

Louth and Meath ETB Quality Improvement Plan Review

Part 1: Overview of Quality Improvement Activities in 2018

Section 1. Governance

1.1 Quality Assurance Governance structures

Priority areas in 2018

- Implementation of QA Governance structures
- Initiation of the process around development of overarching set of Quality Assurance procedures

Main achievements in 2018.

- Much work has been completed around raising an awareness across the FET sector of the importance of the QA process, and the necessity that all managers and staff have bought into the process. This has been achieved, and management teams are aware of the importance of facilitating staff to engage actively in the process established and that staff are kept updated alongside use of ICT portals to enable and support this work. LMETB staff are also actively engaged in working at national level with Fora, and as a result, we are informed by the support of the work of national fora and our QA colleagues in ETBs and ETBI.
- Quality Assurance Governance Management Committee (QAGMC) established and a number of meetings held to co-ordinate the new governance structure
- Governance Chart/Structure in place
- 5 main sub committees established (Communications, Programme Development, Assessment, QA policies, Teaching & Learning).
- Terms of Reference agreed for sub groups.
- Working groups established with work programmes set to draft new QA policies.
- Gant chart developed

1.2 Quality Assurance Procedures

Priorities in 2018

- QAGMC formed
- Review of existing Training Centre TQAS policies and procedures and former VEC policies and procedures and the development of one agreed set of policies and procedures for LMETB.
- Set common LMETB QA policies and agree appropriate QA procedures across education and training provision

Main achievements in 2018.

- New standard Admission Policy Developed, approved by the QAGMC, ratified by LMETB board and published <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/10/LMETB-FET-Admissions-Policy.pdf>
- New policies developed in the following areas, approved by the QAGMC and going forward for ratification by the LMETB Board at the March meeting:
 - Staff Communication policy
 - learner Communication policy
 - Public Information policy
 - Access, Transfer and Progression Policy
 - Publication of Quality Assurance Evaluation Reports
- Policy development in a selected number of areas currently being undertaken through working groups with draft policies/procedures currently being developed in the following areas:
 - Draft Learner Contract
 - Draft Admissions Appeal Policy , Application Form and Flow chart
 - Draft Teaching and Learning Policy
 - Draft Results Approval Procedures
 - Draft TOR's for RAP
- Key documents for use in LMETB's Internal Programme Development Application Process
 - Draft Programme approval Request Form
 - Draft Approval/Rejection form
 - Draft Comment form
 - Draft Programme Approval Schedule
- Internal Self-Monitoring , Self-Evaluation and Improvement procedures documents
- Results Approval Process

Section 1. Governance: **Barriers and Challenges**

No dedicated QA unit. To date LMETB continue to resource QA from existing FET programme staff. However LMETB suffer from a shortage of key staff due to various factors including a lack of suitable candidates presenting for vacancies. With the volume of work related to FARR, PLSS, ESF funding, Strategic planning, TEL, CPD, Youth work Initiative and new programmes such as Skills to Advance, New Apprenticeships and Traineeships the pool of experienced staff to draw from is seriously depleted.

Section 1. Governance: **Priorities in 2019 / 2020**

- The development of a new QA unit to assist with the development, implementation and monitoring of an effective, integrated QA system for all LMETB FET provision.
- Continued development and review of sub committees.

Section 2. Excellent Experience for Learners

2.1. Access Transfer & Progression

Priorities in 2018

- Develop Access, Transfer and Progression Policy
- Review existing admissions procedures for LMETB and develop Standard pre-entry assessment in place in all FET centres

Main achievements in 2018.

- Workgroup formed
- Access, Transfer and Progression Policy developed and approved by QAGMC, awaiting ratification by LMETB board
- New standard Admission Policy Developed, approved by the QAGMC, ratified by LMETB board and published <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/10/LMETB-FET-Admissions-Policy.pdf>
- Draft Admissions Appeal Policy, Application Form and Flow chart to be sent for approval to QAGMC at next meeting.

2.2 Teaching and Learning

Priorities in 2018

- Form Teaching and Learning Sub committee
- Implementation of TEL strategies
- Implementation of CPD strategies
- Monitoring of systems/initiatives at centre & ETB level
- Development of a Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy action plan and the appointment of a dedicated staff member to lead the strategy.

Main achievements in 2018.

- T & L Sub Committee formed
- T & L Work group formed to develop policies
- TEL action plan developed
- VTOS and Youthreach learners given free access to Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/about-us/it-department/office-365-proplus-students/>
- Moodle under construction for VTOS and BTEI programmes, PLC already using it. Training session delivered.
- Sharepoint sites built for Youthreach, BTEI and VTOS, training session delivered.
- Draft teaching and Learning Policy developed for consultation and review by Teaching and Learning subcommittee.
- Local and National CPD taking place
- CPD template developed and submitted to SOLAS

2.3 Supports for learners

Priorities in 2018

- Review and update of a learner handbook and learner contract to support a positive teaching and learning experience
- Development of a customer learner charter to enable and support the voice of the learner

Main achievements in 2018.

- Draft Learner contract developed for consultation and review by Teaching and Learning subcommittee.
- New Learner Charter developed, approved by the QAGMC and LMETB board and published <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/10/LMETB-Learner-Charter.pdf>

Section 2. Excellent Experience for Learners: **Barriers and Challenges**

- Waiting on sanction from the DES to appoint a TEL officer as again this is being resourced by existing staff.
- Waiting on sanction from the DES to appoint a PD officer as again this is being resourced by existing staff.

Section 2. Excellent Experience for Learners: **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

- Develop QA Induction pack for new tutors
- Review/update/develop learner handbook

Section 3. Excellent Education & Training

3.1 Programme Development, Approval and Review

Priorities in 2018

- Set up Programme Development Sub committee
- Set up Working group
- Standard programme development and approval templates to be devised and adopted

Main achievements in 2018.

- Subcommittee formed
- Work group formed
- Draft Programme approval Request Form for consultation and review by sub committee
- Draft Approval/Rejection form for consultation and review by sub committee
- Draft Comment form for consultation and review by sub committee
- Draft Programme Approval Schedule for consultation and review by sub committee

3.3 Assessment

Priorities in 2018

- standardisation of assessment templates; internal verification and External Authentication processes and Results Approval Processes

Main achievements in 2018.

- Work group set up
- National Assessment guidelines and templates under review by committee
- Terms of Reference for RAP developed for consultation and review by sub committee
- Draft Results Approval Panel process developed for consultation and review by sub committee

Section 3. Excellent Education & Training: **Barriers and Challenges**

As previously mentioned no dedicated QA unit

Section 3. Excellent Education & Training: **Priorities in 2019/ 2020**

- Development of a clear standardised FET LMETB wide policy and procedures for exam Repeats
- Implement reviewed/revised national Assessment guidelines
- Develop and publish progression routes in PR material to be available across all guidance services
- Development of standardised LMETB QA handbooks for tutors/teachers for use across all FET Centres
- Development of standardised guide to assessment for learners for use across all FET Centres
- Review the existing IV processes with a view to developing standardised procedures across FET Centres
- Review the findings of the sectoral review on External Authentication and implement changes to the process as required once the national framework is agreed

Section 4. Effective Communication and Collaboration

4.1. Information for Learners

Priorities in 2018

- Development of a customer learner charter to enable and support the voice of the learner
- Develop QA web page

Main achievements in 2018.

- Learner Charter developed, approved by the QAGMC and LMETB board and published <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/10/LMETB-Learner-Charter.pdf>
- Quality Assurance page developed on LMETB website <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/about-us/quality-assurance-in-further-education-and-training-in-lmetb/>

4.4 Public Information & Communication

Priorities in 2018

- Managing the public dissemination of QA policies and procedures

Main achievements in 2018.

- Quality Assurance page developed on LMETB website <http://louthmeath.etb.ie/about-us/quality-assurance-in-further-education-and-training-in-lmetb/>

Section 4: Effective Communication and Collaboration: **Barriers and Challenges**

- It can be difficult to engage staff in consultation of policies and procedures developed and to get comment returned in a timely manner.

Section 4: Effective Communication and Collaboration: **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

- Learner voice, enhance and extend existing learner representation mechanisms
- Develop processes/communication channels to review learner/staff feedback at ETB level
- Formalise FET learner Fora so as to enable and support programme/service review and development