a particular concern for certain industries where a specific skill-set is required and these have not been shown on placement for the associated award but prior completion of the award in association with a very different or more generic vocational area results in full certification. The solution to this QBS anomaly requires further input from QQI, ETBI and counterpart ETB providers.

10.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- QA Team to support the Access and Disability Officer in the development of a new Inclusion policy.
- QA review into the practices around work experience placements including further consultation with providers with a view to providing more support to Work Experience providers as standard (linked to Assessment of Learners).

10.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB continues to invest in the learning & working environments associated with FET provision in line with the 2018-2022 Strategy Statement. Learners, Practitioners and FET Managers have attested to the high-quality of their respective learning and working environments via survey and focus group consultation. Learning environments have become part of the organisation's contingency arrangements as a result of COVID-19 restrictions and much investment of resources and effort has gone into supporting FET learners and staff learning and working from home.

A strategic approach will be developed to suitably accommodate in as far as possible, learners presenting with specific additional needs or disabilities that might prevent them from accessing appropriate courses. Work experience placement procedures will be reviewed with a view to further development.

HIGHLIGHTS



Waterford Youthreach

In 2018 the previous Waterford Youthreach building was determined no longer suitable and a new-purpose design built premises was commissioned in close proximity to the old building. In 2021 a purpose designed retrofit of a new premises for Gorey Youthreach is currently underway.



Gorey and Enniscorthy 'Fab-Labs'

A Fabrication Laboratory known as 'FabLab' has been developed in both Enniscorthy and New Ross. The FabLabs have 3D printers, CNC Milling machine, Laser Cutting Machine, Virtual reality Headset, Handheld 3D Scanner and an Electronic assembly / test area..



NZEB

As part of its planning for 2018, WWETB commenced development of a training response to NZEB. This led to the establishment of a state-of-the-art Irish Centre of Excellence in high-performance building in Enniscorthy and a Retrofit Centre in Waterford.



COVID-19 Adaptions to Learning Environments

In response to the challenge of COVID19, several centres and classrooms have been expanded to allow for safe and appropriate social distancing as required. This work was specified and commissioned within a very tight turnaround time in the interest of efficiency and safety. In Waterford Training Centre alone, seven classrooms have been extended or adjusted, and two new classrooms have been constructed in Kilcohan Training Centre.

Figure 10.5: Images- Waterford Youthreach, Enniscorthy FabLab, NZEB & COVID-19 adaptations.

Major extension to Waterford Training Centre.

This major (50,000 sq ft.) building project will involve the complete refit and refurbishment of the 'Techniform' building, adjacent to the existing Training Centre, to accommodate significant additional apprenticeship provision and enhanced training facilities. This project will confirm Waterford Training Centre and WWETB Training Services as one of the largest and cutting edge providers of craft apprenticeships, traineeships and innovative training programmes in the country. It will also entail closer co-operation between WWETB and Waterford Institute of Technology in relation to apprenticeship training and supports.

Wexford Further Education and Training (FET) College of the Future

This major (50,000 sq. ft.) building project will bring Wexford to the front edge of national FET policy with the development of a 'FET College of the Future' as proposed by SOLAS in their Strategic Statement. Not alone will this involve the transfer of existing further education and training services presently spread across several facilities in Wexford town to a newly refurbished state of the art facility at the former 'Allied Hub-Clonard' premises but it will also be one of the first such facilities in the country. It will mean the addition of several apprenticeship workshops and further education and training rooms and will bring the entirety of WWETB FET learners in the Wexford Town region into one campus, thus ensuring a top class learning facility for all while facilitating a more seamless pathway for learners through the various levels of the FET pathway.

11. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

11.1 INTRODUCTION

T.L.A. (B) Assessment of Learners

- B1). WWETB has well established assessment procedures.**
- B2). The Assessment procedure is consistently applied across WWETB programmes.**
- B3). Assessments are secure and there is assessment integrity.**
- B4). Learners are made aware of their responsibilities around assessment. This is consistent.**
- B5). WWETB Assessment promotes/ signals effective teaching and learning.**
- B6). Learners are assessed at appropriate points in their course and there is timely feedback..**
- B7). WWETB Learners are informed of the how, why and when of assessment.**
- B8). Learners are involved in the Review of Assessment processes.** Area for Improvement
- B9). The processes for assessment complaints and appeals meet the same standards of fairness, consistency and fitness for purpose as assessment in general.**
- B10). The assessment of learners on work placement is monitored and reviewed.** Area for Improvement

Part of the continuum of the integrity and approval of results that WWETB learners progress with, is the development of assessment procedures that are fit for purpose and consistently applied. WWETB stands over the fairness and transparency of assessment activity and the veracity and accuracy with which assessment material is set, processed and graded. WWETB uses two systems for assessment of learners predominantly; Assessment Instrument Specifications (AIS) and Locally Devised Assessment (LDA). Both systems include external authentication in association with assessment and grading to

ensure that both are in line with the respective award standards. Assessments leading to non-QQI awards are generally developed by the awarding body.

Learners are briefed on the process of assessment during the induction for their respective courses and notified of the schedule for assessment in advance of the assessment activity. Assessments are devised based on information contained in Module Descriptors (administered locally in Further Education programmes) and Assessment Instrument Specifications (training programmes).

The assessment instrument is contained in packs or briefs and it provides all of the information students need to complete their assessment, including assessment criteria. Teaching and Learning portfolios contain the module information including the learning outcomes, indicative content, an overview of the assessment, marking schemes and total marks achievable for each assessment piece. All assessment activity is linked to the intended learning outcomes for the respective award and FET practitioner staff engaged with locally devised assessment processes are made aware of the Grid of Level indicators by way of QA Assessment briefings and the QA SharePoint site.

Exams which are prescribed within certain modules are run with reference to the WWETB Examinations Handbook (FET) which establishes exam conditions. Examinations are kept secure prior to the exam sitting in accordance with the WWETB Secure Storage Handbook (FET). An invigilator(s) is designated to facilitate the exam sitting and there are procedures in place for the handover of exam scripts for grading. In the case of Training programmes, the Curriculum section of the QA Team issue the appropriate exam scripts and are involved in the administration of examinations.

The WWETB QA Team has developed a number of overarching assessment procedure documentation that have been approved by the QA Steering Group and FET Management. These include Examinations, Short-term Extensions, Compassionate Consideration, Secure-Storage, Assessment Malpractice, Repeats, Appeals, and Reasonable Accommodation and Recognition of Prior Learning. Many of these assessment procedure handbooks have been informed by the ETBI Assessment Handbooks.

11.2 WHAT IS WORKING

There is high awareness among FET Managers of the prevalence of WWETB assessment procedure documentation as indicated by consultation data. 96% of FET Managers felt that **'WWETB has well established assessment procedures'** (4% IDK). The systematic use of these procedures in the establishment of standardised documentation and processes at centre level is attested to by FET practitioner staff with 97% of the survey cohort agreeing

that ***'There are standard procedures and documentation in relation to assessment'***. Learners report that they are informed about the assessment process in relation to their respective courses and about their responsibilities including deadlines and plagiarism.

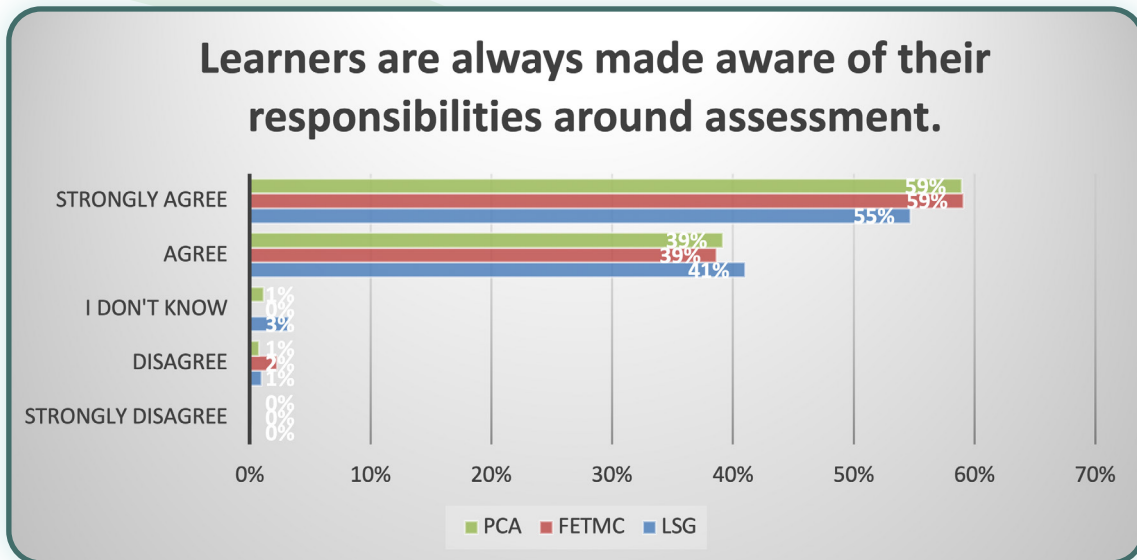


Figure 11.1: TLA-B4

Practitioners reported conclusively that learners are comprehensively informed about all aspects of each assessment instance (98%) and learners supported the assertion that ***'the Assessment Briefs always provide detail of what has to be done, how it has to be done and the submission deadline'***. (94% agree- 2% disagree). There was also consensus among learners, practitioner and FET Manager groups as to the appropriateness of the timing of assessments which is also an indication of the appropriateness of learner workload in relation to their learning.

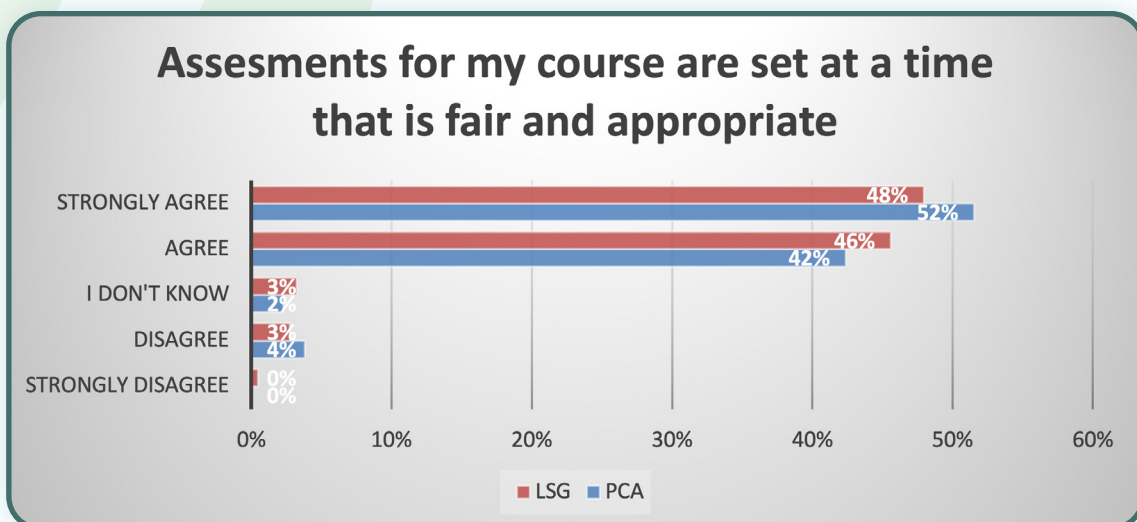


Figure 11.2: TLA-B6(a)

Feedback is integral to the learning process. Learners receive formal feedback as standard on their assessment work. Informal feedback was purported to be an area of strength by Learner Focus Group participants with some referencing; 'continuous' 'individual', 'confidential', 'scheduled and additional if required' and 'one-to-one' forms of support. One learner in the Focus Group mentioned receiving their course feedback after all assignments had been submitted and commented that this reduced the value of the feedback. This would be out of step with the guidance notes on the standard feedback form issued by QA.

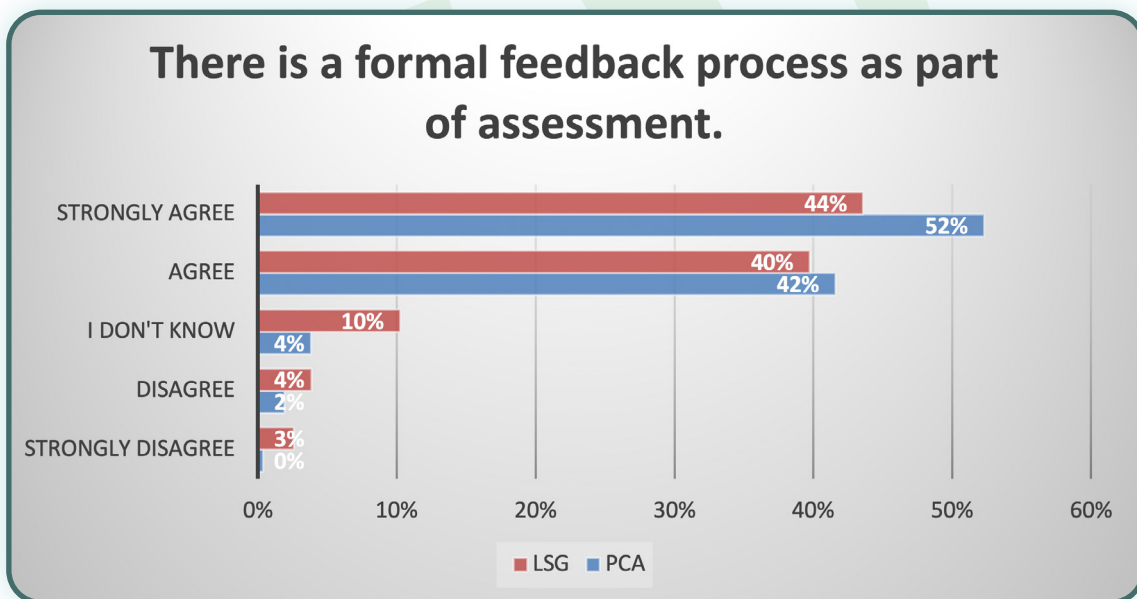


Figure 11.3: TLA-B6(b)

Learners have the right to appeal their grades and there is a robust procedure in place for this. An independent Appeals Examiner is engaged to view the assessment material, the Tutor pack, the IV and EA report and makes a final recommendation on the grade based on this information. The appeals process is managed by the QA Team and FET Managers indicate an endorsement of the consistency and fairness of the process: **'The process for assessment complaints and appeals is fair and consistent'**. (94% agree with 6% IDK).

External Authentication reports are signalling effective teaching and learning across WWETB FET programmes and are often highlighting elements of best practice. WWETB FET Centres are implementing consistent and fair assessment procedures across the board without exception, and these are followed recurrently by practitioners with only minor and sporadic exception. Systematic monitoring of the EA reports by the QA Team grants an oversight into the assessment processes for each centre and allows intervention by way of additional support and training from the QA Team if required.

Assessments delivered on training programmes use the standardised Assessment Instrument Specifications (AISs) for each module, which include briefs, marking schemes and other documentation for all assessment instruments. These AISs originated from SOLAS. As quite some time has passed since their development, some have become quite outdated and in need of review. The WWETB QA Team has commenced an initiative that entails the process of supporting the Community Training programmes to transition from the use of AISs to the use of locally devised assessment. The action is a collaborative one involving the training programme Management and Practitioner teams, members of the QA Team and appropriate FET Managers.

11.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

WWETB has in place a Reasonable Accommodation Policy and the organisation is committed to achieving equity and fairness for all learners in terms of their learning and assessment, including the provision of support options for learners who may be unfairly disadvantaged by the course or assessments formats. WWETB aspires to being definitive concerning 'reasonable accommodation' supports in terms of; maintaining integrity and fairness, quality assuring supports and ensuring the appropriate availability of supports.

A clear definition and organisational understanding of what is 'reasonable' (including the probability that the term will equate to different measures dependant on locally available resources) still has to be established and managed correctly for delivery at centre-level. WWETB FET Quality Assurance and FET Management commit to giving due consideration to the procedures relating this policy area to ensure fairness and clarity for our learners and stakeholders.

End of course evaluations are used by WWETB FET centres to gain the benefit of the learner voice. Centres create their end of course evaluations based on principle service elements frequently including the learners' experience of the assessment process. While this systematic process is indicative of a learning and evolving organisation, there is possibly scope for the QA Team to gain further insight from these evaluations in a way that would help inform overarching procedures or guides. The QA Team is mindful of burdening FET Managers with additional reporting obligations but the maximising of learning from end of course learner evaluations is an action worth exploring.

Work experience providers relayed a feeling of general support from WWETB representatives in terms of their provision of work experience opportunities for WWETB Learners (as illustrated in TLA- A2(b) survey data). There was a notable dissipation of this sense of support in relation to the provision of feedback and marks for the work experience participant highlighting an area requiring action.

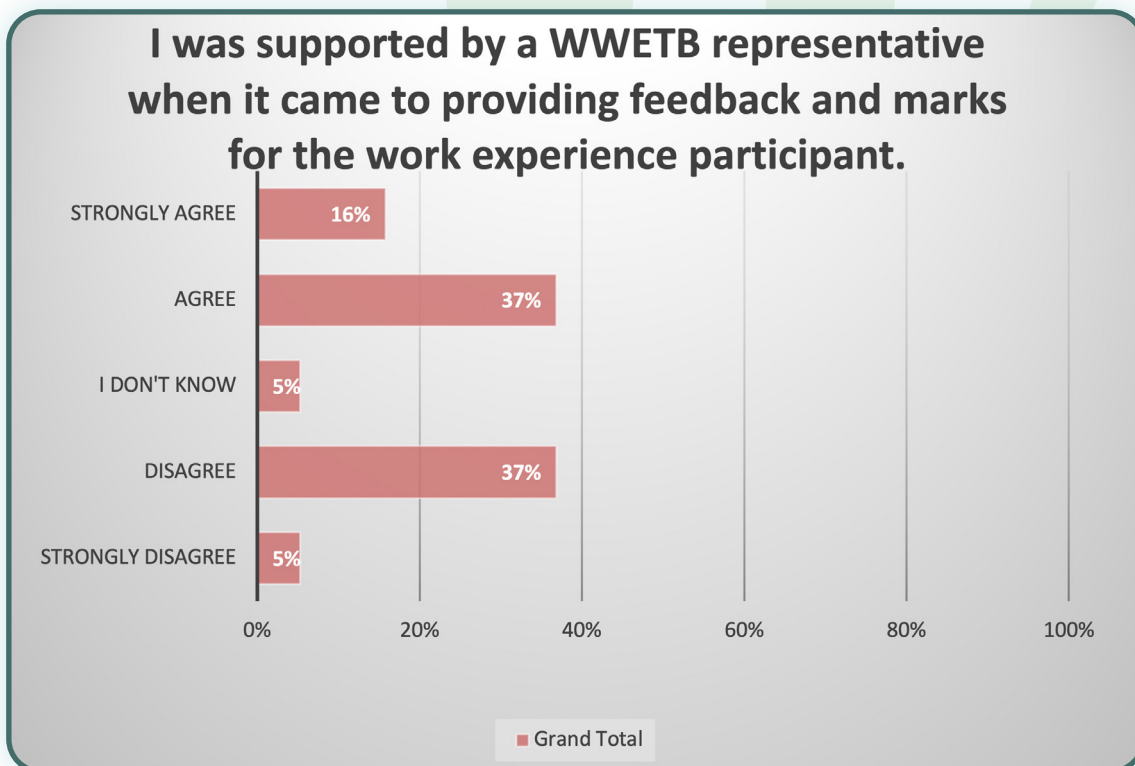


Figure 11.4: TLA-B10

Many centres have built long-term relationships with local providers of placements. It is important that these relationships evolve positively and formally so that impacting events like changes in key personnel (in either party) can be accommodated without negatively effecting the provision of work experience opportunities. The Work experience provider cohort is a large stakeholder group and it is of critical importance for all parties that our interactions with this group are effective and efficient.

WWETB is a collaborative and communicative organisation and there are numerous examples of instances of centres and peer-groups working cooperatively together with a shared aim or to achieve a common goal. Following on from the substantial effort that is being invested into PLD (professional learning and development) is the supporting of a culture where individuals engaged in PLD further share their learning with their peers, in a more formal way. PLD activity often brings practitioners together in a way where they get to share knowledge and experience as they engage in the learning of further techniques and methodologies they apply to their own practice and within their own settings. For the time that they engage together in PLD, they are a 'community of practice' but too infrequently does this 'community of practice' stay connected to share their experiences of using the new methodologies. In addition to this, the effectiveness of the dissemination of the learning from this PLD activity to peers by the returning

practitioner is unknown. The FET Manager Focus Group communicated some areas where improvements could be made such as; 'a need to share learning', 'showcasing the benefits of professional development,' 'clarity around the benefits of participating in professional development and allowances available' and 'releasing tutors to collaborate/training.' Addressing these issues might enable the budding of communities of practice that would lead not just to more progressive means of delivery and assessment but also a more innovative and industrially pertinent FET provision. Input from the Review Team is very welcome in this regard.

11.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- QA Team to review policy for Reasonable Accommodation.
- Continued QA support for selected FET centres transitioning from AIS to LDA systems and a review plan for same.
- QA Team to publicly display overarching Assessment Procedure Handbooks.
- QA Team to explore 'End of Course Learner Evaluation' practices and output as a potential source of learning in key areas.
- QA Team to explore potential localised practices of issuing summative feedback only to learners.
- QA Team to explore the various localised practices in relation to the support of Work Experience Providers in relation to providing marks and feedback pertaining to learner placement.
- Further exploration of methods of sharing peer learning more productively and supporting Communities of Practice.

11.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB has much work done on the development of assessment policies and procedures. There is extensive awareness and implementation of standard assessment procedures and there is confirmation from key stakeholders of the consistency and fairness of these procedures. Assessment forms a core part of the business of WWETB FET provision and is an indicator of the adequacy of the teaching and learning process. WWETB is satisfied that research associated with the Review indicates good performance in the delivery and assessment of learning. Unsurprisingly, as delivery and assessment in many ways represents the keystone of provision, there are many elements of this that the organisation wishes to further develop.

HIGHLIGHTS

WWETB FET Repeats Policy

In the FET sector, different types of Further Education and Training programmes often have distinct aims and focus and serve specific cohorts of our learning communities. This has frequently led to slightly divergent programmatic approaches to varying aspects of education and training provision. While these variances may make sense to a practitioner within FET, the learner experience of this amounts to inconsistency and disparity, particularly when moving between programmes. WWETB is committed to fairness in assessment across FET provision.

One example of this is in repeats of assessment activity. Different practices were occurring in different programmes in relation to repeats of assessment. There were even examples of variances in practice within the same programme type.

In 2019, the QA Team developed an overarching Repeats Policy for FET. This entailed reviewing existing practices across all programmes and individual centres. A survey was developed and issued in order to collect and collate this information. Subsequent to this The QA Team held a meeting with FET Managers & Coordinators to define the issues, the aims and to establish a common workable procedure for offering assessment repeats to WWETB FET Learners. A FET Repeats Policy was drafted by the QA Team and further consultation led to a series of revisions. The policy in its current form was ratified by way of the QA Steering Group and the FET Management Team. The policy represents a more consistent and collective approach to assessment repeats while still allowing for certain flexibilities and programmatic realities (PLC provision for instance presents many operational challenges with regard to the facilitation of repeat assessments). It is also an illustration of the organisation's commitment to quality-assure all aspects of provision to achieve the fundamental principles of fairness, clarity and transparency. A review plan for the Repeats Policy will be established by the QA Team

12. SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

12.1 INTRODUCTION

T.L.A. (C) Support For Learners

- C1). Learners are informed about the full range of supports and services available to them. These supports are actively promoted.** Area for Improvement
- C2). Learners are surveyed/consulted annually for their overall impression of Learner supports and resources.** Area for Improvement
- C3). Different learner support units benefit from networking with each other ensuring a coherent approach.** Area for Improvement
- C4). Resources are in line with best practice and National Standards**
- C5). The organisation provides pastoral care supports for learners.** Area for Improvement
- C6). There are mechanisms in place for learners to make representations to the provider about general concerns that impact on the learner body.**
- C7). Learners have access to career guidance appropriate to their course and level.**

WWETB endeavours to support learners throughout their learning journey. Support comes in many different forms and WWETB has made an effort to establish specific support units to offer a continuum of specialist provision for our learners. These specialist support units include:

- Access and Disability Officer
- WWETB Guidance Service
- Learning Support Service for Apprenticeships
- Professional Psychotherapeutic Counsellor (Adult Guidance Team)

WWETB provides various other supports as part of specific FET provision or to specific FET cohorts.

- Transport- (To centres and events- selected programmes/cohorts)
- Allowances - (selected programmes. Provided by the state but part administrated by ETBs)
- Class Materials - (selected programmes/cohorts)
- Laptops/Tablet Loan- (selected programmes/cohorts)
- Counselling/Mental Health Support- (Funded for some programmes/cohorts)
- MAEDF - (Community Education - Monetary assistance)
- Additional Tutor Supports - (Apprenticeship)

In line with the organisational values, learner support begins at centre-level. Usually this occurs at the point of access, where assistance with accessing the learner's chosen or most appropriate course is available. WWETB learners receive an induction associated with their chosen course (94% of surveyed Learners reported - ***'There was an induction session where I was given all the necessary information about the course'***). During this induction is generally where learners receive information about supports that are available to them.

Learners sometimes require support while on course. Specific supports for numeracy and literacy (learning support) are frequently provided on a needs basis in-centre and the extent of provision is governed by the capacity and expertise within the centre to accommodate it. Some programmes can offer additional supports such as counselling support and mental health supports and use discretionary budgets for this. Other programmes actively assist learners with referral to other support agencies where appropriate.

Apprenticeship programmes have a well-developed provision for learning supports and additional mental health supports and there is a designated Learning Support Officer. A framework for apprentice support has been developed incorporating a training plan, support provision in assessment, dedicated tuition spaces, modifications and promotion of supports.

The WWETB Adult Educational Guidance Service provides information and guidance support as an option to WWETB learners at a pre-entry, induction, ongoing, pre-exit and post-exit stages, and supports are delivered through a number of mechanisms including one to-one guidance, group guidance, drop-in, phone and online information query services. The service is free, impartial and confidential and all service activities are designed to assist people to make informed educational, career and life choices.

The HSE and ETBI have collaborated in the development of an initiative to support the learner cohort of the 16 ETBs. The initiative is entitled 'Text 50808,' and is a free 24/7 anonymous text support service. The 50808 service

provides everything from a calming chat to immediate support for people going through mental health or emotional crisis – big or small. 'ETB' has been chosen as the keyword and ETB users text 'ETB' to the 50808 helpline, which will connect texters with a volunteer trained to listen, reassure, and guide.

12.2 WHAT IS WORKING

WWETB support services and personnel work diligently to ensure that support provision is to the highest level and in line with national standards. Designated support personnel are linked in with national support and oversight agencies. Formalised learner support in FET is an area of recent growth and development for the organisation. Learners report that they are informed of the supports available to them (90%) and this is reinforced by FET Managers, 88% agree with the statement. Although many of these supports referred to are independent of the aforementioned support services and are in-house supports provided and managed by individual centres and staff teams.

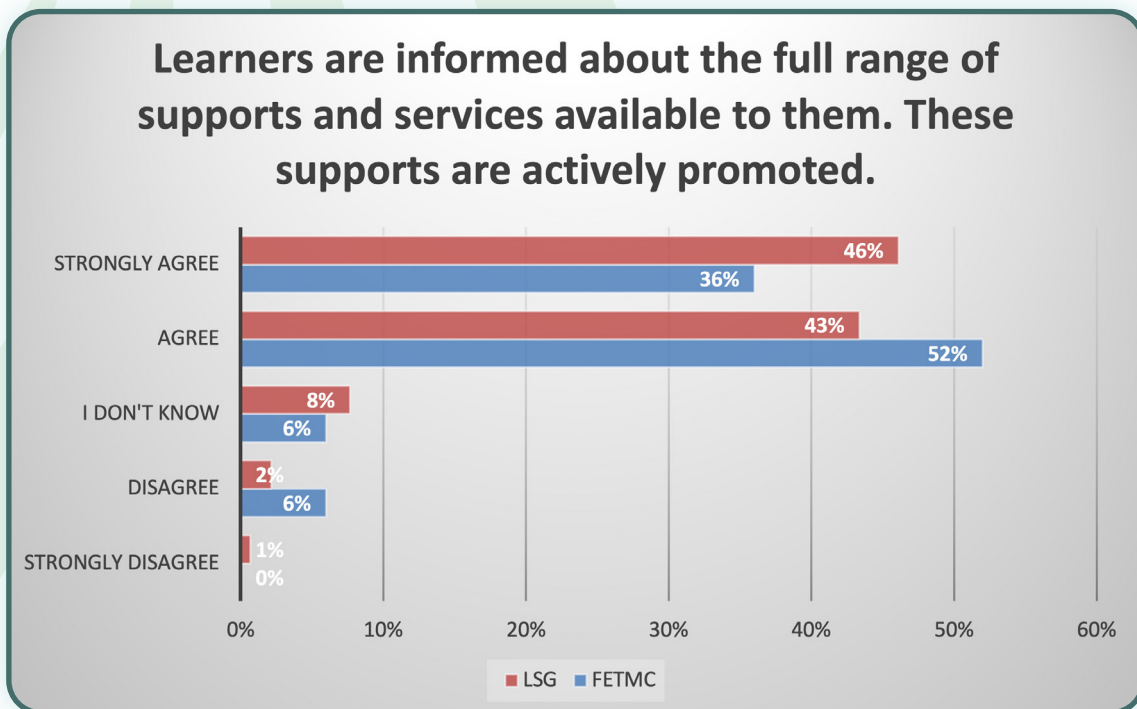


Figure 12.1: TLA-C1

There is a mechanism by which Learners as well as other individuals/bodies can make representations to the provider about general concerns that may impact the learner body. The organisation has a 'Customer Complaints Procedure' which details how to make a formal complaint and includes a template document for the complainant to do so. Many centres have learner representative bodies in place that can make suggestions or vocalise issues to management in a formal fashion and in this way, have some influence over many aspects of centre life.

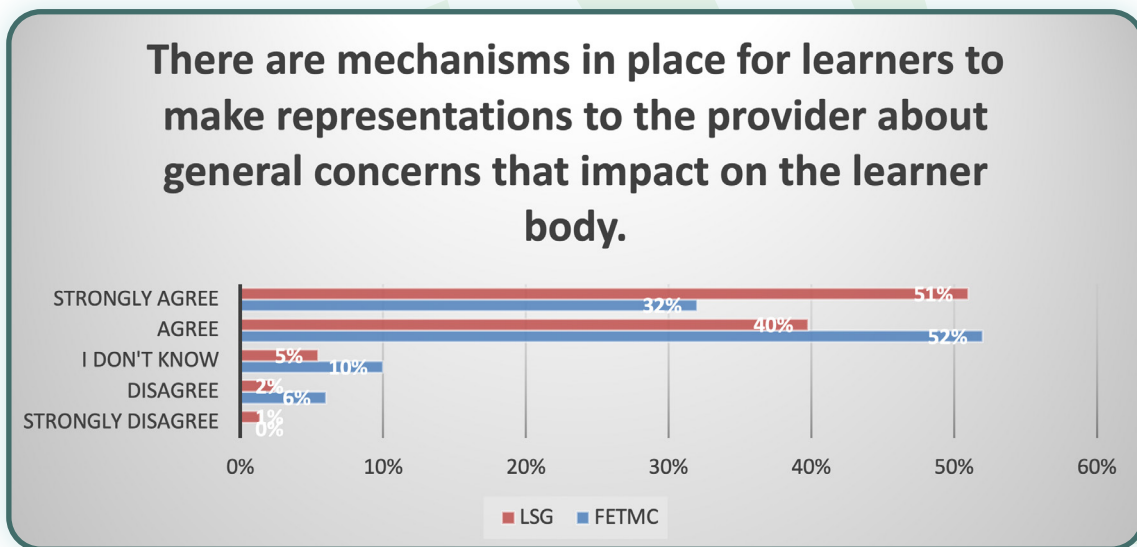


Figure 12.2: TLA-C6

12.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Designated WWETB support personnel promote their services and work diligently to carry them out. One of the elements discussed by FET Managers during the respective Focus Group session was the perceived lack of full awareness of some these supports among centre staff and learners. This contravened the survey feedback where learners and FET Managers felt there is promotion of support services. It presented as an area where further work may be needed to establish what supports learners are availing of and the mechanism by which this is happening. Evidence compilation for the review has shown that Learning Support for Apprenticeships is functioning at a high-level, enjoying the benefit of designated personnel in this regard. Ultimately, a clearer understanding of the formats by which learner supports are offered locally in centres and courses could in time lead to a more conclusive blueprint for learner support across FET provision and allow for support personnel to network and refine the delivery of these supports. Further consultation is needed with learners who avail of supports to garner their appraisal of same to aid the development of an optimal learner support network.

We know by way of the survey responses from learners that there is a conclusive feeling of support of a pastoral nature among the cohort. Similarly, in the Learner Focus Group session, participants stressed how supported they felt by staff in their centres and the general approachability of practitioners and Management.

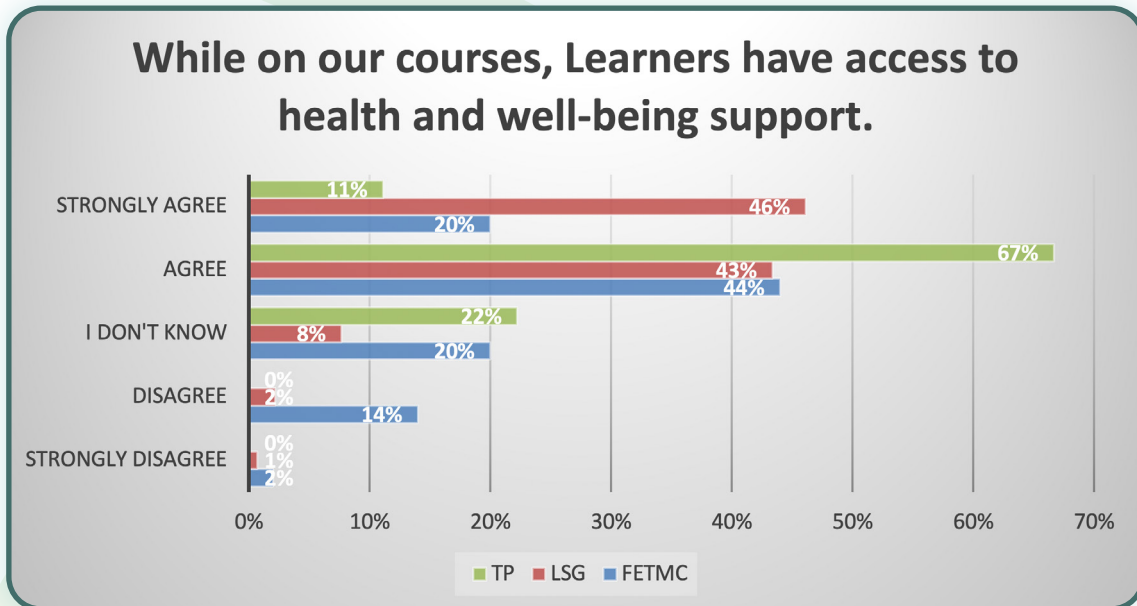


Figure 12.3: TLA-C5

While it can be inferred that support which is pastoral in nature is an area of strength for the organisation, and a counselling service has been made formally available through the Adult Guidance Service in recent months, pastoral support is frequently informal in nature. Informal support while essential and largely endemic in the education sector is subject to fluctuation depending on several factors including staff/individual training, experience, confidence and individual disposition etc. It is also difficult to quantify the specific effectiveness of informal support. The learners will often discuss their well-being with a practitioner or centre manager and then get further support or referral. There are plans to review and possibly expand on the access to psychotherapy counselling by way of further additions to the Adult Guidance Team.

12.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Plan for further consultation regarding FET learner supports and generate report.
- Establish a strategy for the development of a framework of supports for FET Learners and centres.
- Progress plans to put in place formal counselling/well-being support, accessible to all FET learners

12.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB is committed to the support of learners learning with the organisation. Support structures are in place across FET provision to assist learners with support for learning, guidance for further learning and employment and access to supports for general well-being and mental-health. There is scope for further refinement of supports to ensure they are appropriately accessible to learners and that support structures are promoted, clear and consistent.

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019, the Learner Support Service for Apprenticeships developed a Support Framework. The framework represents a strategy for comprehensive and wide-ranging support for apprentices incorporating:

- Tailored assessments and delivery involving the Adult Literacy Service through the Learning Support Coordinator.
- A wide array of learning supports including literacy, numeracy, exam preparation, theory support and technical drawing support, as well as access to study tips and time- management worksheets.
- Mental Health and well-being support and information including the availability of a counsellor.
- A system for referral which involves a number of internal stakeholders including instructors, senior training advisors, learning support tutors and training managers as well as external stakeholders.
- Modification of materials and Universal Design for Learning as a mode of working (AHEAD)
- Promotion strategies with the main focus on reducing stigma and increasing inclusion.
- Professional learning development around working with apprentices with Specific Learning difficulties and Emotional behavioural disorders and assistive and emerging technology.
- Research (2022) Plans to assess impact and benefits through research with recommendations for future provision.

The Learning Support Service is developing support provision for apprentices based on this systematic framework. Much progress has been made to date in developing supports related to key areas. Progress is documented on a continuous basis in yearly reports to the FET Manager (and statistics are available through PLSS). Elements include provision for evaluative engagement with the learner to establish the effectiveness of supports (as per Draft Digital Learning Plan), and general learner feedback is collated in the WWETB Support

to Apprentices Tutor Booklet which is an 'entry to exit' record of their journey. One of the real assets for the development and realisation of such a framework is the existence of designated Apprenticeship Learning Support personnel, enabling specific oversight and coordination of support activity which is very much an integrated plan between Training and Adult Literacy. This ensures the right supports are in place year round.

This model of practice is supported comprehensively by ETBI's National Support to Apprenticeship Working Group, which the Learning Support Coordinator sits on.

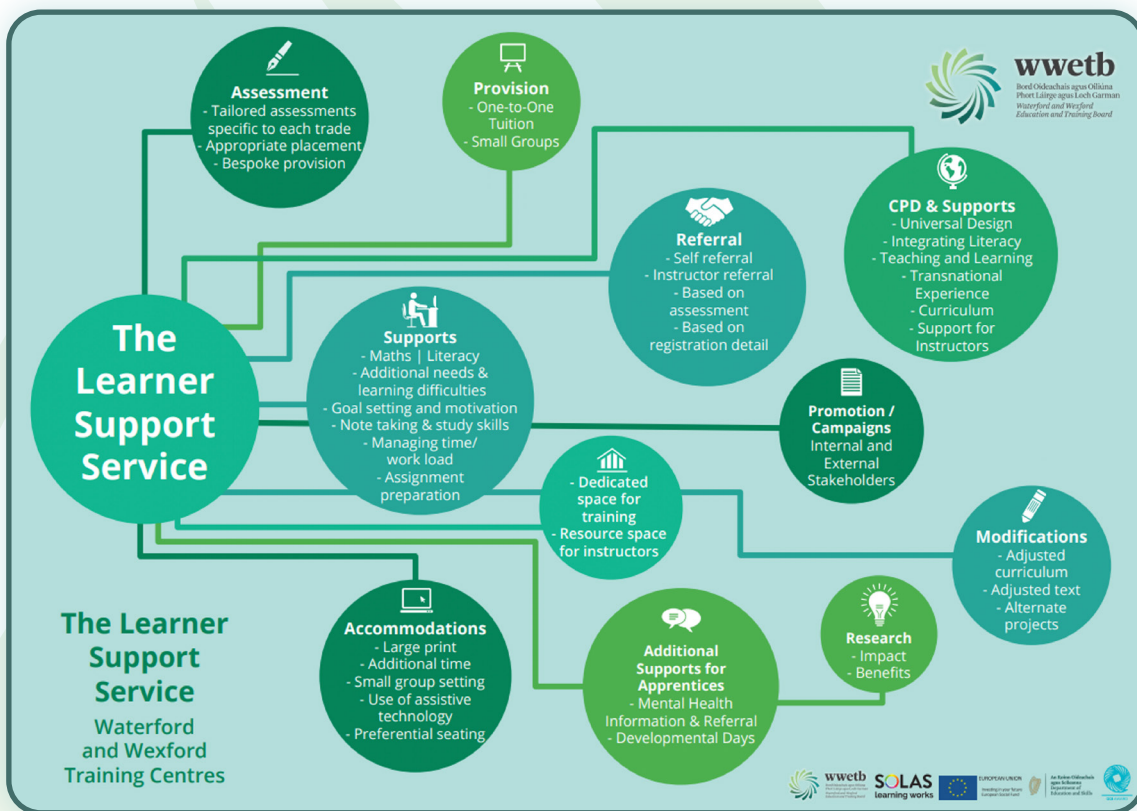


Figure 12.4 (overleaf): Learner Support Framework- Apprenticeships

13. SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

13.1 INTRODUCTION

S.E.M.R. (A) Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Review

- A1). *WWETB has a formalised system for the self-evaluation, monitoring and review of all provision of education and training and related services and activities.***
- A2). *WWETB sets objectives and applies a suitable method for gathering evidence in ascertaining the achievement of these objectives.***
- A3). *Overall Learner satisfaction and experience forms part of the data that we review.***
- A4). *As part of our review and enhancement process, WWETB consults with employers, collaborative partners, and external experts.*** Area for Improvement

WWETB engages in systematic self-evaluation and review processes encompassing all formats of Further Education and Training provision. In 2018, the ETB completed an executive self-evaluation, as part of the re-engagement process with QQI, identifying key areas for development and improvement. FET Quality Assurance is monitored and reviewed annually as part of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and WWETB engages in annual 'Dialogue meetings' with QQI as part of the external quality assurance framework. The Dialogue meetings provide an opportunity for the ETB to update QQI on strategic developments in relation to quality assurance.

WWETB FET Management and SOLAS work cooperatively to develop the Strategic Performance Agreement which monitor indicators of performance using FARR and PLSS data and set targets based on these. Targets arising from the QIP and the Strategic Performance agreement (with planned actions for their achievement) are shared with the Senior Management, FET Management Team, and via the FET Forum and further at QA Steering Group meetings and at programme level between AEOs and Programme Managers/Coordinators as

appropriate. The FET Annual Report is submitted to the WWETB Board which contains a summary of the review findings and targets for FET.

Youthreach Centres engage in Centre Evaluation and Improvement Planning (CEIP), an annual and formal process involving staff teams, learners and other stakeholders and facilitated by an external facilitator. This culminates in a series of actions listed in a report that is issued to the AEO.

WWETB holds large scale Learner feedback events in association with AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Agency. These Adult Learner Fora are held annually and representatives from all FET programmes are facilitated to feedback on the pros and cons of their learning experiences with WWETB culminating in an annual report that informs FET Management.

WWETB is a consultative and collaborative organisation. The Strategy Statement 2018-2022 was developed through extensive consultation with a number of stakeholder bodies and representative groups.

The following stakeholder groups were consulted as part of the development of the Strategy Statement

Stakeholder Group	
Students in WWETB Colleges	Representatives of External Stakeholders including:
Parents/Guardians of WWETB Students	
Learners on Adult Education Programmes	
Teachers in WWETB Colleges	
Principals and Deputy Principals in WWETB Colleges	
Managers and Coordinators in WWETB FET Centres	
All WWETB Support Staff	
Boards of Management Members	
WWETB Members	
	• Chambers of Commerce
	• Department of Education and Skills
	• IBEC
	• IT Carlow
	• SOLAS
	• South-East Regional Skills Forum
	• South-East Action Plan for Jobs
	• Tusla
	• Waterford City and County Council
	• Waterford IT
	• Wexford County Council

WWETB endeavours to engage in regular consultation with external stakeholders to inform practice. To this end, WWETB has active membership of a number of fora representing a wide array of stakeholder interests for example local Regional Skills Fora and Chambers of Commerce Groups. The organisation also enjoys collaborative partnerships with local Higher Education Institutes, namely; Waterford Institute of Technology, Carlow Institute of Technology, Limerick Institute of Technology and more recently St. Patrick’s College, Carlow.

WWETB maintains strong relationships with peer organisations and agencies such as ETBI and our counter-part ETBs and engage in a number of collaborative working groups such as the FET Forum (ETBI), the HR-IR Forum(ETBI), QA Network (ETBI), AEOA, CEFA, BTEIA, ALOA, National FET PD Coordinators, NAVC, NAYC, Principals Forum (ETBI), NCGE etc.

13.2 WHAT IS WORKING

Parallel to the development of WWETB’s Strategy Statement 2018-2022 was the development of a plan to implement the strategies. The Strategy Statement Implementation Plan underpins the organisations commitment to monitoring, review and evaluation. Fundamentally, WWETB is a reflective organisation and all facets of core business undergo review to establish effectiveness and address challenges or barriers to progress. Learner feedback is critically important to the organisation and all learners are consulted on their course experiences. FET Managers were surveyed on learner consultation and in particular they were asked if they felt that the resulting information from individual Learner consultation is refined and reported through the management structure. 78% were confident that this was the case.

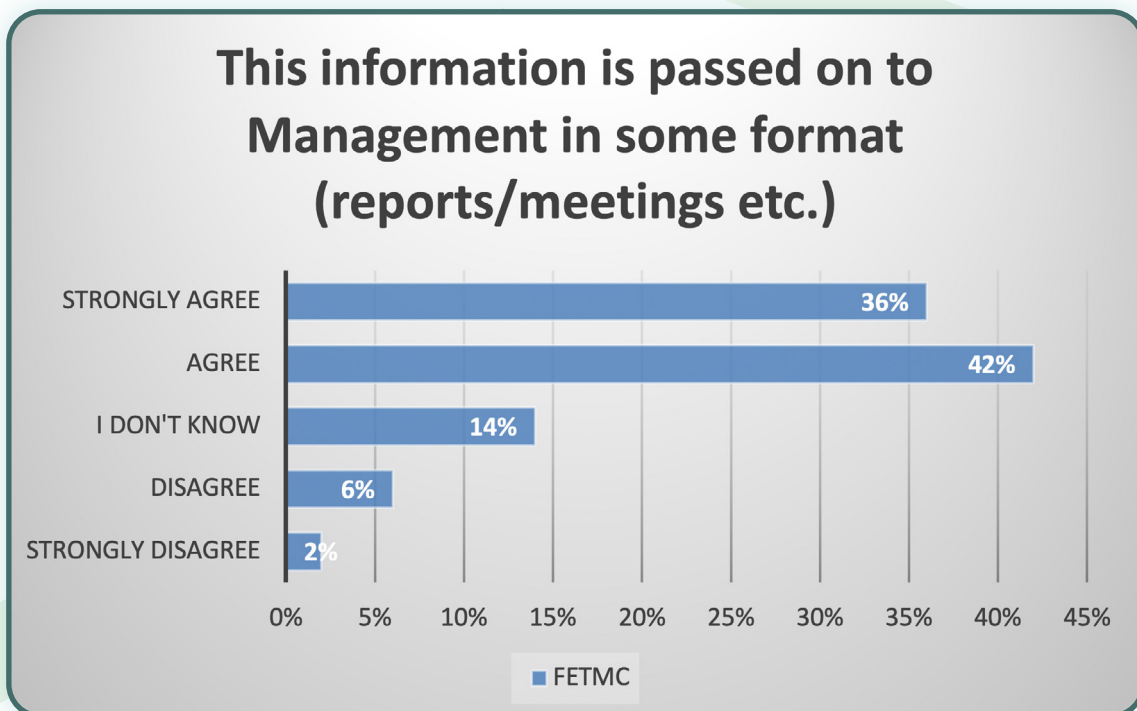


Figure 13.1: SEMR-A3(b)

13.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

WWETB holds large scale Learner feedback events in association with AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Agency. These Adult Learner Fora are

held annually and representatives from all FET programmes are facilitated to feedback on the pros and cons of their learning experiences with WWETB culminating in an annual report that informs FET Management.

WWETB is a consultative and collaborative organisation. The Strategy Statement 2018-2022 was developed through extensive consultation with a number of stakeholder bodies and representative groups..

The practice of evaluating the effectiveness of our relationships with industry bodies is a process that currently does not formally happen across all of our provision and is a potential action for the organisation. Cooperation with local industry representatives is tantamount to providing a responsive and suitably impactful FET service in the region. While these relationships are in place and impact on WWETB planning for provision via our Service to Business unit, an evaluation of the relationships that exist between with our wider FET provision and employers merits consideration.

Companies and organisations involved in the provision of work experience for WWETB FET Learners were consulted about their opportunities to provide feedback to the organisation about skill sets/ competencies they see as required in their specific industry. 47% responded that there has not been such an opportunity. Further discussion among the FET Management Team and other internal management groups about the implications of this feedback is an action for the organisation.

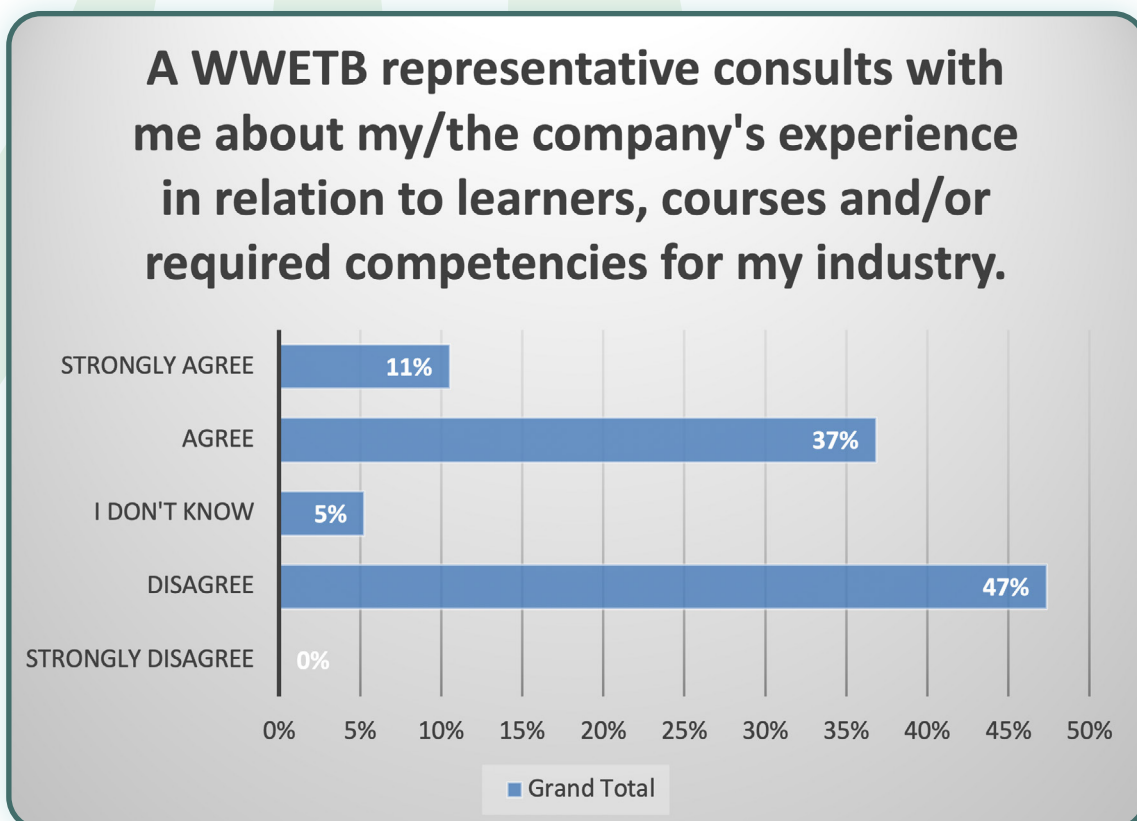


Figure 13.2: SEMR-(A4)

Learner consultation is an area of strength for the organisation. A potential action to build on this is the addition of the learner voice to WWETB's QA Steering Group. This will be explored forthwith.

13.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Investigate a strategy for evaluating of the impact of relationships with local industry across all of our provision.
- Explore a more widespread consultative process with industry representative groups regarding competencies specific to certain industries and ensuing programmatic review to establish the extent of development of these competencies within WWETB programmes
- Explore the potential for further consultation with local Work Experience providers

13.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB engages in systematic review and monitoring of core business at multiple levels. Review and evaluation at centre levels feeds into overarching organisational review. Review involves key stakeholder groups and external consultation. The organisation is represented in multiple collaborative groups and fora relative to development of FET provision. There is potential to further explore and quantify the impact of relationships with certain stakeholders including local industry bodies. The QA Steering Group may benefit from the input of a learner representative.

14. PROGRAMME MONITORING AND REVIEW

14.1 INTRODUCTION

S.E.M.R. (B) Programme Monitoring & Review

- B1).** *WWETB supports programme level review and there is a process by which key findings feed into overall review activity when appropriate.* Area for Improvement
- B2).** *Learners are involved in programme level review to ensure that learner needs are known and learner experience of workload can be evaluated.*

Programme level monitoring and review forms part of the work of Centre-Managers, their staff teams and respective FET Managers. All aspects of programme delivery are addressed through scheduled staff meetings and FET Coordinators and Principals report on programmatic developments and challenges at scheduled meetings with their respective FET Managers. Courses are reviewed at a modular level by learners and tutors via end of course evaluations. Such reviews help to gain insight into learner workload and delivery pace, the success of certain teaching methodologies, the course assessment activity and any other issues that may have been encountered.

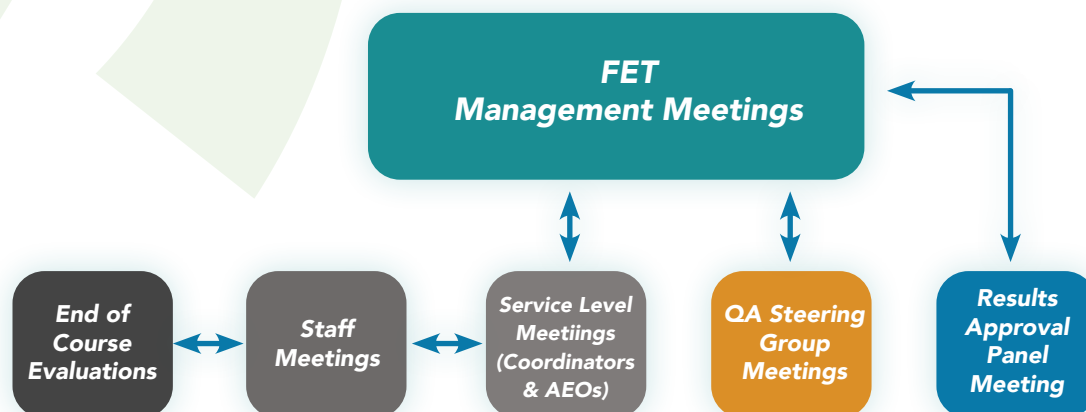


Figure 14.1: Programmatic Review-Information Flow

WWETB adapts major award programmes with the inclusion of modules by request from the centre through the Programme Approval Process. Elements of Common Award System (CAS) modules themselves and Assessment Instrument Specifications (AISs) can be amended on a needs basis by the QA Team. These proposed changes are generally recommended by practitioners and enable errors to be addressed or obsolete references to be updated or removed. The QA Team save the latest versions of the WWETB branded Module and Programme Descriptors on the QA SharePoint site which is accessible to all FET Managers and QQI-QA personnel in centres.

14.2 WHAT IS WORKING

WWETB supports programme level review and there is a process by which key findings feed into overall review activity when appropriate.

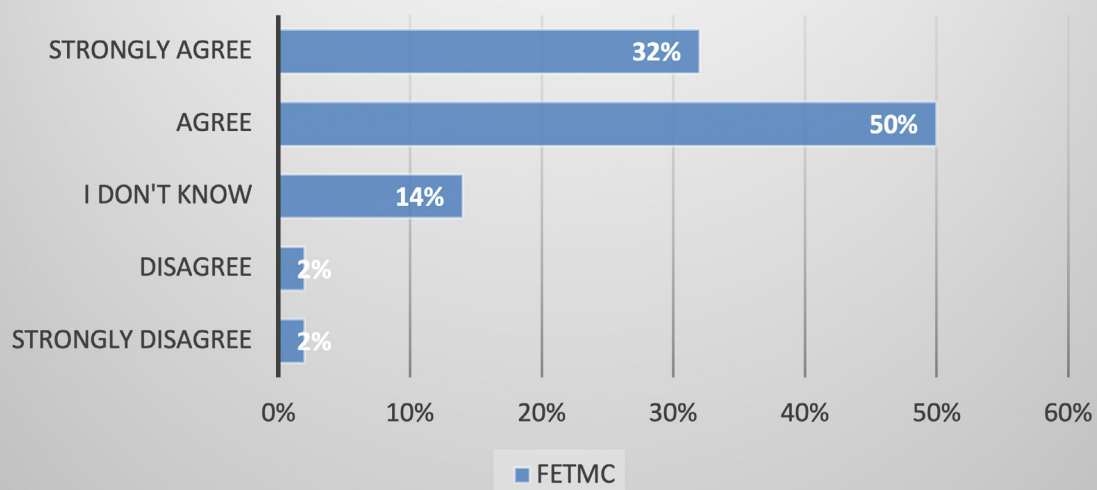


Figure 14.2: SEMR-(B1) FETMC

FET Managers have confidence in the programme-level monitoring and review systems as illustrated by survey responses. Programme descriptor and module descriptor changes are happening allowing the removal of errors within these documents and minor updates to be made. Across the board, learners are consulted for their experiences of courses and these learner evaluations are informing Centre Management and staff teams in programme management and development activity locally.

**If I encounter an issue with Programme or module descriptors, there is a process by which this can be addressed.
(For teaching staff only)**

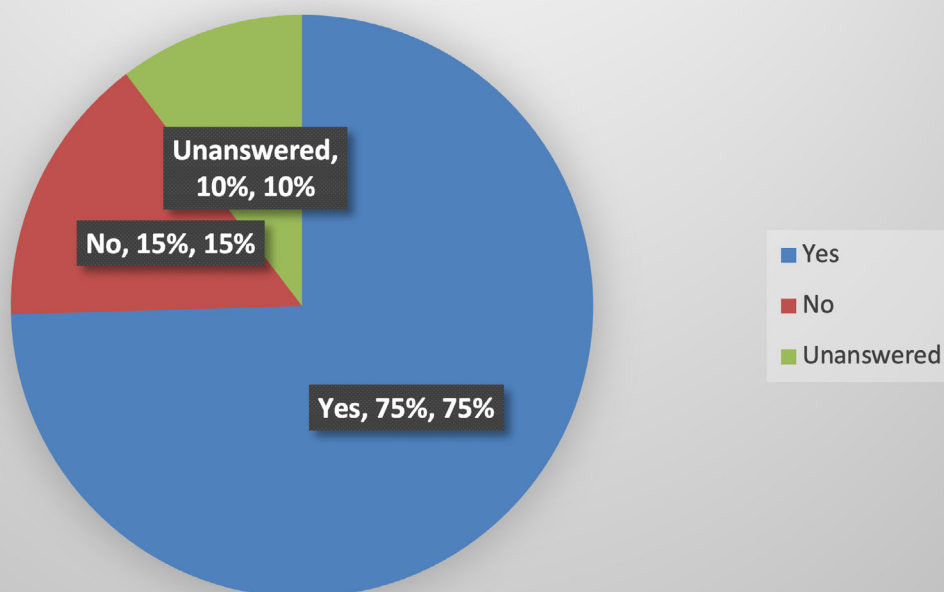


Figure 14.3: SEMR-B1 (PCA)

14.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Changes to Module and Programme Descriptors are happening regularly. The QA Team receives contact from a FET Manager or Practitioner with the proposed change and this is then reviewed for appropriateness by the QA Team. Occasionally, the suggested change relates to module content error and in these instances, the QA Team will disseminate the proposed change to other practitioners with subject matter expertise for review. Currently, this is not a formal process. Formalising the process is an action arising from this section of the review.

The majority of programmes will go through a re-validation process in due course. The sector awaits further information from QQI on the format of the re-validation process. It is expected that it will mean a provider-led collaborative review that will require widespread consultation with practitioners and for some modules and programmes, consultation with external stakeholders, industry experts and learners. A 'community of practice' approach may be an appropriate approach to receiving practitioner input in this regard.

14.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Formalise the process of amending Programme and Module Descriptors and AISs.
- Investigate a Community of Practice based approach to the review of modules/programmes

14.5 SUMMARY POINTS

Monitoring and review of programmes forms part of the fundamental work carried out by Programme Managers and FET Managers. Learners are consulted on their experiences of WWETB programmes and this feedback, as well as practitioner feedback forms part of the information that leads to the evolution of programme delivery. Fundamental documentation associated with programme delivery currently undergo minor modifications, but a formal process for more wholesale review of programme content requires development.

HIGHLIGHTS

In early 2019, centre-level review of our payroll programmes found that several Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs) in the 5N1546 & 6N4005 Payroll award standards were no longer assessable. They had become outdated due to PAYE modernisation and new sectoral regulation.

WWETB's QA Team was notified of the issues regarding these modules and began a process of rectification. A collaborative working group was formed (comprising of WWETB, CDET, DETB, GRETB) with the intention to review the existing programmes, determine an appropriate solution to the problem and update the programmes as necessary. It was planned to do this in a manner that would maintain national consistency with the shared programmes and allow all 16 ETBs to take on the updated programmes if they wished.

It was confirmed by QQI that the Learning Outcomes in the award standard could not be amended which presented a challenge for affected providers. A proposal was made to QQI to leave the ELOs in the award standard unchanged, and instead update the required Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) in the programme module descriptors, while keeping the amended ILOs consistent with the ELOs. This was the first time this approach was taken by the sector and the first instance of an agreed alteration of Learning Outcomes by the provider. This was a major departure for the ETB sector.

Consequently, LOs were amended for both the 5N1546 & 6N4005 programme and new FE Programme Descriptors and a new Training Assessment Instrument Specification (AIS) for 5N1546 were developed, approved through the ETBs' oversight and governance structure, and rolled out. This serves as an excellent example of programme monitoring and review and a collaborative approach to shared programme development within the ETB sector.

15. OVERSIGHT, MONITORING AND REVIEW OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL THIRD PARTIES

15.1 INTRODUCTION

S.E.M.R. (C) Oversight, Monitoring and Review of Relationships with External Third Parties

- C1). WWETB's Quality Assurance policies include provision for engagement with external partnerships and secondary providers.**
- C2). This policy sets out the provisions for due diligence on the reputation, legal status, standing and financial sustainability of such parties.**
- C3). WWETB's Quality Assurance policies include provision for examiners, external authenticators, Contracted Training Providers and other associations. The appropriate policy sets out the process for ensuring that there are no impinging conflict of interests and other affiliations.**
- C4). WWETB's associations with other providers of certification are based on internal and external quality assurance procedures.** Area for Improvement
- C5). WWETB maintains systematic partnerships with appropriate stakeholder groups and agencies with a view to development of FET provision.**

Collaborative partnerships with external parties are key to the delivery of an expansive and high-quality suite of further education and training programmes across the South-East region. WWETB is committed to exercising due diligence with regard to these collaborative relationships and to minimising the risks that may impact negatively on the reputation of the organisation or on the integrity of programmes, services or standards that form part of WWETB's FET provision. WWETB ensures compliance with the quality assurance criteria associated

with the respective certification bodies through well-established oversight structures and with the collaboration of the associated centres and WWETB QA Team. WWETB maintains strong and collaborative working partnerships with counterpart ETB providers and with key national agencies such as SOLAS, QQI, ETBI and the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

WWETB is formally represented on numerous external Boards of Management and the work associated with these boards is reported back to WWETB oversight structures. (List of these external Board affiliations is included as Appendix 5.

15.2 WHAT IS WORKING

Effective working relationships are in place with a wide range of statutory, non-statutory, national and local stakeholders including SOLAS, QQI, DSP, Local Authorities, Local Enterprise Boards, Voluntary Bodies, Community Training Providers, Community Training Centres (CTC), Local Training Initiatives (LTI), and Secondary Providers (Contracted Training and Specialist Training Providers (STP) including the National Learning Network).

WWETB has established an Audit and Risk Committee to safeguard against the failure of control measures or the emergence of risk, particularly where the use and distribution of funding is concerned.

Collaborative provision is governed by service-level agreements, operating guidelines and procedures or 'agreements to collaborate' (LTIs), in each case to ensure the transparency and integrity of the relationship. These collaborations are also subject to rigorous monitoring and review to ensure compliance with programme specifications, quality assurance and certification standards. Contracted Training providers are collaborated with through a formal Framework Agreement. This stakeholder group were consulted about systematic assurances of integrity as part of the consultation process for the Review and the consultation confirmed that the processes in place safeguard against risks to the parent provider.

As part of our contract with WWETB, we are obliged to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest or affiliations that might damage WWETB as an organisation.

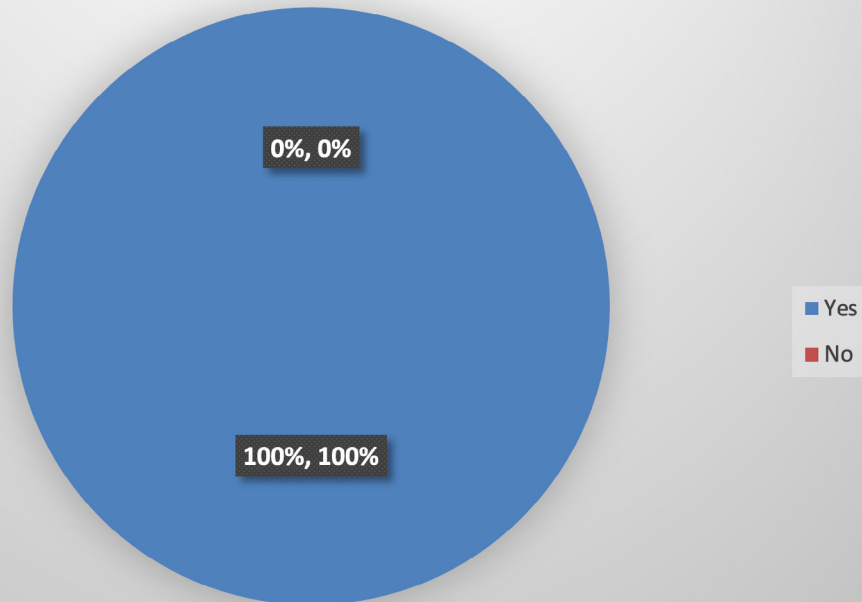


Figure 15.1: SEMR-(C3)

The organisation engages and maintains close links with both National and International awarding bodies and institutions including:

QQI	State Exams Commission
City & Guilds	Irish Pharmacy Union
ITEC	Irish Water Safety
CIBTAC	Microsoft
CIDESCO	Pearson
Accounting Technician Ireland	DES Junior & Senior Trades
RTITB	CPA Ireland
CompTIA	RSA
ICS	Oracle
Engineering Inspection Specialists (EIS)	PHECC
Redseal	METLAB

Craft Apprenticeship has a service-level agreement (SLA) with SOLAS for the governance and management of quality-assured craft apprenticeship provision in the region. In this regard, the SOLAS Apprenticeship Guidelines define the ETB's support activities for employers and apprentices participating on an apprenticeship programme. The provision of craft apprenticeship programmes is subject to annual independent monitoring by the WWETB Authorised Officer and SOLAS based Quality Assurance Services (QAS) unit. Certification for post 2016 apprenticeship is with the coordinating provider for that apprenticeship (e.g. Accountant Technician awarding body is Accounting Technicians Ireland). WWETB ensures compliance with the external Quality Assurance policies of these certification bodies via centre-level monitoring and review. Examiners and External Authenticators when required are contracted in line with external and internal quality assurance policies. External Authenticators (EAs) are contracted by the QA Team and the EA signs a formal Letter of Engagement prior to each instance of authentication which sets out the provider's procedures for:

- Delivery of Service
- Duration of Contract
- Remuneration
- Pension Entitlements
- Vetting/ Reference Checking

The effective development of further education and training provision requires collaboration with other organisations, agencies and groups operating within the sector and several examples of such collaborations have been referred to in previous sections of this report. WWETB actively collaborates with its peer organisations both on specific initiatives and via ETBI facilitated working for such as:

- Chief Executives forum
- Director Fora- (FET, OSD, Schools)
- Quality Assurance QA Network

The organisation maintains working relationships with local higher education institutes such as Waterford and Carlow Institutes of Technology and St. Patrick's College, Carlow. Waterford Institute of Technology is represented on the Steering Group for this review as are local industry in the form of a representative from Teva, a local pharmaceutical company. Collaborations with industry are of paramount importance to the business of the organisation. A Service to Business unit maintains the organisation's relationships with industry representatives. WWETB engages on a regular basis with industry representative groups such as ISME (Irish Small & Medium Enterprises Association), the CIF (Construction Industry Federation) and the IMI (Irish Management Institute).

15.3 WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

WWETB engages with a number of certification bodies as part of an expansive FET provision and adherence to quality assurance procedures for several of these certification bodies is maintained at centre-level. WWETB identifies the value in extending the oversight of these external quality assurance procedures within the remit of the WWETB QA Team and QA Steering Group.

The current reporting structures within Community Education needs to be reviewed in the context of the new Community Education Framework and 'Wider Benefits of Learning' project currently in development with ETBI.

WWETB engages in initiatives that periodically require the input of a consultant or an external SME panel member. Heretofore when this has occurred, a formal Terms of Reference has not been issued to such affiliates. In the interest of transparency and clarity a Terms of Reference should be considered in such instances.

15.4 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS

IDENTIFIED ACTION

- Quality Assurance Agreements with all certification bodies to become part of the oversight responsibilities of the QA Team and QA Steering Group. Develop policies and procedure for this.
- Further development of record keeping and reporting of relationships and collaborative projects with external 3rd parties and 2nd providers.
- QA Team to draft a standard Terms of Reference document for instances of securing services of external panel experts.

15.5 SUMMARY POINTS

WWETB fosters and maintains extensive collaborative relationships with a multitude of organisations and agencies with the objective of providing high-quality and comprehensive education and training opportunities in the South-East region. The organisation endeavours to systematically monitor and retain diligent oversight of these relationships as appropriate. WWETB works closely with its respective funding agencies and oversight bodies to ensure transparency and accountability are in place with regard to all core business and affiliations. Minor procedural elements have been identified which require action that will enhance control measures within these relationships.

HIGHLIGHTS

LTI: ETB/FAI Player Development Course

The ETB/FAI Player Development LTI commenced in WWETB in 2018. It offers a QQI Major Award in Sports and Recreation which includes; Work Experience, Communications, Word Processing, Personal Effectiveness, IT, Team-working, First Aid, Nutrition, Sport and Recreation Studies, Sports Anatomy and Physiology, Exercise and Fitness, Soccer Coaching and a number of additional awards including; ITEC cert Fitness instruction, FAI Kickstart 1&2 Coaching, Distance Learning Workshop, Lifeguard, Media Training Workshop and Pan- Disability workshop. This broad programme offers learners an excellent foundation for a future in football, health, sport and leisure industry.

There is no similar programme in the South East of Ireland and the award is an example of a multiple-award programme requiring the collaboration of a number of bodies. The programme is delivered in WIT Campus in Waterford. There are on average 22 learners per academic programme.

The focus of the programme is to train young people aged 16 to 25 in Level 5 Sport and Recreation and additional non-QQI awards. The progression options for the programme include, higher education, scholarships in USA, self-employment, employment and other further education provision. There is also the possibility of some players securing professional football contracts in Ireland, England and USA.

The partnership with the FAI offers an excellent networking opportunity for learners. Learners also have the opportunity to assist with various FAI Projects during the year and gain valuable hands on experience in the areas of football development, refereeing and coaching.

We are also very fortunate in WWETB that the current Co-ordinator has extensive links with English and American clubs and colleges. For example, within the 2019/2020 programme 12 learners went to higher education which included 4 on varying scholarships in WIT, 4 to the FAI IT Carlow Football Programme with two further learners offered USA Scholarships.

The ETB/FAI LTI is supported internally by WWETB through regular group and one to one sessions with the Adult Educational Guidance Service. The co-ordinators actively participate in WWETB networking events and offer support and mentoring to other programmes.

The ETB/FAI Player Development Course achieves almost 100% major awards each academic term. The programme is an excellent example of collaborative partnerships with external parties to deliver innovative, quality programmes.



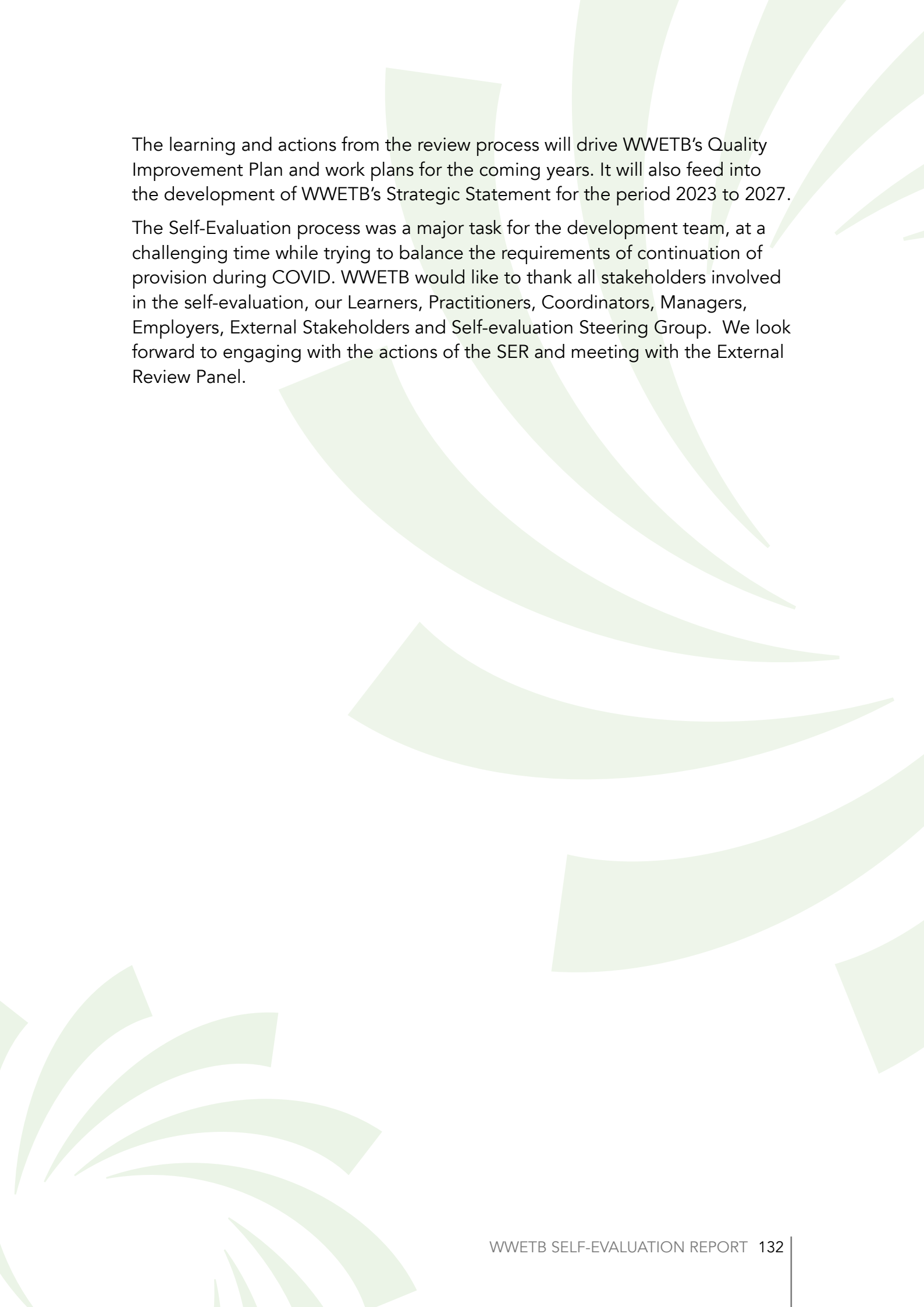
Figure 15.2: FAI Player Development Course

CONCLUSIONS

The extensive self-evaluation process undertaken has provided an opportunity for the WWETB's FET division and supporting services to review and reflect on the effectiveness, appropriateness and completeness of systems that have been developed and implemented for the governance and management of quality assurance since the establishment of WWETB. It has allowed us to evidence areas of strength, good practice and innovation. It has also provided the opportunity to openly identify areas for improvement and gaps in our current systems.

The review has evidenced wide-ranging strengths of the organisation. Survey consultations have shown the high levels of positivity and satisfaction across all our stakeholder groups, particularly our learners. The COVID-19 emergency has in many ways been a stress-test of our quality procedures and governance structures. The agile ways in which our centres, practitioners and learners have been supported while maintaining the governance, standard and integrity of provision at all times, has been a testament to the strengths of our existing structures, practices and people. WWETB has invested and resourced greatly in quality and has an established, highly visible, amalgamated Quality team supporting our FET provision. The high levels of accessibility, briefings and support has led to a high degree of consistency and a culture of quality in the organisation. The self-evaluation process has demonstrated the huge amount of work done by the Quality team and also the awareness of what gaps remain and the actions still to be undertaken. The area of data analysis is now a key strength of WWETB, with a dedicated data analyst part of the Quality team. The use of data to support, plan, monitor and review our FET provision is an area we intend to develop further in the coming years.

WWETB is committed to being open and honest about gaps and areas for improvement identified in the review. We embrace the opportunity to put the necessary plans in place to address these areas. The 2021 Quality Improvement Plan will undergo a mid-year review and actions which can be addressed in 2021 will be added to this plan. Further actions will be added to a medium-term plan for review in 2022. A clear picture of outstanding policy or procedure development or review is now in place and plans will be put in place immediately to address these, indeed many are already underway. Where actions do not fall under the governance of the Quality Team, these will be reviewed with the necessary functional areas. This review process has already begun as part of the focused consultation on the SER and review of the actions with FET Management.



The learning and actions from the review process will drive WWETB's Quality Improvement Plan and work plans for the coming years. It will also feed into the development of WWETB's Strategic Statement for the period 2023 to 2027.

The Self-Evaluation process was a major task for the development team, at a challenging time while trying to balance the requirements of continuation of provision during COVID. WWETB would like to thank all stakeholders involved in the self-evaluation, our Learners, Practitioners, Coordinators, Managers, Employers, External Stakeholders and Self-evaluation Steering Group. We look forward to engaging with the actions of the SER and meeting with the External Review Panel.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1- GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEO- Adult Education Officer

AIS- Assessment Instrument Specification

ALO- Adult Literacy Officer

AONTAS- The National Adult Learning Organisation

BTEI- Back to Education Initiative

CAO- Central Applications Office

CAS- Common Award System

CEF- Community Education Facilitator

C&G- City & Guilds

CSO- Central Statistics Office

CTC- Community Training Centre

DDLETB- Dublin Dun Laoghaire Education & Training Board

DFHERIS- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

DSP- Department of Social Protection

DoE - Department of Education

EA- External Authentication / External Authenticator

EESS- Enterprise Engagement Support Service

EMP- Employers

EROC- Emergency Reception & Orientation Centre

ERTLA- Emergency Remote Teaching Learning and Assessment

ESF- European Social Fund

ESOL- English for Speakers of Other Languages

ETB- Education and Training Board

ETBI- Education and Training Boards Ireland

FARR- Funding Allocation Request and Reporting

FESS- Further Education Support Service

FET- Further Education and Training

FETMC- Further Education & Training Managers & Coordinators

GDPR- General Data Protection Regulation

G.M.Q.- Governance & Management of Quality

GRETB- Galway Roscommon Education & Training Board

H&S -Health and Safety

HE- Higher Education

HEI- Higher Education Institute

ICT- Information and Communications Technology

IDK- (Survey Response) 'I don't know.'

IoT- Institute of Technology

IRGSS Information, Recruitment and Guidance Support Service

IV- Internal Verification

LECP- Local Economic and Community Plan

LEO- Local Enterprise Office

LES- Local Employment Service

LSG- Learner Survey Group

MOODLE -A free and open-source online learning management system (LMS) that supports learning

MSLETB- Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education & Training Board

NALA- National Adult Literacy Agency

NCCA -National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

NFQ- National Framework of Qualifications

NHA- National Hairdressing Apprenticeship

NZEB- Near Zero Energy Building

OETC- Outdoor Education and Training Centre

OGP- Office for Government Procurement

OSD- Organisation Support and Development

PAC- Programme Approval Committee

PCA- Practitioners & Centre Administrators

PLD- Professional Learning & Development

PDSS- Professional Development Support Service

PLC- Post-Leaving Certificate

PLSS -Programme Learner Support System

QA- Quality Assurance

RAP- Results Approval Panel

QASG- Quality Assurance Steering Group

QBS- Quality Business System (QQI)

QQI- Quality and Qualifications Ireland

RPL- Recognition of Prior Learning

SER -Self-Evaluation Report

S.E.M.R.- Self-evaluation, Monitoring & Review.

SESG- Self-Evaluation Steering Group

SLA- Service Level Agreement

SOLAS- The National Further Education and Training Authority - An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh Agus Scileanna

SMT -Senior Management Team

SPA- Strategic Performance Agreement

TEL -Technology-Enhanced Learning

T & L- Teaching and Learning

T.L.A.- Teaching, Learning & Assessment

TNA- Training Needs Assessment

TP- Training Partners

TSO- Training Standards Officer

TQAS- Transitional Quality Assurance System

UDL- Universal Design for Learning

VEC- Vocational Educational Committee

VLE- Virtual Learning Environment -

VTOS- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

WWETB- Waterford & Wexford Education and Training Board

WWTS- Waterford & Wexford Training Service

WXP- Work Experience Providers

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APPENDIX 3: KEY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS- LINKS

Overarching Documentation

Document Name & Description	Hyperlink
<p>Review Areas Breakdown: This document outlines the self-evaluation approach and methodology and forms the context of the report.</p>	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2
<p>Consultation Matrix: A summary of the content of the survey consultation with cross-survey matrix.</p>	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2/
<p>QQI Core Guidelines: The core guidelines for FET providers from QQI, the statutory FET Quality agency</p>	https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf
<p>WWETB Strategy Statement: WWETB's statement for strategy for 2018-2022</p>	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/information-compliance/foi-publication-scheme/strategy-statement-2018-2022/
<p>WWETB Annual Service Plan: Outlines key elements in the delivery of services proposed for 2021.</p>	http://www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/03/Service-Plan-2021.1.pdf
<p>WWETB FET Quality Improvement Plan: WWETB plan for implementation of quality in FET provision -2021</p>	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2/
<p>Executive Self-Evaluation Report: Self-evaluation report for QQI reengagement process</p>	http://waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2018/04/WWETB-ESE-Report-v1.0-002.pdf
<p>SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement: FET Performance agreement- WWETB and SOLAS 2018-2020</p>	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/WWETB-Strategic-Performance-Agreement-2018-2020.pdf
<p>Transitional Quality Assurance System: Legacy training QA System.</p>	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2018/04/SOLAS-F%C3%81STQAS-Over-Arching-Quality-Assurance-Manual-for-Trrianing-Services.pdf

FET Policy Documents

FET Policy Name & Description	Hyperlink
<p>Assessment Repeats Policy: Policy for repeats of assessments</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/WWETB-Repeats-Policy-V0.4.pdf</p>
<p>Compassionate Consideration Handbook: Policy and procedures for compassionate consideration in assessment</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/WWETB-COMPASSIONATE-CONSIDERATION-Version-0.1.pdf</p>
<p>Learner Appeals Policy: Policy for assessment appeals</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2/</p>
<p>Examinations Handbook: Overarching Policy and procedures for FET examinations</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/DRAFT-EXAMINATIONS-Version-0.3.pdf</p>
<p>Malpractice Handbook: Policy and procedures for malpractice instances in assessment</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2/</p>
<p>Reasonable Accommodation Handbook: Policy and procedures for reasonable accommodation in assessment</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2/</p>
<p>Recognition of Prior Learning Handbook: Policy and procedures for recognition of prior learning</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/ETBI-Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-April-2018.pdf</p>
<p>Short-term Extension Handbook: Policy and procedures for short-term extensions in assessment activity</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/WWETB-SHORT-TERM-EXTENSION-Version-0.1.pdf</p>
<p>Secure Storage Handbook: Policy and procedures for secure storage of assessment materials and documentation</p>	<p>www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/WWETB-SECURE-STORAGE-Version-0.2.pdf</p>

Supplementary Information and Evaluation Evidence

Supplementary Information	Hyperlink
Self-evaluation Report Evidence: All the supporting evidence for the self-evaluation report	Contact WWETB QA Team for Access
Core Guidelines and Strategy Statement Mapping Document: Spreadsheet showing the correlation between the themes and principles of both documents	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/15271-2/
Guide to Remote External Authentication: A guide for centres on the process of preparing for remote external authentication visits	www.waterfordwexford.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2021/06/Quality-Assurance-Guide-to-Remote-External-Authentication.pdf

APPENDIX 4: WWETB QA BRIEFINGS RECORD

Date	Location	Topic
25th October 2016	Woodlands Hotel	QA Briefing to FET Forum
29th November 2017	Waterford Teachers' Centre	Academic Writing, Referencing & Plagiarism
30th January 2018	WYTEC CTC	Met with QA Co-ordinator re 2018/19 Assessment and Programme Plans
13th February 2018	Woodland Garden LTI Training Programme, Dungarvan	QA Briefing on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
13th February 2018	Ballybeg CDP Horticulture LTI Programme	QA Briefing on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
12th March 2018	Woman's Centre LTI	QA Briefing and programme planning
14th March 2018	Manor St John LTI, Lisduggan, Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
16th April 2018	Waterford Heritage LTI	Briefing on Assessment and EA Planning and programme windup
16th May 2018	Connect Programme LTI, Waterford Area Partnership, Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
5th June 2018	St John's Priory LTI	Briefing on Assessment / IV and EA Planning
11th September 2018	Cornmarket LTI	Briefing new Tutor on QA procedures and annual planning and RCCRS system

Date	Location	Topic
12th September 2018	Gorey Youth Needs	Briefing on QA new assessment forms planning implementation of C&G and later LDA's
14th September 2018	Access LTI	Briefing on QA new assessment forms planning and Briefing new coordinator
18th September 2018	Waterford Travellers Programme (LTI) Ballybeg, Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
18th September 2018	NLN 2018/2019	Ongoing Briefings for new tutors and QA briefings plus new changes and support on process/forms and systems
19th September 2018	FAI Player Development Programme (LTI) Carriganore, Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
25th September 2018	St. John's College	QA Workshop
27th September 2018	Enniscorthy STP	Briefing on QA systems to new coordinator and yearly QA planning
8th October 2018	Courtown LTI	Briefing on QA new assessment forms course QA planning
10th October 2018	Kilmuckridge LTI	Briefing on New QA forms and programme windup
17th October 2018	Treo LTI, Westgate Business Park, Dungarvan, Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
17th October 2018	Dunhill Education Centre, Dunhill Ecopark, Ballyphilip, Co Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan

Date	Location	Topic
1st November 2018	Making Connections LTI, Lisduggan, Waterford	QA Briefing with Co-ordinator and Tutors on Assessment and 2018/19 Programme Plan
20th January 2019	Information Tech Applications Instructors-Waterford Training Centre	Assessment Process Briefing
22nd January 2019	All Waterford LTIs, WYTEC CTC and NLN Waterford	Briefed all Coordinators on all WWETB revised assessment forms and Updated Assessment Guidelines
10th February 2019	Creative Training	Assessment Process briefing
19th February 2019	Waterford Literacy/ESOL (Waterford)	Assessment
5th March 2019	Connect Programme LTI	New Programme Commencement and met with Co-ordinators
13th March 2019	VTOS Enniscorthy	QA Briefing (Gen/Assessment)
25th March 2019	Woman's Centre LTI	QA Briefing and programme planning
April 2019	Waterford Heritage Programme LTI, Jenkins Lane, Waterford	This LTI programme closed down after 35 years so there were many meetings during this period to wind the programme down
29th April 2019	Waterford Heritage LTI	Briefing on Assessment and EA Planning and programme windup
6th May 2019	BTEI Waterford/Wexford	FARR Introduction
7th May 2019	Adult Literacy/ESOL Waterford/Wexford	FARR Introduction
8th May 2019	VTOS Waterford/Wexford	FARR Introduction
9th May 2019	Youthreach Waterford/Wexford	FARR Introduction

Date	Location	Topic
10th May 2019	PLC Waterford/Wexford	FARR Introduction
13th May 20	Electrical Instructors Wexford	Assessment Process Briefing
18th June 2019	St John's Priory LTI	Briefing on Assessment / IV and EA Planning
18th August 2019	Groundworks Instructors Wexford	Assessment Process Briefing
27th August 2019	Waterford Traveller Programme	Briefed New Coordinator on QA Processes and new Forms
27th August 2019	Dungarvan College (Waterford)	Quality Assurance (Gen)
29th August 2019	Treo Dungarvan	New Programme for 2019/2020 Commenced. Briefed Co-ordinator and Tutors on New Forms and Processes
5th September 2019	Ballybeg Horticulture LTI	QA Briefing with Manager, Tutors and Internal Verifier on Assessment Policy
12th September 2019	Enniscorthy STP	Briefing on QA systems to new coordinator and yearly QA planning
16th September 2019	NLN 2018/2019	Ongoing Briefings for new tutors and QA briefings.
25th September 2019	Access LTI	Briefing on QA new assessment forms planning and Briefing new coordinator
26th September 2019	Gorey Youth Needs	Briefing on QA new assessment forms planning implementation of C&G and later LDA's
28th October 2019	Kilmuckridge LTI	Briefing on New QA forms and programme windup
15th November 2019	Adult Literacy Dungarvan	Assessment Process

Date	Location	Topic
27th November 2019	Youth Train CTC	Briefing new Tutors on QA procedures and new QA forms plus
28th November 2019	New Ross AEC (Wexford)	Quality Assurance (Gen)/ Assessment
17th February 2020	Electrical Instructors Kilcohan	Assessment Process Briefing
26th February 2020	Subla Youthreach (Waterford)	Quality Assurance (Gen)/ Assessment
5th March 2020	Kennedy College (Wexford)	Assessment
9th March 2020	Waterford College of Further Education (Waterford)	Quality Assurance (Gen)/ Assessment
10th March 2020	Chevron Training (Online)	Online methods? Assessment Process Briefing
14th October 2020	MS Teams (FET coordinators)	Assessment Process Briefing
3rd November 2020	MS Teams (FET coordinators/QQI Centre contacts)	IV / EA Process
4th November 2020	Tramore FET Centre (Adult Literacy)	IV Training
6th November 2020	MS Teams (Bunclody Outdoor Education Centre)	Developing LDAs
9th November 2020	MS Teams (FET coordinators/QQI Centre contacts)	QBS Training
13th November 2020	MS Teams (ESOL coordinator/tutors)	ESOL Assessment Standardisation Project
20th November 2020	MS Teams (FET coordinator /AEOs)	New Early Learning and Care Awards & Programmes Update
24th November 2020	Bunclody FET Centre (Adult Literacy North Wexford)	QBS and IV Training

Date	Location	Topic
24th November 2020	New Ross FET Centre (ESOL Wexford)	QBS and IV Training
9th December 2020	MS Teams (WCFE)	WE/PPD on Community Health Service award
19th January 2021	MS Teams (FET coordinators)	Nursing/Healthcare Support Work Experience
27th January 2021	MS Teams (all staff involved in Work Experience)	Work Experience Alternatives Update
5th February 2021	Teams (Bunclody Outdoor Education Centre)	Assessment Process Review
10th February 2021	Electrical Instructors Waterford Training Centre	Assessment Process Briefing
26th February 2021	MS Teams	Consultation between QA and Digital Learning in relation to Remote EA
11th March 2021	MS Teams (WCFE)	Remote EA Process
26th March 2021	MS Teams (FET Forum)	Inaugural Review Update
29th March 2021	MS Teams	LDA Project (QBS)
27th April 2021	Adult Literacy Dungarvan	QBS Training
6th May 2021	BTEI West Waterford (Dungarvan)	QBS Training
17th May 2021	Welding Instructor-Waterford Training Centre	Assessment Process Briefing

APPENDIX 5: EXTERNAL BOARD AFFILIATIONS

FET Representation on Outside Boards March 2021

Staff Member	Board	Sub Committees	Frequency of Meetings	How feedback to WWETB
Susan Sheahan	Healthy Wexford		Monthly	Through FET Forum
	Healthy Wexford	Mental Well Being Working Group	Bi Monthly	Through FET Forum
Noel Hackett	Waterford Leader P/Ship		Monthly	
	WLP	TUS	Every 2 months	
	Waterford and South Tipperary Regional community and Youth Services – Day Project		Every 2 months	
Deborah Butler	Waterford Age Friendly Alliance	Social Participation thematic sub-group	Every 6 weeks	Monthly Report
	Waterford Age Friendly Alliance	Social Participation and Respect and Social Inclusion subgroup	Every 6 weeks	Monthly Report

Staff Member	Board	Sub Committees	Frequency of Meetings	How feedback to WWETB
	Waterford Integration Services- Ordinary Member of Board of Trustees			Monthly Report
	WIS	Education and Social Enterprise Task Group	Monthly	Monthly Report
Sarah Lavan	Traveller Interagency Group (TIG) Wexford		Every 6 weeks	Monthly Report
	TIG	TIG sub-committee on Education, Training, and Employment (chair)	4 times a year	Monthly Report
	FET National Inclusion Network		Monthly	Monthly Report
	ETBI Active Inclusion Position Paper working group		Monthly	Monthly Report
	ETBI/Down Syndrome Ireland (DSI)		Monthly	Monthly Report
	Disability Consultative Group (DCG) Wexford		Not yet established	

Staff Member	Board	Sub Committees	Frequency of Meetings	How feedback to WWETB
	LCDC SICAP sub-committee Roma Services		Bi annually at present	
Bridín Moloney	Wexford Age Friendly Alliance	TBC-	Quarterly	Not met as yet- monthly report?
	Community Education/ WIT Steering group		Quarterly	Not met as yet- monthly report?
Aine Whelan	Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre BOM		Monthly	Monthly Report
	SHFRC	Operations Sub Group	Monthly	Monthly Report
	Traveller Interagency Group Waterford		Monthly	Monthly Report
	Waterford Age Friendly Alliance		Quarterly	Monthly Report
	Waterford Age Friendly Alliance	Civic Participation and Employment	Quarterly	Monthly Report
	Waterford Council Keep Well Committee	Digital Connectivity and Access to Learning	Every 2 weeks	Monthly Report
	Community Education/ WIT Steering Group		Quarterly	Monthly Report

Staff Member	Board	Sub Committees	Frequency of Meetings	How feedback to WWETB
Fran Kennedy	ETBI Adult Education Officers Network		Monthly	Email to AEO's
	ETBI Community Education Position Paper Focus Group		Monthly	
Mary Walsh	Co Waterford Community Childcare Facility CLG	None	5 meetings per year plus sitting on Interview boards	Some knowledge gained feeds into discussion on Childcare Courses
	South East FLAG (Fisheries Local Action Group)	None	4/5 times a year	Minutes of meetings are submitted to the CE and also CE KWETB
Helena Finlay	Waterford City and County Council	Steering Group of Development of Waterford Cultural Quarter	Last meeting was 2019 due restrictions. Webinar this morning as part of Next meeting -Autumn subject to public health service guidelines	Report to Michael O'Brien and Mary Walsh AEO Last report January, 2020

Staff Member	Board	Sub Committees	Frequency of Meetings	How feedback to WWETB
Mary Walsh O'Shea	Solas - Evaluation of FET Provisions at Level 3 & 4 and incorporating BTEI	Advisory Committee	Quarterly	Emails to FET Director, Coordinators and AEO's re information how evaluation was taken place.
Noreen Reilly	Principal Forum ETBI		4 meetings annually	Principals
Michael O'Brien	Waterford City and County Council LCDC and LAG	SICAP Sub Committee Skills Sub Committee	Should be 4. More recently	SMT
	Waterford Sports Partnership		Every 2 months	SMT
	HPBA Management Group		Every 2 months at the moment	SMT
Alan O'Gorman	ETBI		Monthly	QA Steering Group and FET Management Meetings
Jackie Browne	Waterford Migrant Integration Steering Group		Monthly	Email to AEO

APPENDIX 6: REVIEW MEETINGS RECORD

Date	Meeting	Attendees
12/09/19	QA PD with Trish O'Brien	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin, other ETBs
04/10/19	Brief meeting re: Review Schedule decision	Alan O'Gorman, Ken Whyte (DFET), Shay Cummins (Unit Manager)
08/10/19	Note to Principals Meeting RE: External Review	Alan O'Gorman, Eimear Ryan (Director) PLC Principals
09/10/19	QA PD with Trish O'Brien	Eda Ryan, Mary O'Connor, Jim Kenneally, other ETBs
27/01/20	QQI Review Meeting- Planning	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin, Jessica Gill
05/02/20	QQI Review- Official Launch- Naas	Ken Whyte, Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
18/02/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
04/03/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
24/02/20	Review Steering Group (SESG) Meeting	SESG Members
14/05/20	QA Workshop- Trish O'Brien- Pilot 1	Alan Larkin
27/05/20	QA Workshop- Trish O'Brien- Pilot 2	Alan Larkin
25/08/20	Review of Provider Profile Data	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin, Jon Ishaque
04/11/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
11/11/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
13/11/20	Mapping National Guidelines Mission & Strategy & Policy	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin, Edel Walsh.
17/11/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
24/11/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
01/12/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin
02/12/20	Review Steering Group (SESG) Meeting	SESG Members
08/12/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O'Gorman, Alan Larkin

Date	Meeting	Attendees
10/12/20	Consultation Group- OSD	Ken Whyte, Karina Daly, Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
17/12/20	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
06/01/21	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
07/01/21	Consultation Group- CPD	Fran Kennedy, Paul Fallon, Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
11/01/21	Consultation Group- Second Providers & Other stakeholders	John Cassidy, Fran Kennedy, Nichola Long, Colin McCarthy, Alan O’Gorman, Jessica Gill, Alan Larkin, Edel Walsh
12/01/21	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin, Edel Walsh
12/01/21	Consultation Group-Learner Support	Joann Power, Peter Lucey, Sarah Lavan, Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Jessica Gill, Alan Larkin
12/01/21	Presentation of WWETB Board of Management- QQI Review	Alan O’Gorman, WWETB Board of Management
15/01/21	Review Planning Meeting- QA	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin.
21/01/21	Survey Consultation- Development/ Review	Jon Ishaque, Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
25/01/21	Survey Consultation- Development/ Review	Jon Ishaque, Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
26/01/21	Survey Consultation- Development/ Review	Jon Ishaque, Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
27/02/21	Survey Consultation- Development/ Review	Jon Ishaque, Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
01/02/21	Support For Learners- Guidance Consultation meeting	Peter Lucey, Alan Larkin, Edel Walsh
03/02/21	Review Steering Group (SESG) Meeting	SESG Members
10/02/21	Meeting with Guidance re section 12	Peter Lucey, Alan Larkin
11/02/21	Provider Profile Meeting	Alan O’Gorman, Jon Ishaque, Alan Larkin
12/02/21	Digital Learning Consult	Fiona Dee, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin

Date	Meeting	Attendees
16/02/21	Review of Data Evidence	Alan O’Gorman, Jon Ishaque, Alan Larkin
19/02/21	Provider Profile- Staffing Detail	Alan O’Gorman, Jon Ishaque, Alan Larkin
23/02/21	Review of Provider Profile	A. O’Gorman, J. Ishaque, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
24/02/21	Review of Provider Profile	A. O’Gorman, J. Ishaque, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
26/02/21	Focus Groups- Survey Review	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
01/03/21	Provider Profile Update	Alan O’Gorman, Jon Ishaque, Alan Larkin
02/03/21	Survey Data Review	A. O’Gorman, J. Ishaque, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
03/03/21	Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
05/03/21	Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin.
08/03/21	QQI Update Session- K. Henry	Various Provider Reps. AOG, AL
09/03/21	Focus Groups- Planning	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
10/03/21	Focus Groups- Planning	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
11/03/21	Review Steering Group (SESG) Meeting	SESG Members
12/03/21	Learner Focus Group Session	Learner reps, A. O’Gorman, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
16/03/21	Learner Focus Group Review	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin.
18/03/21	Practitioner Focus Group Session	Practitioner reps, A. O’Gorman, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
18/03/21	FET Coordinators Focus Group.	FET Coordinator reps, A. O’Gorman, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
19/03/21	Admin & Spec. Function Focus Group.	Finance, HR, IT, Digital Learning, PLD, PLSS, Data, A. O’Gorman, E. Walsh, A. Larkin
23/03/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin

Date	Meeting	Attendees
30/03/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
09/04/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
16/04/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
20/03/21	Review SER Comments	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin.
21/03/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Edel Walsh, Alan Larkin
27/04/21	SESG Meeting- Planning	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
28/04/21	Review Steering Group (SESG) Meeting	SESG Members
05/05/21	Review SER Comments	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin.
05/05/21	Review of Section 4 with PLD/DL	Fiona Dee, Paul Fallon, Alan Larkin
07/05/21	Review of Section 15	Nichola Long, Fran Kennedy, Trevor Sinnot, Michael O’Brien, Fran Kennedy, A. O’Gorman
07/05/21	Review of Section 4	Karina Daly, Lorraine Fox, Annemarie Jones, Sandra Murphy, Michelle Ryan, Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
10/05/21	Review of Section 12	Jaqueline Sweeney, Joann Power, Sarah Lavan, Peter Lucey, Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
11/05/21	SER Feedback Review	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
13/05/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
19/05/21	FET Management Meeting- Prep.	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin
20/05/21	FET Management Team Meeting: Review of Actions from SER	FET Management Team, Alan Larkin
26/05/21	Review Steering Group (SESG) Meeting	SESG Members
02/06/21	SER Review- General	Alan O’Gorman, Alan Larkin

Appendix 7:

TERMS OF REFERENCE - SELF EVALUATION STEERING GROUP

TQQI Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in
Education and Training Boards

Introduction to the Review

The statutory certification body for Further and Higher Education- QQI, are currently engaged in the wholesale review of Quality Assurance in all ETB organisations. Each review will be carried out by an international team of independent experts and peers, who will review the education and training provision, to ensure agreed quality standards are being met. As part of the review, All ETBs are required to conduct an evaluation of its Quality Assurance systems and outline the findings in a published report. The publishing of the report will be followed by a Desk Review by the specialist panel appointed by QQI and subsequent to this, a Main Review Visit will take place where the specialist review team will conduct a series of meetings with representatives of all associated stakeholder groups. The Review Team will publish a report based on their findings on behalf of QQI and the ETB will formulate a further Action Plan based on the report.

WWETB's Review Schedule

Review Activity	Start	Estimated Duration
Evaluative Process WWETB	January 2020	8-9 Months
Self-Evaluation Report submission	December 2020	
Planning Visit	February 2020	1 Day
Main Review Visit	April 2021	1 Week
QQI Published Review Findings	October 2021	

Self- Evaluation Steering Group

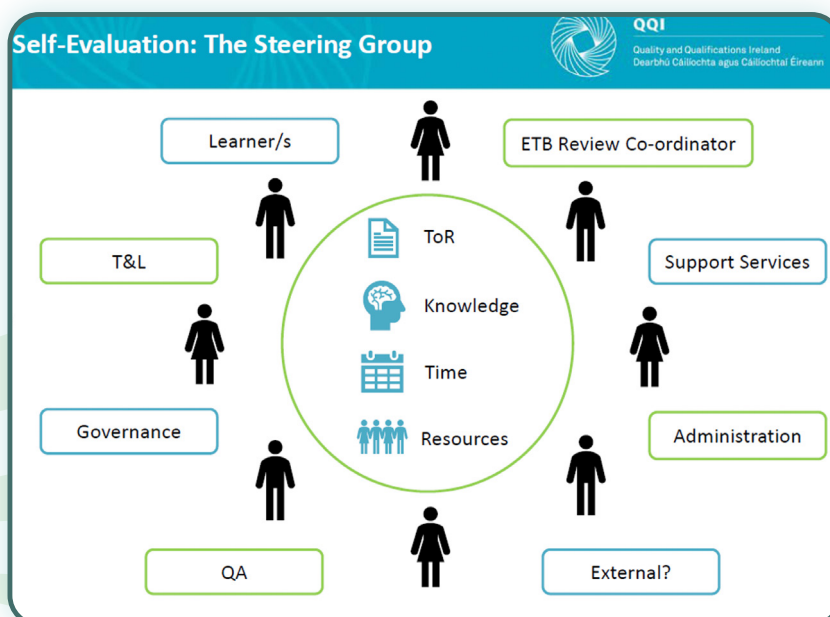
It is recommended that the ETB will form a Self- Evaluation Steering that would provide the following general functions:

- Assist in the coordination of the self-evaluation process
- Monitor progress
- Oversee the production and submission of WWETB's Self-Evaluation report
- Participate in the Main Review Visit by the External Review Team- April 2021

Terms of Reference- Self-Evaluation Steering Group

The Steering Group for WWETB's self-evaluation process and ensuing Self Evaluation Report will be made up of representatives of the key-stakeholder groups associated with the business of WWETB. The group will provide input that will help develop and realise WWETB's self-evaluate process and report ahead of submission to the External Review team in December 2020. The vehicle for this input will be by way of a series of meetings at which all appointed Steering Group members will convene.

The meetings will be chaired by WWETB's Director of Further Education. At these meetings, Steering Group members will be briefed on the overall project status by WWETB's Quality Assurance Team and will afforded the opportunity to contribute thoughts, ideas and opinions on the direction and process of self-evaluation activity that will take place throughout 2020. They will also act as a voice for the stakeholder group they represent and may be consulted on that basis during these meetings.



Schedule for Self-Evaluation Steering Group Meetings

It is proposed that the Steering Group will meet approximately every six weeks initially, with the initial meeting taking place towards the end of February 2020. It is hoped that large-scale engagement with stakeholder groups would be for the most part complete by June 2020, and so the meeting schedule for the Steering Group from June on to the submission of the final report may be less frequent than every six weeks.

QQI's External Review Team will meet with the Steering Group with between the 19th-23th of April 2021 as part of the series of meetings that will take place for the external review.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.qqi.ie//Publications/Pages/Review-Terms-of-Reference-Inaugural-Review-of-Quality-Assurance-in-ETBs.aspx>

<https://www.qqi.ie//Publications/Pages/Review-Handbook-Inaugural-Review-of-Quality-Assurance-in-ETB.aspx>



wwetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
*Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board*