BORD OIDEACHAIS
AGUS OILIÚNA CHIARRAÍ

KERRY EDUCATION
AND TRAINING BOARD

Quality Assurance Manual

QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT APRIL 2023

The source of reference for the policies and procedures implemented by Kerry Education and Training Board to assure the quality of its Further Education and Training Programmes and related services.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Director of Further Education and Training

This Quality Assurance Manual was developed by the Kerry ETB Further Education and Training (FET) Quality assurance unit in consultation with key stakeholders in 2018, 2019 and 2022 to provide guidance to all our stakeholders on quality assurance and enhancement activity across Further Education and Training in Kerry ETB.

Quality Assurance underpins all our activity in Kerry ETB FET and this Quality Assurance Manual is a living document designed to provide Kerry ETB Further Education and Training staff and learners with guidance on best behaviors and practices, while also reflecting these practices across Kerry ETB FET.

In essence this Quality Assurance Manual describes the systems and processes that govern and affect quality in Kerry ETB FET and ensures consistency and excellence in the development, delivery, review and evaluation of all Kerry ETB FET courses and programmes.

This Manual is developed in line with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for Education and Training Boards in May 2017.

This April 2023 version is a revised document.

Owen O'Donnell
Director of Further Education and Training
Kerry Education and Training Board

QA GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

Kerry Education and Training Board's (ETB) governance structure has been established to provide Kerry ETB with academic oversight of its FET programmes - ensuring that decisions regarding admission, assessment and progression of learners are maintained separately from the financial and operational activities.

Title   QA Governance Structures, Organisation and Administration

Date approved

Effective from

Date for review

Summary   Kerry ETB has developed a quality assurance system which is in compliance with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards and Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning.

The key structures of this system are:
- Quality Council
- Programme Governance Board
- Quality Assurance Governance Board

All governance units established within this QA system have prescribed membership, terms of reference and operating procedures concerning their responsibilities and remit. A designated Chair and Secretary are identified. Agendas and minutes are maintained and available to all members. Communication is mapped within the structures and associated roles, to support the feedback and feedforward of outputs, specific decisions.

KERRY ETB PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE BOARD

QQI AWARD

Chief Executive Officer

SOLAS

Governance Structure

Management Structure

Quality Council

FET Director

CSG Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship

CSG Commis Chef Apprenticeship

ETBI Monitoring and Enhancement Panel

Employers

Employers

Inaugural Review Steering Group

QA Unit

FET Management

FET Forum

Kerry ETB Quality Governance Council

Kerry ETB Programme Board

Teaching and Learning Working Group

Quality Assurance Working Group

RPL Committee Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship

National Programme Board Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship

National Examination Board Wind Turbine Maintenance Technician Apprenticeship

RPL Committee Commis Chef Apprenticeship

National Programme Board Commis Chef Apprenticeship

National Examination Board Commis Chef Apprenticeship

Kerry Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Governance Structure

QUALITY COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE QUALITY COUNCIL

ROLE

The purpose of the Quality Council is to oversee the planning, coordination, quality, development and improvement of all aspects of further education and training programmes (FET Programmes) as part of the further education and training offering of Kerry ETB. It protects, maintains and develops the standards of education and training programmes and related activities. In doing so, the Quality Council is ensuring, as far as possible, that all learners receive an equivalent experience.

MEMBERSHIP

Chair: Brendan Touhy
Secretary: The Quality Officer

Members:
- Staff members drawn from across Kerry ETB, as the CE (FET Director) determines appropriate. representatives from the Programme Governance Board, the Quality Assurance Governance Board, representatives from the national Apprenticeship Programme Boards; one of which is from industry.
- A learner representative.

External Members: The Chair of the Quality Council may from time to time recommend to the CE the appointment of external members to the Council. These will be persons who can bring an external perspective to the working of the Council, such as employers or experts in FET or in quality systems. Persons with expertise from other ETBs may also be invited to join the Quality Council for a defined period.

ACCOUNTABLE TO Chief Executive Officer

OPERATING PROCEDURES

- The Quality Council will meet at least 4 times a year.
- In order for a quorum to be established, 50% of members + 1 additional member must be in attendance.
- The meeting agenda and supporting documentation must be circulated to members at least one week in advance of a scheduled meeting.
- Decisions are made by consensus or by the exercise of a vote if necessary; the Chair has the deciding vote in the event of a tie.
- Meeting outcomes are recorded and circulated in draft form within 2 weeks of a meeting.
- The minutes of meetings are approved at the beginning of the subsequent meeting of the Quality Council.
- In some cases, at the discretion of the Chair, an incorporeal meeting of the Quality Council may be held where reports can be circulated virtually and accepted by the Quality Council without the Quality Council having to meet.

RESPONSIBILITIES The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kerry ETB has delegated certain governance responsibilities to the Quality Council, as detailed below. The Quality Council is accountable to the CE for carrying out its functions, regardless of whether it forms governance sub-groups or working groups to advance these tasks.

THE QUALITY COUNCIL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FOLLOWING:
QA policies and procedures
· Approving the quality assurance policies and procedures to go to the CE for final approval.

Programme Responsibilities
· Recommending proposals to the CE, as appropriate, for the development of new programmes that are consistent with the mission and strategy of Kerry ETB.
· Recommending programme documentation to the CE for approval prior to its submission to the awarding body for validation.
· Making recommendations to the CE for the establishment of appropriate structures to support new or existing programmes.
· Making recommendations for staff development where it is necessary or desirable for the improved delivery or development of programmes.

Monitoring and Review Responsibilities
· Noting the annual schedule of reviews - Approving programme and organisational review documentation prior to its submission to the awarding body.
· Receiving reports of progress against action plans arising from quality reviews.
· Receiving observations arising from programme feedback reports and other internal and external stakeholder reports, as appropriate.

Assessment Responsibilities
· Ratifying the agreement of persons to act as External Authenticators and External Examiners.
· Noting assessment reports and confirming they are in line with agreed assessment processes and procedures.
· Ratifying assessment results and final results presented by the QA Officer (or equivalent) prior to their submission to the awarding body for the purposes of certification.

Apprenticeship-specific Responsibilities
The Quality Council is asked to reserve a section of its agenda to fulfil the role of Quality Council. In doing so, it undertakes the following responsibilities:
· Considering reports from the Consortium Steering Group established by the Quality Council on matters affecting apprenticeship programmes.
· Considering the report by the Monitoring and Enhancement Panel on matters affecting the apprenticeship programme.
· Ensuring that the proposals received from the National (Apprenticeship) Programme Board and from the Consortium Steering Group for new partnerships conform to the requirements of the programme and that suitable Memorandums of Agreement are in place.
· Fulfilling any reporting requirements to external authorities on apprenticeship activities.
· Receiving named annual and biannual reports from the National (Apprenticeship) Programme Board.
· Noting examination results from the National Examination Board.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- Agreeing its operating procedures.
- Establishing sub-units of governance, as required, and delegating responsibilities to those groups through defined terms of reference.
- Establishing ad-hoc working groups to assist it in fulfilling its functions.
- Take appropriate action, where necessary, on reports and/or observations received.
- Receiving recommendations from sub-units of governance on specified matters to inform its functions.
- Receiving annual reports from sub-units of governance on their activities.
- Providing a Quality Council Annual Report to the CE, identifying key decisions and actions taken by the Quality Council and making any recommendations to the CE, as appropriate.
- Participating in the review of its terms of reference and formally making recommendations to the CE for amendments and additions, if required.
- Reviewing the outcomes of reviews of terms of reference by its sub-groups and making recommendations to the CE as appropriate.
- Exercising any other functions, which may be formally delegated to it by the CE.

QUALITY COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE BOARD

Governance Unit	Programme Governance Board
Document	Terms of Reference
Approved by	Quality Council
Version	1.5
Due for Review by	September 2023

ROLE

The purpose of the Programme Governance Board is to fulfil the role and responsibilities delegated to it by the FET Quality Council, for the oversight, planning, co-ordination, development and quality of the programmes of the ETB. In doing so, it assists the FET Quality Council in protecting, maintaining and developing the standards of education and training programmes and the related activities of the ETB.

The Programme Governance Board is overseeing all programme developments, however, its role and responsibilities below do not apply directly to Apprenticeship programmes, unless otherwise specified. Governance of apprenticeship programmes is managed by the National (Apprenticeship) Programme Board and development and outcomes are noted at the Programme Governance Board.

ACCOUNTABLE TO Chief Executive Officer

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Programme Governance Board is designed to enable professional colleagues to collectively contribute to the oversight, planning, co-ordination, development and quality of the ETB's education and training programmes.

Chair: The Programme Governance Board has significant responsibilities. The Chair of the Programme Governance Board will be the Director of Further Education and Training. The Chair will present a summary of the PGB meetings to the FET Quality Council.

Secretary: The Secretary will be the Quality Assurance Manager who will liaise closely with any sub-units of governance that are reporting to the Programme Governance Board, or other groups providing information to inform the Programme Governance Board. The Secretary will also prepare relevant documentation for the FET Quality Council.

Fixed Members: 6 Senior FET Management members drawn from across the ETB, as the Director of Further Education & Training determines appropriate.

Occasional Members:
- 2 representatives from the QA Governance Board.
- 1 representative from the National (Apprenticeship) Programme Board.
- 1 industry representative.

ROLE OF CHAIR

Role and Responsibilities of the Chair
The responsibilities of the Chair of the Programme Governance Board include:
- Working closely with the Secretary to agree on meeting agendas.
- Ensuring meetings function efficiently and effectively.
- Providing adequate time for discussion of agenda items.
- Ensuring that members have been provided with materials in advance of the meeting to support informed decision-making.
- Ensuring that a quorum is present before commencing a Programme Governance Board meeting.
- Ensuring that decisions are taken in the context of the Programme Governance Board's remit and that they are recorded.

ROLE OF SECRETARY

Role and Responsibilities of the Secretary
The Secretary is a full member of the Programme Governance Board.
His/her responsibilities include:
- Agreeing a schedule of meetings with the Chair in consultation with members and having regard to the business of the Programme Governance Board and the meeting dates of the FET Quality Council.
- Convening meetings of the Programme Governance Board and determining the agenda of the meetings, in consultation with the Chair.
- Circulating the agendas for meetings and associated documentation and reports for review by Programme Governance Board members.
- Liaising with the Secretary of the of the FET Quality Council, and with the secretaries of governance units reporting into the Programme Governance Board, to manage a smooth flow of information.
- Preparing draft minutes of meetings and circulating these to members.
- Ensuring that the decisions of the Programme Governance Board are made known to the appropriate individuals/governance units.
- Reporting to the Chair on the implementation of the decisions of the Programme Governance Board.

MEETINGS

- The Programme Governance Board will meet at least 6 times a year.
- In order for a quorum to be established, 50% of members + 1 additional member must be in attendance.
- The meeting agenda and supporting documentation must be circulated to members at least one week in advance of a scheduled meeting.
- Decisions are made by consensus or by the exercise of a vote if necessary; the Chair has the deciding vote in the event of a split decision Meeting outcomes are recorded and circulated in draft form within 2 weeks of a meeting.
- The minutes of meetings are approved at the beginning of the subsequent meeting of the Programme Governance Board.
- Confirmed minutes are submitted for noting to the next meeting of the FET Quality Council.
- Meeting outcomes are recorded and circulated in draft form within 2 weeks of a meeting.

In some cases, at the discretion of the Chair, an incorporeal meeting of the Programme Governance Board may be held where reports can be circulated virtually and accepted by members without the Programme Governance Board having to meet.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

The Programme Governance Board is responsible for the following:
- Agreeing its operating procedures in consultation with the Chair and Secretary of the FET Quality Council.
- Establishing sub-groups to advance programme-related matters, if required, and in agreement with the Chair and Secretary of the FET Quality Council.
- Establishing working groups to advance programme related matters, as required
- Making recommendations to the FET Quality Council to inform its decision-making and in line with its terms of reference.
- Reporting to the FET Quality Council and preparing a Programme Governance Board Annual Report for the FET Quality Council on key decisions and actions taken by the Programme Governance Board and making any recommendations to the FET Quality Council, as appropriate.
- Receiving recommendations from sub-units of governance on specified matters to inform its responsibilities.
- Receiving annual reports from sub-units of governance on their activities.
- Participating in the review of its terms of reference and formally making recommendations to the FET Quality Council as appropriate.
- Reviewing the outcomes of reviews of terms of reference by its sub-units of governance and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council as appropriate.
- Exercising any other functions, which may be formally delegated to it by the FET Quality Council.

PROGRAMME RESPONSIBILITIES

- Reviewing proposals for the development of new programmes and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council.
- Appointing the Programme Development Group to develop draft programme documentation and identifying the programme expertise required for its membership.
- Reviewing and commenting upon draft programme validation documentation submitted by the Programme Development Group.
- Recommending programme validation documentation to the FET Quality Council for approval and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council for submission to the awarding body.
- Reviewing proposals for the provision of newly validated or existing programmes and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council.
- Making recommendations to the FET Quality Council for the establishment of appropriate structures to support new or existing programmes.

MONITORING AND REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

- Reviewing programme review documentation submitted by the Programme Governance Board and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council prior to its submission to the awarding body.
- Reviewing reports on qualitative and quantitative assessment outcomes from the QA Governance Board and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council as appropriate.
- Reviewing feedback reports on teaching and learning matters from the QA Governance Board and making recommendations, including staff development and learner support requirements, to the FET Quality Council.
- Assigning the Programme Development Group to implement minor modifications and additions to programmes recommended as a result of programme reviews, where these do not affect module outcomes.
- Approving modified programme documentation submitted by the Programme Development Group.
- Receiving reports of progress against action plans arising from programme reviews and reporting issues arising to the FET Quality Council.

APPRENTICESHIPS RESPONSIBILITIES

- Noting developments and outcomes from Kerry ETB-led 2016+ Apprenticeship Programme.

QUALITY COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE GOVERNANCE BOARD

Governance Unit	Quality Assurance (QA) Governance Board
Document	Terms of Reference
Approved By	Quality Council
Version	1.5
Due for Review by	September 2023

ROLE

The purpose of the QA Governance Board is to fulfil the role and responsibilities delegated to it by the FET Quality Council, for the development, oversight, planning, co-ordination and improvement of quality assurance policies, procedures, and processes. In doing so, it assists the FET Quality Council in protecting, maintaining and developing the standards of education and training programmes and the related activities of the ETB.

The FET Quality Council of the ETB has delegated certain governance responsibilities to the QA Governance Board, as detailed below. The QA Governance Board is accountable to the FET Quality Council for carrying out its functions, regardless of whether governance sub-groups or working groups are formed to advance these tasks.

ACCOUNTABLE TO

Chief Executive Officer

MEMBERSHIP

Chair: The QA Governance Board has significant responsibilities. The Chair of the QA Governance Board will be the Director of Further Education and Training (FET). The Chair will present a summary of the QAGB meetings to the FET Quality Council.

Secretary: The Secretary will be the Quality Assurance Manager who will liaise closely with any sub-units of governance that are reporting to the QA Governance Board, or other groups providing information to inform the QA Governance Board.

Fixed Members: 5 Senior FET Management members, as the Director of FET determines appropriate.

Occasional Members:
· 1 representative from the FET Quality Council
· 1 representative from the Programme Governance Board
· 2 representatives from any of the QA Working Groups
· 1 learner representative
· 1 employer representative

ROLE OF CHAIR

Role and Responsibilities of the Chair

The responsibilities of the Chair of the QA Governance Board include:

· Working closely with the Secretary to agree on meeting agendas.
· Ensuring meetings function efficiently and effectively.
· Providing adequate time for discussion of agenda items.
· Ensuring that members have been provided with materials in advance of the meeting to support informed decision-making.
· Ensuring that a quorum is present before commencing a QA Governance Board meeting.
· Ensuring that decisions are taken in the context of the QA.

ROLE OF SECRETARY

Role and Responsibilities of the Secretary

The Secretary is a full member of the QA Governance Board. His/her responsibilities include:

· Agreeing a schedule of meetings with the Chair in consultation with members and having regard to the business of the QA Governance Board and the meeting dates of the FET Quality Council.
· Convening meetings of the QA Governance Board and determining the agenda of the meetings, in consultation with the Chair.
· Circulating the agendas for meetings and associated documentation and reports for review by QA Governance Board members.
· Liaising with the Secretary of the FET Quality Council, and with the secretaries of governance units reporting to the QA Governance Board, to manage a smooth flow of information.
· Preparing draft minutes of meetings and circulating these to members.
· Ensuring that the decisions of the QA Governance Board are made known to the appropriate individuals/governance units.
· Reporting to the Chair on the implementation of the decisions of the QA Governance Board.

MEETINGS

· The QA Governance Board will meet at least 6 times a year (it is recommended that it meets 6 times in its first year).
· In order for a quorum to be established, 50% of members + 1 additional member must be in attendance.
· The meeting agenda and supporting documentation must be circulated to members at least one week in advance of a scheduled meeting and external members may be invited to present agenda items.
· Decisions are made by consensus or by the exercise of a vote if necessary; the Chair has the deciding vote in the event of a split decision.
· Meeting outcomes are recorded and circulated in draft form within 2 weeks of a meeting.
· The minutes of meetings are approved at the beginning of the subsequent meeting of the QA Governance Board.
· Confirmed minutes are submitted for noting to the next meeting of the FET Quality Council.
· In some cases, at the discretion of the Chair, an incorporeal meeting of the QA.
· Governance Board may be held where reports can be circulated virtually and accepted by members without the QA Governance Board having to meet.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- Agreeing its operating procedures in consultation with the Chair and Secretary of the FET Quality Council.
- QA Governance Board has oversight of the Quality Assurance Working Group.
- Establishing sub-groups to advance QA-related matters, if required, and in agreement with the Chair and Secretary of the FET Quality Council.
- Establishing working groups to advance QA-related matters, as required
- Making recommendations to the FET Quality Council to inform its decision-making and in line with its terms of reference.
- Reporting to the FET Quality Council and preparing a QA Governance Board Annual Report for the FET Quality Council on key decisions and actions taken by the QA Governance Board and making any recommendations to the FET Quality Council, as appropriate.
- Receiving recommendations from sub-units of governance on specified matters to inform its responsibilities.
- Receiving annual reports from sub-units of governance on their activities.
- Participating in the review of its terms of reference and formally making recommendations to the FET Quality Council as appropriate.
- Reviewing the outcomes of reviews of terms of reference by any subunits of governance and making recommendations to the FET Quality Council as appropriate.
- Exercising any other functions, which may be formally delegated to it by the FET Quality Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Reviewing and commenting upon draft quality assurance policies and procedures.
- Recommending quality assurance policies and procedures to the FET Quality Council for approval.
- Recommending revisions to quality assurance policies and procedures to the FET Quality Council for approval.
- Reviewing and commenting upon the quality review schedule and submitting this to the FET Quality Council for noting.
- Reviewing and commenting upon the standard of reports arising from the implementation of any agreed quality assurance schedules (e.g. programme or service reviews).
- Submitting the outcomes of programme reviews to the Programmes Governance Board for consideration and onward transmission to the FET Quality Council.
- Making recommendations to the FET Quality Council for the approval of other review documentation and outcomes that are required to be submitted to an awarding body.
- Receiving reports and follow-up on actions arising from quality reviews and reporting to the FET Quality Council on issues or recommendations arising.
- Escalating areas of risk associated with the quality assurance of further education and training to the FET Quality Council.

ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Agreeing individuals to act as External Authenticators and submitting details to the FET Quality Council for ratification.

DOCUMENTED APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy for the documenting the approach to Quality Assurance. QA Policies and Procedures articulate how Kerry ETB will assure the quality of teaching, learning and service activities across its FET provision. This policy does not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set the framework within which the QA Policies and Procedures of Kerry ETB will be developed, monitored and maintained. This policy also has the purpose of complying with the following:

a) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and its Sectoral Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.
b) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all policies and procedures relating to the quality assurance and enhancement of Kerry ETB FET programmes and related services.

This policy gives due regard to the following wider policy:
• Kerry ETB Framework for the Development of Policies and Procedures, approved by the Board of Kerry ETB.

POLICY FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Kerry ETB will develop a programme of policy development which is specific and time-defined, with input from all relevant stakeholders.

Each policy will be recorded in writing. Unrecorded custom and practice will not be deemed to be a policy. Policies will be clear and unambiguous and written so as to be understood by all stakeholders.

The extent to which policy is capable of being implemented within the structures of Kerry ETB Colleges and Centres will inform its development. Any policy which may not be capable of being implemented in a fair and consistent manner will not be recommended by the Quality Council to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

Policies will reflect good practice within the FET sector. The norm of sectoral policies will be considered when policies are being developed.

The effectiveness of policies will be reviewed by Kerry ETB under its Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy and Procedure, in line with its planned review schedule. Where a policy is not achieving its intended outcomes it will be amended outside of its planned review date where necessary.

Each policy will have an owner who is responsible for its implementation and for making suggestions for its amendment. Each policy will also have a recorded date of adoption, and the date by which a review of the policy must be commenced or completed.

AREAS FOR WHICH POLICES WILL BE DEVELOPED

Kerry ETB will develop policies in the following areas:

a) Governing and managing the quality assurance of programmes and related services.
b) The development of programmes.
c) Learner access to programmes and their subsequent transfer and progression.
d) The recruitment, management and professional development of staff.
e) Teaching and learning.
f) Blended learning.
g) Assessment of learners.
h) Learner supports and the provision of learning resources.
i) The management of information and data.
j) The publication of information.
k) Engagement with external parties involved in education and training.
l) Self-evaluation, monitoring and review of programmes internally and externally.

Kerry ETB will update and where necessary create additional policies in line with regulatory and legal policies.

POLICY FOR PROCEDURES

Kerry ETB will articulate the specific methods, steps and stages which will be used to implement its policies. A programme of procedure development will be set out which is specific and time-defined, with input from all relevant stakeholders.

Each policy will have an associated procedure for its implementation unless the owner of that policy formally expresses the view that no such procedure is required for that specific policy.

Each procedure shall be recorded in writing. Unrecorded custom and practice will not be deemed to be a procedure. The procedure will be clear and unambiguous and written so as to be understood by all stakeholders. The steps to be taken to implement the procedure, and the order in which they must be taken will be clear so that they can be easily understood by all stakeholders.

The extent to which a procedure is capable of being implemented within the structures of Kerry ETB Colleges and Centres will inform its development. Any procedure which may not be capable of being implemented in a fair and consistent manner will not be recommended by the Quality Council to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

The effectiveness of procedures will be reviewed by Kerry ETB under its Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review Policy and Procedure, in line with its planned review schedule. Where a procedure is not achieving its intended outcomes it will be amended outside of its planned review date where necessary.

Each procedure will have an owner who is responsible for its implementation and for making suggestions for its amendment. Each procedure will also have a recorded date of adoption, and the date by which a review of the procedure must be commenced or completed.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All programmes

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0		New policy	Quality Assurance Officer	

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

The following outlines Kerry Education and Training Board's (Kerry ETB) policy and procedures for programme development. This policy and the associated procedures do not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that programmes are developed consistently and in accordance with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) requirements. It also ensures that programmes are developed with appropriate regard to the resources required to deliver them when validated by QQI.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all programmes developed and delivered by Kerry ETB.

- Programmes include those that lead to Common Award System Awards, non-Common Award System Awards and new Apprenticeship programmes.
- Programmes may lead to major awards or minor awards or special purpose awards.
- Programmes will be developed at levels 3 to 6 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

POLICY

All programmes will be developed with a view to their validation by QQI.

- The steps in the approval process are designed to reinforce the separation of functions between the executive (FET Management Team and Chief Executive Officer) and the quality assurance governance structure (Quality Council and Programme Governance Board), while also demonstrating the required interaction between them.

- Programmes will be developed to ensure that successful learners will achieve the standard expected at the designated level. This will be measured in achievement of stated Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) appropriate to the level.
- All programmes developed by Kerry ETB, in line with this policy, will be placed on the NFQ. All programmes are developed for validation in accordance with the quality assurance procedures outlined in this handbook.
- Programmes will be designed to ensure that the National Policy on Access Transfer and Progression is adhered to and that there are articulation and progression routes within Kerry ETB or, alternatively, that arrangements can be made for such routes with named educational institutions and programmes.
- In general, all programmes developed shall be in line with Kerry ETB's Strategic Plan in place at the time of development. Programme development is informed by consultation with stakeholders such as sectoral interest groups, prospective employers, national policy makers and learners.
- Programmes will be developed by Programme Development Groups, led by an appropriately qualified teacher/instructor/tutor with oversight from the Quality Assurance Officer.

- Programmes leading to Common Award System awards shall be developed in accordance with QQI's CAS *Compound Programme Descriptor Template* and associated Guidelines, while programmes leading to non-Common Award System awards shall be developed in accordance with QQI's Non *CAS Compound Programme Descriptor Template* and associated Guidelines. Apprenticeship programmes shall be developed having regard to QQI's *Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* for Apprenticeship Programmes.
- Programmes will be delivered and supported by appropriately qualified staff as outlined in the appropriate section of this Handbook.
- All programmes as validated by QQI, will fall to be reviewed at least every 5 years and re-validation sought if appropriate.
- Project management of the programme development process is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance officer of Kerry ETB.

PROCEDURE
Programme proposals may emerge from a range of sources within Kerry ETB. Proposed programmes will be developed over three stages:
a) Initial Programme Feasibility
b) Development to Stage of Pre-External Review
c) Development to Completion and Submission to QQI.

Step 1: Initial Programme Feasibility
This stage of development is carried out by the programme proposer(s). It examines the feasibility of the programme, paying particular attention to its strategic fit and the education and training rationale for the proposed programme. This stage also checks that the proposed programme is viable, both vocationally and financially.

In this phase, outline programme learning outcomes are developed, and a benchmarking process undertaken. This information is captured in a New Programme Proposal Template.

The completed template is submitted to the FET Management Team together with an indicative timetable for development. The FET Management Team shall consider the proposal and decide **either**:

a) To approve it to be sent to the Programme Governance Board (PGB)
   Or
b) Refer it back to the proposer seeking further information/amendments
   Or
c) Decline to approve it.

Step 2: Development to Stage of Pre-External Review
- Following approval from the PGB, a Programme Development Group (PDG) is established by that body with advice from the Quality Assurance Officer. During this phase, the PDG will further develop the proposal in line with the programme descriptor [QQI template and guidelines]. It will include refined programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs), curriculum structure with module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) and teaching and learning and assessment strategy.
- The programme team should consider the viability of all modes of study and of delivery at this point.
- The programme at this stage should also have indicative costs associated with delivering the programme, in terms of equipment, materials and human resources.
- The draft programme documentation, accompanied by a completed Template shown in Template B, is sent to the FET Management Team for outline funding approval.
- Following funding approval, the draft programme document and associated template is forwarded to the PGB for consideration.

Step 3: Development to Completion and Submission to QQI

If the Programme Governance Board approves the proposal at this point, it will commission a report from an external independent subject matter expert. This person will examine the proposal draft programme documentation and complete a report in accordance with the Template C.

The completed report will be sent to the PDG for its consideration and appropriate amendments to the programme shall be made by that group, in accordance with the recommendation in the report. A document showing how the FET Management Team recommendations have been addressed should also be prepared and together with the SME's report, included as an appendix to the programme document.

The PDG will also refine the indicative costs estimated in the earlier stage of development.

The following programme documentation will be forwarded to the Quality Council (QC) for consideration:
a) Final revised programme document, including the report from the FET Management Team and the response of the PDG to this.
b) The final cost estimates.

Following consideration by the QC, the complete proposal, including all documentation, together with that body's recommendation that it be forwarded to QQI seeking validation, will be sent to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for decision.

Having reviewed the proposal, the Chief Executive Officer will decide whether to send the proposal to QQI seeking validation. If this decision is positive, all required documentation will be sent to QQI following which that body's processes will be initiated and a validation event arranged.

Response to QQI Validation Report and Conditions/Recommendations

Following receipt of the QQI Validation Report, it shall be referred to the PDG for action. The PDG shall amend the Programme to comply with any conditions and shall consider any recommendations in the Report.

Following this, the amended programme document shall be forwarded to the Quality Council for consideration. Following its review, the QC may forward the revised document to QQI and make a recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer whether to commence the programme.

The Chief Executive Officer shall make such a decision.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FLOW CHART

Programme Initiation

Proposers complete Template A (feasibility stage)

Senior Management Team review feasibility of proposal and decides to seek further info., approve or reject

Programme Governance Board consider recommendation from Senior Management Team to proceed to development stage and agree to establish a programme development group

FET Director considers allocation of funding for programme development and makes recommendation to CE

CE approves funding for the development of programme

Programme Development Group commence development of the programme

Template B is completed (development stage)

Programme Governance Board commission report from external subject specialist

External subject specialist report produced

Programme Governance Board consider report from external subject matter expert

Programme is refined in line with external subject matter expert report

Revised programme document produced

Programme Governance Board reviews programme and forwards to the Quality Council for consideration and approval

Programme Descriptor Award stage assessment Programme review report\(re-validation)

Quality Council consider the programme and decide to approve or not approve

Quality Council makes a recommendation to the CE that the programme be forwarded to QQI seeking validation

CE considers recommendation from Quality Council

If the decision is positive CE formally authorises the application approving the application to go forward to QQI

QQI establishes a panel to assess the application

QQI validation report issued

Programme document revised in response to QQI validation report

Quality Council consider revised programme and recommend to CE whether to commence the programme

CE considers recommendation from the Quality Council

Approval for programme to commence

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Programme Development
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All programmes

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0		New policy	Quality Assurance Officer	

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING A NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FORM

PROGRAMME TITLE AND DURATION
State the programme title and the duration.

PROGRAMME DETAILS
State the NFQ Level, the number of credits, the awarding body and the final qualification. Where the programme leads to a published award, include the link to the award specification. Confirm that the proposed award is a registered qualification in the EU. If the proposed award is not stated on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications, please provide a link to the relevant EU framework where the award is registered.

State whether any regulatory requirements apply, if so provide details and include the link to the relevant reference point(s) on the regulatory body website.

RATIONALE FOR DEVELOPING THE PROGRAMME
Explain why the programme is being developed. Will the programme respond to an identified skills shortfall? Will the programme address a gap in a particular progression route by providing a bridge to a given course?

Provide a statement on who the programme is for, what the programme is for, what is involved for learners, and what qualification the programme leads to. Confirm that the programme is either employment focused or progression focused.

Provide a statement on the viability of the programme, compared to similar programmes on offer. Consider the currency of the qualification- what is the expected lifespan of the programme before a wider review would be needed to bring the programme in line with industry/education developments and or requirement.

AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME
State the aims of the programme.

OUTLINE OF PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES
State the particular educational goals that learners are intended to achieve. Try to capture at least one education goal for each given module. Do not restate the learning outcomes associated with a given award or a given module. Rather state the key outcomes that the learner should achieve on completion of the whole programme.

The important concept here is that the programme learning outcome is measurable. For example, 'Demonstrate how IT Software can be used in the design of marketing material' or 'Use theoretical knowledge to develop a marketing strategy and a costed plan'. Restrict the list to no more than eight outcomes. Try to achieve the relevant balance between knowledge and understanding, and skill and competency (depending on the nature of the programme).

DETAILS OF THE INITIAL BENCHMARKING EXERCISE CONDUCTED
For programmes leading to QQI CAS Awards or for New Apprenticeship Programmes, include a statement confirming that a review of current provision by ETB's shows that
(a) a programme leading to the CAS award is not currently part of a given ETB's suite of validated programmes
or
(b) cannot be accessed through Kerry ETB applying to become a collaborating provider of the current suite of new apprenticeship programme.

Provide an overview of how the programme compares to similar programmes already on offer, and how what addition value it will provide in comparison.

PROGRAMME ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

State the general qualification requirements, (for example' a qualification placed at NFQ Level 4, or 'the Leaving Certificate').

State the required experience for those who do not hold the minimum qualifications. State the English language requirements, (for example 'if English is the 2nd language the applicant must provide evidence of English language proficiency at CEFRL level B2).

State the level of maths proficiency where relevant, (for example 'a pass grade in maths as part of a qualification placed at NFQ Level 3 will be accepted as showing the level of required maths proficiency').

State the digital competency required (e.g. a Basic User, an Independent User or a Proficient User level of competency) State any other requirements if relevant, (for example 'the applicant must pass a colour vision test')

TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION DETAILS

In the rationale section, the programme will be categorised as either
(a) employment focused
    or
(b) progression to further study.

Where the programme is categorised as employment focused - describe the job role that the course will qualify the learner in. Provide a minimum of one example from a relevant job search website which clearly references minimum qualification requirements. Where the programme is categorised as (b) progression to further study- provide a minimum of two examples via links to a relevant college/ institute website, which clearly reference the minimum qualification requirements for course entry. If an established link(s) exists for the qualification associated with this programme to allow learners to progress onto a course of further study please outline.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESOURCE BASE

In terms of teaching /staffing requirements- what are the predicted demands on space, facilities, and qualified personnel (core teaching/instructing staff). What are the predicted demands on core teaching/ instructing equipment?

If IT facilities/services are required for the delivery of the programme, please provide details. If additional staff are required to deliver this programme, please provide details if not available in-house.

NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

PROVIDER DETAILS

FET College/Centre
proposing the programme:

Date:

PROGRAMME DETAILS

Title:

Duration:

Programme details:

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Rationale for developing
the programme:

Details of Benchmarking
Exercise Conducted:

PROGRAMME LEARNER

Target Learner Group and Projected
Enrolment per class group:

Programme entry requirements:
Transfer and Progression details:

PROGRAMME OUTLINE

Aims of the Programme:

Outline of Programme
Learning Outcomes:

OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNED PROGRAMME

Proposed Module:	NFQ Level:	Credit value and est. of learning hours:
		Total:

OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE BASE

COST IMPLICATIONS

Est. cost

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Identify where the main implication is

(facilities, staffing, equipment etc.)

SUBJECT SPECIALISATION

Provide details of specialist expertise

required for programme delivery

SUBJECT SPECIALISATION

Provide details of specialist equipment/

technology required

(including hardware and software)

EXTERNAL SUBJECT SPECIALIST REPORT ON THE NEW PROPOSED PROGRAMME

Name and Institution of External Subject Specialist

Demand from Employers and Support from Industry and other Stakeholder(s)

Demand from Learners

Appropriateness of the Award Title/Level

Overall Balance of Learner Workload

Appropriateness of Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes

Appropriateness of Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes

Appropriateness of Teaching and Learning Methodologies

Appropriateness of Proposed Delivery Mode(s)

Appropriateness of the Assessment Strategies

Additional Comments

ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy and procedures for programme access, transfer and progression in Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB). This policy does not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

This policy gives due regard to the:
• Kerry ETB Fees and Fee Waiver Policy Further Education and Training (FET Pillar).

Specific reference to the system for determining, collecting and refunding course fees associated with FET provision are made in this wider policy.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there are pathways available to enter and transfer between, and progress from Kerry ETB FET programmes. This policy also has the purpose of complying with the following:
a) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and its Sectoral Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.
b) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

SCOPE
This policy applies to all FET programmes which have a route to achieving awards and qualifications.

POLICY
Programme Access
Kerry ETB will ensure that there is a fair and consistent approach to how learners are selected and enrolled in all FET programmes. Entry requirements will be based on the principle that prospective learners who can demonstrate that they have attained a basis for successful participation based on eligibility, suitability and benefit to the applicant, as appropriate to the particular programme.

Kerry ETB will limit recruitment numbers for the programme for any one intake, to accommodate teaching/training space capacity and to facilitate practical demonstrations which are an inherent part of FET delivery. Numbers will not exceed those approved through the validation process. A waiting list will operate where demand exceeds the places available.

Kerry ETB will publish a statement of entry requirements for all programmes on an annual basis. The statement of entry requirements will define:
a) The minimum academic standard and those qualifications deemed to satisfy this.
b) The English Language entry requirements and the evidence that should be presented to demonstrate a sufficient level of proficiency.

Kerry ETB will make the following available to prospective learners:
a) Statement of the entry requirements for every programme.
b) Details as to how admission decisions are made regarding allocation of places.
c) Details on the appeals mechanism for applicants refused access to a programme.

Learners wishing to enrol for a Kerry ETB programme must have achieved at least the minimum requirements for entry onto the programme.

The Admissions Office is responsible for ensuring each application is properly evaluated and a decision reached and communicated to the applicant normally within ten working days.

Applicants may be interviewed by a member of the Admissions Office or nominated representatives. At the interview stage, applicant documentation is verified and an initial assessment made of the applicant's suitability for the selected programme.

Ideally, all applicants' original documentation will be provided by the applicant and verified by a member of the Admissions Office, as to its authenticity at the initial interview stage. Evidence of the applicant's qualifications will be filed with the standard application documentation. At this time, a course place can be offered to the applicant. In situations where an applicant is unable, due to timing circumstances, to furnish the required documentation, a provisional course offer can still be made. The provisional offer is subject to the verification of the documentation at a later date. This requirement will be expressly communicated when the provisional offer is made.

Kerry ETB will monitor the effectiveness of the process of selection of appropriate learners for a given programme, and their ability to successfully complete the programme depending on the programme entry criteria.

Recognition of prior learning for admission to a programme
Kerry ETB recognises that knowledge, skills and competencies can be acquired from a range of experiences, including formal, non-formal and informal learning. This is in line with the aims of the NFQ to recognise all learning achievements, by supporting the development of alternative pathways to qualifications (or awards) and by facilitating the recognition of prior learning.

Kerry ETB will use the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as a mechanism for determining standard access equivalences, and admitting applicants to a programme.

College Principals/Campus Managers and FET Centre Managers will ensure that all course applicants are made aware of the potential benefits of RPL and will adjudicate on applications from those seeking to use RPL as a method of satisfying entry requirements to a programme. Such adjunction shall be carried out in accordance with the Kerry ETB RPL Procedures.

Appeals
An applicant is entitled to appeal an admissions decision on the following grounds:
a) Incorrect process- specific evidence of irregularity in Kerry ETB's application process.
b) Specified/stated grounds where the decision was based on misinterpretation of data or information provided as part of the application process. The appeal must be made in writing to the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager within 10 days of the issuing of admissions decision. The grounds for appeal will be considered by the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager and evaluated by an Independent Appeals Committee.
The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing to the applicant normally within 10 days of receipt.

Cancellation

Kerry ETB reserves the right to cancel a course where there are insufficient numbers to run a viable programme. In such circumstances, applicants will be notified that the course is not to run and the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager will organise a refund of any payments made. Application numbers will be reviewed at least monthly from the opening of the recruitment cycle. A final decision will be made to run the programme 3 weeks prior to the course commencement date.

For programmes that have not recruited sufficient numbers as per agreed minimum intake or insufficient numbers for a viable programme, the determination not to run the programme is made by the FET Director, informed by the Admissions Office. Applicants holding confirmed course offers will be notified not less than 2 weeks prior to the commencement date of that course.

Transfer and progression

Kerry ETB offers a range of awards on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The NFQ defines the relationship between awards, which in turn contributes to transfer and progression between levels and between award-types at the same level.

Kerry ETB FET programmes are normally divided into modules and stages. Stages and modules are sub-programmes within programmes. A stage comprises of a set of modules at a similar level, and represents a rung on a progression ladder. Kerry ETB recognises the importance of the stage concept and will develop programmes group(s) modules with the same level of learning in the relevant discipline. Learners achieving an award will be eligible to progress to a particular stage having demonstrated achievement of the minimum intended learning outcomes of all preceding stages.

Learners achieving an award are eligible to progress to a programme leading to another award at the next level up, where there is such an award in the same field of learning. Where there is not an award at a higher level in the same field of learning, learners achieving an award are eligible to transfer to a programme leading to another award at the same level.

Responsibilities

- The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive.
- The FET Director has overall responsibility for Learner access.
- The Admissions Office will act in an administrative capacity for the FET Director for all matters. pertaining to Learner Access and Admission.
- The QA unit is responsible for monitoring compliance with the admissions process.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Access, Transfer and Progression
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All programmes which have a route to achieving awards and qualifications

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0		New policy	Quality Assurance Officer	

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Kerry ETB operates over a range of Further Education and Training (FET) areas, in addition to its role in the provision of second level education.

The FET areas include:
- Craft Apprenticeship
- New Apprenticeships
- Adult Education Provision
- Youth Programmes Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- Courses for Employment
- Courses for Progression

Kerry ETB offers several programmes in each area, and it operates across numerous centres throughout the County. This geographical dispersion, with similar programmes offered in different locations together with the range of disciplines, programme levels and structures, point to the absolute requirement for an overarching Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA) strategy to deliver an effective and consistent service. This strategy provides the framework that determines how teaching, learning and assessment is implemented within a particular discipline and to programmes within that discipline.

Given the range of education and training activities it offers, Kerry ETB's learners come from diverse educational, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The key strategic objective of Kerry ETB in the provision of its services of education and training is the promotion of lifelong learning among its learners. This is driven by Kerry ETB's Mission: *'Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB) in partnership with its members, staff and stakeholders is committed to creating and promoting the development of a lifelong learning society in Kerry, so that all who live there have access to the education and training required to fulfil their potential and meet their personal, social, cultural, economic and civic* needs'.

Based on this Mission and its values, Kerry ETB's TLA Strategy places inclusive lifelong learning at its centre.

In order to ensure that the Kerry ETB's teaching and learning practices are aligned with best practice, Kerry ETB actively promotes collaborative projects with other ETBs and Further Education Providers, with the aim of improving service delivery and the development of discipline-related best practice in Teaching and Learning, through a sharing of experiences. These projects are co-ordinated through Kerry ETB's QA Office, in consultation with Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), or other agencies, where appropriate.

ELEMENTS OF KERRY ETB'S TLA STRATEGY
The TLA Strategy, which accords with QQI's Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016) and Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (2018), aims to ensure that core practices are aligned with the Mission of Kerry ETB.
This is achieved by ensuring that:
1. Any programme proposed for validation by Kerry ETB will be accompanied by a programme-specific TLA strategy.
2. All programme-specific TLA strategies will be developed with reference to this overarching strategy.
3. In the case of programmes with a blended learning component, Kerry ETB 's TLA strategy and programme specific TLA strategies are informed by best practice in blended and online pedagogy and instructional design.
4. The Quality Assurance systems of Kerry ETB are integral to and support the TLA strategy.

In particular, the following sections of the Quality Assurance Handbook are intrinsically related to and underpin the TLA Strategy:
a) Programme Design and Development.
b) Staff Recruitment and Development.
c) Blended Learning Policy and Procedures.
d) Learner Support.
e) Programme Monitoring and Review.

PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Our Quality Assurance processes encompass all activities contributing to the design and development of the curriculum at both module and programme level. Learning design within the programme curriculum is learner- centred and takes into account the profiles and changing needs of learners. Programme development entails input from subject matter experts, industry representatives, educational and learning designers. In the case of blended learning programmes, the programme development process ensures that technology is used appropriately, and in the service of pedagogy (see guideline 4.1.4 of QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes).

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Our Quality Assurance processes ensure the recruitment of high calibre teaching and instructor staff, and the provision of appropriate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for all staff engaged in programme delivery and support. CPD facilitated by Kerry ETB takes account of the specific needs of staff involved in the design and delivery of blended programmes in Kerry ETB. Opportunities for CPD are facilitated internally, and staff are additionally supported to pursue external CPD opportunities, where this is required.

ONLINE AND BLENDED LEARNING

Our Quality Assurance processes ensure that all teaching, instructor, and staff involved in learner support, undertake a minimum level of training in the Virtual Learning Environment system (VLE), and participate in professional development in blended and online pedagogies. Minimum standards for online content and curriculum ensure the consistency of the learning experience across modules. The

ongoing development of Kerry ETB's pedagogic approaches is supported by the Teaching and Learning function of Kerry ETB. This function coordinates learning design resources, assesses potential platforms and tools for use in Kerry ETB and monitors/evaluates use of current platforms and tools.

Further details on Kerry ETB's policy and procedures in respect of Blended Learning are shown in the Blended Learning section of the QA Handbook.

LEARNER SUPPORTS

Our Quality Assurance processes ensure that all learners are accorded appropriate supports for their learning. In the case of programmes with a blended learning component, learners are introduced to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) of Kerry ETB and provided with a high level of technical support and guidance in the course of their studies. Online and blended pedagogies are learner-centred, promoting interaction and facilitating the development of an online learning community.

As part of the programme induction process, each learner is provided with a Learner Handbook at the commencement of their programme, which is the essential reference for their programme of study. This Handbook details the rights and responsibilities of learners and detail the range of learner support available. Learner supports are designed to assist in developing learner confidence and independent study skills, including:

- Receiving a clear explanation of the blend of learning that learners will experience, and the realistic commitment required of them to complete the programme.
- The prior knowledge and technical skills necessary to participate in the programme.
- Programme elements, including practical sessions and workshops, skills demonstrations, and face-to-face peer discussions.
- The contribution of autonomous and collaborative aspects to the individual's learning.

The quality of learner supports and opportunities for enhancement are formally reviewed as part of Kerry ETB's Review and Enhancement processes, as described in the relevant sections of the QA Handbook. In addition, tutors and administrators respond to queries from learners during day-to-day programme delivery. In this way, areas of concern or potential areas for improvement, can be brought to the attention of the appropriate manager for immediate remedial action.

PROGRAMME MONITORING AND REVIEW
Our Quality Assurance processes ensure ongoing monitoring and review activities are undertaken that provide insights to the learner experience within Kerry ETB's programmes, including the quality of teaching and curriculum. Feedback is collected from learners on all aspects of their experience while undertaking a programme in Kerry ETB.

In the case of programmes with a blended learning component, feedback from learners is sought on their face-to-face classes and programme support services, including online learning support. Staff working in online learning support roles are able to provide real time feedback to teaching staff pertaining to synchronous learning, as well as contributing to overall programme monitoring. This is supplemented by the collection of feedback from teaching staff and other stakeholders in relation to programme delivery, and data on learner retention, outcomes, and completion. All of these indicators are reviewed by the appropriate QA mechanisms and recommended improvements implemented.

In addition, the Quality Committee monitors feedback on Learner Support as part of its academic oversight brief and makes decisions for enhancements to be implemented by the appropriate unit or manager.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TLA STRATEGY

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Practices
All teaching, learning and assessment practices at Kerry ETB are *Constructively Aligned*[2]. There are three dimensions essential to the concept of constructive alignment.

1. **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):** These articulate what learners will be able to do upon successful completion of each module and programme.

2. **Assessment:** The assessment strategy for each module and programme is derived from the ILOs. Assessment must provide learners with an opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the ILOs.

3. **Learning Activities:** The learning activities within a module and programme are chosen to facilitate learners acquiring, developing and practicing the knowledge, skills and competences they need to achieve the ILOs, and to be able to demonstrate this through the assessment process.

Module and programme development will be undertaken with regard to the principles of Constructive Alignment, with ILOs derived from the relevant level of the NFQ, or Standards as appropriate. This approach focuses on each module's learning outcomes and assessment regimes, together with the teaching and learning activities required to deliver these learning outcomes. Kerry ETB recognises the need to balance these three elements in creating appropriate learning experiences and pathways.

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[2] *Biggs, J.B. & Tang, C. (2011). Teaching for Quality Learning at University. Buckingham: Open University Press/Society for Research into Higher Education. (Fourth edition)*

All learning and teaching practices at Kerry ETB are firmly grounded in a learner-centred approach, with an emphasis on developing transversal skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and independent learning within the learning journey. Learner-centred instruction emphasises the facilitative role of teachers and the uniqueness of learners. It encourages the fostering of successful interpersonal relationships between teachers and learners, and an appreciation and respect for diversity and difference.

Formative assessment and feedback are integral to the process of learning and reflect the emphasis on learner-centeredness that underpins teaching and learning in the programme. Feedback processes at Kerry ETB are intended to place the learner at the centre of the process, emphasising opportunities for learners to seek and use feedback, and develop self-evaluative judgement over time.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning, which promotes the continuing development of knowledge, skills and competences throughout an individual's career, is central to the ethos of Kerry ETB and is embodied in its Mission statement to enable our learners to grow personally and professionally. We are cognisant of the requirement to set processes in place to facilitate this and as our learners travel through their learning journey. Specifically in the case of adult learners, we have regard to fundamental principles of adult education in our approaches to teaching and learning, and our curriculum design:

i.   Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
ii. Experience provides the basis for the learning activities, and as adults possess significant past experience (including mistakes) to the classroom, this should form the basis for learning activities.
iii. Adults are most interested in practical subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their work or personal life.
iv. Adult learning is problem-centred rather than content-centred (or memorisation oriented).

The curriculum will attest to the importance of lifelong learning for our learner cohorts, and this will be reflected in the programme teaching and learning strategies. Kerry ETB prepares its learners to succeed by ensuring their cumulative knowledge, skills and competencies, on programme completion, are relevant to the dynamic and rapidly shifting employment market.

Kerry ETB is committed to supporting learners in their development of transversal skills, for example, problem-solving, communication and creativity. Kerry ETB will approach this through a range of curricular and co-curricular measures.

STAFF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Kerry ETB is committed to the provision and support of appropriate Continuing Professional Development for all staff and has processes within its QA system to facilitate this. All teaching and instructor staff as well as learner support staff will be offered training and development opportunities that are directly relevant to their roles.

In the case of staff involved in the delivery of programmes with a blended learning component, a comprehensive induction programme will be available for all staff in teaching, instructor and learner support roles. This will include an introduction to the VLE and the Blended Learning component of Kerry ETB's TLA Strategy.
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BLENDED LEARNING

The following outlines Kerry Education and Training Board's (Kerry ETB) policy and procedures for the development and delivery of programmes in Blended Learning Mode. This policy and the associated procedures do not exist in isolation, so cross reference may be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

Kerry ETB is committed to ensuring its programmes that are developed for blended learning delivery are developed having regard to QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (2018). It will incorporate the guidelines in its blended learning programme development processes in a planned incremental manner and is committed to achieving the overall goal of full compliance.

QQI has adopted Garrison and Kanuak's definition of blended learning as *'The integration of classroom face-to-face learning experiences with online learning experiences'* (Garrison and Kanuak, 2004, p.96).

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for the infrastructure development, staff training, programme development and delivery in blended learning mode, in alignment with QQI's Statutory QA Guidelines.

This policy and the associated procedures guide all staff in training, development and delivery of programmes, in a blended learning mode.

SCOPE
This policy applies to Blended Learning Programmes developed, or procured, and delivered by Kerry ETB, at levels 3 to 6 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Programmes include those that lead to CAS Awards, non-CAS Awards and new Apprenticeship programmes.

Programmes may lead to major awards or minor awards or special purpose awards.

Kerry ETB is conscious of the difficulties posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the required shift to online delivery required by the pandemic. However, this policy transcends the contingency arrangements required to address this issue and refers to the development of all Blended Learning programmes in the future.

This policy applies directly or indirectly to all Kerry ETB staff members, working under the FET pillar at a point in time, particularly those holding teaching, administrative, management or support roles.

POLICY PRINCIPLES
Kerry ETB's Blended Learning Policy is guided by the following principles which are aimed at facilitating high quality teaching and learning. Kerry ETB has responsibility for:
a) Ensuring that proposals for new blended learning programmes take full account of the implications of blended learning and are subject to appropriately informed academic review and approval.
b) Establishing clear criteria to identify fit-for-purpose programmes suitable for Blended Learning integration.
c) Providing contextually appropriate strategies for blended curriculum design and the integration of blended learning to existing programmes.
d) Ensuring that an appropriate balance is maintained between face-to-face and online content and delivery within programmes.

e) Providing clear guidelines and practical supports for learners and staff members in relation to all aspects of Blended Learning within the organisation.

f) Providing the concrete infrastructure required for the facilitation of teaching and learning, inclusive of programme delivery, learner supports and programme administration.

g) Providing access to appropriate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training programmes that interface with internal processes and systems for the incorporation of Blended Learning.

h) Providing a framework for facilitating learner engagement in both face-to-face and online learning environments; ensuring learner support mechanisms are visible and actively promoted in both.

i) Implementing and maintaining quality review processes that encompass both the online and face-to-face components of programme delivery.

POLICY DETAIL

Kerry ETB's policy in respect of blended learning is formulated around three core pillars - Strategy, Programme Design and Development, and the Learner Experience.
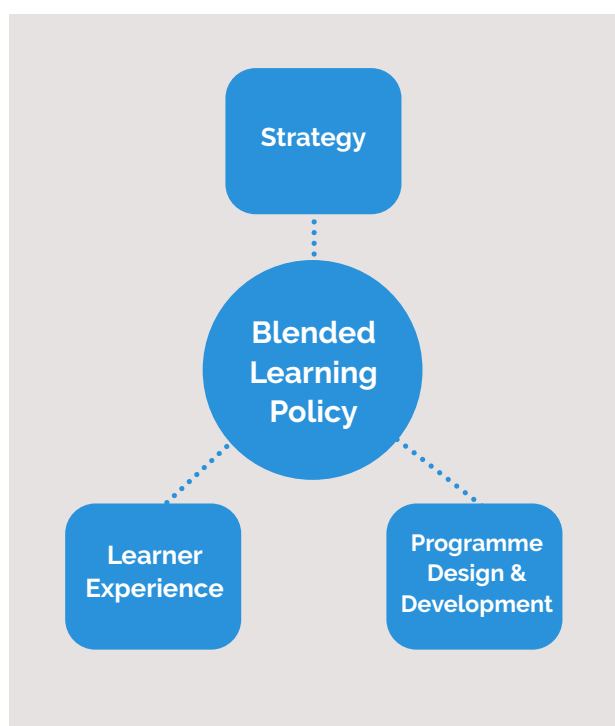
STRATEGY

Kerry ETB is cognisant 'of the distinctive demands that blended learning will make on infrastructure and systems that differ from full-time face-to-face contexts' (QQI Guidelines page 8).

Kerry ETB therefore commits to ensuring that:

1. Its strategy, at an institutional level, systematically addresses and facilitates arrangements for blended learning.

2. The infrastructure and resources required to support good quality blended learning are understood, planned, and routinely monitored and evaluated.

3. Appropriate continuing professional development processes and procedures are developed and facilitated to ensure the upskilling of staff in the latest developments in Blended Learning.

4. Appropriate investment in Learning Design capacity is made through new appointments and/or re-training of existing staff.

5. Adequate levels of IT support services are provided as technical support for the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

6. A fit-for-purposes Community of Practice is developed among its staff involved in Blended Learning activities in its different units.

7. A planned approach to professional development in the area of Learning Technology is implemented. This approach will support relevant staff to in turn support staff to use technology for blended learning.

8. Realistic expectations for the overall quality of the blended learning provision, including the effectiveness and accessibility of learning resources and other learning materials to support online provision are approved and published.

9. Its Quality Assurance Procedures for blended learning are comprehensive and fit for purpose and encompass provisions for dealing with a second provider who delivers aspects of a programme through blended learning.

Programme Design and Development

Kerry ETB is committed to assuring quality in the design, development, review, delivery and evaluation of programmes and modules that include blended learning.

Kerry ETB commits to ensuring that:

1. Online learning components are appropriately designed to ensure they can be effectively integrated into programmes for the purpose of achieving learning outcomes.
2. Learning resources, materials and delivery mechanisms are appropriate, fit-for-purpose, monitored and reviewed.
3. Its current chosen blended learning delivery vehicles, Microsoft Teams and Moodle, are continually reviewed to ensure they are appropriate for the respective sets of programmes and target learners for which they are deployed.
4. Its programme development processes for blended learning programmes, including online learning modules, are appropriate and fit-for-purpose, reflecting best practice in blended learning curriculum design.

Learner Experience

Kerry ETB is committed to providing a range of appropriate information and supports to both prospective and enrolled learners. Kerry ETB commits to ensuring that:

1. Appropriate information is made available to prospective learners to enable them to make an informed choice about enrolling on a blended learning programme.
2. Appropriate support is provided to enable learners to progress towards becoming an autonomous learner.
3. The range of available technical, academic and pastoral supports are made clear and promoted to learners enrolled on a blended learning programme.

Kerry ETB's minimum standards for its online content and learning resources have been derived from QQI's guidelines and Kerry ETB's ICT Strategy and Blended and Remote Learning guidelines for staff and learners 2020. These may be supplemented and augmented as appropriate over time, utilising the processes within the Quality Assurance Handbook for ongoing review of QA documentation.

RESPONSIBILITY

a) The FET Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive Officer.
b) The Quality Assurance Governance Board is responsible for approving a schedule for quality reviews and submitting this to the FET Quality Council for noting. It is also responsible for receiving reports on follow-up on actions arising from quality reviews and reporting to the FET Quality Council on issues or recommendations arising.
c) The Quality Assurance Governance Board is responsible for undertaking the review, amendment and development of quality assurance policies and procedures.
d) The FET Director, Quality Assurance Officer and Learner Support Officer are jointly responsible for making recommendations to the FET Quality Council, through the Quality Assurance Governance Board, pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.
e) The Quality Assurance Officer is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the overall alignment of Kerry ETB's policy and procedures pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review to QQI's guidelines and policy statements.

RELATED LEGISLATION, REGULATION OR GUIDELINES

a) Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
b) Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards 2017 (QQI).
c) Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes 2018 (QQI).
d) Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
e) Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).

PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BLENDED LEARNING

Overview

Kerry ETB engages learning designers and educational technologists in the curriculum development process, enabling close collaboration between this function and academic subject specialists. This enables Kerry ETB's programmes to be developed in a subject-led, learner centred manner, in which technology is in the service of pedagogy, as per QQI's guidelines.

The FET Management Team in Kerry ETB has determined that Microsoft Teams and Moodle should be Kerry ETB's VLE options. Moodle is used in its new apprenticeship programmes and a number of other programmes delivered through its training centres, while Microsoft Teams is used in other cases. In addition, Kerry ETB intends to deploy Turnitin as a tool to promote academic integrity, streamline grading and feedback, deter plagiarism, and improve learner outcomes in its programmes.

The VLE chosen for a particular application allows staff to develop and select appropriate online content and learning resources for learners, and enables learners to access this in a controlled, secure environment. It encourages communication and collaboration in learning tasks, thus encouraging cooperation and adding to the learning experience of the learners. Forum activities in the VLE are used by staff and learners for online discussions which promote collaborative working, engagement and interactivity with all members of the group. The chosen VLE is also used to manage continuous assessment and feedback.
All assignments are required to be submitted in soft copy via the relevant process and through the plagiarism detection software, Turnitin, where appropriate.

Kerry ETB takes a proactive approach to reviewing new tools and resources that may be used to enhance programme delivery.

Kerry ETB's procedure for the assessment, use and monitoring of platforms and tools ensures that potential new technologies are carefully evaluated to determine whether they are reliable, secure and aligned to pedagogic objectives prior to use, and that opportunities for staff to test these are planned and controlled.

To ensure the quality and consistency of blended learning provision across its programmes, Kerry ETB has developed minimum standards for online content and learning resources, learner induction/ supports and staff development/ training.
Kerry ETB has prepared two sets of guidelines that are relevant to this:
a) Teaching and Learning Guidelines for Staff
b) Blended and Remote Learning Guidelines for Kerry ETB Learners.

These are attached as Appendices A and B, respectively.

Approval and Oversight

Kerry ETB's oversight processes are aligned with our strategic objectives and mission. We also rely on the Quality Improvement Plan Strategy to guide approval and oversight practices. The programme development and internal approval process for blended learning programmes mirrors that for face-to-face programmes, with a number of significant additions that are detailed below.

Approval

Kerry ETB follows a two-stage approval process in the preparation for and execution of processes - Planning and Programme Management.

Decision-making at governance level takes account of strategic and corporate decision-making, and funding concerns. Programme management approval processes take account of academic issues that fall within the remit of programme management.

The governance element includes an analysis and approval of the following:
a) Vision, strategy and goal: What is the intended end-result for the Blended Learning programme?
b) Learners and provision: Who is the Blended Learning learner? Which cohorts would benefit from Blended Learning? What is the scope and provision required for the target learners? Do the target learners have access to the required devices? Is their broadband capacity adequate?
c) Needs and sector demands: Which groups and individuals are in urgent need for Blended Learning? What supports are in place and which ones are lacking or missing?
d) Decisions and levels of authority: operational leadership, tactical oversight functions (e.g.

compliance, risk, finance), executive leadership and/or statutory, corporate leadership.
e) Clarity: regulatory bodies and requirements: QQI, FET sector, government, and other external bodies.
f) Corporate decisions and funding.

The programme management element includes the following:
a) Overseeing development of the programme proposal: collation of proposal plan, format, scope and standards.
b) Programme outline, outcomes and awards: what are the intended learning outcomes and awards?
c) Considering the outcomes of consultation with industry.
d) Identifying specific cohorts and learner profiles through appropriate methodologies.
e) Identifying the most appropriate delivery vehicle and programme management systems (currently either Microsoft Teams or Moodle).
f) Ensuring programme efficiency: depth, duration and provision.
g) Ensuring the programme maintains an appropriate balance between face-to-face and on-line learning.
h) Content and programme components for fit-for-purpose delivery.

OVERSIGHT

Kerry ETB's oversight and review processes in respect of blended learning provision, include addressing the following questions:
1. What do we need for effective Blended Learning programmes? Resources, priorities, contexts; Learner and staff needs; FET environment.
2. How can we achieve this? Resources and planning required for new programmes, having regard to the desired provision and target learners.
3. Are we doing it right? Effectiveness of the implementation planning; issues emerging from the deployment phase.
4. Did the programme meet the anticipated outcomes? Assessment through robust review systems involving stakeholders.

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Kerry ETB has adopted QQI's guidelines to guide the assessment, procurement, use and monitoring of platforms and tools to deliver blended learning.

USE AND MONITORING OF PLATFORMS AND TOOLS

Kerry ETB has chosen two platforms, Microsoft Teams and Moodle as delivery and programme management tools for its blended learning offerings. Moodle is used in its new apprenticeship programmes and a number of other programmes delivered through its training centres, while Microsoft Teams is used in other cases. It is committed to refining the protocols for deciding on a particular VLE for specific programme types and learner cohorts, based on analysis and review of current experience of delivery. Kerry ETB is planning to deploy Turnitin to promote academic integrity, streamline grading and feedback, deter plagiarism, and improve learner outcomes in its programmes.

Kerry ETB continually monitors and reviews the effectiveness of the platforms and tools used through feedback from learners and academic staff. This feedback is considered and reviewed by the Quality Council and decisions for improvement made.

There are a number of mechanisms in place to facilitate the collection of feedback, which is considered by the programme board system.

Feedback is routinely sought from learners on programme curricula and delivery via the VLE, in addition to feedback on the quality and availability of support services and effectiveness of administration.
• Teachers/Tutors/Instructors and support staff are able to provide feedback and raise any concerns pertaining to the VLE and integrated platforms on an ongoing basis.

IT SERVICE SUPPORT

IT support is required to facilitate access to suitable information technology and educational resources (including educational technology and any VLE provided as required by Kerry ETB, identified at programme development and agreed at validation).

It is the responsibility of the Programme Governance Board, supported by the TEL Working Group, to identify and specify the IT and computing requirements for programme delivery.

The CCT department is additionally responsible for the provision and the management of sustainable computing facilities accessible to staff and learners.

The CCT department works with management and staff to systematically upgrade hardware and software in line with technical developments and advise Kerry ETB on more effective tools and methodologies to enhance the learner experience.

IT support services are available at all time during class delivery. Helpdesk support provided by TEL Champions is available for learners and teachers/tutors/instructors during normal office hours.

The CCT Department is also responsible for ensuring that all software is properly licensed and copyright protocols are respected. Other responsibilities include firewalls, backups, etc.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure for Blended Learning is multifaceted. The most appropriate model, either Microsoft Teams or Moodle, is determined through consideration of the following elements in a sequential manner:

1. Learner Profile.
2. Learner needs.
3. Staff supports required.
4. Identification of required infrastructure and associated functionality for delivery of the programme.
5. Review of available infrastructure and associated functionality.

PROGRAMME CONTEXT

Standards for Online Content and Learning Resources

Kerry ETB has adopted the following standards in respect of online content and learning resources: All content items and learning resources within Kerry ETB's VLE and supported platforms must:

a) Reflect the learner-centred pedagogy of Kerry ETB.
b) Be subject to quality review by an appropriately informed peer (e.g. subject matter and learning design expertise) before uploading to the VLE.
c) Cite copyright and licensing status appropriately for any third-party content.
d) Engage learners in activities that enable them to test and monitor their progress at appropriate points in their learning.
e) Be presented in a manner showing its relationship to the face-to-face learning environment.
f) In the case of text items developed within Kerry ETB, be written in plain language.
g) Be accompanied by links to clear information regarding the availability of relevant academic supports.
h) Reflect culturally diverse perspectives that are free of bias.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Blended Learning programmes for Kerry ETB follow the stages of programme and curriculum design that are incorporated in traditional course planning and detailed in section X of its Quality Assurance Handbook.

Curriculum design for all programmes, including those delivered in Blended mode, includes learning, teaching and assessment quality measures. Each programme is informed by approaches to Blended Learning that are fit for purpose and support achievement of learning outcomes.

All programmes and modules incorporating Blended Learning are subject to approval by the FET Quality Council and ratification by the Chief Executive Officer.

Programme quality reviews cover four main strands: Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Technology. The review process follows a structured approach that encompasses both the online and face-to-face learning environments.

Design, Syllabi and Delivery

Kerry ETB's curricula are driven by the fundamental tenet that places the learner at the centre of quality assurance. Its curricula incorporate Blended Learning approaches, while maintaining traditional face-to-face programme functions to suit a varied spectrum of learners and programme structures.

These design and delivery principles:
- Are subject led, rather than technology led.
- Focus on the learner, critical thinking, reflection, autonomy, and engagement.
- Develop content that is specifically designed for blended learning delivery.
- Ensure subject matter and content inform pedagogy and instructional design.
- Maintain continuity and consistency (access, resources, instructional design).
- Maintain security; promote supports and services.
- Encompass contingency measures to ensure the continuous delivery of content and assessment.
- Facilitate ongoing syllabus and curriculum enhancement, informed by programme quality review mechanisms.

Content Creation

Kerry ETB's content development process involves the selection of appropriate platforms, formats or tools to facilitate achievement of pedagogic objectives. Content development may entail the use or production of the following:
a) Video and audio content.
b) Reusable learning objects (RLOs).
c) Subject- specific and Blended Learning curricula and syllabi.
d) Online learning and teaching platforms, including Moodle and Microsoft Teams.
e) Functions within Moodle, Microsoft teams and other platforms that facilitate engagement and participation.
f) Learning, teaching and assessment analytics: records of learning and teaching performance, e-Learning experience and achievement, allocation of programme content and resources.
g) Comprehensive study guides accessed onsite and online by learners and staff members.

The above list is not exhaustive and continues to be under ongoing quality review via quality assurance and enhancement processes.

STANDARDS FOR LEARNER INDUCTION AND SUPPORTS (BLENDED LEARNING)

Kerry ETB's minimum standards for learner induction and supports in blended learning have been derived from QQI's guidelines, Kerry ETB's ICT Strategy and SOLAS TEL Strategy. These may be supplemented and augmented as appropriate over time, utilising the processes within the Quality Assurance Handbook for ongoing review of QA documentation.

PROGRAMME INFORMATION AND MANAGEMENT

All learners within Kerry ETB must:

1. *Be informed prior to enrolment of the level and nature of the support available. This will include information pertaining to:*
   - Details on the different elements of the blend of learning that they will experience on the programme including online activities, face-to-face attendance requirement, synchronous and asynchronous activities, autonomous learning etc.
   - The commitment required from them to successfully complete the programme, including self-directed learning.
   - Pre-knowledge or technical skills required to participate on the programme.
   - When academic, technical and pastoral supports are available.
   - Details of the hardware or software required.
   - Terms and conditions relevant to a specific programme (e.g. timings for synchronous learning or assessment, assessment deadlines, regulations pertaining to re-assessment opportunities).

2. *Be systematically inducted to Kerry ETB's VLE and integrated platforms following admission. This induction must include information pertaining to:*
   - Overall layout and navigation of the VLE.
   - Location of contact lists for academic, administrative and technical queries within Kerry ETB.
   - Availability of online technical support and contact information.
   - Location of essential learner support information, policies and procedures within the VLE.

   - General protocols for communicating online, which promote dignity, courtesy, and respect for diversity.
   - Communication channels used within the VLE and Kerry ETB.

3. *Be systematically inducted to learning in blended and online modes. This induction must include information pertaining to:*
   - Overall expectations and standards.
   - Strategies for successful blended and online learning.
   - Support services and resources available online, including those relevant to academic integrity and the avoidance of plagiarism.
   - Online library access and associated resources and supports.

4. *Have access to comprehensive information regarding their programme of study, to include:*
   - ILOs and teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module and for the programme overall.
   - Schedules for the submission and assessment of work.
   - Information on how their performance will be assessed, and the relative weighting of assessment tasks.
   - Information on how timely formative feedback will be provided to them in the online sections of the programme.
   - Lists of learning resources available.

5. *Have access, within a reasonable time frame, to technical support for asynchronous learning activities.*

6. *Have access, in real time, to technical support during synchronous learning activities.*

7. *Have the opportunity to provide feedback to Kerry ETB, both routinely and ad hoc, on their experience of using the VLE and integrated platforms.*

STANDARDS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING (BLENDED LEARNING)

Kerry ETB's minimum standards for staff development and training in blended learning have been derived from QQI's guidelines, Kerry ETB ICT Strategy and SOLAS TEL Strategy.

These may be supplemented and augmented as appropriate over time, utilising the processes within the Quality Assurance Handbook for ongoing review of QA documentation.

All staff in academic, teaching and learner support roles within Kerry ETB must:

1. Undertake a general and an academic induction upon commencing employment with Kerry ETB. Within the academic induction, be introduced to:
   - The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) of Kerry ETB.
   - The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy of Kerry ETB (inclusive of Blended Learning)

2. Complete designated Blended Learning training modules within a time frame agreed with their manager.

3. Participate in ongoing training and development activities for Blended Learning.

4. Ensure their contributions to the development of curriculum within Kerry ETB comply with minimum standards for online content and learning resources and associated processes.

5. Observe protocols for communication with learners and facilitation of online discussions.

6. Strive to facilitate a safe, inclusive, accessible, and reliable online learning environment.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Blended Learning
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	September 2020
Effective Date	September 2020
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Designated Reviewers	FET Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All programmes using Blended Learning as a mode of delivery

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0	Sept 2020	New Policy and Procedures	Quality Assurance Officer	FET Quality Council

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook defines the policy and procedures used at Kerry ETB FET Colleges and Centres to ensure fair and consistent planning of assessment, operation of assessment and marking/grading of assessment. This policy and the associated procedures do not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate. The Kerry ETB assessment procedures are listed below and can be found on page 56.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that programme assessment is valid, reliable, fair, transparent and authentic. This policy also has the purpose of complying with the following:

a) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and its Sectoral Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

b) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all assessed courses across Kerry ETB FET provision.

POLICY

Assessment as a valid, reliable, fair, transparent and authentic process

The College Principals, the Campus Manager and FET Centre Managers will play a key role in ensuring that assessment is valid, reliable, fair, transparent and authentic. The assessment tasks (and marking criteria) devised by programme staff will enable learners to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes, and will facilitate robust decisions. The scheduling of assessment will be efficient, especially regarding the amount and timing of assessments.

Within each programme a broad and balanced range of assessment techniques will be used, with an interdisciplinary approach being adopted where possible. A range of assessment instruments will be used to avoid over-reliance on any single instrument. Assessment briefs will comprise of:

a) Guidelines that explain the format to be used for assessment outputs.

b) Details on what should be contained therein.

c) Marking schemes which are to be devised in line with assessment criteria.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Kerry ETB recognises assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, which supports an understanding of core theory and practice for learners. Assessment will be promoted as a positive activity, which contributes to and enhances learner's development and progression.

Learner Communication

Learners will be informed about assessment policies and procedures through the Learner Handbook, which is made available to all Learners as part of the course induction. The handbook will be updated as required to align with any changes to the assessment process. The format and requirements of a particular assessment will be provided through a detailed assessment brief at the start of each module. Queries relating to a given assessment by Learners will be addressed by the relevant instructor/tutor.

Scheduling assessment

Assessment schedules will take into account learner workloads and allow time for learner reflection. Such assessment schedules will be available to learners.

Reasonable accommodation

In admitting applicants with specific needs, Kerry ETB acknowledges its obligation to ensure that assessment arrangements are designed so that all learners are assessed on equal terms. Across FET provision there will be a number of learners who qualify for specific adaptations for assessment. This may be due to a disability, a medical condition or specific learning differences. Some, such as physical or sensory disabilities may be obvious, whilst others may not be apparent, unless disclosed by the learner. Additionally, conditions may be temporary. The needs of individual learners with apparently similar conditions will also vary.

Learners will be required to inform the College Principal, Campus Manager, FET Centre Manager where they identify themselves as persons with specific needs, and request that arrangements be made to provide an adaptation to assessment. Learners are required to inform their College Principal, Campus Manager, FET Centre Manager in writing at least six weeks in advance of the assessment date.

Learners will be required to inform their College/ FET Centre where they consider that they require an adaptation to assessment, arising from a short term condition or temporary injury. Learners are required to inform their College/FET Centre in writing as soon as is practicable.

The College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager will determine the nature of the adaptation to the standard assessment conditions:
a) Accessible venue
b) Additional time
c) Reader/scribe/prompt
d) Use of assistive technology
e) Use of a separate room/space
f) Supervised breaks - use of this is likely to include a recommendation for a separate room
g) Examination paperwork in preferred format

The determination will be made on the basis of the written request and the documentation submitted by the Learner. The Learner will be informed in writing of the decision on the adaptation to the standard assessment conditions.

Where a learner is unhappy with the decision on the adaptation to the standard assessment conditions, s/he can appeal. The Assessment Process Appeals procedure shall be used for reconsiderations of outcomes of the applications for an adaptation to assessment.

Extension of date of submission

Where circumstances beyond a Learner's control may have impacted unfairly on an assessment task s/he may submit a request for an extension of the date of submission. Requests for such an extension will apply to circumstances beyond a Learner's control such as accidents or sudden illness or the death of a family member. Requests will not be approved if they arise from a Learner's poor time management, or a Learner's failure to take reasonable steps to avoid circumstances that may affect their ability to complete the assessment by the due date.

A Learner who considers that their performance in a continuous assessment task has been affected by circumstances beyond their control may formally request an extension of the date of submission, indicating the grounds for their request and attaching relevant documentary evidence. The request must normally be made in writing to the relevant instructor/tutor in advance of the due date or, in extreme cases, no later than five working days after that date.

The instructor/tutor, in consultation with the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager, will decide if extending the due date of submission is justified. Where it is decided that it is justified, the Learner will be informed in writing of the extension of time which has been granted for the submission of the assessment task. The full range of marks/grades used in the original assessment will be applied when determining the mark/grade following special consideration.

Where a learner is unhappy with the decision on extending the date of submission, s/he can appeal. The Assessment Process Appeals procedure shall be used for reconsiderations of outcomes of the applications for extending the date of submission.

Academic Integrity and Malpractice

Learners are expected to strive for academic integrity with the support of the College and to undertake assessment tasks honestly and truthfully, avoiding plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. The responsibility to demonstrate academic integrity lies with the enrolled learner.

Kerry ETB will provide guidance referencing and acknowledging all sources. Information will also be provided in the Referencing Handbook for the FET Sector. Kerry ETB hosts the anti-plagiarism package Turnitin.com, which facilitates learners to reflect on the content of their written assessment and the associated referencing before final submission. The responsibility to demonstrate academic integrity lies with the learner. All submitted work for assessment purposes, which includes but is not limited to, text, graphics, tables, formulae, or any representation of ideas in print, electronic or any other media, in addition to artefacts, computer software and algorithms, must correctly acknowledge the source of any data which is not original to the learner. Turnitin.com will be used to ensure that written assignments do not display evidence of plagiarism. Where an Instructor/Tutor/Teacher suspects malpractice, the College Principal/ Campus Manager/ FET Centre Manager will be informed. An investigation will determine whether there is a case of assessment malpractice to answer by the Learner.

The responsibility to act or engage in a practice that undermines the fairness of an assessment lies with the enrolled learner. Learners are required to avoid plagiarism, unauthorised collusion or any form of contract cheating, or the evasion of assessment regulations.

Any suspected intended or unintended act of assignment falsification, misrepresentation, deception, or breach of examination regulations will be considered Academic Malpractice. Where programme staff suspect Assessment Malpractice, the College Principals/Campus Manager and FET Centre Manager will be informed. An investigation will determine whether there is a case of assessment malpractice to answer by the Learner.

Marking and Feedback

Learners will be given timely feedback on the continuous assessment elements of their course (e.g. all assessments undertaken during a module, prior to the module completion date). Such feedback will explain the basis of the learner's assessment mark against the assessment criteria and will provide information on how the learner can strengthen their work for future assessment purposes and/or repeat assessment. College Principals/the Campus Manager/FET Centre Managers shall record the dates when assessment marks and feedback are given to learners as part of the course assessment schedule and notify learners at induction. Instructors/tutors/teachers shall ensure that marks are available and feedback given to learners within 20 working days of the submission date.

Release of Results

The release date for approved results shall be determined by the Quality Assurance Governance Board. College Principals/the Campus Manager/ FET Centre Managers shall record such dates as part of the course assessment schedule and notify learners at induction. Approved results will be issued to learners as soon as possible after the meeting of the Results Approval Panel at which they are determined.

Where a learner is unhappy with the approved result s/he can appeal. The appeal must be made in writing to the College Principal/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager within 10 days of the issuing of the approved result by the College/FET Centre. The Assessment Result Appeals procedure shall be used to appeal results. The Assessment Result Appeals procedure applies to all learners enrolled on FET Courses and de-registered learners whose assessment results have yet to be issued.

Internal Verification

All work submitted for assessment which has been marked by an instructor/tutor/teacher and which contributes to the achievement of credit or a qualification will be subject to internal verification. For practically based assessment, where marking takes place at the time of the assessment, the formal record of how the mark was arrived at, with reference to the marking criteria and where practicable a recording of the assessment will be used for internal verification purposes.

An explanation of the purpose of internal verification will be provided to learners in the Learner Handbook.

Staff conducting internal verification are required to confirm that Learner evidence exists and that marks are correctly computed and recorded for a sample of Learners.

Staff conducting internal verification are required to record the details of the particular pieces of assessment which have been selected within the sample for review, and any resulting changes to marks that have been as a result of identifying and correcting any errors.

Results Approval Panels; convened by the College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, will review such reports.

The Internal Verification of Results procedure shall be used to internally verify results.

External Authentication/Examination
All work submitted for assessment which has been marked by an instructor/tutor and which contributes to the achievement of credit or a qualification will be subject to external authentication. The Quality Assurance will be agreeing individuals to act as External Authenticators and External Authenticators and submitting details to the FET Quality Council for ratification.

An explanation of the purpose of external authentication will be provided to learners in the Learner Handbook.

External Authenticators are required to complete the Kerry ETB External Authentication training workshop.

External Authentication will provide independent authoritative confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of learners in accordance with national standards.

External Authenticators will conduct a review of internal verification reports- authenticating the findings/outcomes of internal verification.

External Authenticators are required to review assessment results for a sample of learners and ensure that assessment results have been marked in a valid and reliable way and are compliant with the requirements of the award.

External Authenticators will note any inconsistencies in the grading of learner evidence which has been selected within the sample for review and moderate such grades. External Authenticators are required to record the details of the particular pieces of assessment which have been selected within the sample for review, and any resulting changes to marks.

External Authenticators are required to complete a report recording the outcomes of their review of internal verification reports, and authenticating the findings/outcomes of internal verification. Their report will also record the details of the particular pieces of assessment which have been selected within the sample for review, and any resulting changes to marks.

Results Approval Panels; convened by the College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, will review such reports.

The External Authentication procedure shall be used to externally authenticate the assessment of learners.

Results Approval
Results Approval Panels will review and recommend assessment results to the Quality Council. Such recommended results communicated to learners prior to formal ratification of provisional results.

College Principals/the Campus/Manager/ Managers of FET Centres will inform learners and programme staff of the approved results once ratified.

Ratification of Approved Results by the Quality Council
The Quality Council will ratify recommended results presented by the QA Officer (or equivalent), prior to their submission to the awarding body for the purposes of certification.

Monitoring of Grade Achievement
Kerry ETB monitors and analyses learner attainment at programme level; including the benchmarking of grade achievement. Such information is used to initiate quality and enhancement activities, including liaising with external authenticators to facilitate programme improvement.

**Assessment at Programme Level
(New Programmes)**

A programme assessment strategy will be devised for each new programme and documented in the validated programme specification. The programme assessment strategy provides guidance for programme staff, learners and those who are involved in work-based elements of the programme.

The Programme Governance Board will consider the effectiveness of the learning outcomes being employed in both the programme development process and in the programme provision. They will also ensure that over-assessment of the learner is avoided.

The Programme Governance Board will undertake periodic evaluations of the range of teaching methods and assessment methods to identity best practice as well as areas for improvement, and, where necessary, training and resource requirements which will support improvement practice.

Following the programme evaluation process, the Programme Governance Board will consider the totality of the learning experience and identify how the blend of teaching methods and assessment serves the overall programme aims and intended outcomes.

PROCEDURE

The Kerry ETB assessment procedures are as follows:

- Examinations: Planning, Conducting and Concluding
- Compassionate Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances
- Short-Term Extensions Assessment Deadlines
- Secure Storage of Assessment Materials, Records and Learner Assessment Evidence
- Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Assessment Result Appeals
- Assessment Process Appeals
- Assessment Malpractice
- Internal Verification of Results
- External Authentication
- Results Approval Procedure

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive Officer.
- The FET Director has overall responsibility for the assessment process managed by Kerry College and FET Centres.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, are responsible for prompting assessment as a positive activity, ensuring the accuracy of information related to course assessment instruments and assessment schedules and for ensuring the accuracy of updated information if and when any changes are made.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, are responsible for ensuring that learners have confirmed their understanding of academic integrity and how it applies to their course assessment.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres are responsible for the management of the use of the Kerry ETB anti-plagiarism package at College/Centre level.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager are responsible for ensuring that learners are informed about assessment policies and procedures.
- Instructors/tutors are responsible for ensuring that learner's queries relating to a given assessment are addressed.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres are responsible for the scheduling of assessments at the college/centre and for the maintenance and updating of assessment schedules.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres are responsible for determining the nature of adaptations to standard assessment conditions where a learner has informed the College/FET Centre that they require an adaptation to assessment.
- Instructors/tutors/teachers, in consultation with College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, are responsible for decisions to extend the due date of submission of an assessment, where a learner has requested such an extension arising from circumstance beyond the learners control.

- Instructors/tutors/teachers are responsible for informing College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres of suspected assessment malpractice.
- Instructors/tutors are responsible for providing timely feedback on continuous elements
- The Quality Assurance Governance Board is responsible for issuing the release dates of approved results.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres are responsible for the operation of internal verification of all work submitted for assessment marked by an instructor/tutor/teacher.

- The Quality Assurance will be agreeing individuals to act as External Authenticators and submitting details to the FET Quality Council for ratification.
- The QA Unit is responsible for the centralised organisation of external authentication.
- The QA Unit is responsible for the processing of assessment appeals.
- The Quality Council is responsible for ratifying results prior to their submission to the awarding body.
- The QA Unit is responsible for monitoring and analysing learner attainment.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Assessment of Learning
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Relevant Kerry ETB Policies	
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All assessed courses and programmes

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0			Quality Assurance Officer	

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Kerry ETB Academic Integrity Policy
Responsible Officer(s)	Kerry ETB QA Unit
Issuance Date	Recommended by Quality Assurance Governance Board 19.01.2023
Effective Date	7th February 2023
Supersedes	Version 1.3
Next Revision Date	February 2028
Designated Reviewers	Quality Council

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT AND VALUES

Principles

Assessment is underpinned by the **principles of assessment** including the *fair* principle (equal opportunity for all learners) and *consistent* principle (consistency in approach to assessment across Kerry ETBs centres, programmes, and modules). To ensure the fair and consistent assessment of learners, the following policy provides guidelines and should shape responses to academic integrity in Kerry ETB. Kerry ETB's Quality Assurance System overarches these principles and ensures learner achievement is assessed in a fair and consistent way in line with the national standards for the award.

Values

Kerry ETB views academic integrity as a commitment to six fundamental values, as expressed by the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI): honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.
These fundamental values and the commitment of Kerry ETB to act on them are foundational to fostering a teacher and learning environment of academic integrity.

PURPOSE OF POLICY

Kerry ETB is committed to preserving the highest standards of honesty, openness and accountability. Academic integrity is an expression of these standards in preparing for assessment and during assessments. High standards of academic integrity are critical to Kerry ETB as they maintain trust in Kerry ETB courses, programmes and certification.
To ensure that learners have received clear guidance on what constitutes academic integrity, learners should be advised on their obligations and given an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about academic integrity.

The Purpose of the policy is to set out:
- The definition of academic integrity as it applies and is understood in Kerry ETB.
- Which contexts and to whom it applies in order to assist the guidance of ethical behaviour.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all engaged in FET assessment activities in Kerry ETB.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an ethical approach and commitment to preserving high standards of honesty, care and accountability in preparing for and doing assessments i.e. written and practical assessments, skills demonstration and examinations. Approaching assessments with academic integrity allows a learner to prepare and submit their best work. It also provides them with an understanding and an opportunity to develop skills for future studies, such as referencing and citation skills, and good professional practice in the workplace such as working independently.

Kerry ETB values and support good academic work and expects all involved in assessment, staff, and learners, to embrace the principles and values of academic integrity and to work to prevent and combat academic malpractice.

Assessment Malpractice

An assessment system malpractice is any act or practice which brings into question the validity or integrity of the assessment process and which normally arises due to one or more non-accidental factor. In general, this falls into two broad categories:

- Plagiarism (Including Artificial Intelligence AI writing tools).
- Unacceptable Behaviour.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in assessment may include but is not limited to:

- Representing work completed by and/or authored by another person (including other learners, family, work colleagues, and friends) as their own.
- Procuring work from a company or external source including the internet.
- Copying work from any source or medium without reference (i.e. website, book, journal article) using Harvard style.
- Taking a passage of text, or an idea, and summarising it without acknowledging the original source using Harvard style.

- Passing off collaborative work as one's own.
- Piecing together sections of others' work into a new whole.
- Submitting another learner's work with or without their knowledge.

The submission of such plagiarised materials for assessment purposes is fraudulent and all suspected cases will be investigated and dealt with appropriately using the 6.10.

ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE
Procedure https://www.kerryetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/6.10-Assessment-Malpractice.pdf

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Unacceptable behaviour in assessment may include but is not limited to:

- Unauthorised removal of assessment material from the assessment location.
- Deliberate damage to or destroying of assessment related materials.
- Use of electronic communication device/technology or other unauthorised materials during the assessment.
- Assisting other learners during the assessment.
- In an assessment event (e.g. examination), any form of communication with other learners (written, verbal, gestures, expressions, pointing, etc.).
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners, beyond what is allowed.
- Copying from another learner (both parties involved in the investigation).
- Fabrication of results and/or evidence.
- Falsification (faulty data collection methods).
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the assessment event or process.
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment.
- Engaging in unsafe practices in assessment.
- Disruptive, violent, and offensive behaviour in relation to assessment.
- Tampering or interfering with assessment materials or another learner's work.
- Submission for assessment of a piece of work that has been purchased/procured from another source where the work is not the learner's own work.

DEALING WITH BREACHES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The procedure for dealing with breaches of academic integrity is 6.10 ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE https://www.kerryetb.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/6.10-Assessment-Malpractice.pdf

SUPPORTING A CULTURE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Kerry ETB recognises that academic integrity is a shared responsibility and commits to building and sustaining a culture of academic integrity in a number of ways:

Academic Governance

Sound academic governance and academic integrity are closely intertwined. The Quality Council oversees the planning, coordination, quality, development and improvement of all aspects of FET Programmes in Kerry ETB. It protects, maintains and develops the standards of FET programmes and related activities. It has responsibilities concerning FET QA policies and procedures, FET programmes, monitoring & review, assessment and apprenticeship specific roles.

Quality Assurance

Academic integrity is at the heart of Kerry ETB's approach to FET quality. Primarily the Kerry ETB QA Handbook supports a culture of academic integrity by setting out Kerry ETB's quality management framework, policies and procedures. It focuses particularly on:

- Documented Approach to Quality Assurance.
- Programme Development.
- Access, Transfer and Progression.
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy.
- Blended Learning.
- Assessment of Learners .
- Support for Learners.
- Information and Data Management.
- Provision and Use of Public Information.
- Other Parties Involved in Education and Training.
- Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.

Staff Supports

Kerry ETB commits to supporting staff to:
- Gain knowledge and understanding of how to support academic integrity.
- Be confident in approaches to supporting academic integrity.
- Model academic integrity practices.

Learner Supports

Kerry ETB commits to supporting learners to:
- Develop an understanding and skills at induction.
- Provide information on Kerry ETB Academic Integrity expectations.
- Provide academic support to them throughout their studies/training programme.

Limiting Opportunities

Limiting the opportunities to engage in academic malpractice is an important aspect of Academic Integrity in Kerry ETB and through the implementation of its assessment procedures, Kerry ETB commits to minimising such opportunities. Kerry ETB FET Assessment Procedures are available at this link: https://www.kerryetb.ie/further-education-training/quality-assurance/programme-delivery-and-assessment/

Detection

Kerry ETB has committed to ways to detect when academic malpractice has occurred through the use of specific tools and practices outlined below:
- 'Turn It In' for NFQ Level 5 and Level 6 Course Specific.
- Supporting the investigation of breaches of academic integrity as outlined in 6.10 ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE.

Reporting and Data Analysis

Kerry ETB has committed to:
- Implementing a continuous improvement approach to academic integrity across the FET provision of Kerry ETB through regular review and assessment of perceptions.
- The inclusion of Academic Integrity in its Quality Improvement Plan.
- Address specific academic integrity actions annually.

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SUPPORT FOR LEARNERS

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy for the provision of appropriate supports for enrolled learners who have additional learning needs in areas such as mental health, literacy and numeracy and English language.

This section of the QA Handbook also outlines the policy for supporting enrolled learners to set realistic career goals and make informed career decisions, through the provision of guidance services. This policy and the associated procedures do not exist in isolation, so cross reference will be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the appropriate supports in areas such as literacy, numeracy and English language, academic integrity, and guidance to address the needs of individual learners and to enable such learner's to successfully participate in Kerry ETB FET programmes. This policy also has the purpose of complying with the following:

a) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and its Sectoral Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

b) The requirements of QQI, as set out in its Topic Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning, that Kerry ETB documents and implements a policy for Quality Assurance.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the promotion and provision of non-academic support, additional tutorial support, English language support, and guidance services across FET provision in Kerry ETB.

POLICY

Kerry ETB provides appropriate supports to enrolled learners on Kerry ETB FET programmes, to support their retention and attainment of intended programme learning outcomes.

Learner Induction

Following enrolment, learners will complete a course induction. Information will be provided on Non-Academic Support, Academic Support, Internet Usage Protocols, and Guidance Services as part of course induction.
This information will also be provided in the Learner Handbook. As part of course induction, learners will confirm that they have received the Learner Handbook, and understand their role and responsibilities in relation to their course and their participation in their college/centre community. Confirmation of this understanding will be obtained through agreement and signing of a Learner Contract.

Learner Wellbeing and Pastoral Support

A designated contact person will be assigned from the staff team at each College/Centre as a 1st point of contact for learners who require wellbeing support. The College Principals and Campus Manager at Kerry College will liaise with the pastoral support team, to organise wellbeing support. Wellbeing support will also be provided to learners registered with FET Centres. The FET Centre Manager will liaise with relevant counselling support services in Kerry, to organise wellbeing support.

Additional tutorial support for learners

In addition to timetabled learning hours and where a need has been identified, the College Principals and Campus Manager at Kerry College will liaise with the relevant campus tutorial support person, to organise such tutorial support. Additional tutorial support will also be provided to learners registered with FET Centres, where a need has been identified. The FET Centre Manager will liaise with the relevant Adult Literacy and Basic Education Coordinator, to organise such tutorial support.

Learners will come together with a tutor, to work on particular areas in more detail- specifically numeracy, structuring written responses, oral presentation skills, and basic information technology skills.

Additional tutorial support does not focus on specific assignments or programme topics, and proofreading or advice on dealing with programme assessment fall outside of the remit of this support.

Additional tutorial support will be offered to learners who request it or are identified by programme staff as requiring such additional support.

Additional tutorial support will be promoted actively by the College Principals/Campus Manager/FET Centre Manager and to ensure that learners are aware of its existence.

Learners will be surveyed annually for their overall impression of additional tutorial supports.

English-language support classes

In addition to timetabled learning hours and where a need has been identified, English-language support classes for learners registered with Kerry College will be provided. College Principals/the Campus Manager will liaise with the relevant campus language support person to organise English-language support classes. English-language support classes will also be provided for learners registered with FET Centres, where a need has been identified. The FET Centre Manager will liaise with the Adult Basic Education Coordinator to organise such English-language support classes.

Learners will engage with an English language tutor and work on particular areas in more detail-specifically reading, writing and speaking in English (second language literacy).

English language support classes do not focus on specific assignments or programme topics, and proofreading or advice on dealing with programme assessment fall outside of the remit of this support.

English language support classes will be offered to learners who request it or are identified by programme staff as requiring such additional support.

English language support classes will be promoted actively by the College Principals/Campus Manager/FET Centre Managers to ensure that learners are aware of its existence.

Learners will be surveyed annually for their overall impression of English language supports.

Guidance

In addition to timetabled hours, guidance services will be provided to learners registered with Kerry College. College Principals/the Campus Manager will liaise with the relevant campus guidance person, to organise the necessary guidance services to support registered learners to plan progression and career pathways. Guidance services will also be provided to learners registered with FET Centres. The FET Centre Manger will liaise with the relevant guidance counsellor at the Kerry Adult Guidance and Information Service, to organise the necessary guidance services to support registered learners to plan progression and career pathways.

Learners will be surveyed annually for their overall impression of guidance supports.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive Officer.
- The FET Director has overall responsibility for the learner support services managed by Kerry College and FET Centres.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of information related to the learner supports provided, and for ensuring the accuracy of updated information if and when any changes are made.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres, are responsible for organising Learner Induction and for ensuring that the records are maintained of signed Learner Contracts.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager are responsible for liaising with the pastoral support team to organise wellbeing support. FET Centre Managers are responsible for liaising with relevant counselling support services in Kerry, to organise wellbeing support.

- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Managers of FET Centres are responsible for liaising with the relevant support person to organise the additional tuition or English language support classes.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager are responsible for liaising with the college/campus guidance person to organise the necessary guidance services to support registered learners to plan progression and career pathways.
- Managers at FET Centres are responsible for liaising with the Kerry Adult Guidance and Information Service, to organise the necessary guidance services to support registered learners to plan progression and career pathways.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Learner Support
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Relevant Kerry ETB Policies	
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All learners enrolled in Kerry ETB FET Programme

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0		New policy	Quality Assurance Officer	

INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy for the management of learner information and data. Learner data and information means recorded information, created or received and maintained by Kerry ETB in the transaction of processing applications, enrolments and learner certification.

Kerry ETB reports to SOLAS and learner information and data for operational and reporting purposes. Data recorded by Kerry ETB is used by SOLAS to co-ordinate and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the FET sector in Ireland (as mandated by the Further Education and Training Act 2013.

This policy gives due regard to the Programme Learner Support System (PLSS) Data Protection Statement, and to the following wider polices:
- Kerry ETB Data Protection Policy - approved by the Board of Kerry ETB.
- Kerry ETB Privacy Notices, approved by the Board of Kerry ETB.
- Kerry ETB Data Subject Access Request (DSAR) Policy and Procedure, approved by the Board of Kerry ETB.
- Kerry ETB Data Breach Protocol, approved by the Board of Kerry ETB.
- The Kerry ETB ICT Access Control Policy, approved by the Board of Kerry ETB.

Specific reference to the data access controls, data backup systems, the collection of personal data, and assigned roles within Kerry ETB Schools/Centres are made in these wider policies.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to outline the operational protocols pertaining to the Information and Data Management Systems for Kerry ETB FET Programmes and Services, in alignment with QQI's Statutory QA Guidelines. The policy, therefore, relates to the collection, processing and use of information and data on applicants, enrolled learners and graduates of Kerry ETB FET Programmes.

SCOPE
This policy applies to all Kerry ETB records and information collected, processed and used by Kerry ETB, including but not limited to:
a) Applicants
b) Enrolled learners
c) Graduates of Kerry ETB Programmes

POLICY
Kerry ETB, through its Information and Data Management Systems, collects, processes and uses information and data on applicants, enrolled learners and graduates of Kerry ETB FET Programmes, to document and report on its principal FET activities and to effectively support the development of its FET programmes and services.

Information on QA policies and procedures, quality assurance evaluation reports
Information made openly available will include, but is not limited to:
a) Quality Assurance policies and procedures.
b) Outcomes of external quality assurance engagements.
c) Reports from completed programme reviews/revalidation.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Information and Data Management
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Relevant Kerry ETB Policies	
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	Records and information collected, processed and used by Kerry ETB including but not limited to applicants, enrolled learners and graduates of Kerry ETB FET Programmes

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0	Sept 2020	New olicy and Procedures	Quality Assurance Officer	FET Quality Council

PROVISION AND USE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy for providing public information on Further Education and Training (FET) programmes and services in Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB). Public Information means any information, regardless of form or format, Kerry ETB makes it available to the public for the purposes of promotion of its FET programmes and services and the recruitment of learners.

This policy gives due regard to the wider Kerry ETB Communications Policy and Procedure, approved by the Board of Kerry ETB and the Kerry ETB Social Media Policy; approved by the Board of Kerry ETB. Specific reference to the publication of information on Social Media, assigned public relations roles within Kerry ETB Schools/Centres, and to communicating with the Media are made in these wider policies.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for providing accurate and accessible public information about FET programmes and services, in alignment with QQI's Statutory QA Guidelines. This policy guides all staff involved in providing public information. The policy, therefore, relates to the ongoing publication of quality assurance procedures, the publication of information relating to accredited and non-accredited programmes, procedures for access, transfer and progression, and information for enrolled learners.

SCOPE
This policy applies to the publication of official Kerry ETB information that has been ratified as sufficient and accurate-programme information, QA policies and procedures and quality assurance evaluation reports.

Information on programmes leading to major awards or minor awards or special purpose awards is included in the scope of this policy.

Information on programmes that are non-accredited or do not lead to awards is included in the scope of this policy.

POLICY
Kerry ETB is committed to providing accurate, objective and accessible information about the FET programmes and associated services that it provides.

Information on QA policies and procedures, quality assurance evaluation reports
Information made openly available will include, but is not limited to:
a) Quality Assurance policies and procedures.
b) Outcomes of external quality assurance engagements.
c) Reports from completed programme reviews/revalidation.

Programme Information
Information made openly available will include, but is not limited to:
a) The relevant level of qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications where applicable.
b) Information on entry requirements, access arrangements for each programme.
c) Where a programme has progression and transfer arrangements with a tertiary education provider this information is also included.
d) Details of fees and methods of payments, and refunds.

e) Details of programme duration, component modules, and assessment methods.
f) Details of English Language requirements for applicants whose first language is not English.
g) Recognition of Prior Learning.
h) Contact details for further queries relating to details of the programme.

This information is monitored and updated regularly to ensure that potential applicants can make informed choices and other external stakeholders have a clear view of Kerry ETB FET programmes and services. It is the responsibility of the FET Director to approve the accuracy of all programme information prior to this information being published.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive Officer.
- The FET Director has overall responsibility for the information contained in published written documents, reports issued by the Quality Assurance Unit, and prospectus and brochures issued by Kerry ETB Further Education and Training Colleges and Centres.
- College Principals, the Campus Manager and Adult Education Officers are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of information related to the programmes being offered before publication, and for ensuring the accuracy of updated information if and when any changes are made.
- The Admissions Office is responsible for updating the Kerry College brochure/prospectuses and the Kerry College website kerrycollege.ie as directed by the College and Campus Manager, and ultimately the FET Director.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Provision and Use of Public Information
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Relevant Kerry ETB Policies	
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	Official Kerry ETB information

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0			Quality Assurance Officer	

KERRY ETB LINE MANAGEMENT CHART 2020

Chief Executive Officer

Director of Schools, Youth and Music

Director of Organisational Support and Development

Executive Support

Executive Support

Executive Support

• **Marketing & Communications**
• **Technology Enhanced Learning Officer**
• **Staff Officer**

Post Primary School Principals

CNS School Principals

Youth Development Officer

Internal Audit & Compliance Officers

Department Heads

• **Deputy Principals**
• **Admin Staff**
• **Assistant Principal Post**
• **Cleaners**
• **Special Needs Assistants**
• **Director of Adult Education**
• **Teachers**
• **Caretakers**
• **Programme Co-ordinators**

• **School Support**
• **Home School Liasion Officers**
• **SEN Support Teacher**
• **Local Schools Competition Programme Co-ordinator**

Admin

Well-being Co-ordinator

Creative Youth Co-Ordinator

Tutors

Music Generation Development Officer

• **Admin Staff**
• **Tutors**

Contracted Health & Safety Officer

• **Admin Staff**
• **Cleaner**
• **Caretaker**

Reporting lines for Publishing information

Director of Further Education and Training

Executive Support

Kerry College Campus Principals

Kerry College Campus Manager

Adult Education Officers

Director of NODET

- ?????
- Admin Staff
- Cleaners
- Caretakers

- Deputy Principals
- Assistant Principal Post
- Personal Assistants
- Director of Adult Education
- Teachers
- Programme Co-ordinators
- Admin Staff
- Caretakers

Mentor Project Co-ordinator

Mentor

- Training Services Assistant Managers
- Instructors
- Course Recruitment Officer
- Senior Training Advisors
- Training Standards Officer
- Community Training Officer
- Contracted Training Officer
- Assistant Training Standards Officers
- National Apprenticeship Programme Co-ordinator
- Admin Staff
- Caretaker

- Further Education Standards Officer
- Admin Staff
- Curriculum Development Officer

Course Recruitment Officers (3)

Adult Literacy Officers

Tutors

P/T Programme Co-ordinators (BTEI & Community Ed)

Tutors

Centre Managers

- Tutors
- Teachers
- Admin Staff
- Caretakers
- Cleaners

Adult Guidance Co-ordinator

- Adult Guidance Counsellor
- Adult Guidance Information Officer

Statisical Anaylis Officer

VTOS Co-ordinators

- Teachers
- Admin Staff
- Caretakers
- Cleaners

Youthreach Co-ordinators

- Resource Persons
- Admin Staff
- Caretakers
- Cleaners

OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

This section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook outlines the policy for evaluating the QAP of second providers with whom Kerry ETB may engage with for the purposes of delivering Kerry ETB FET programmes. A separate and distinct policy and procedure applies to apprenticeship programmes (Section 10 of the QAP for New Apprenticeship Programmes).

In addition to second providers, this policy addresses:
a) Arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI.
b) Engagement of external subject specialists.

In relation to arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI, this policy gives due regard to the Policy and procedures for Self Evaluation.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for approving collaborative arrangements with other providers of non-apprenticeship programmes, and the monitoring and review of those respective arrangements. This policy also provides a protocol3 for entering into arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI and for engaging external subject specialists. This policy guides all staff involved in collaborative arrangements, arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI, and who engage with external experts.

SCOPE
This policy applies to collaborations and agreements with a provider in respect of non-apprenticeship programmes. A Provider may be an Education and Training Board, an Institute of Technology or an Independent Education and Training Provider. The policy also applies to arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI and engagement of external subject specialists.

POLICY
Formal arrangements and engagements with other parties involved in education and training are made with a view to responding to the changing needs of stakeholders and the fluid nature of curriculums.

In general, such arrangements/engagements shall be in line with Kerry ETB's Strategic Plan. The steps in the approval process are designed to reinforce the separation of functions between the executive (Senior Management Team) and the academic units of governance (Quality Council).

Where a collaborative arrangement with other providers of non-apprenticeship programmes is being developed, then the Quality Council will be involved in ensuring that the provider has the capacity to comply with the quality assurance procedures outlined in this handbook, prior to a Memorandum of Agreement being signed. All approved arrangements and engagements by Kerry ETB, in line with this policy, will be subject to the quality assurance procedures outlined in this handbook.

Collaborations and agreements with a provider in respect of non-apprenticeship programmes

Kerry ETB, as the first provider has primary responsibility for the programme. The collaborating provider is party to the agreement and is offering the programme.

Kerry ETB, as the first provider, requires that any collaborating provider enter a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with it to provide Kerry ETB Programmes.

The MOA must specify the programme and detail the modules, assessment processes, physical facilities and staffing requirements required to deliver the programme. Recruitment and induction processes should also be agreed.

The MOA is signed by the FET Director on behalf of the Quality Council and countersigned by the Chief Executive Officer or FET Director of the collaborating provider.

Arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI

Kerry ETB's QA is provider owned and comprehensive - covering all programmes and related services regardless of whether or not these lead to QQI awards, and/or other awards recognised within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The Senior Management Team (SMT) considers any proposals from FET Colleges/Centres to initiate new arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI, to procure programmes of education and training:

The SMT shall consider the proposal and decide either:
a) To recommend it for approval to the Quality Council.
   or
b) Refer it back to the proposer seeking further information/amendments.
   or
c) Decline to recommend it for approval.

Kerry ETB notifies QQI of its new and existing arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI, to procure programmes of education and training.

Such procured programmes are subject to the Procedure for Self Evaluation, Monitoring and Review-specially the Procedure for Ongoing Review of Programmes and Associated Services
a) Annual Programme Monitoring Reports
b) Admissions Audit Reports
c) Results Approval Panel Monitoring Reports
d) Learner Appraisal of Modules and Programmes
e) Graduate Surveys

Engagement with external subject specialists- external authentication

Through the engagement of external subject specialists as external authenticators, Kerry ETB is aware of qualification standards and emerging developments in respective of the subject specialism and allied fields of study. External authenticators are drawn from a sectoral level directory[4] and appointed by the FET Director as a subject specialist, on the basis of:
• Their academic qualifications in a defined field of learning [ISCED referenced].
• Evidence of their prior experience of operating a variety of assessment tasks associated with their subject specialism.

Kerry ETB requires external authenticators to attend a briefing session prior to commencing the authentication process.

RESPONSIBILITIES
• The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive.
• The Senior Management Team is responsible for decisions to recommend any new arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI to, procure programmes of education and training.
• The Quality Council is responsible for approving such recommendations.
• The FET Director is responsible for notifying QQI of its new and existing arrangements.
• The FET Director is also responsible for appointments to act as an External Authenticator.
• The Quality Assurance Officer is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the overall alignment of Kerry ETB's policy and procedures pertaining to Other Parties Involved in Education and Training to QQI's guidelines and policy statements.

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[4] *Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) national directory of External Authenticators (EAs) for Further Education and Training programmes*

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Other Parties involved in Education and Training
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Relevant Kerry ETB Policies	Assessment Policy and Procedure Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	Collaborations and agreements with a provider in respect of non-apprenticeship programmes Arrangements with awarding bodies other than QQI Engagement with external subject specialists-external authenticators

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0	Sept 2020	New olicy and Procedures	Quality Assurance Officer	FET Quality Council

SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

POLICY

This section of the Quality Assurance Handbook outlines Kerry Education and Training Board's (Kerry ETB) policy and procedures for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review of its Quality Assurance Policies, its programmes of education and training and associated services. This policy and the associated procedures do not exist in isolation, so cross reference may be made to other related policies and procedures where appropriate.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework for Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review of its QA policies and procedures, its programmes and associated services, in alignment with QQI's Statutory QA Guidelines. This policy and the associated procedures guide all staff and learners involved in the ongoing self-evaluation and monitoring of quality, including review of programmes. This monitoring process therefore relates to the organisation and operation of the programme as a whole, including associated services.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all QA policies in the Quality Assurance Handbook and to programmes developed and delivered by Kerry ETB, at levels 3 to 6 in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Programmes include those that lead to CAS Awards, non-CAS Awards and new Apprenticeship programmes.

Programmes may lead to major awards or minor awards or special purpose awards.

This policy applies directly or indirectly to all members of the Kerry ETB community, inclusive of learners, and staff holding teaching, administrative, management or support roles.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW BY QQI

A new quality review programme for the country's Education and Training Boards (ETBs) has been launched by QQI. The review programme will evaluate the effectiveness of quality assurance of further education and training within ETBs and aims to encourage a quality culture which will improve the experience and outcomes for their learners.

Kerry ETB is scheduled to be reviewed in Phase 2 of the programme.

While each ETB is responsible for evaluating and improving their own quality, QQI is responsible for carrying out external quality reviews. Each review will be carried out by an independent team of national and international members convened by QQI. The review process requires each ETB to evaluate the implementation of its quality assurance procedures. The resulting self-evaluation report will be considered by the independent review team and discussed with staff, learners and stakeholders during a site visit. The findings of the review team will be contained in a review report published by QQI.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

The development, monitoring and review of Kerry ETB's Quality Assurance Framework will be:
a) Consultative (the opinions of learners, staff and other stakeholders will be sought and appropriately considered).
b) Undertaken based on the subsidiarity principle (functions that can be carried out efficiently by smaller or lesser bodies within Kerry ETB will not be exercised by larger or greater bodies; delegation of functions to the former will be accompanied by support from the latter).
c) Based on evidence and expertise, both internal and external.

d) Presented in usable formats, written in plain English and available to staff and the public as required.

e) Consistent, i.e. policies and procedures will not contradict each other.

The reports that are considered by the governance boards, recommended to the Quality Council and approved by the Quality Council are set out in the table that follows:

NATIONAL (APPRENTICESHIP) PROGRAMME BOARD

1. Consideration of the External Examiners Report.
2. Recommendation to Quality Council to approve results.
3. Preparation of consolidated admissions report.

QUALITY COUNCIL

1. Noting of reports on working groups of the Programme Governance and Quality Assurance Governance Board.
2. Approval of results.
3. Noting of consolidated admissions report.
4. Approval of new developed programme.
5. Approval of differential validation for new programme.
6. Approves an award with a new certifying body.
7. Approves agreement with a new awarding body.
8. Recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer to approve policies and procedures.

PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE BOARD

1. Preparation of report on working groups of the board.
2. Agreement to seek QQI approval of proposals to modify existing programmes.

QUALITY ASSURANCE GOVERNANCE BOARD

1. Preparation of quality improvement progress report.
2. Recommendation to the Quality Council to approve policies and procedures.
3. Consideration of External Authentication Reports and centralised management of authentication process.
4. Recommends differential validation for new programme.
5. Approved modules to be added to an existing programme.
6. Recommends an award with a new certifying body.
7. Approved to add a new programme/module that Kerry EB is validated to deliver.
8. Recommends agreement with a new awarding body.
9. Approved course name/title change.
10. Approves alternative assessments brief or update a current assessment brief on ELC.

POLICY DETAILS

Kerry ETB is committed to maintaining robust and systematic processes for review and self-evaluation as part of Kerry ETB's overall Quality Assurance Framework and internal self-monitoring and self-evaluation processes are systematically integrated within the Framework.

Responsibilities for activities pertaining to this are clearly delineated within the Terms of Reference for the Quality Assurance Board of Governance at Kerry ETB and within the individual role descriptions outlined in the governance and management structure in the Quality Assurance Handbook. These are particularly emphasised within:
a) Terms of Reference for the Quality Council.
b) Terms of Reference for the Quality Assurance Governance Board.
c) Terms of Reference for Programme Governance Boards, including National Programme Boards for new Apprenticeship Programmes, for which Kerry ETB is the Co-ordinating Provider.
d) Roles and responsibilities: FET Director.
e) Role and responsibilities: Quality Assurance Officer.
f) Role and responsibilities: Learner Support Officer.

Monitoring and evaluation are critical to ensuring the success of programmes, the enhancement of the learner experience, and the continued quality of services delivered. The on-going monitoring reports created provide information for the evaluation of programmes, services and quality assurance policies and procedures, as part of internal and external processes and contributes to the enhancement of the learner experience and programme quality in Kerry ETB.

POLICY FOR REVIEW OF QUALITY ASSURANCE HANDBOOK

The Quality Assurance Working Group oversees an annual review of sections of the Quality Assurance Handbook. It is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance Officer to undertake this review with input from the various units in Kerry ETB.
The purpose of the annual review is to:
a) Evaluate the effectiveness of Kerry ETB's QA procedures.

b) Examine Kerry ETB's compliance with QQI's requirements.
c) Ensure the review of the Quality Assurance Handbook is transparent and informed by stakeholder feedback.
d) Make recommendations for additions to, or enhancements of the Quality Assurance Handbook, on a section by section basis, with the complete Quality Assurance Handbook being reviewed over a four-year period.

Any recommended revisions or updates of the Quality Assurance Handbook are reviewed by the Quality Assurance Governance Board, with final approval required from the Quality Council.

POLICY FOR PROGRAMME MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the policy of Kerry ETB to carry out regular programme monitoring and review, based on a process of self-evaluation, in order to:
a) Promote and embed a quality culture, which all staff and learners play a role in enhancing.
b) Identify best practices for wider promulgation.
c) Ensure that programmes remain relevant and fit for purpose for their intended target market.
d) Inform updates of programme content, delivery modes and teaching and learning strategies.
e) Evaluate learner supports and resources, and information provided to learners.
f) Identify the impact of interventions and the development of additional services.
g) Identify issues for review or appropriate corrective action.
h) Determine the quality of the learner experience and make appropriate changes.
i) Evaluate the adequacy of existing services.
j) Review learner progression and completion rates.
k) Ensure that the education, training and labour market requirements of the learner are met.
l) Review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme.
m) Analyse the performance of services provided by Kerry ETB for its programmes to inform future actions and developments.
n) Meet the changing terms and conditions of its regulatory body, QQI.

The aims of self-evaluation include identifying appropriate quality measures, setting objectives and gathering evidence of the achievement of those objectives. The Quality Assurance Governance Board and the Quality Council ensure that objective setting and prioritising are carried out appropriately, transparently and are reported back to those entities. This ensures that findings are acted on and feed into ongoing quality enhancement through a Quality Enhancement Plan which sets out a schedule of actions to be undertaken following internal evaluation and identifies the person(s) responsible for actions and follow-up.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Quality Council is responsible for approving this policy and procedure for ratification by the Chief Executive.
- The Quality Assurance Governance Board is responsible for approving a schedule for quality reviews and submitting this to the Quality Council for noting. It is also responsible for receiving reports on follow-up on actions arising from quality reviews and reporting to the Quality Council on issues or recommendations arising.
- The QA Working Group is responsible for undertaking the review, amendment and development of quality assurance policies and procedures.
- The FET Director, Quality Assurance Officer and Learner Support Officer are jointly responsible for making recommendations to the Quality Council, through the Quality Assurance Governance Board, pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review.
- The Quality Assurance Officer is responsible for monitoring and maintaining the overall alignment of Kerry ETB's policy and procedures pertaining to Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review to QQI's guidelines and policy statements.

RELATED LEGISLATION, REGULATION OR GUIDELINES

- Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines 2016 (QQI).
- Sector Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards 2017 (QQI).
- Topic Specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes 2016 (QQI).
- Policies and criteria for the validation of programmes of education and training 2017 (QQI).
- Policy and Criteria for Making Awards 2014 (QQI).
- Policy for the Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Education and Training Boards 2019 (QQI).

PROCEDURE FOR SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Procedure for ongoing review of Quality Assurance Framework

The following steps describe the procedure for the ongoing review of the Quality Assurance Handbook:

1. The Quality Assurance Officer develops an internal quality review schedule that has regard to the complexity of the Section and ensures each area within the Quality Assurance Handbook is reviewed at least once in the coming four-year period.
2. The schedule is submitted for approval by the Quality Assurance Governance Board.
3. Provision is included in the schedule for policies and procedures to be reviewed in advance of the nominated time period as a result of any of the following:
   - Changes to relevant regulation, accreditation requirements or legislation.
   - The outcomes of external QA events (for example, QQI, QA or Validation panels).
   - Issues raised by staff or learners in Kerry ETB in relation to a particular policy or procedure.
4. The Quality Assurance Officer implements the review schedule, engaging staff from across the organisation (training, teaching, administrative, operations and learner support) as appropriate to assist in monitoring and review of policies and procedures that relate to their roles. The process of review encompasses the following:
   - Ensuring the text is up to date and aligned with the current regulatory context.
   - Analysing whether the policy or procedure is implemented as written.
   - Considering whether the policy or procedure is of ongoing relevance and use within Kerry ETB.
   - Evaluating whether improvements or edits could improve the policy or procedure and its implementation.
5. If changes are proposed, these are submitted for consideration to the Quality Assurance Governance Board, which shall make a recommendation to the Quality Council.
6. Should it be deemed necessary, the Quality Council will inform QQI of the changes approved.

SAMPLE QA REVIEW SCHEDULE	
Element of Core Statutory QA Guidelines	**Reviewed in Year (1-4)**
Governance and Management of Quality	1
Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	2
Programmes of Education and Training	3
Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	4
Teaching and Learning	4
Assessment of Learners	3
Support for Learners	1
Information and Data Management	2
Provision and use of Public Information	2
Other Parties involved in Education and Training	1
Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review	4

PROCEDURE FOR ONGOING REVIEW OF PROGRAMMES AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES

The Quality Assurance Officer, under the direction of the FET Director, is responsible for preparing Kerry ETB's Annual Self-Assessment Report, compiled from the various self and external evaluation activities, benchmarking, data analysis and the following reports. The Annual Self-Assessment Report includes findings and recommendations for improvement with an enhancement or action plan detailing how and when Kerry ETB will address the recommendations made in the self-assessment report.

A key element of monitoring is to identify areas for further development. Working with the Quality Assurance Governance Board, the Quality Assurance Officer consolidates the results of the various monitoring activities into Kerry ETB's Quality Improvement Plan. They take responsibility, under the direction of the Quality Assurance Governance Board, for monitoring the implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan and reports on this to the Quality Council.

Copies of monitoring reports are retained by the Quality Assurance Officer. The Annual Self-Assessment Report and the Quality Improvement Plan are submitted to the Quality Assurance Governance Board for review.

A range of monitoring, self-evaluation and review processes inform the Annual Self-Assessment Report, including:

Annual Programme Monitoring Reports

A comprehensive annual monitoring report should be completed each year for each programme, or group of linked programmes, as determined by the Quality Assurance Officer. This report will be completed by the programme management function, in consultation with any relevant Programme Governance Boards. The report is based on the following:
a) Learner enrolment including breakdown of RPL applications.
b) Analysis from Results Approval Panel/National Examination Board including learner attainment, rechecks, reviews, appeals and any academic misconduct issues.
c) Progression and award statistics and analysis.
d) External Authenticators' reports.
e) Learner appraisal of programmes.
f) Teacher/Trainer/Instructor/Tutor feedback.
g) Programme Governance Board minutes.
h) Report from ETBI Apprenticeship QA Monitoring and Enhancement Panel (New Apprenticeship Programmes).
i) Survey of employers.

Annual Learner Services Report

This is completed by the Learner Support Officer annually and referred to the Quality Assurance Governance Board. The report should review the range of learner services, both academic and non-academic, offered and co-ordinated by the Learner Support Unit over the year including:
a) Academic Support:
   - Information supplied at induction.
   - Information supplied in the Learner Handbook.
   - Adherence to Internet Usage Protocols.
   - Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) supports.
   - Additional Tutorial Support.
b) Non-academic Support:
   - Pastoral Care.
   - Disability Support Services.
   - Health Services, including Counselling Services.
   - Careers Service.
The report should also include details of take up of individual services.

Admissions Audit Report

An admissions audit is conducted annually for all programmes under the direction of the Quality Assurance Officer, to determine if admissions decisions have been made in accordance with Kerry ETB policy. A report on the audit is submitted to the subsequent meeting of the Quality Assurance Governance Board.

Results Approval Panel/National Examination Board Monitoring Report

The Quality Assurance Officer, or their nominee, attends at a meeting of the Results Approval Panel/National Examination Board, at least once per year, as an observer. They compile a report that should answer the following questions:
a) How complete and accurate was the data presented to the meeting?
b) Was the management of the meeting appropriate?
c) Was the process of decision-making appropriate and in accordance with Kerry ETB policies as well as QQI and programme regulations?

d) Did the examiners/assessors, internal and external, contribute effectively to the decision making in the meeting and were their contributions given appropriate weight?

This monitoring is applied to progression (where appropriate) and award boards only and is required to cover at least one meeting annually.

The report is submitted to the Quality Assurance Governance Board.

Learner Appraisal of Modules
A formal learner appraisal of modules is undertaken twice during module delivery, in the middle and end, using the *Learner Module Survey*. The survey is designed to elicit the learners' views on:
a) The resources available.
b) The content of modules.
c) The delivery of modules.
d) Communication with staff associated with the module.
e) General evaluation and suggestions.

Learners are given the opportunity to appraise the module anonymously. The outcomes from the appraisal are submitted to the Programme Governance Board.

Learner Appraisal of Programmes
A formal learner appraisal of the entire programme is undertaken towards the end of the year using the Learner Programme Survey. The survey gathers learner feedback on:
a) Learner attendance.
b) Resources available.
c) Organisation and content of modules.
d) Communication with staff and services of Kerry ETB.
e) General evaluation and suggestions.

It is the responsibility of the Programme Management Function to have the questionnaires administered towards the end of each year and ensure that they are analysed for the first meeting of the respective Programme Governance Boards in the next session.

Graduate Survey
The graduate survey is issued to graduates in the year immediately following the completion of their studies. In order to ensure a good response rate, it is ideally carried out at the Annual Conferring Ceremony by the Learner Services Department.

The results are used to enhance and develop the services provided by Kerry ETB that in their entirety contribute to the learner experience. The survey also gives information on the preparedness of graduates for the job market.

The feedback is incorporated in a report which is considered by the Quality Assurance Governance Board and forms part of the consolidated Annual Self Evaluation Report.

CONTROL SHEET

Policy and Procedures Title	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review
Responsible Officer(s)	FET Director
Issuance Date	
Effective Date	
Last Revision Date	
Supersedes	Version 1.0
Next Revision Date	September 2024
Designated Reviewers	Senior Management Team; Quality Council
Scope	All programmes

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Approval Date	Revision Description	Originator	Approved by
New Policy Version 1.0	Sept 2020	New olicy and Procedures	Quality Assurance Officer	FET Quality Council

LEARNER APPRAISAL OF MODULES
(ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORTS)

Module Title and Code: _____

Programme Management: _____

Date Prepared: _____

PROVISIONAL DATA AND COMMENTARY

Number of learners registered on the module _____

Number of learners passed module assessment at first attempt _____

Number of learners failed/withdrawn _____

Average mark (excluding withdrawals /fails) _____

Number of learners passing on resit _____

% of leaners passed module assessment at first attempt _____

% of learners failed/withdrawn _____

Comment on the effectiveness of the module teaching and learning strategy.
Include new plans and ideas from staff input.

_____

_____

Comment on the effectiveness of the assessment schedule. Include new plans and ideas for revisions to assessment schedule from staff input Target learners.

_____

_____

Actions. _____

_____

Comment on resources available for delivery of this module - VLP, text books, specialist equipment, and facilities.

_____

_____

Comment on provider level resources, learner support, guidance and careers information, etc.

_____

_____

Comment on relevance of content.

_____

_____

Comment on where content requires updating.

_____

_____

Comment on any other issues you believe requires note or attention provider level resources, learner support, guidance and careers information, etc.

_____

_____

Proposals for changes to defined parts of module (requiring formal approval through Kerry ETB governance structures).

_____

_____

Submitted on behalf of the instructor/teaching team by: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

LEARNER APPRAISAL OF PROGRAMME

(ANNUAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORTS)

Module Title and Code: _____

Programme Management: _____

Date Prepared: _____

PROVISIONAL DATA AND COMMENTARY

Number of learners registered on the module _____

Number of learners passed module assessment at first attempt _____

Number of learners failed/withdrawn _____

Average mark (excluding withdrawals /fails) _____

Number of learners passing on resit _____

% of leaners passed module assessment at first attempt _____

% of learners failed/withdrawn _____

Has Module Review resulted in changes to the programme this year? Comment on any impact on learning outcomes, modifications to assessment and how learner feedback informed the module review process.

_____

_____

Comment on this year's enrolment data- compared to numbers, profile the effectiveness of the assessment schedule. Include new plans and ideas for revisions to assessment schedule from staff input Target learners.

_____

_____

Actions. _____

_____

Comment on resources available for delivery of this module- VLP, text books, specialist equipment, and facilities.

_____

_____

Comment on provider level resources, learner support, guidance and careers information, etc.

_____

_____

Comment on course relevance.

_____

_____

Comment on course content.

_____

_____

Comment on industry perspective.

_____

_____

Comment on any other issues you believe requires note or attention provider level resources, learner support, guidance and careers information, etc.

_____

_____

Proposals for changes to defined parts of module (requiring formal approval through Kerry ETB governance structures).

_____

_____

Submitted on behalf of the instructor/teaching team by:

_____

Name: _____

Date: _____

PROGRAMME REVIEW REPORT
(RE-VALIDATION)

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME BEING REVIEWED - CAN INCLUDE EMBEDDED PROGRAMMES				
Principal Programme Title	**Award**	**Exit Award?**	**FET Credits**	**Last Validated by QQI (Year)**

Electronic link to Panel Report

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME ENROLMENT		
Duration/Intakes per annum	**Max enrolment per intake**	**Intake Period(s)**

Intake/Enrolled 1st Year (Stage 1)	**Progressed to 2nd Year (Award stage)**	**Deregistered**	**Graduated**

Programme objectives.

Target learners.

The Review Process.

Review findings.

Programme organisation & management.

_____

_____

Programme structure.

_____

_____

Programme entry requirements.

_____

_____

Programme learning outcomes & their relation to the programme objectives.

_____

_____

Curriculum structure.

_____

_____

Grades.

_____

_____

External Examiner reporting.

_____

_____

Recommendations.

_____

_____

Recommendations in respect of programme organisation & management.

_____

_____

Recommendations in respect of entry requirements/RPL arrangements.

_____

_____

Recommendations in respect of structure of the curriculum.

_____

_____

Recommendations in respect of grade
analysis/analysis of programme achievement.

The Review Process.

CONFIRMATION OF THE RANGE OF DOCUMENTATION CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE REVIEW AND USED IN THE COMPILATION OF THE PROGRAMME REVIEW REPOST

3.2.9.1 DOCUMENT	TICK
External examiners' reports	◯
Grade achievement reports	◯
Apprentice survey reports	◯
Instructor/mentor survey reports	◯
Employer survey reports	◯
Programme monitoring reports	◯
Annual programme evaluation reports	◯
Amendments to the programme since it was last validated	◯
Programme Descriptor (Old version of programme)	◯
Other documents:	◯