

## Inaugural Review Action Plan

### Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board

March 2022

#### Part 1: Dissemination of Review Report Findings

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) has welcomed the commendations and recommendations of the Inaugural Review Report which took place virtually in May 2021. In making its recommendations, the review team has confirmed finding of the ETB's self-evaluation process and findings and has also provided advice on how MSLETB can move to its next phase of development.

On 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021, QQI launched the 'first snapshot of quality in education and training boards' following the approval and publication of the review reports from Phase 1 of the education and training board quality reviews.

MSLETB's Review Report was published on the QQI website, and thereafter on the MSLETB website and intranet, as well as being distributed internally to the following groups:

- FET Leaders and PLC Principals Group
- QA Unit
- Self-Evaluation Steering Group
- FET Quality Council
- FET Committee
- Executive Management Team
- MSLETB Board

The commendations and recommendations were discussed at the following governance group and management group meetings:

- EMT Meeting – January 2022
- PLC & FET Leaders Meetings – December 2021 & March 2022
- FET Quality Council – January, February & March 2022
- FET Committee – February 2022

Following the visit from the Review Team, a decision was made to retain the Self-Evaluation Steering Group and extend its terms of reference to include the development of an action plan following the issue of the team's report. The Self-Evaluation Steering Group met on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 and created five sub-groups to review and discuss the report's 25 recommendations based on the following broad thematic areas:

- QA Policies and Procedures
- Learners
- External Stakeholders
- Data & Benchmarking
- PD & Review

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2022, the wider group met where the five sub-groups fed back their proposals for planned actions relating to each of the report's recommendations.

In devising this action plan, the recommendations of the Inaugural Review Report have been categorised into nine areas:

- The ETB's Mission & Strategy (1)
- The Documentation of Quality Assurance Policies & Procedures (6, 7 & 13)
- Integrity & Approval of Assessment Results (14 & 20)
- The Learning Environment (2, 10, 11 & 21)
- Stakeholder Engagement (3, 12 & 25)
- Public Information and Communications (19)
- Information and Data Management (4, 15, 16, 17, 18 & 24)
- Staff Recruitment, Management and Development (5 & 8)
- Programme Monitoring and Review (9, 22 & 23)

## Part 2: Planned Actions to Address Review Report Findings

	Recommendation	Commentary	Planned Actions	Planned Completion Date
1	1. Efforts to harmonise the ETB's structure, strategy and planning are well underway, especially relating to QA systems and TEL. Other areas are still in an early stage of development. The review team recommends that MSLETB continue the development of integrated QA practices across all services.	<p>The review team commended the ETB in its QA governance structures and systems and there is opportunity to take advantage of the consultation and reflective processes undertaken during the preparation for the inaugural review and in the ongoing engagements with stakeholders in the development of the Board's new Strategy Statement and its Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS to inform the development and implementation of an enhanced FET Strategic Framework and associated action plans.</p> <p>MSLETB will evaluate and make the necessary changes to build on and enhance learner representative structures, ensuring its capacity to facilitate strong, effective and consistent representation of the ETB's diverse learner body. Supports for learners should be strengthened to ensure learner representatives are well positioned to participate effectively and MSLETB is committed to engaging with AONTAS to provide training for nominated learner representatives to successfully carry out their roles and in building a strong learner voice.</p>	<p>Review of membership of all QA Governance groups to ensure broad-based representation is in place, including learner representation.</p> <p>Develop a learner representative structure based on the above review and define the required operational and governance arrangements needed to support the structure.</p> <p>Develop a mechanism to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the learner representative structure.</p> <p>Develop an induction programme for learner representatives on governance groups.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of publishing minutes of meetings internally and publicly on the ETB's website.</p> <p>Review the induction programme for staff members involved in governance groups</p>	<p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Q1 2024</p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q2 2023</p>

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Commentary</b>	<b>Planned Actions</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
			and action any recommendations.	
			Develop and implement FET Strategic Framework and associated actions.	Q4 2023
6, 7 & 13	<p>6. The review team recommends that MSLETB complete development of the QA Manual including integrated QA policies and procedures across all services. This should become the primary resource for staff members on all QA requirements.</p> <p>7. The review team recommends that the ETB continually reviews and develops its QA documentation systems to ensure that QA policies, procedures and associated materials are readily available and accessible to all staff requiring such information.</p> <p>13. The review team recommends that the work of integrating and harmonising assessment-related policies and procedures across its services and locations be completed and resulting policies and procedures</p>	<p>As acknowledged by the review team, Covid-19 had an impact on the development of the QA Manual as contingency arrangements needed to be developed and implemented. However, significant learning was gained from policy and procedure development during this time as well as the benefits of centralising QA resources.</p> <p>Feedback from staff regarding the accessibility and practicality of the current document repository has been taken on board and the feasibility of an electronic document management system is being investigated.</p> <p>MSLETB will bring together and review its policies that guide teaching and learning to create a single integrated Teaching and Learning Policy Framework.</p>	<p>A procedure around policy development will be developed based on learning from recent experiences.</p> <p>Membership and Terms of Reference of QA Working Group will be reviewed to ensure representation from all centre/programme areas.</p> <p>An in-depth consultation with stakeholders, on the evolving Quality Assurance Manual will take place.</p> <p>Following the agreement on an integrated Quality Assurance Manual, an MSLETB Learner Handbook will be developed and included in an updated learner induction process.</p> <p>A formal review cycle for the Board's updated Quality Assurance Manual will be</p>	<p>Q2 2022</p> <p>Q2 2022</p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Q4 2022</p>

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Commentary</b>	<b>Planned Actions</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
	included in the proposed Quality Manual.		agreed as part of the rollout process.	
			Staff QA Handbook (digital) provided to all personnel delivering MSLETB programmes.	Q4 2022
			Accessible portal for document storage and retrieval to be developed and rolled out.	Q4 2022
			Development of MSLETB Module Management System for the preparation & management of programme documentation.	Q4 2022
			Development of Teaching and Learning Framework	Q3 2023
14 & 20	14. The review team recommends sharing the insights and recommendations of EA reports across centres to enhance QA-related learning. This would enable heads of centres and teachers/tutors/instructors to benefit from the good practice and areas for improvement identified in other locations and contribute to harmonising practice.	Following the conclusion of a certification period, there is analysis at both centre level and ETB level of the insights and recommendations contained within EA reports. The reporting of these results are communicated to various QA governance groups. MSLETB acknowledges the need to formalise this process and establish a mechanism by which centres can access and utilise this information to enhance good practice. There is also a significant opportunity for MSLETB to establish a process for centre-level quality	Update and standardise training and briefings for assessors.	Q2 2023
			Briefings with EAs in similar subject areas will be carried out in order to capture feedback at a programmatic level.	Q3 2023
			MSLETB will establish a process for centre-level quality improvement based on recommendations emerging from RAP meetings	Q2 2023

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	<p>20. The review team recommends that a structure be established to integrate assessment methods across programmes and centres, to promote efficiency and uniformity across services. Assessment requirements should be incorporated into the proposed Quality Manual.</p>	<p>improvement based on recommendations emerging from RAP meetings.</p> <p>MSLETB was commended in the review report on its integration of assessment procedures and on the quality of assessment related information provided to staff and aims to build on this good practice. MSLETB is currently reviewing its assessment procedures based on best practice and the development work undertaken with other ETBs through ETBI. This will include updated QA procedures covering the following sections of the assessment process in its QA Manual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment Deadlines</li> <li>• Assessment Malpractice</li> <li>• Compassionate Consideration</li> <li>• Reasonable Accommodation</li> <li>• Secure Storage</li> <li>• Examination Regulations</li> <li>• Appeals</li> </ul> <p>There has also been significant learning during the Covid-19 contingency planning and rollout, especially in relation to alternative assessments, and the effectiveness of these modified arrangements to assessment during this period.</p>	<p>to be led by the QA Working Group.</p> <p>Review of RAP Terms of Reference in relation to membership, procedures and reporting mechanisms.</p> <p>Consultation with stakeholders in relation to specific areas of assessment procedures.</p> <p>A review of appeals fees and application processes, from a learner perspective, in order to standardise the learner appeals process across MSLETB.</p> <p>A formal review cycle of MSLETB's approach to the fair and consistent assessment of learners will be established to ensure the consistency of approach across all provision.</p> <p>MSLETB will establish an assessment working group explore assessment-related projects and to promote good practice.</p>	<p></p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q2 2022</p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q1 2024</p> <p>Q3 2023</p>

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Commentary</b>	<b>Planned Actions</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
2, 10, 11 & 21	<p>2. The review team recommends that MSLETB develop an integrated strategy and action plan for service delivery post-Covid. The strategy should define the future role centre-based, online and blended learning methodologies, taking account of learner needs and circumstances.</p> <p>10. The review team recommends that MSLETB develop a standard initial assessment system to identify learner needs and the supports required. This system could be developed and piloted in partnership with other providers.</p> <p>11. The review team recommends that MSLETB take an active role in developing systems for Recognition of Prior Learning in consultation with QQI and other certification bodies.</p> <p>21. The review team recommends development of a Learner Support Unit as a “one stop shop” for learners requiring assistance, based on UDL principles. Such a unit would contribute to integrating and streamlining the inputs of existing support services.</p>	<p>The review team commended MSLETB on its continued development of physical and ICT infrastructure to enhance the learner experience. However, MSLETB recognises that many FET courses have a highly vocational element to them and require face-to-face engagement. The need for a holistic approach to the learner experience also requires that face-to-face contact with learners is protected. Post-pandemic, MSLETB will examine, in detail, the learning gained from experiences in online delivery in order to identify the elements of blended methodologies that can be adopted for future use.</p> <p>The success and impact for learners of the Laptop Loan Scheme has provided MSLETB the opportunity to extend this scheme post Covid 19. MSLETB is committed to providing continued investment in TEL infrastructure to provide optimum teaching and learning environment for learners.</p> <p>MSLETB is committed to establishing a Learner Support Unit where all learners who identify with having additional needs undergo a needs assessment on registration. This needs-based assessment will address</p>	<p>Development of a blended learning strategy framework based on good practice and national developments and application for QA Approval from QQI of same.</p> <p>Extensive stakeholder consultation on the topic of service delivery to inform ETB strategy and action plan.</p> <p>Development, review and roll out of a common assessment tool for entry to FET programmes, where a learner’s suitability cannot be determined on the basis of past achievement. This will ensure that a learner is placed on a programme that best meets their needs and that appropriate supports are put in place, as required.</p> <p>Undertake review the application of exemptions across the service to ensure its consistent implementation for learners.</p> <p>MSLETB will establish an RPL Working Group who will work towards developing a</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Q4 2023</p>

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		<p>both learning and examination needs which will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>MSLETB will take an ETB-wide approach to learner supports, considering the lifecycle needs of each category of learner (fulltime, parttime, etc.) and ensure that policies, processes and supports meet the differing needs of an increasingly diverse learner cohort. MSLETB will review the funding model for, and invest appropriately in, learner services and supports, with an emphasis on supporting the mental health and wellbeing of learners.</p> <p>MSLETB recognises that there is an opportunity for the QA Working Group to collaborate with the new Learner Support Unit in communicating information around assessment procedures to learners, including RPL. MSLETB recognises the increasing demand for RPL by its learners and is committed to working towards a formal process through sectoral engagement at a national level and learning from best practice.</p>	<p>policy and procedures for MSLETB and also develop more formal RPL arrangements through collaboration with other providers.</p> <p>MSLETB will commit to targeted professional development funding for RPL programmes and engagement with national RPL networks to build capacity and subject matter expertise.</p> <p>MSLETB will appoint a Learning Supports Coordinator.</p> <p>The establishment of a Learner Support Unit to support learners and centres across all ETB provision.</p> <p>Review and enhance the Terms of Reference and membership of Learner Supports Steering Group and associated working groups.</p> <p>Provision of increased support and counselling to meet the wellbeing needs of learners.</p>	<p></p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q2 2022</p> <p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q4 2023</p>



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			Development and adoption of a Learner Charter for the ETB's FET provision.	Q3 2022
			QA Working Group in conjunction with Learner Supports Steering Group will work in tandem to ensure crosscutting items are actioned	Ongoing
3, 12, & 25	<p>3. The review team recommends that MSLETB use experience gained through developing the SER to strengthen further its engagement with stakeholders. This will further enhance its capacity to identify emerging needs and to develop services to address them.</p> <p>12. The review team recommends that MSLETB build on existing agreements with higher education providers and continue to develop clearer progression pathways. In doing so, the review team recommends that the ETB further develop its Transition Programme for learners exiting school and progressing to FET programmes</p>	<p>Engagement with external stakeholders is a priority for MSLETB. MSLETB will continue to build externality into the activity of the FET Quality Council and all associated subgroups in order to contribute to oversight of quality processes. MSLETB will continue to develop and review its relationships with its external stakeholders across all its activity. Building on the FET Quality Council and numerous programme steering groups, MSLETB will seek to explore different approaches in further engaging with external collaborators in programme design and delivery. Through the SER process MSLETB built up mechanisms of engagement with stakeholders and these mechanisms need to be progressed and standardised.</p>	<p>Initiate clusters to allow centres to network locally, thus providing a platform for the planning and rollout of programmes and services to the communities in which they operate.</p> <p>Develop, test and rollout of Learner App.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to expand the current apprenticeship provision in line with the new Government's action plan for apprenticeships.</p> <p>Completion and rollout of SEED CRM project to strengthen engagement with employers</p>	<p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q3 2022</p>

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	<p>25. The review team recommends that MSLETB strengthen its engagement with employers by formalising its existing engagement activities carried out by its Employer Engagement Team. The proposed CRM system being developed under the SEED project is likely to facilitate this process in the future.</p>	<p>Learner feedback is a key component in fostering a culture of continuous development and improvement across the Board's FET provision. Currently, various approaches are engaged in this regard; the AONTAS Learner Forum events, mid-year and end of year surveys, exit interviews, focus groups, etc. The self-evaluation process has highlighted the need to have a consistent formal approach to capturing feedback from stakeholders. In the context of the new FET Strategy and aligned with the theme for the Digital Transformation of FET, MSLETB will develop a 'Learner App' which will assist and improve the capture of learner feedback and track learner outcomes.</p> <p>MSLETB will continue engagement with higher education providers to expand progression opportunities and to present options to learners exiting uncompleted higher education courses.</p> <p>Engage employers in the region through course development and through Apprenticeship Consortia.</p>	<p>Staff Training – Employer Engagement Teams and other employer facing personnel PD in Training Needs Analysis, Relationship Management, Pitching and Data Capture (SEED CRM).</p> <p>MSLETB will review existing agreements with higher education providers and continue to develop clearer progression pathways</p> <p>MSLETB will link in with Employers and the Atlantic Technical University to build connections to facilitate ideas for research and prototyping.</p> <p>MSLETB will further review transition opportunities for learners exiting 2nd level to progress to FET.</p> <p>MSLETB will conduct annual reviews of the quality of provision of its external/third parties.</p>	<p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q4 2022 Q4 2023 Q4 2024</p>

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		<p>MSLETB will broaden the membership of the EE Teams to include other services/programmes in the ETB.</p> <p>MSLETB had identified the need to strengthen its use of employer data in general in order to enhance service delivery. MSLETB is at an advanced stage of building out the Strategic Employer Engagement Database (SEED) funded through SOLAS Innovation funding.</p>		
19	19. The review team recommends that MSLETB carry out its intended review of all linked websites to consider their viability and redesign and appoint a Communications Officer to streamline current communication activities.	<p>MSLETB recognises the demand for services around PR and marketing and has appointed a Communications Officer. This will provide a more streamlined, focused, professional and coordinated approach to future public relations and marketing events.</p> <p>In direct response to this recommendation, a new Communications Working Group has been created to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear communication to learners, staff, employers, partners, the community and other stakeholders to enhance the quality, focus, and relevance of MSLETB services</li> <li>• To identify potential themes for communications activity,</li> </ul>	<p>Appointment of Communications Officer.</p> <p>MSLETB to engage in review of all websites and social media usage.</p> <p>MSLETB Style Guide and enhanced branding guidelines will be developed and published.</p> <p>Media training will be provided for MSLETB spokespersons.</p> <p>Development and implementation of annual communications plan/strategy.</p>	<p>Q1 2022</p> <p>Q1 2022</p> <p>Q3 2022</p> <p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q2 2022 Q3 2023 Q4 2024</p>

	Recommendation	Commentary	Planned Actions	Planned Completion Date
		<p>communications opportunities, activities and events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To monitor and evaluate MSLETB engagement across the range of media platforms making recommendations where appropriate</li> <li>To collaborate with external agencies to ensure all promotions are aligned to the MSLETB communications strategies</li> </ul>		
4, 15, 16, 17, 18 & 24	<p>4. In conjunction with the Quality Manual, the review team recommends that the ETB develops and implements a set of indicators for each service to measure the effectiveness of these policies and procedures, in particular their impact on learner achievement and progression.</p> <p>15. The review team recommends the establishment of meaningful KPIs for all services and using the qualitative and quantitative data available to effectively measure and analyse performance</p>	<p>MSLETB recognises that there is a need to strengthen its capacity to collate and analyse its own data and as such aims to develop a process and planned timeframe with appropriate benchmarking mechanisms identified. This process will enable KPI development from data collection and analysis.</p> <p>MSLETB will continue engagement with national partners to enhance the functionality of the PLSS in providing accurate and updated information, especially in the area of learner destinations and also continue the ongoing reporting and feedback to SOLAS in order to affect necessary updates and functionality of the</p>	PLSS Enhancement through national partners and forums	Ongoing through 2022-24
			Engagement in consultative process with QQI around certification outcomes and data formats.	Ongoing through 2022-24
			Harmonise learner feedback gathering instruments to allow improved data analysis.	Q1 2023 release of v1
			Develop system for use by centres to present data.	Q4 2023 release of v1
			Through a process of consultative design, create data analytics systems to support data driven decision making.	Q4 2024

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Commentary</b>	<b>Planned Actions</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
	<p>16. Continue to review and update its management information systems to streamline data collection and processing across the organisation.</p> <p>17. Develop an overarching policy and procedures on the collection and use of data as part of a new, harmonised QA system and describe these in the Quality Manual.</p> <p>18. Explore effective ways of using data to inform FET provision, monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>24. The review team recommends that MSLETB develop meaningful KPIs in consultation with second providers and use these as the basis for future monitoring and review of service provision by these providers.</p>	<p>PLSS through membership of the ETBI-led PLSS Advisory Group.</p> <p>MSLETB acknowledge that a more streamlined approach is required to report on certification outcomes and associated data.</p> <p>With engagement and collaboration through the ETBI QA Network and other appropriate networks, MSLETB will further develop and refine its approach to gather learner feedback and information on the effectiveness of teaching and learning, informed by best available evidence, with the goal of better supporting programmes/centres in enhancing teaching and learning – introduce an agreed approach to collection and analysis of learner feedback which closes the loop by reporting information to learners and facilitating dialogue between centres and their learners.</p>	<p>Amalgamate current procedures on collection and use of data in order to develop overarching policy in this area.</p> <p>Development and design of graduate survey to measure learner achievement and progression.</p>	<p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Q4 2022</p>
5 & 8	<p>5. The review team recommends setting up additional Communities of Practice (COPs) to support staff and promote peer learning.</p>	<p>MSLETB are committed to creating more Communities of Practice (COPs) across its provision, both in different subject areas and areas of practice. This will be supported and resourced by PD.</p>	<p>MSLETB is committed to establishing and maintaining five new CoP annually and providing coaching for emerging CoP leaders.</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p> <p>Q4 2023</p> <p>Q4 2024</p>

	Recommendation	Commentary	Planned Actions	Planned Completion Date
	8. The review team recommends that MSLETB streamline its human resources approaches by defining the skills and knowledge required to realise its strategy and QA objectives and by establishing a training needs analysis system to ensure that access to PD activities is based on identified needs and that PD can be linked with staff progression.	<p>MSLETB supports the <a href="#">National FET Professional Learning and Development Statement of Strategy 2020-2024</a>, in particular Goal 2: Build the capability of those who work in the FET sector through the identification and deployment of strategic professional learning and development initiatives in priority areas. In this regard, MSLETB's FET PD Policy outlines a mechanism for line management to address skill shortages within their teams.</p> <p>There are significant opportunities to increase the offerings of PD around quality assurance and assessment with support from and collaboration with the Professional Development Advisory Group.</p>	ETB-wide policy around staff release and remuneration in order ensure equity of opportunity. This will be developed in conjunction with HR.	Q4 2023
			Introduction of a formalised training needs analysis process, following a FET wide survey, to ensure that future PD is targeted to specific identified needs.	Q2 2023
9, 22 & 23	<p>9. The review team recommends development of a systematic programme review process incorporating scheduled review of existing programmes to ensure continued relevance.</p> <p>22. The review team recommends that MSLETB continues to develop its monitoring and review processes, in</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to strengthen reporting mechanisms to ensure that information gathered at centre or programme level is captured and reported in a consistent manner to the relevant governance groups. This will take place through a centre-based evaluation process which will be piloted in a number of selected services prior to rollout across the ETB.</p>	Inclusion of a Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review policy in the new QA Manual.	Q3 2022
			Pilot centre-based evaluation process in selected centres. Evaluate process and report findings to FET Quality Council.	Q3 2023
			Implement a process to allow centres to feed into annual quality improvement planning	Q2 2024

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	<p>the context of its strategic plans and goals.</p> <p>23. The review team recommends rollout of the proposed centre-based evaluation process, initially on a pilot basis. This process should include a self-evaluation instrument to be completed by each centre manager in consultation with learners and staff. The process should result in a centre QIP, feeding into the organisation QIP.</p>	<p>Learner feedback is currently captured in a number of ways. This includes formal routes through programme boards/steering groups where feedback, course content, delivery, and assessment is captured and reviewed.</p> <p>A number of feedback options should be made available. Module and programme-level feedback will be more fully implemented and integrated into a structured programme monitoring and review process. As part of the QA workplan, MSLETB will ensure that programme boards capture learner feedback in a systematic way and demonstrate how this is incorporated into a regular programme review process.</p>	<p>following a centre-based evaluation process.</p> <p>A schedule for programme reviews will be established. There is an opportunity to link this schedule of programme review with the schedule for centre-based evaluation.</p> <p>Development of a programme revalidation process as part of the new QA Manual.</p>	<p></p> <p>Q2 2024</p> <p>Q1 2023</p>

**Approved by MSLETB FET Quality Council 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022**