



Quality Assurance

National Apprenticeship in Robotics & Automation
QQI Level 6 Programme

Empowering people
for Life

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Introduction and Purpose

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) have been appointed by the National Consortium Steering Group to act as the Coordinating Provider to deliver a National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation. LMETB will act with the Robotics and Automation industry, approved Collaborating Providers and industry to deliver the new national apprenticeship programme as validated by QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland).

This document is part of the overall Quality Assurance governance system in LMETB and must be read in conjunction with LMETB Quality Assurance Policy Statement, which provides the overarching policies and principles that underpin the Board's approach to QA for the delivery of our Education and Training Services.

This document outlines LMETB's Quality Assurance Procedures (QAPs) as Coordinating Provider, for the establishment, provision, maintenance, and review of the validated National Apprenticeship Programme, in compliance with QQI Topic Specific Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines for providers of statutory apprenticeship programmes.

Statutory apprenticeship programmes are governed by the Industrial Training Act 1967. Under this Act, the Further Education and Training Authority, SOLAS, has a range of statutory responsibilities, including the designation of statutory apprenticeships via Industrial Training Orders.

LMETB have extensive experience at delivering traditional craft apprenticeships and numerous other programmes at level 6. We are also Collaborating Providers for Level 6 Cyber Security Apprenticeship delivered by LMETB's Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE), location Building B, Xerox Technology Park, Dundalk, Co Louth, Ireland, A91 Y319.

LMETB are now expanding their scope of provision into becoming a Coordinating Provider for other new/post 2016 apprenticeship programmes. This document outlines the quality assurance procedures for the National Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship.

Currently LMETB is partnering with leading industry vendors to deliver a range of technologically relevant qualification covering a wide range of required skills to ensure apprentices graduate with the requisite competencies required to succeed and develop their careers in the Advanced Manufacturing domain.

Training in advanced manufacturing skills in LMETB's Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE) is currently through micro-certification, associated with Industry 4.0, and other industry vendor certifications. Industry 4.0 represents the transition from knowledge based to data driven manufacturing operations involving continuance development aligned with emerging technologies. Therefore, training that allows for the dynamic delivery of content that can be continuously adapted to respond to industry development and needs is required.

LMETB was recently validated for QQI Level 6 Special Purpose Certificate Using Robotics in Advanced Manufacturing, to include micro credential modules.

It also offers several courses in the related areas of Information Technology and Engineering. For example, Engineering, Technology, Software Development and Computer Systems and Networks, Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). LMETB's Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence (AMTCE), will be the centre offering this Special Purpose Award in Utilizing Robotics in Advanced Manufacturing, as is currently offering short vendor-certified course in Robotics and Collaborative Robotics.

AMTCE presently have progression pathways from QQI L6 Traineeship in Maintenance Technician Electronics and L6 Maintenance Technician Pneumatics, that may lead onto the L6 RAA National Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme. LMETB are currently devising MOAs with other leading institutions.

LMETB are excited to lead the delivery of this exciting Apprenticeship, utilising the fantastic resources in our newly renovated AMTCE Centre.

Table of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
QAGMC	Quality Assurance Governance Management Sub-Committee
SAO	SOLAS Authorized Officer
CSG	Consortium Steering Group
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
CSG	Consortium Steering Group
NPB	National Programme Board
NEB	National Examination Board
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
MIPLOs	Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes
MIMLOs	Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes
MOA	Memoranda of Agreement
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
QAP	Quality Assurance Procedures
RAA	Robotics And Automation
IV	Internal Verification
EA	External Authentication
SOLAS	SOLAS is the State agency that oversees the building of a world class Further Education & Training (FET) sector in Ireland, developing skills to fuel Ireland's future.
DES	Department of Education and Skills
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

Glossary of Terms

Assessor	The assessor is the teacher or mentor with responsibility for conducting assessments in accordance with the quality assurance requirements set out in the apprenticeship programme.
Award	An award is conferred by the awarding body when an apprentice successfully completes a programme of study. An example of an award is a Certificate in Robotics and Automation.
Awarding Body	A body that makes awards. It includes National Awarding Bodies, Professional Awarding Bodies and Private Awarding Bodies
Award Type	An award type is a category of named awards which have common features and the same NFQ Level e.g., Advanced Certificate (NFQ level 6)
Blended Learning	The integration of classroom face to face learning experiences with online learning experiences
Competency	Competency for the purpose of the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship is defined as the application of skills, knowledge, and competence to perform tasks or combinations of tasks to industrial and commercial standards under operational conditions.
DES	Department of Education and Skills
ETB	Education and Training Board; a statutory local education body that administers education at secondary, Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) and adult education levels
EQF47	European Qualifications Framework is an overarching qualifications framework. It links the qualifications of member countries and acts as a translating mechanism making qualifications more transferable across borders
External Authenticator (EA)	The EA is a subject matter expert that provides independent confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of the apprentices, in accordance with the national standards. The EA event establishes the credibility of the provider's assessment processes and ensures that assessment results have been marked in a valid and reliable way and are compliant with the requirements for the award.
FET Credit	Estimated apprentice credit expressed in multiples of 10 hours - 1 FET Credit is 10 hours effort.
Graduate	A person who has attained a qualification at undergraduate or postgraduate level
Internal Verifier (IV)	The Internal Verifier verifies that the programme's assessment procedures have been applied across the range of assessment activities, confirms the assessment results by checking apprentice evidence exists, confirming marks and grades are compiled correctly, recorded, and transferred correctly, and completes an internal verification report.
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications is a 10-level system giving academic or vocational value to qualifications obtained in Ireland (Level 1 lowest attainment - Level 10 highest attainment)
PLC	The Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) programme is a full-time programme for young people who have completed their Leaving Certificate and adults returning to education. PLC courses are mostly provided in vocational schools with some provision in voluntary, secondary and community and comprehensive schools. PLC courses are generally at Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 or Level 6.
QQI	QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) is an independent State agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training services in Ireland. It was established in 2012 by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

SOLAS	SOLAS is the new Further Education and Training Authority, which has responsibility for funding, planning, and coordinating Further Education and Training programmes.
Teacher	For this programme, a teacher refers to the role of the teacher/tutor/instructor delivering training in classroom contact hours, in the off- the-job apprentice training provision.
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
Workplace Mentor	The workplace mentor is employer nominated, with a minimum of five years' experience working with Robotics or within an Automated environment. The workplace mentor will have completed programme specific mentoring training and is responsible for mentoring and assessing apprentices in the workplace.

Section 1 – QA Governance Structures and Procedures

Title	QA Governance Structures, Organization and Administration
Date approved	
Effective From	
Date for Review	
Summary	<p>LMETB, as the Co-ordinating Provider of the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation programme, has developed a Quality Assurance (QA) system which is compliant with the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for New Apprenticeship Programmes. The key structures of this system are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Consortium Steering Group (CSG) • QAGMC RAA Quality Governance Management Sub-Committee (FET Quality Committee) • National Programme Board (NPB) • National Examination Board (NEB) • ETBI New Apprenticeship Monitoring and Enhancement Panel • Quality Assurance Arrangements with Employers • Quality Assurance of Collaborating Providers • The Apprentice <p>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 made, and actions undertaken by individual governance units.</p>

LMETB Governance Structure National Robotics & Automation Apprenticeship Programme

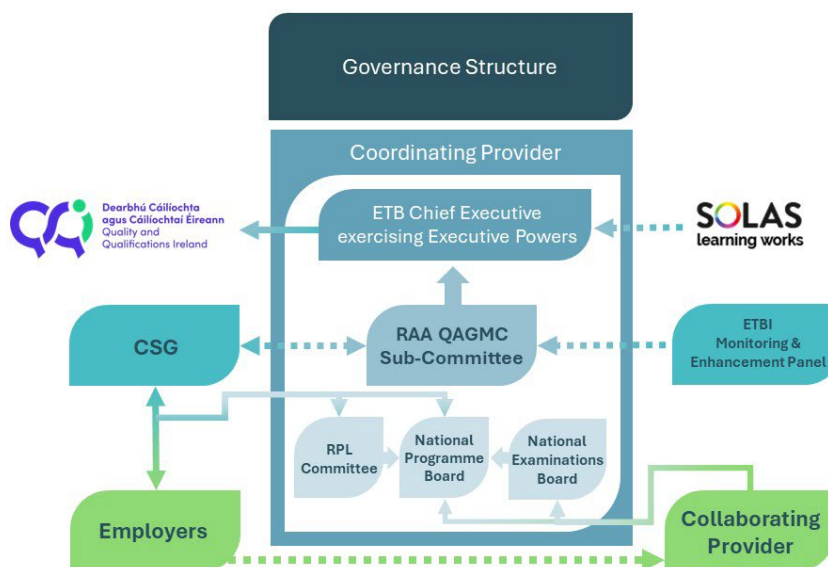


Figure 6

Quality Assurance Governance Structures

1.1 QAGMC RAA Quality Governance Management Sub- Committee (FET Quality Committee)

Role

The purpose of the QAGMC Quality governance Management Sub-Committee (FET Quality Committee) is to oversee the planning, co-ordination quality, development, and improvement of all aspects of the new apprenticeship programme as part of the further education and training offering of the ETB. It protects, maintains, and develops the standards of education and training programmes and related activities. In doing so, the QAGMC RAA (FET Quality Sub-Committee) is ensuring, as far as possible, that all apprentices receive an equivalent experience.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chief Executive (CE) of (LMETB), supported by the Senior Management Team, has delegated certain governance responsibilities to the QAGMC RAA (FET Quality Sub-Committee), as detailed below. The QAGMC RAA Quality governance Management Sub-Committee (FET Quality Sub-Committee) 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.

MEMBERSHIP

Chair: The Director of FET (or designated member)

Secretary: The ETB Quality Officer (or equivalent staff member designated by Director of FET)

Members:

- Staff members drawn from across the ETB, as the CE (Director of FET) determines appropriate.

- Representatives from the National Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme Board, one of which is from industry.
- An apprentice representative

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

Accountable to: Chief Executive

Operational Procedures

- The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will meet at least 6 times a year.
- 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 QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee,
- In some cases, at the discretion of the Chair, an incorporeal meeting of the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee may be held where reports can be circulated virtually and accepted by the Committee without the Committee having to meet.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive (CE) of the ETB has delegated certain governance responsibilities to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, as detailed below. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee 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 QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee is responsible for the following:

- QA policies and procedures
- Approving the apprenticeship quality assurance policies and procedures of the ETB.

Programme responsibilities

- Recommending proposals to the CE, as appropriate, for the development of new programmes that are consistent with the mission and strategy of the ETB.
- Approving programme documentation 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 organizational 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

- Noting assessment reports and confirming they are in line with agreed assessment processes and procedures.
- Ratifying assessment results, and final results presented by the TSO/QA Officer (or equivalent) prior to their submission to the awarding body for the purposes of certification.

Apprenticeship-specific responsibilities

- Considering reports from the CSG established by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee on matters affecting apprenticeship programmes.
- Considering the report by the Monitoring and Enhancement Panel on matters affecting the apprenticeship programme
- ETBI New Apprenticeship Monitoring and Enhancement Panel
- Ensuring that the proposals received from the National RAA Apprenticeship Programme Board and from the CSG for new partnerships conform to the requirements of the programme and that suitable Memoranda of Agreement are in place.
- Fulfilling any reporting requirements to external authorities on apprenticeship activities
- Receiving named annual and biannual reports from the National RAA 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 an QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee Annual Report to the CE, identifying key decisions and actions taken by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee 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 subgroups and making recommendations to the CE as appropriate
- Exercising any other functions, which may be formally delegated to it by the CE.

1.2 Apprenticeship Consortium Steering Group

<p>Role and Purpose</p>	<p>The key function of the National Consortium Steering Group (CSG) is to ensure the National Apprenticeship Programme conforms to and evolves with the requirements of the occupation. It is industry led and acts to bring together the employers, the Co-ordinating Provider and other collaborating providers involved in the programme.</p> <p>The CSG at this point has evolved from the Initial Consortium Steering Group (ICSG) whose role was to identify and appoint the Coordinating Provider. The key role of the ICSG was to ensure that the employers are fully cognizant of the role of the Coordinating Provider.</p>
<p>Membership</p>	<p>The CSG comprises of the National apprenticeship programme’s key stakeholders including SOLAS as the Statutory Regulating Authority, employers, occupational associations, any occupational regulators, and the Coordinating Provider.</p> <p>Chair: Person of Authority from an enterprise or the community of practice involved in the occupation.</p> <p>Others: The majority of the Consortium Steering Group will comprise of representatives from enterprises, employer’s associations, and community of practice or relevant professional bodies. The Co-ordinating Provider as well as representatives from other “off-the-job” providers shall also be members. The Co-ordinating Provider should provide secretariat for the committee.</p>
<p>Accountable to</p>	<p>The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee</p> <p>The CSG will also interact with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coordinating Provider through the National Programme Manager • The National Programme Board • The National Examinations Board and • Collaborating Providers. <div data-bbox="430 1227 1276 1792" data-label="Diagram"> <p>The diagram illustrates the governance structure. At the top is the 'Governance Structure' box. Below it is the 'Coordinating Provider' box, which contains the 'ETB Chief Executive exercising Executive Powers'. To the left of the Coordinating Provider is the 'CSG' (Consortium Steering Group) box, and to the right is the 'RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee' box. Below the RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee are three boxes: 'RPL Committee', 'National Programme Board', and 'National Examinations Board'. To the left of the RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee is the 'Employers' box, and to the right is the 'Collaborating Provider' box. There are also logos for 'Dearbhí Cáilíochta agus Cállochtai Éireann Quality and Qualifications Ireland' and 'SOLAS learning works' on the left, and 'ETBI Monitoring & Enhancement Panel' on the right. Arrows indicate interactions: solid arrows from Employers to CSG, CSG to RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee, RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee to ETB Chief Executive, and RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee to RPL Committee, National Programme Board, and National Examinations Board. Dotted arrows show interactions between SOLAS and ETB Chief Executive, and between RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee and ETBI Monitoring & Enhancement Panel. A green dotted arrow points from Employers to Collaborating Provider.</p> </div> <p>Figure 6</p>
<p>Responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSG is part of the overall national development structure of all new apprenticeship programmes. The role, membership, and purpose of the

	<p>CSG are set out in QQI Topic Specific QA Guidelines for New Apprenticeships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coordinating Provider for the Apprenticeship plays a lead role in liaising with the employers and other providers through the Consortium Steering Group. The role of the CSG is to ensure the apprenticeship programme complies with the requirements of the occupation. The CSG has a key role in the development and review of the occupational profile and in promoting public awareness of that profile. • Develop in conjunction with relevant stakeholders binding MOAs/MOUs which commit all parties to the implementation process. • The CSG contributes to the decision-making process in collaboration with LMETB and national stakeholders on the expansion of apprenticeships, and the addition of new employers and providers. • Approval for establishment of the CSG is vested in the Apprenticeship Committee <p>The governance and operating processes for the CSG are being further developed by SOLAS in collaboration with national stakeholders. This may change some of the relationships and operations outlined below.</p> <p>On validation of the programme, the role of the CSG will transition from a developmental role in the establishment of the occupational profile and the appointment of a Coordinating Provider, to a continuing role in supporting, and improving the validated apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>To carry out this role the CSG will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interact with employers, the regulatory authorities, the occupational bodies, the NPB and the Coordinating and Collaborating Providers • seek to ensure that recruitment and delivery arrangements adequately support equity and inclusion of applicants and provide relevant learning support for these groups if needed.
Operations	<p>Consortium Steering Group – Inputs</p> <p>The CSG will receive its information from several sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the development and validation phase of the programme the CSG will receive ongoing reports on the structure and outcomes of the programme. • LMETB will inform the CSG of issues pertaining to the management and delivery of the programme. This will be accomplished formally through the reports as specified in section 3 and informally through the secretariat and through the provider membership on the CSG. • SOLAS will inform the CSG on developments in labour market conditions both regionally and nationally as reports are generated by state bodies. The SOLAS Authorized Officer may also liaise with the CSG on issues concerning the statutory apprenticeship system. A specific area of concern might be the management of fluctuating demand for apprentices and for dealing with deficits in an individual apprentice’s training. • Employers, through membership of the CSG, may communicate concerns over the programme, its delivery or management or the apprenticeship itself. This will also be achieved by formal surveys of employers initiated by the CSG. • Apprentices, through feedback mechanisms, can bring their concerns to the CSG using the reporting system referred to in section 4. The review of the occupational profile gives industry in general the opportunity to

	<p>inform the CSG of particular and broad changes in the sector that might require the CSG's attention.</p> <p>Consortium Steering Group – Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its operation, the CSG will report to LMETB, SOLAS, the public and the employers. Some of this activity may be delegated to the Coordinating Provider through the secretariat. • The CSG provides LMETB with the approved occupational profile for the apprenticeship. • During the development phase, it will comment and agree the structure of the programme and on the MIPLOs. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will agree the final submission to QQI. • It will comment on reports received from the NPB on the recruitment and assessment of apprentices and on the delivery of the programme. It may advise LMETB to take specific action on foot of feedback from employers or apprentices. • The CSG will act to support SOLAS by informing it of local and regional demand for apprentice programmes, by assessing capacity of employers and enterprises to train apprentices in conjunction with SOLAS and by suggesting new employers and providers. • The CSG has a public role in supporting the promotion of the occupation and the apprenticeship. It will do this by providing information on the programme to the potential apprentices and to the media. • Through its employer members and professional bodies, it will inform the industry of matters relating to the programme. • Through surveys and reports on surveys, it will inform the industry of shared and issues in relation to the programme.
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1.3 National Programme Board

Role	The NPB is the single national entity with responsibility for the effective management, operation, monitoring and review of the National Apprenticeship Programme. The RAA National Programme Board is responsible for the oversight of the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship (RAA) programme and reports to LMETB's dedicated RAA Quality Assurance General Management Committee (QAGMC) sub-committee.
Membership	<p>Membership of the NPB comprises of:</p> <p>Chair: LMETB National Programme Manager for the National L6 Apprenticeship Programme in Robotics and Automation</p> <p>Secretary: Coordinating Provider Programme Leader</p> <p>Other Members:</p> <p>At least one instructor from LMETB (one instructor or representative from each Coordinating Provider will be added if/when other ETBs are validated to deliver the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation)</p> <p>Two employers who are occupationally qualified in the areas, nominated by the CSG.</p> <p>Two persons who will act as mentors of apprentices in employment, nominated by the group of employers.</p> <p>One representative of apprentices (who may be a graduate) nominated by the apprentices.</p>
Accountable to	RAA QAGMC Sub-Committee
Schedule of Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least six times per year on commencement of the new apprenticeship programme. Additional meetings may be required during the set-up phase of the programme. • 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 NPB.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing oversight of delivery and assessment of the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme as validated by QQI. • Establish a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Committee, where required, to manage the operation of RPL as it applies to the programme, as validated. • Devise the assessment strategy and types of assessment to be used in a programme cycle to ensure that the module

	<p>outcomes are being assessed, that cumulatively the MIPLOs are assessed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the assessment schedules for the programme on the advice of the National Programme Manager. • Consider inputs from the External Authenticator on issues of delivery and assessment. This will be done on receipt of the External Examiner’s report and in advance of new cycle starting. • Consider reports from Collaborating Providers, Workplace Mentors, and instructors on the progress of apprentices and on delivery and assessment of the approved programme. • Encourage the sharing between workplace mentors and providers of best practice in the delivery and assessment of apprentices. • Consider the effectiveness of the teaching, learning and assessment strategies being implemented as per the validated programme. <p>Programme monitoring, review, and improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree and implement minor modifications and additions to the programme where these do not affect module outcomes. This will include suggestions from the External Authenticator, or improvements suggested by mentors or by instructors/lecturers/instructor/tutors. • Monitor the on-going operations of the programme nationally. • Monitor examination and continuous assessment results nationally to ensure an appropriate mix of learning modes and associated assessment methods. • Seek feedback from significant stakeholders on the delivery of the programme and on possible minor modifications. • Regularly consider results of surveys of apprentices and other stakeholders of programmes. • Contribute to the occupational review process. • Suggest necessary equipment and facilities requirements and upgrades as well as skills enhancement initiatives. • Examine the effectiveness of support services such as administrative services and learning resources, Moodle, MS Teams etc. • Make recommendations on the use of existing resources and the need for new resources. • Introduce improvements in the programme arising out of the monitoring and review process. • Perform a detailed self-evaluation of the operation of the NPB periodically (usually every five years) • Suggest appropriate external experts to play a role in designing, monitoring, and reviewing programmes. • Recommend appropriately qualified persons as External Authenticators.
Reports	<p>After each new intake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions Reports from LMETB National Programme Manager and Collaborating Programme Leaders

	<p>Annual Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated Admissions Report • External Authenticators Report • On-the-job Site Visit Reports • Apprentice Feedback Reports • Consolidated Apprentice Feedback • Consolidated Apprentice Graduate Report • Staff and Mentor Feedback Report • Provider Reports from each Collaborating Provider • Draft Annual National Programme Board Report <p>Biannual Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated Examinations from LMETB and each collaborating provider (dependent on number of intakes per year)
<p>Standing Committee of The National</p>	<p>The National Programme Board may establish a Standing Committee, which would meet between scheduled meetings of the Programme Board, at the request of the National Programme Coordinator, to discuss urgent items that may require some action before the next scheduled meeting of the Programme Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of the Standing Committee may include: • National Programme Manager • One instructor from LMETB (the Co-ordinating Provider) • An employer who is a member of the NPB • An apprentice representative who is a member of the NPB

1.4 National Examinations Board (NEB)

Purpose	The NEB makes authoritative decisions on assessment results presented to it. The purpose of the NEB is to meet and to consider the delivery and the assessment of the National L6 Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme. It will also ratify the results of the National Apprenticeship Programme. Following, and separate from the formal business of the meeting, instructors and assessors will be afforded an opportunity to reflect on the programme, and to share experiences.
Membership	Chair: National Programme Manager Secretary: Coordinating Provider Programme Leader Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of one examiner from LMETB (the Coordinating Provider). • A minimum of one examiner from each collaborating provider (if/when other ETBs are validated to deliver the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation). • A minimum of one nominated mentor from employers. • A representative from ETBI's External Monitoring and Enhancement panel (for the first cycle of the programme). • External authenticator(s). • QA Coordinator from LMETB. • Collaborating Programme Leaders from all providers where assessments have taken place
Accountable To	QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee
Schedule of Meetings	After each assessment session
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate in accordance with QQI's appropriate rules and regulations. • Review the following reports for consistency of assessment, evaluation of trends in grades, and discussion of any issues that have arisen during assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Internal Verification Report(s) o External Authenticator Report(s) o Broadsheet of Results • Consider any issues arising in relation to the results and make recommendations regarding corrective action. • Report to the CSG and make recommendations to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee regarding any corrective actions taken. • Ratify the national results of the apprenticeship programme. • Recommend, based on the assessment results that apprentices be permitted to proceed to the following year of their training. • Recommend results to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee for noting at their next meeting. • Recommend the results for submission to QQI, the awarding authority, to request awards. • Promote best practice in assessment and the development of a community of practice among instructors and assessors. • Undertake a review of the operations of the NEB itself at the end of each programme cycle.
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the robust examination and assessment processes, the NEB will convene to ratify the programme results. • The NEB may act once the Chair of the Board is satisfied that an appropriate quorum for the proper discharge of the Board's responsibilities is in place.

- Normally decisions should be reached by consensus. However, where a consensus cannot be achieved, the members of the NEB will arrive at a decision via a majority.
 - The proceedings and deliberations of the examination boards of LMETB are strictly confidential. Under no circumstances should any person attending a meeting of the NEB disclose to any other person a decision of the board or any document, information or opinion considered, conveyed, or expressed at the meeting.
 - The Chair of the NEB may, however, communicate appropriately with LMETB's QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee regarding any matter requiring such communication, arising out of the proceedings of the NEB.
 - At the meeting of the NEB, a Table or Broadsheet of Results, or equivalent, will be endorsed which will record the total marks awarded to each apprentice in each examination module and which will indicate, in relation to each apprentice's overall result, whether the apprentice has passed, has passed with Merit, has passed with Distinction, or is being referred.
 - Any dissenting opinion by an External Authenticator recorded upon the Examination Report will be brought to the attention of the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee Chair.
 - Meetings of the NEB should allow for full and frank discussion of all borderline cases before a final decision is made. That final decision should be based on the cumulative evidence presented rather than on the view of one examiner.
 - Produce a National Examination Report, which includes the Broadsheet of Results, local examination board reports, and corrective action recommendations, for submission to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee. The Report of Results will be signed by the Chair and Secretary of the meeting, and by all the examiners present at the meeting. It will be forwarded by the Secretary of the NEB to the National Programme Manager at the earliest opportunity.
 - The Secretary of the NEB will forward the Broadsheet of Results, together with any additional reports, to the next meeting of the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.
 - Where clear-cut recommendations emerge at a meeting of the NEB, the Chair of the NEB may cause a provisional list of results to be issued to apprentices by the National Programme Manager.
 - The National Programme Manager will not issue a provisional result in the case of any apprentice whose result is (i) in dispute, (ii) indeterminate, (iii) the subject of a recorded dissenting opinion, or (iv) whose entry is regarded as provisional. The name of any such apprentice may not be included in any provisional list of results issued by LMETB, nor should any information in relation to results be communicated to any such apprentice pending a decision thereon from the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.
- The following guidelines will be followed with a view to arriving at definite recommendations:
- In the case of apprentices in the first year of the programme, the NEB will accord the apprentices a greater degree of latitude, given reasonable grounds.
 - In the case of final (award stage) examinations/assessment the results should be interpreted in such a manner as to require the apprentice to have demonstrated that they have met the criteria, based on examination performance, to the grade awarded.
 - The NEB may, in the case of illness, bereavement or other unavoidable circumstances that have been verified and are deemed significant in terms of, the apprentice's assessment performance, recommend that a final decision on an

	<p>apprentice’s result be deferred to enable the apprentice to complete specific outstanding requirements of the programme or examination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NEB must be cognisant of fairness to all apprentices in granting referrals to individual apprentices. • The final consensus of the Board is agreed and noted in the minutes.
Appeals	<p>It is the policy of LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, to endeavour in so far as is practicable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal with all reviews, appeals and disputes in relation to assessment matters in accordance with the principles of natural and constitutional justice. • Provide arrangements in relation to reviews, appeals, and disputes in relation to assessment matters which ensure that they are dealt with fairly, transparently and in a timely way, and which may involve, as necessary, experienced ETB staff and wholly independent persons of appropriate knowledge and experience in the process. • Ensure that any potential lessons are learned from the processing of rechecks, reviews, and appeals and where appropriate that this learning is captured in revised processes and procedures. • It is a requirement of LMETB that any complaint or dispute arising in relation to any result considered, or to be considered by it for the purposes of an award of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) will fall to be resolved as a matter of first recourse, via its procedures.
Reports	NEB Report to be submitted to the QAGMC and the CSG.

1.5 ETBI New Apprenticeship QA Monitoring and Enhancement Panel

Role	The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee established individual Co-ordinating ETBs will the monitoring and review of ETB quality assurance procedures for new apprenticeship programmes. This will be supported and facilitated by ETBI who will establish an external Quality Assurance and Enhancement Panel at sectoral level. This panel will assist ETBs in demonstrating the effective development and implementation of their QA procedures and to further develop and enhance these procedures in the sector, ensuring consistency with QQI requirements.
Membership	Members will comprise of external independent professionals and/or sectoral colleagues who have expertise in quality assurance and improvement in education. They will be familiar with quality assurance guidelines of QQI and will have had direct experience in designing, implementing, and reviewing the effectiveness of quality assurance instruments. Members will be selected to establish a nationally formed panel and membership and terms of reference will be reviewed after one year of operation.
Accountable To	QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee
Schedule of Meetings	Per arrangement with ETBs and through ETBI
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with designated ETBI Structures to assist ETBs in demonstrating the effective development and implementation of their QA procedures and to further develop and enhance these procedures, ensuring consistency with QQI requirements. • Develop processes and procedures to monitor and enhance quality assurance for new apprentice programmes in the ETB sector, with regards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency – ensuring that relevant information is accessible to stakeholders. • Apprentice Participation – strengthening methods for systematically gathering apprentice feedback on the programmes and support services. Learning – helping to create the environment in which apprentices can take responsibility for their own learning. • Apprentice Support – developing and improving the academic and pastoral support services available to apprentices. Teaching & Training – supporting innovative teaching/training methods both on and off-the-job, by recognizing and promulgating best practice. • Assessment – ensuring that the examination and assessment system is fair, consistent and effective in measuring the extent to which apprentices achieve the stated learning outcomes, for both on and off- the-job assessment. • Lifelong Learning – fostering and developing in apprentices a lifelong learning ethos to help them develop their careers through Continuing Professional Development. • Assist ETBs in demonstrating the effectiveness of their QA procedures for new apprenticeship programmes. • Advise QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee where appropriate, where appropriate, on developing policy responses to reporting requirements of statutory stakeholders pertaining to new apprenticeship programmes. • Assist ETBI structures in developing appropriate training for key ETB staff on specific elements of quality assurance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the development of ETB staff capacity for self-study and peer review. These will play a pivotal role in monitoring the effectiveness of quality policy and procedures. • Participate in the monitoring and review of the new apprenticeship programmes in the sector. • Provide a structured feedback report to LMETB Coordinating Provider's QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee within one month of the review
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Section 2 – Quality Assurance Roles and Responsibilities

Title	Quality Assurance Roles and Responsibilities
Date Approved	
Effective From	
Date of Review	
Summary	This chapter outlines the organizational roles which underpin the quality assurance governance and operation of the National Apprenticeship Programme within the Coordinating and Collaborating Providers. (if/when other ETBs are validated to deliver the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation.

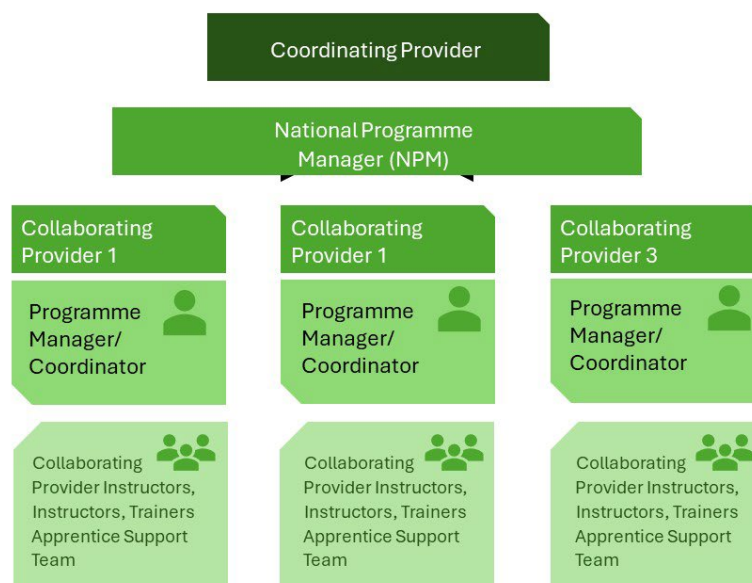


Figure 7

2.1 National Programme Manager

Following appointment by the CSG, LMETB will appoint a National Programme Manager who will be responsible for coordinating the roll out and implementation of the National Apprenticeship Programme as laid out in the MOA between the Coordinating and Collaborating Providers.

It is the responsibility of the National Programme Manager to:

1. Take responsibility for the development of a programme proposal to go forward for validation.
2. Establish a Programme Board comprising of both employers and educational providers.
3. Ensure through adequate consultation with stakeholders that the apprenticeship programme is industry led and meets the needs of the market and that the programme evolves with the requirements of the occupation.
4. Ensure strong reporting and communication links between the Coordinating Provider, Collaborating Providers, the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, CSG, the NPB, and the National Examination Board.

5. Ensure through the MOA and programme specification that procedures both on and off-the- job are implemented correctly and consistently across the Collaborating Providers nationally.
6. Provide an Information Workshop on the National Programme for Workplace Mentors
7. Engage with the Provider Programme Leader and Collaborating Provider Programme Leaders to ensure all responsibilities are carried out to ensure quality and consistency amongst each of the providers.
8. Engage with the Coordinating and Collaborating Provider Programme Leaders to ensure that Instructors, Internal Verifiers and Workplace Mentors are familiar with the recording systems, documentation and procedures for assessment and internal verification of LMETB.
9. Ensure any recommendations implemented and/or corrective actions of the National Programme Board or QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee are progressed.
10. Manage the provider approval application process.
11. Manage the provider re-approval process.
12. Establish and manage a database of employers, providers, and mentors.
13. Convene meetings of the Consortium Steering Group and the National Programme Board.

2.2 Coordinating/Collaborating Provider Programme Leader(s)

Each provider (including the Coordinating Provider) is required to nominate a staff member to act as a Provider Programme Leader with overall responsibility for the apprenticeship programme for that provider.

The Provider Programme Leader will:

1. Provide the programme for incoming apprentices, including introduction to the training location, programme structure and on and off the job content and timetable.
2. Ensure Instructors, Internal Verifiers and Workplace Mentors understand their role and are supported.
3. Ensure Instructors, Internal Verifiers and Workplace Mentors are familiar with the Programme they are assessing and verifying and have sufficient knowledge to enable them to interpret the knowledge requirements, values, and documentation.
4. Ensure Instructors, Internal Verifiers and Workplace Mentors are familiar with the recording systems, documentation and procedures for assessment and internal verification quality assurance.
5. Liaise with apprentice employers.
6. Provide the National Programme Manager with reports on programme outputs and inputs as per the monitoring schedule.
7. Ensure any corrective actions required are implemented within the agreed timescales.
8. Attend meetings of the National Examinations Board.
9. Ensure any corrective actions required at the on-the-job site are communicated to the National Programme Manager and QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee when cases arise where an employer no longer has capacity to provide on-the-job training.
10. Contribute to Workplace Mentor training if required.

2.3 Instructors/Trainers/Tutors/Instructors/Lecturers

Establishment of eligibility to deliver/teach on the programme is the responsibility of the Coordinating and Collaborating Providers, based on the specification in the validated programme documentation. The Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor on the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme will:

1. Provide high-quality teaching and instruction to the apprentices aligned with the validated programme objectives, minimum intended learning outcomes and indicative content, teaching, learning and assessment strategies as per the programme specification.
2. Ensure validity, authenticity, currency and sufficiency of evidence produced by apprentices. Brief the workplace mentors on the on-the-job assessments.
3. Work closely and in collaboration with the Provider Programme Leader in a technical subject matter advisory role.
4. Maintain apprentice records and documentation, including up to date attendance records and grades.
5. Monitor safety of apprentices, classroom, and tools according to safety guidelines.
6. Fully brief and provide information to the apprentice on the assessment process.
7. Evaluate apprentices progress and provide them with prompt, accurate and constructive formative and summative feedback.
8. Organize repeat assessment for apprentices when required as per LMETB's procedures.
9. Enter results into the online system/gradebook.
10. Ensure safe practices in the classroom and in the field.
11. Identify any learning support needs of the apprentice and source and/or provide support where required.
12. Contribute and collaborate with colleagues on the NPB in the establishment of a community of practice to support the ongoing development and enhancement of the National Apprenticeship Programme.
13. Comply with anti-discriminatory practice and uphold equal opportunities.
14. Attend scheduled meetings with relevant stakeholders.
15. Attend and contribute to National Examination Board meetings.
16. Maintain confidentiality for sensitive information.

2.4 Provider Tutor/Supervisor

Each provider will assign a Provider Supervisor to each apprentice, and he/she will be responsible for the pastoral care and the academic progress of the apprentice, mentoring the apprentice in small groups and on a one- to-one basis. The Provider Supervisor will liaise with the apprentices' workplace mentor on the work-based assessments and will visit the apprentice in his/her workplace at least once a year.

2.5 SOLAS Authorized Officers

A network of SOLAS Authorized Officers based in ETBs manage, support, and administer a portfolio of apprentice approved companies and apprentices within their region on behalf of SOLAS. They operate under a certificate of appointment as SOLAS Authorized Officers by the Chief Executive Officer of SOLAS under section 43 of the Industrial Training Act 1967, as amended.

The SOLAS Authorized Officers provide an independent brokerage through which the integrity of the overall Apprenticeship Programme is maintained and are a critical link between the Coordinating and Collaborating Providers, the apprentice, and the employer. They currently carry out a range of functions on behalf of SOLAS including, but not limited to:

1. Conducting an assessment site visit to assess the employer's suitability to train apprentices.
2. Briefing employers on their roles and responsibilities in relation to the on-the-job elements of the apprenticeship on behalf of the statutory regulator.
3. Assessing and approving employers to register apprentices, through SOLAS Employer Approval and Code of Practice
4. Approving and registering new apprentices and apprentices changing employers
5. Providing an objective information and guidance service to all apprentices registered

6. Monitoring of employers during the apprentice's on-the-job phases
7. Maintaining apprentice and employer records.
8. Collaborate and communicate with the National Programme Manager in the delivery of the Programme.

LMETB as Coordinating Provider, will work in collaboration with the network of SOLAS Authorized Officers and will fully brief them on the programme-specific criteria for employer suitability to train apprentices, as outlined in the validated programme documentation. On validation of the programme, a schedule of briefings will be conducted for SOLAS Authorized Officers by the National Programme Manager and NPB representatives.

2.6 Workplace Mentors

Workplace Mentors will be experienced generally holding an NFQ Level 6 award on equivalent and/or with a minimum of two years relevant experience. They will occupy a role in the workplace that corresponds to a senior practitioner level. They will be appointed by the employer and approved by the SOLAS Authorized Officer supported by the LMETB National Programme Manager or Programme Leader on collaborating site as required.

Employers and Workplace Mentors will be briefed on the Workplace competency requirements by the programme team in collaboration with the Consortium Steering Group. They will be trained to ensure that they understand their responsibility in relation to training and assessing an apprentice on-the-job, to industry and awarding body standard. They will be responsible for mentoring and assessing apprentices in the workplace.

It is anticipated that models and approaches to workplace mentoring will be further developed within the ETB sector. In advance of national developments in this regard, the workplace mentoring programmes for new apprenticeships within LMETB will be developed in collaboration with the new apprenticeship-specific Consortium Steering Group for the specific programme.

LMETB will work in collaboration with other ETBs through ETBI national forums in the development and implementation of a sectoral workplace mentoring model.

The Workplace Mentor will:

1. Ensure that the apprentice is introduced to his/her colleagues and peers and is familiar with the workplace environment.
2. Provide opportunities to enable the apprentice to achieve the minimum intended programme learning outcomes as documented in the programme specification.
3. Facilitate the apprentice's learning experience in the workplace by shadowing, coaching, observing, and guiding.
4. Support the apprentice in communicating with the employer on training related issues.
5. Support the apprentice in the workplace by ensuring that the apprentice is conversant with the normal work practices and rules pertaining to the occupation, including its history, staffing structure, customer base and competitive position, and as far as is possible, include the apprentice in the community of practice within the workplace.
6. Develop a sense of professionalism in the apprentice including attributes such as dependability, maturity, politeness, respect, loyalty, and the ability to communicate effectively.
7. Guide the apprentice in completing his/her programme and when the standard for each competency task has been reached, sign the Work-Based Competency Task Book.
8. Provide pastoral care for the apprentice in the workplace on an on-going basis and bring any issues of concern to the attention of the Programme Coordinator.
9. Assess the apprentice in "on-the-job" competencies.
10. Ensure the apprentice uploads all assessment documents and evidence of workplace assessment on learning resources Moodle, MS Teams etc.
11. Communicate with the Provider Programme Leader and other staff on issues to do with the apprentice and the programme.

12. Attend NPB meetings as appropriate and co-operate with reviews of the programme.

2.7 The Apprentice

LMETB is conscious of its responsibilities to ensure the apprentice is fully supported and treated fairly during their training. It will ensure that supports such as literacy, numeracy and other support are in place to ensure an optimum learning experience for the apprentice.

LMETB also recognizes the contribution that the apprentice community can make to the improvement of quality of the programme. In this regard, it is fully committed to a comprehensive apprentice feedback system both on-the-job and off-the-job. It also recognizes the unique perspective that apprentices on a programme have and seeks to harness this input through representative membership of the NPB.

The role of the apprentice is to:

1. Comply with the minimum entry requirements for the applicable programme to which they wish to apply. (Please note employers may have requirements in the excess of the minimum requirements set out in the programme).
2. Attend the induction programme and attend on time, all scheduled classes of all off-the-job training elements of the programme.
3. Be diligent, committed and engage actively in learning throughout the programme.
4. Seek the advice of the employer and/or workplace mentor/and/or instructor/tutor/lecturer/teacher/trainer should difficulties arise during the apprenticeship.
5. Behave in a responsible and mature manner while in employment and during off-the-job training.
6. Be subject to LMETB rules & regulations for the programme as well as any contractual obligations set down by the employer.
7. Undertake all scheduled assessments and exams including referrals.
8. Perform all tasks with due care and diligence and observe all health & safety regulations during both on-the-job and off-the-job elements of the apprenticeship.
9. Be aware that apprentices remain in the employment of the employer throughout the duration of the programme.
10. Carry out all reasonable instructions from the person or persons to whom they are assigned, during both on-the-job and off-the-job elements of their apprenticeship.

As the focus of the apprenticeship programme, LMETB recognizes that it is important that the apprentice has clear communication channels with their employer and training provider. These channels should allow matters to be dealt with in a speedy manner and should ensure that the apprentice's experience is an optimal one. The following are the contact points available to the apprentice during the apprenticeship:

1. The Provider Supervisor in each collaborating provider is responsible for the pastoral care of its apprentices.
2. As per the normal functioning of the workplace, the employer, supervisor and/or person with HR responsibility should deal with all employment-related issues and complaints.
3. The Authorized Officer will brief the apprentices on their role and responsibilities in relation to the on-the-job elements of the apprenticeship and will monitor each apprentice's activities in the on-the-job element of his/her apprenticeship.
4. The workplace mentor will support the apprentice in the workplace training and will be a resource of skill and knowledge and will support the apprentice in communicating difficulties to employers or to the National Programme Manager.
5. The National Programme Manager will organise feedback processes where the apprentice can securely comment on the training programme and on the apprenticeship in general. Where necessary the National Programme Manager will deal with any

complaints or bring them to the attention of the NPB, SOLAS or the employer as appropriate.

6. In cases where an apprentice is dissatisfied with the handling of a complaint by the NPB he/she has access to LMETB's complaint procedure.

The new Apprentice Rights and Responsibilities Charter, Supports and Complaints procedures are outlined in Sections 7.4 and 7.5 of these procedures.

2.8 Quality Assurance Arrangements with Employers

Employers are a critical part of the apprentice programme. LMETB recognizes that it is important that agreements with employers are clear and facilitate the employer in taking on apprentices. Given the key role of the employers in the training of apprentices and the responsibility of LMETB, as the Coordinating Provider, for all aspects of programme quality, it is essential that there is a clear and unambiguous understanding between the ETB and employers in the areas of:

Recruitment, registration, and induction

1. On-the-job training curriculum
2. On-the-job training
3. Off-the-job training
4. Programme development and periodic review

By accepting the apprenticeship "Code of Practice", employers are expected to train the apprentice in the required on-the-job elements of the apprenticeship and to provide the apprentice with the opportunities to practice new skills under supervision while taking cognizance of the apprentice's skill level at the time the task is being undertaken.

Consequently, employers are required to directly employ a suitably qualified person who can or has been approved by LMETB to act as the workplace mentor.

Employers are expected to ensure that all the on-the-job assessments are conducted in a fair and consistent manner and to submit all the on-the-job training assessment results to LMETB on schedule. Employers are expected to release the apprentice(s) for induction and off-the-job training on the dates and to the location as specified by LMETB. Employers are expected to comply with all statutory health and safety, employment, and apprenticeship regulations.

While there is a role for the CSG the SOLAS Authorized Officers and SOLAS in ensuring adherence to the agreements, overall responsibility lies with the National Programme Coordinator.

2.9 Quality Assurance of Collaborating Providers

LMETB, as Co-ordinating Provider, must be satisfied and verify that all Collaborating Providers have the capacity to offer the new apprenticeship programme. A provider wishing to offer the apprenticeship programme will need to demonstrate they have the capacity to do so. For providers seeking to be Collaborating Providers, LMETB will implement a Provider Approval process, which is detailed in [Appendix H](#)

Providers seeking to become Collaborating Providers of a programme are required to conduct a detailed self- evaluation against the required criteria and when satisfied that they have the capacity and capability, they may apply to be a Collaborating Provider. In the case of an ETB or Institute of Technology (IoT), a written statement confirming that this has been carried out, accompanied by the self-evaluation, will in general be accepted by the LMETB for approval as a Collaborating Provider. In all cases LMETB will insist that a signed MOA Memorandum of Agreement between it and each Collaborating Provider is in place before that provider may commence the validated programme.

2.10 Employer and Provider Responsibilities

The responsibilities for the Employer and Provider are summarized in the table below. (table 1)

1. Recruitment, Registration, and Induction	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit the apprentice and present the apprentice for registration. Ensure that the apprentice is a suitable candidate for training. Make the apprentice available for this induction process if it occurs in advance of the off-the-job period. Introduce the new apprentice to the community of practice within the enterprise and ensure that the apprentice is recognized as a novice member of the community. Provide individualized support to the apprentice where necessary especially in the early stages of the apprenticeship. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquaint the apprentice with the details of the training schedule, of the assessment procedures and the academic and apprentice regulations and the supports available. Provide adequate induction to the programme. This will include assessment of any deficits in prior learning which can be addressed by suitable support. Introduce the apprentice to the wider community of practice outside the enterprise as far as it is possible.
2. On-the-job Training Curriculum	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the apprentice is given the learning opportunities required for the programme. These opportunities should include skills knowledge and competencies designed to achieve the intended programme outcomes. Co-operate with the provider in implementing the quality assurance procedures. Ensure that the apprentice is freed to take advantage of training opportunities required by the programme that are not available in the enterprise. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquaint the Employer with the curriculum of the on-the-job phases of the programme, of the assessment processes and of an indicative schedule of training. Ensure that the Employer accepts the quality assurance procedures for the programmes. Identify deficiencies in provision available from the Employer and arrange the permanent or temporary transfer of the apprentice to an alternative Employer.
3. On-the-job Training – Workplace Mentors and Supporting the Apprentice	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the apprentice is given the learning opportunities required for the programme. These opportunities should include skills, knowledge and competencies designed to achieve the intended programme outcomes. Co-operate with the provider in implementing the quality assurance procedures. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquaint the Employer with the curriculum of the on-the-job phases of the programme, of the assessment processes and of an indicative schedule of training. Ensure that the Employer accepts the quality assurance procedures for the programmes. Identify deficiencies in provision available from the Employer and arrange the permanent or temporary

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the apprentice is freed to take advantage of training opportunities required by the programme that are not available in the enterprise. 	<p>transfer of the apprentice to an alternative Employer.</p>
<p>4. On-the-job Training –Management</p>	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a member of staff as contact person for the National Programme Manager • Allow programme team members access to and observation of the apprentice at work. • Ensure that the apprentice keeps continuous records of experience and assessment and makes them available to the provider. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint programme team members who will be observing the apprentice and liaising with the workplace mentors. • Ensure that the programme team members do not disrupt the normal operation of the enterprise.
<p>5. Off-the-job Training-Management</p>	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a member of staff as contact person for the National Programme Manager. • Allow programme team members access to and observation of the apprentice at work. • Ensure that the apprentice keeps continuous records of experience and assessment and makes them available to the provider. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint programme team members who will be observing the apprentice and liaising with the workplace mentors/assessors. • Ensure that the programme team members do not disrupt the normal operation of the enterprise.
<p>6. Off-the-job Training</p>	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release the apprentice for the scheduling training. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule the training for the apprentice. • Inform the apprentice and the Employer of any changes to the schedule. • Ensure that the apprentice is fully briefed on the requirements of the off-the-job element and provide the apprentice with the materials and information necessary for the successful completion of the element.
<p>7. Programme Development and Periodic Review</p>	
<p>Employer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the provider is informed about relevant changes in the occupation. • Co-operate with the periodic review of the programme. 	<p>Provider ETB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the programme is subject to ongoing development, in collaboration with National Programme Board and Consortium Steering Group.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Consortium Steering Group in its activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize the periodic review of the programme. • Organize and manage the National Programme Board.
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Section 3 – Governance Reports

Title	Governance Reports
Date Approved	
Effective From	
Date of Review	
Summary	This chapter provides an outline of the key reports and data processes being implemented in the ETB sector for/by Coordinating Providers and in partnership with collaborating ETBs to facilitate the management of new apprenticeship programmes. All Collaborating Providers are required to comply with the reporting requirements of Coordinating ETB (when applicable).

Table 2

3.1 Reports' Purpose and Functions

The annual reporting process is a valuable exercise that fosters self-reflection and self-evaluation across a range of important areas and is fundamental to ETBs mission for continuous and visible quality improvement and enhancement. The NPB is responsible to LMETB 's QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee for ensuring that the programme runs as agreed with all Collaborating Providers. The data collected by LMETB will also be required for regulatory and financing bodies. The data will be collected in a standard way from each Collaborating Provider. The format of reports required by these bodies may influence the format and content of the management reports. Collaborating Providers shall use the same apprentice management system which will allow for standardized and efficient reports.

The quality assurance governance structures established within the LMETB rely on a range of data and reports from the multiple sites collaborating ETBs/providers (when applicable).

A set of key reports and data processes are being implemented in the ETB sector for/by Co-ordinating Providers and in partnership with collaborating ETBs to facilitate the management of new apprenticeship programmes. All Collaborating Providers are required to comply with the reporting requirements of the Coordinating ETB. The purpose of the reports identified is to ensure that the new apprenticeship programme is running effectively at each site.

The reports will be used:

1. To measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme. The efficiency will be measured based on resource input per apprentice. The effectiveness will be measured by looking at the outcomes in terms of completed modules and stages of the programme.
2. To inform the periodic review of the programme.
3. As evidence for proposed changes in specific programmes. These may give rise to minor changes to programme schedule or content or assessment instrument that may be made by the National Programme Board.
4. To improve efficiency and reduce bureaucracy - they will be combined to produce composite reports which will be supplemented by and contribute to the periodic reviews of the programme and of the occupational profile.
5. To inform the monitoring of new apprenticeship programmes by the ETBI National QA Monitoring and Enhancement Panel in across the ETB sector.
6. To include a description of the follow-up action undertaken from previous reports.

3.2 Programme Maintenance Cycle – Report Production Process

LMETB's QA procedures are designed to inform relevant bodies of the process, to suggest changes or confirm progress, and to initiate action.

The processes are:

1. The Production of the Report is where the raw data is generated from any of the stakeholders involved in the apprenticeship. These reports will be agreed with the Collaborating Providers and will be standardized across the sites. They will also remain comparable from year to year to allow longitudinal comparisons and consolidation over the period of the validation.

2. The analysis of the data will be undertaken by the appropriate personnel within the Collaborating Provider. The analysis will be an examination of the process, the confirmation that it is proceeding as planned or proposals for changes in process or necessary corrective action. The National Programme Board will initiate any corrective action required.
3. The purpose of the Review is to ensure that the reports are produced and analysed, and that any agreed-upon action is taken. In some cases, the response to the reports may be delayed until the report has been considered by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.
4. Where the action is minor then the Response can be agreed and directed by the National Programme Board. Where it is more substantial, it will be referred to the Consortium Steering Group.

3.3 Types of Reports Summary

The report is summarized in the tables below:

Name	Content	Source	Frequency	Recipient	Review	Action
Admission Report	Numbers, gender, non-standard, nationality (Irish, EU, International), qualifications, evaluation of induction and admission process per site	Provider1	Following each new cohort of apprentice	National Programme Board	See Consolidated Admissions Report below	See Consolidated Admissions Report below
Consolidated Admissions Report	Overall figures and suggestions for admission induction process changes	Provider Admission reports	On receipt of Provider Admission Report	National Programme Board	Apprenticeship FET Quality Committee, Consortium Steering Group	National Programme Board
Examinations	Results of the examinations at a site, comments from instructors and other stakeholders on results and on examination process	Provider	Following Examinations	National Examinations Board	See Consolidated Admissions Report below	See Consolidated Admissions Report below

External Examiners Report	Standard report covering an assessment of how the programme is achieving its aims and a report on quality and results. of the assessments	External Authenticator	For each Examination	National Programme Board and National Examinations Board	QAGMC Quality Committee, CSG and the public	National Programme Board
On-the-job Observation	Records of individual apprentice achievement on-the-job	Workplace Mentor, Programme Team Member	Refer to module descriptor	National Programme Board and NEB	National Programme Board	National Programme Board, Local Programme Lead
Apprentice feedback	Standard survey form on content, delivery, and management of programme	Initiated by the National Programme Manager and/or workplace mentor and generated by apprentices	Annually	National Programme Board and Providers	National Programme Board	National Programme Board and Providers
Consolidated Apprentice Feedback	Consolidated comments from apprentices	Individual Provider Reports consolidated by Provider Programme Leader	Annually	Consortium Steering Group, National Programme Board	Consortium Steering Group, National Programme Board	National Programme Board directed by Consortium Steering Group
Individual Complaints	Matters relating to the training of apprentices, through a formal process. This excludes informal. or anonymous complaints	Apprentice or Instructor	Occasionally	As detailed in these procedures		See Complaints Procedures

Examination Appeals	Matters relating to examinations	Apprentice	Following Examination	Provider Programme Leader/National Programme	Apprentice	Following Examination
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Table 3

3.4 Stakeholder, Programme and QA Efficiency and Effectiveness Reports

The stakeholder reports are intended to give an overview of the programme outcomes following the completion of the programme by a cohort of apprentices. The reports outlined below, except for the first, can be combined into a single report to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee and the Consortium Steering Group.

Name	Content	Source	Frequency	Recipient	Review	Action
Apprentice Graduate Report	Employment status, year of graduation, career expectations, attitude to programme etc.	National Coordinator	Six months following graduation of each cohort	Collaborating Provider	National Programme Board	See Consolidated Graduate Report below
Consolidated Apprentice Graduate Report	Overall figures and suggestions for admission induction process changes	National Coordinator	On receipt of Provider Graduate Report	National Programme Board	QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee Quality Committee, Consortium Steering Group, regulator	National Programme Board
Employer Report	Comments on operation of programme, employment of graduates, changes to programme	National Coordinator	Annually	Consortium Steering Group or Programme Leader for Consortium Steering Group	QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, Consortium Steering Group	National Programme Board
Staff Report	Operation of the programme, of the NPB and of QA systems, changes to programme	National Coordinator	Annually	National Programme Board	QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, Consortium Steering Group	National Programme Board
Provider Report	Operation of the	National Coordinator	Annually	National Programme Board		

	programme, of the NPB and of QA systems, changes to programme					
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Table 4

Section 4 – Quality Assurance of Employers and Collaborating Providers

Title	Quality Assurance of Employers and Collaborating Providers
Date Approved	
Effective From	
Date of Review	
Summary	This section provides the policies and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of provision. It sets out the provider's commitment to quality in terms of programme provision.

Table 5

Louth Meath Education and Training Board, as Co-ordinating Provider, must be satisfied and verify that all Collaborating Providers have the capacity to offer the new apprenticeship programme. A provider wishing to offer the apprenticeship programme will need to demonstrate they have the capacity to do so. For providers seeking to be Collaborating Providers, Louth and Meath Education and Training Board will implement a Provider Approval process. LMETB has primary responsibility for the quality of its apprenticeship programme in terms of its implementation and its' evaluation of its Quality Assurance Procedures. This includes the procedures used for verifying that a collaborating provider has the capacity to deliver an approved apprenticeship programme as well as determining the provider's capacity to train apprentices.

The process is supported by monitoring by the ETBI and QQI, that involves both routine and once-off evaluations, analysis, observations and recording of provider activities to demonstrating the effective implementation of QA procedures and is described in more detail in Section 8.

4.1 Procedures for Verification of Collaborating Provider Capacity

Providers seeking to become Collaborating Providers of a programme are required to conduct a detailed self-evaluation against the required criteria and when satisfied that they have the capacity and capability, they may apply to be a Collaborating Provider. In the case of an ETB or Institute of Technology (IoT), a written statement confirming that this has been carried out, accompanied by the self-evaluation, will in general be accepted by the ETB for approval as a Collaborating Provider. In all cases Louth and Meath Education and Training Board will insist that a signed Memorandum of Agreement between it and each Collaborating Provider is in place before that provider may commence the validated programme. A provider who wants to offer the National Apprenticeship Programme, as validated by QQI, for LMETB is the Coordinating Provider, must enter a formal agreement with LMETB and sign the required MOA Memorandum of Agreement.

The MOA establishes the governance, communication, and reporting arrangements for the apprenticeship programme. Specific requirements and criteria are outlined in the validated programme documentation.

4.1.2 Determining Provider's Suitability for Apprenticeship

To deliver the National Robotics Automation Apprenticeship Programme, as validated by QQI, the Education and Training Provider must demonstrate to the Co-ordinating ETB, that it meets the specified criteria for the validated National Apprenticeship Programme in the following areas:

- Quality Assurance
- Staff Resources
- Environment and physical resources
- Assessment on and off-the-job

The Coordinating Provider must be satisfied that all Collaborating Providers can demonstrate the capacity to offer the new Apprenticeship Programme. The criteria and procedures for the approval of

a provider to offer the National Apprenticeship Programme are set out in the Collaborating Provider Approval Procedure, in [Appendix H](#).

Collaborating Providers are required to identify who will be undertaking various roles in the delivery, assessment, and internal verification processes for the programme. The Collaborating Provider must:

- Identify staff involved in coordination of programme delivery for both on and off-the-job phases.
- Identify a programme leader who will be involved in the coordination of programme delivery.
- Appoint a staff member to quality assure programme delivery for both on and off-the-job elements.

Personnel must be appropriate to the specific apprenticeship programme and the level of assessment activities both on and off-the-job. Details of the requirements and responsibilities of each role involved in the assessment, verification and examinations processes are set out in the Collaborating Provider Approval Procedure document.

Provider approval is valid for five years, subject to on-going compliance monitoring. Approved providers apply for re-approval after the five-year period has elapsed.

The full approval procedure will apply to those providers who have not provided examinations or assessments for a viable number of apprentices within the five-year period, and/or who have had approval suspended or withdrawn because approval criteria were no longer met.

It is expected that the application process for another ETB or an IoT will differ from that for an independent education and training provider, which will normally be a private organization operating on a for-profit basis.

In all cases, it is the Coordinating ETB's responsibility to ensure that it is satisfied that each Collaborating Provider can deliver the programme appropriately. Notwithstanding this, LMETB recognizes that ETBs and IoTs are experienced providers with quality assurance systems in place and while they may not have direct experience in the area in question, they have the capacity to develop the systems required to deliver the programme. In these cases, LMETB will require the collaborating ETB or IoT that is seeking approval, to conduct a self-evaluation against their criteria and make a written declaration to the effect that they meet the criteria. Such a declaration, together with the completed self-evaluation, will be included with the Memorandum of Agreement that will be signed between the ETB and the Collaborating Provider ETB or other before the programme commences on that site.

An ETBI sectoral guideline/protocol has been developed and accepted within the sector for the development of ETB Co-ordinating/Collaborating Provider MOA. This will be implemented by the ETB and issued to Collaborating Providers in development and agreement of the final MOA. The ETBI guideline is outlined in [Appendix A](#) below and the MOA template in [Appendix B](#).

4.1.3 Collaborating Provider Approval for Robotics Automation Programme

Collaborating Provider Approval must be obtained by any Education and Training Provider that is seeking to become a collaborating provider for the Robotics Automation Apprenticeship Programme. Once Collaborating Provider Approval is granted, it will be valid for a period of five years, subject to on-going compliance monitoring, in line with the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria. After the five-year period has elapsed, a Provider must reapply for renewal of the programme approval, but approval will normally be a desk-based procedure unless:

- The Provider has not provided examinations or assessments for a viable number of apprentices within the five years and/or
- The Provider has had approval withdrawn because the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria were no longer being met.

What is a Provider?

The Robotics Automation Apprenticeship National Apprenticeship Programme, for which Louth and Meath Education and Training Board is the Co-ordinating Provider, may only be offered by providers of QQI awards.

A Provider may be one of the following:

- Education and Training Board
- Institute of Technology
- Independent Education and Training Provider

Only approved providers may offer the QQI validated Robotic Automation Apprenticeship Programme and assessments/examinations. Specific programme related documentation applies:

i. QQI Validated Programme

ii. Apprenticeship Quality Assurance Procedures

This programme-related documentation details the programme as validated, specifically:

1. The programme's assessment strategies and procedures
2. The programme's teaching and learning strategies
3. Specifications regarding the programme's staffing requirements
4. Precise specifications of the programme's physical resource requirements
5. Documented procedures for the operation and management of the programme

4.1.4 Determining Provider's Capacity to Train Apprentices

If a Collaborating Provider meets the criteria set out in the Collaborating Provider Approval Procedure, then that Collaborating Provider is required to ensure that each employer, for whom they are responsible, has participated in the Workplace Mentor training, and that provider is required to monitor the on-the-job workplace mentoring.

4.2 Resourcing Apprenticeship: Staffing, Facilities and Equipment

4.2.1 Staffing

All ETBs are required to comply with staff recruitment and selection processes as laid down by the Minister for Education and Skills. LMETB recognizes that the competencies of its staff are a key determinant in the systematic approach to staff recruitment and further professional development. As part of the implementation of the Provider Approval procedure, LMETB examines the information provided in the Provider Approval Form to ensure the Collaborating Provider have a suitably qualified instructor/tutor/trainer/teacher/lecturer in place to deliver and assess the off-the-job phase of the programme by identification of the knowledge, skills, competencies, and experience levels required of staff for each new apprenticeship programme.

The National Programme Manager shall liaise directly with Collaborating Providers and employers to identify and train on-the-job Workplace Mentors for delivery and assessment for the on-the-job phase of the programme.

LMETB, as Coordinating Provider will establish the identity of the External Authenticator for the programme through the Programme Provider Approval Form and confirm qualifications of same.

4.3 Applications from an Education and Training Board or an Institute of Technology

The application process for an ETB or an IoT will differ from that for an Independent Education and Training Provider, which will normally be a private organisation operating on a for-profit basis. In all cases, it is the Co-ordinating ETB's responsibility to ensure that it is satisfied that each Collaborating Provider can deliver the programme appropriately. However, ETBs and IoTs are experienced providers with quality assurance systems in place and while they may not have direct experience in the area in question, they have the capacity to develop the systems required to deliver the programme.

In these cases, The ETB will require the ETB or IoT that is seeking approval, to conduct a self evaluation against their criteria and make a written declaration to the effect that they meet the criteria. Such a declaration, accompanied by the completed self-evaluation, will be included in the Memorandum of Agreement that will be signed between the Co-ordinating ETB and the Collaborating Provider, before the programme commences on that site.

4.4. Programme Approval for an additional Cognate Programme

Programme approval must be obtained by providers who are currently providing an apprenticeship programme and wish to deliver an apprenticeship programme in another cognate area.

4.5. Advisory Visits

An Education and Training Provider can request an advisory visit before applying for Collaborating Provider Approval, or after approval has been granted. The purpose of the advisory visit can be to:

- Provide general advice on Collaborating Provider Approval criteria.
- Identify and clarify specific areas of provider approval that need further attention.
- Provide opportunities for the nominated Education and Training Provider staff to ask questions and resolve queries.

4.6. Programme Approval Application Information

Collaborating Provider Approval is granted based on information that the Education and Training Provider submits at the time of applying for approval. If at any time there are changes to those details, e.g. the Education and Training Provider adds a new teacher/trainer/instructor or internal verifier, it must notify the Programme Coordinator immediately using the Programme Approval Application Update form.

Note: Failure to notify The ETB of changes may affect the provider's approved status.

4.7. Roles of key Assessment, Verification and Assessment/Examination Personnel

When submitting applications for Collaborating Provider's Approval, Education and Training Providers are asked to identify who will be undertaking various roles in the assessment, verification and assessment processes. These should be appropriate to the Robotics Automation Apprenticeship Programme and the level of assessment activities both on and off-the-job. For example, Providers with one or more teachers/trainers/instructors/tutors instructors will probably need more than one internal verifier and may therefore need to identify an Internal Verifier Coordinator to ensure consistency of the internal verification practice.

This section gives details of the requirements and responsibilities of each role involved in the assessment, verification and assessment/examinations processes.

A Provider should identify members of staff to fulfil roles appropriate to the level of assessment activities being undertaken. For example, there will be no requirement to designate an Internal Verifier coordinator in small Providers where one Internal Verifier can undertake effectively all verification activities.

Two or more roles may be undertaken by the same person, e.g. teacher/trainer/instructor and internal verifier. However, it should be noted that Internal Verifiers who are also teachers/trainers/instructors/tutors instructors cannot internally verify their own assessments.

Please refer to the relevant Apprenticeship Programme specific documentation for the level of expertise required by the teachers/trainers/instructors/tutors instructors and Internal Verifiers.

4.8. Quality Control

Quality assurance monitors are appointed by the Co-ordinating ETB to ensure that Collaborating Providers comply with the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria. Their responsibilities relate to systems and quality assurance of programme delivery rather than programme-specific assessment requirements. They report to the Programme Coordinator who will collate and bring reports to Programme Board. The duties of quality assurance monitors include to:

- Conduct inspection or audits to ensure providers comply with the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria.
- Quality monitor Programme delivery both on and off-the-job.
- Provide prompt, accurate and constructive advice and feedback to all relevant parties.
- Provide advice to Providers on internal quality arrangements.

4.9. Access and Equal Opportunities

The ETB is committed to equality of opportunity and fair access to assessment for all our Programmes. The diversity of apprentices for whom this may be an issue is extensive so we offer guidance on access and equal opportunities.

4.10. Reviews, Appeals, Complaints and Infringement of Rules

The ETB always aims to establish and maintain excellent working relationships with our Collaborating Providers. However, on rare occasions, disputes over approved status and other matters may arise. Where these occur, procedures will be in place.

4.11. Online Assessment Management System

Approved Providers will be provided with access to Assessment Management Systems which will enable it to access:

- Moodle System
- Programme Curriculum
- Apprentice Resources and Materials
- Assessment Instruments
- Grade book

4.12. Initial application from Providers other than an ETB or IoT

Where The ETB has determined that a Provider is required to formally apply for approval to offer the programme, that provider is required to:

Complete an Application for Collaborating Provider Approval

Visit Request

E-mail forms to: The ETB's Programme Coordinator

The ETB's Programme Coordinator will:

- Review the completed forms
- Send an acknowledgement of receipt of the application and advise if any further information is required.
- Send copies of the forms, with necessary information, to the Co-ordinating ETB's Apprentice Quality Committee, who may also request additional information.
- Arrange for the Co-ordinating ETB representative to undertake an approval visit.
- Confirm to the applicant provider in writing the outcome of the application, normally within four six weeks of receipt.

4.13. Approval Visit

A visit will be undertaken by a Co-ordinating ETB representative who has expertise in the relevant Programme area or within the family of Programmes, or an External expert will be appointed to review specific programme resources, e.g. staff, programme and physical resources such as kitchen facilities and equipment, etc.

Please also note that if a Provider intends to deliver this programme in more than one location the Co-ordinating ETB representative will need to visit each location to ensure compliance with the approval criteria.

Prior to the visit

The Co-ordinating ETB representative will:

- Contact the education and training provider nominated contact person and agree the visit schedule.
- Indicate any points within the application which need clarification/discussion.
- Identify the members of staff which the Co-ordinating ETB representative wishes to meet.

During the visit

The Co-ordinating ETB representative will:

- Look for evidence to confirm that the provider meets, or has the potential to meet, the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria.

- Provide a briefing on the Co-ordinating ETB Quality Assurance policies and procedures in line with awarding body requirements. Access to the Co-ordinating ETB's Quality Assurance Procedures will be provided following approval.
- Ensure that systems exist for advising all staff involved with conduct of assessments/examinations, and assessment and verification of their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that Workplace Mentors/Assessors will be appropriately trained.
- Provide any help, support or advice required.

At the end of the visit

The Co-ordinating ETB representative will:

- Complete a report on the visit which will include an action plan.
- Send a copy of the report to The ETB's Programme Coordinator who will forward the application to the Co-ordinating ETB's Apprenticeship Quality Committee who will advise the applicant provider of the outcome of the application.

4.14. Notification of Approval Decision

At the time of the approval visit the Co-ordinating ETB nominated representative will discuss their findings and recommendations with the applicant provider, but formal approval must be received from the Co-ordinating ETB Apprenticeship Quality Committee before undertaking any programme delivery and assessments/examinations.

The ETB will not grant conditional approval to Providers, unless there are minor issues which can be easily remedied within the required timescale, so there are only two possible outcomes of a Collaborating Provider Approval application:

a) Collaborating Provider Approval Granted

If the ETB's Apprentice Quality Committee is satisfied that the applicant provider meets the criteria, it will ask the Programme Coordinator to notify the applicant in writing that Collaborating Provider Approval has been granted and provide the applicant with access to all necessary Programme documentation and materials.

b) Collaborating Provider Approval Withheld

Where insufficient evidence to satisfy the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria has been provided, the Programme Coordinator will advise the applicant provider of the following:

1. Areas that need to be developed further and any additional evidence required.
2. Once the action has been implemented, the applicant provider should contact the Programme Coordinator who will request evidence to confirm that the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria have been satisfied. If necessary, another approval visit may be made.
3. An applicant provider may not assess apprentices for the Programme until Collaborating Provider Approval has been granted.
4. An applicant provider has the right to appeal against a decision to withhold Collaborating Provider Approval to the Apprenticeship Quality Committee who will establish a panel of at least two external independent experts to adjudicate on the appeal. The fee for such an appeal is €5000. The result of this adjudication on that application will be final. Notwithstanding this it is open to a provider to initiate a new application following a period of time determined by the Apprenticeship Quality Committee.

4.15. Period of Approval

Once granted, Collaborating Provider Approval continues for a period of **five years** unless withdrawn earlier.

Please note that Providers are subject to inspection visits at any time that the Apprentice Quality Committee deems appropriate, including at assessment/examination time, to ensure compliance with the approval criteria.

4.16. Re-Approval

An approved provider must apply for re-approval by completing the appropriate Application for Re-approval, at least six weeks prior to the approval expiry date. Re-approval will normally be a desk-based procedure unless a Provider has undergone significant changes in staffing or has had approval withdrawn.

4.17. Updating Collaborating Provider Approval Information

If in future there are changes to the details the provider provided at the time of applying for Collaborating Provider's Approval, e.g. a change of Programme Teacher/Trainer/Instructor or personnel involved in assessment or an organisational change that has affected its ability to satisfy the approval criteria, the provider must notify the Programme Coordinator immediately and complete an Application for Re-approval.

Failure to notify the ETB of changes may result in withdrawal or suspension of Collaborating Provider's Approval.

4.18. Withdrawal and Suspension of Approval

Withdrawal

Collaborating Provider Approval may be withdrawn at any time by the Co-ordinating ETB, giving one month's notice in writing, for reasons including the following:

- The Provider fails to comply with the terms of the agreement with the Co-ordinating ETB, with the approval criteria or with any of the Co-ordinating ETB's policies, regulations, requirements, procedures and guidelines which are in force from time to time and which have been sent to the person nominated by the training provider.
- There are major deficiencies in the assessment process and the Co-ordinating ETB's Apprenticeship Quality Committee reasonably believes that the appropriate quality of assessment provision can no longer be ensured.
- There is any change in the legal control of the Provider.
- In the event that an approved Provider becomes bankrupt or insolvent or goes into liquidation, or any resolution or order is made for the purposes of voluntary or compulsory winding-up, the Co-ordinating ETB will normally immediately withdraw approval to run the programme.

Suspension of approval

The Apprenticeship Quality Committee may suspend all or any of a Provider's involvement with delivery of the programme for a specified period of time or indefinitely.

This may occur where:

- Time is required to determine whether the event that triggered the withdrawal of approval can be remedied.
- The Apprenticeship Quality Committee feels that it is appropriate to do so in order to protect apprentices or the Co-ordinating ETB, for example where the Provider is the subject of an investigation or breaches of assessment security.

Provisions applying to withdrawal and suspension of approval

In the event of a withdrawal or suspension of approval, in order to help affected apprentices, providers must provide them, within the time-frame specified by the Co-ordinating ETB, with whatever information (about how they can complete their Programme, for example) or supports the Co-ordinating ETB consider reasonable.

Providers **must** return to the Programme Coordinator, the originals and any copies of any documents which belong to the Co-ordinating ETB.

Withdrawal or suspension does not affect any earlier claims, or give rise to any new ones, as between the Provider and the Co-ordinating ETB, except that:

- The Co-ordinating ETB will seek compensation from Providers to make good any loss which it may suffer as a result of the withdrawal or suspension if it occurs as a result of anything which the Provider has done or failed to do.

- An approved provider has the right to appeal against withdrawal or suspension of programme approval to the Apprenticeship Quality Committee who will establish a panel of at least two external independent experts to adjudicate on the appeal. The fee for such an appeal is €5000. The result of this adjudication will be final. Notwithstanding this it is open to a provider to initiate a new application following a period of time determined by the Apprenticeship Quality Committee.

Collaborating Provider Approval Criteria - Supporting Evidence

The criteria listed in this section relates to Collaborating Provider's Approval. Education and Training Providers will need to demonstrate how they satisfy the criteria. The following is a sample list of the types of evidence that the Co-ordinating ETB representative will expect on the site visit. It is recognised that some may not be relevant until the provider is actually delivering the Apprenticeship Programme.

- Quality Assurance
- Provider Management and Administrative Systems
- Apprentice records and details of achievements are accurate, kept up to date, securely stored and forwarded to the Programme Coordinator. In addition, this information must be made available for External Examining and auditing by the Co-ordinating ETB if required.
- Attendance records of the apprentice
- Assessment results, on and off-the-job
- The roles, responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of the assessment/examination team across all assessment locations are clearly defined, allocated and understood
- There are procedures to ensure effective communication between staff involved with the administration, delivery, assessment and examination of the Apprenticeship Programme both on and off-the-job.

In these circumstances the provider needs to list the type of evidence it will provide, as suggested above, and then at the time of the approval visit show/explain what systems/procedures it has/will put in place to ensure the accuracy and security of apprentice records. An External authenticator will wish to look at the relevant records when undertaking his/her examination visit.

Examples of evidence

- Apprentice registration details
- Apprentice assessment records
- Procedures for maintaining and updating databases (IT or manual)
- Procedures for maintaining evidence files/portfolios
- Security and access arrangements
- Organisational chart showing all assessment locations and staff
- Documented and signed agreements indicating the lines of accountability of partner organisations in relation to the management of assessment and internal quality assurance
- Records of staff having access to/having copies of all necessary documentation
- Organisational/communication flowcharts
- Records of Programme delivery (i.e. lesson plans, schemes of work, etc.)
- Written procedures/oral explanation
- The Provider has access to the Co-ordinating ETB's access policy and assessment regulations, and they are understood by staff and apprentices
- Procedures, accommodation and equipment are fit for purpose to ensure the security of all assessment/examination and external test materials and apprentice scripts, assignments, projects or portfolios, in accordance with QQI requirements.
- There are procedures to ensure assessments/examinations are conducted by appropriate staff in accordance with the Co-ordinating ETB assessment regulations as they relate to the apprenticeship programme.

- Apprentice records and details of achievements are accurate, kept up to date, securely stored and available for External Examining and auditing by the Co-ordinating ETB.
- The apprentice has available to them a copy of the ETB assessment appeals procedure.
- There are procedures to ensure the Co-ordinating ETB is notified of any changes which may affect the Provider's ability to meet the approval criteria.

Access and fair assessment policy

- If an apprentice fails to reach the pass mark in the three attempts, they are deemed to have failed the programme and their apprenticeship will be terminated. There is an appeals process at this stage for apprentices who have been terminated, where they will be afforded the opportunity to appeal their termination and, if successful, gain a fourth and final assessment attempt. It is the policy of LMETB, as Co-ordinating Provider, to endeavour insofar as is practicable to deal with all reviews, appeals and disputes in relation to assessment matters in accordance with the principles of natural justice. See [Assessment Policy](#) for further information

o Details of security and access arrangements (safe or non-portable, lockable steel or metal cabinet, secure room/area)

o Records of appropriate staff accessing or having copies of Assessment Regulations and any other documentation relating to the administration and conduct of assessment o Apprentice assessment records

o Written/Oral explanation of procedures for notification of changes to the assessment, and/or verification team and/or other resources, etc.

- Resources necessary to satisfy the requirements for the Apprenticeship Programme and assessment and examination are/will be identified and provided.
- Equipment and accommodation used for assessment and examination purposes comply with the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation.
- Accommodation is provided for apprentice undertaking assessment/examinations which is suitably quiet, in an undisturbed location, with adequate heating, lighting and ventilation and complies with the relevant rules and regulations of the Co-ordinating ETB.
- Staff have sufficient time, resources and authority to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively.
- A staff development Programme to support the delivery of the programme is established in line with identified needs for both on and off-the-job teachers/trainers/instructors/tutors Instructors and Mentors.
- Examples of evidence of the above o Records of available resources

o Procedures used to identify and report deficiencies to senior management

o Evidence of additional resources obtained as necessary

o Records of accommodation checks o Equipment maintenance records/schedules including Health & Safety schedules

o Health and safety policies and audit reports

o Details of accommodation to be used

o Records of accommodation checks o Copies of the Co-ordinating ETB Assessment Regulations

o Arrangements for assessment planning (practical assessments)

o Record of/plans for Teacher/Trainer teacher/trainer/instructor/apprentice allocation

o Internal Verifier/Teacher/Trainer/Instructor/apprentice ratios

o Procedures for staff induction (new Teacher/Trainer/Instructor)

o Procedures for identifying and meeting staff development need

Records of meetings, briefings and updates

- o Records of individual development plans

- o Procedures for taking remedial action to support staff having difficulty.

Physical resources

Accommodation and equipment required to deliver the National Robotics Automation Apprenticeship programme as validated, having regard to the number of apprentices in a class group in the off-the-job element of the programme.

Resources necessary to satisfy the requirements for the Apprenticeship Programme and assessment and examination are/will be identified and provided

Equipment and accommodation used for assessment and examination purposes comply with the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation

Accommodation is provided for apprentice undertaking assessment/examinations which is suitably quiet, and in an undisturbed location, with adequate heating, lighting, ventilation and complies with the relevant rules and regulations of the Co-ordinating ETB

Examples of evidence of the above

- o Details of accommodation to be used and available equipment.

- o Procedures used to identify and report deficiencies to senior management

- o Evidence of additional resources obtained as necessary

- o Records of accommodation checks o Equipment maintenance records/schedules including Health & Safety schedules

- o Health and safety policies and audit reports o Records of accommodation checks o Copies of The ETB Assessment Regulations o Arrangements for assessment planning (practical assessments)

4.19 Facilities and Equipment

As part of Collaborating Provider Approval Process, the Collaborating Provider must confirm that they have the necessary facilities and equipment required for delivery of the new apprenticeship programme as outlined in the specific validated programme documentation.

Each ETB involved in delivering the apprenticeship programme reviews and evaluates capital equipment requirements of the Training Centre through the SOLAS FARR planning process on an annual basis. Specific capital requirement requests are made by Director of FET through this process. Apprentices will have access to a list of training materials as identified in the specific Programme Specification. All providers delivering the programme must purchase this training material and make it available to the apprentices. All apprentices must have access to a PC/Laptop/Tablet and internet connectivity. Apprentices will be provided with access to Moodle for inputting evidence of on-the-job assessments.

Section 5 – Procedures and Guidelines for the Design of new Apprenticeship Programmes

Title	Procedures and Guidelines for the Design of New Apprenticeship Programmes
Date Approved	
Effective From	
Date of Review	
Summary	This chapter outlines the background to the development of new apprenticeship programmes and the process followed which leads to their approval. Specific procedures for the development of a new apprenticeship programme and the documentation to support the validation are also outlined.

Table 6

LMETB recognizes and supports the need to design and develop apprenticeship programmes (in an efficient and flexible manner) that anticipate the changing needs of the economy, in line with national and international requirements, the NFQ, and stakeholder requirements. LMETB strives to promote initiatives, which support best practice in modern programme development, to keep Education and Training innovative, current, and competitive.

The application of academic quality principles at LMETB requires that it is satisfied that apprentice may attain knowledge, skills, and competence for the purpose of an award, which is consistent with the NFQ, and fulfils the requirements of QQI in relation to access, transfer, and progression. The application of this policy and procedures should ensure that new programmes offered by LMETB have academic and intellectual currency and standards, appropriate to the level of the award, and comparable to similar awards offered nationally and internationally. The approval of new apprenticeship programmes is achieved through validation by QQI.

All apprenticeship programmes developed and delivered by LMETB support the policies and criteria defined by QQI and described in the following documents and should be read in conjunction with the latest versions of these documentations.

1. Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training
2. Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Apprenticeships
3. Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Education and Training Boards
4. ETBI Sectoral Assessment Procedures Documents

5.1 Programme Development and Approval

Prior to or following the issue of an Occupational Profile, the Initial Consortium Steering Group, with the support of the employers who they represent, will identify the entity which will become the Coordinating Provider of the new apprenticeship programme or may appoint an existing relevant or linked provider. The ICSG will need to brief the employers so that they are fully cognizant of the role of the Coordinating provider.

LMETB, as Coordinating Provider shall ensure that the apprenticeship programme is:

1. Designed with overall programme objectives and outcomes that are aligned with industry requirements and encompass the range of skills, competencies, and knowledge.
2. Aligned with the QQI Professional Award-Type Descriptors of the National Framework of Qualifications.
3. Designed jointly by the Coordinating Provider, collaborating providers and employers as a partnership.
4. Designed to allow for national recruitment and for the smooth flow of apprentices between enterprises and educational institutions.
5. Designed to facilitate professional and regulatory licensing, where applicable.
6. Designed to recognize the duality of the apprentice as employee and trainee.
7. Well planned and has practically aligned off-the-job periods which integrate well with appropriately structured on-the-job experience.

8. Facilitated to provide learning experiences that will further the occupational development of the qualified apprentice.

5.2 Elements of Programme Design

In designing an apprenticeship programme, LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, will take account of the following:

1. The programme will prepare the apprentice for a specific occupation for which an Occupational Profile has been established. Will I reference main validation document?
2. Access to the programme is via a contract of apprenticeship between an approved employer of apprentices and the apprentice.
3. The programme will lead to a professional award at an NFQ level that is aligned with the QQI Professional Award Type Descriptor for that level and consistent with the approved Occupational Profile.
4. The programme is a blended combination of on-the-job (employer-based) training and off- the-job training with an education/training provider.
5. For a programme to be classified as an apprenticeship at entry level, it must have a duration of no less than two years.
6. The structure of the programme will provide for more than 50% workplace-based learning.
7. It is assumed here that the apprenticeship programme will be restricted to occupations approved by the State for inclusion in the list of apprentice occupations and there will be only one programme (nationally) per occupational profile.

5.3 Role of the Coordinating Provider in Programme Development

LMETB, in partnership with the Consortium Steering Group, will:

1. Take responsibility, through its QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee for development of a programme proposal to go forward for validation, working closely with the Consortium Steering Group.
2. Appoint a programme development/project manager to convene the programme development group.
3. This Programme Development Manager is responsible to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee through the programme development group, for the efficient development of the programme, and reports to the Director of FET.
4. Identify the broad enterprise sectors relevant to the new occupation through:
 - a. A systematic and rigorous process for identifying, as clearly as possible, the enterprise sectors that may need, or may be supportive of, a new apprenticeship training pathway and if applicable a new occupation. This should identify the national distribution of potential employers. This will ensure that the developing programme truly represents the needs of employers nationally.
 - b. A similar process should take place to identify off-the-job providers who will be partners in the development.
5. Ensure that the apprenticeship programme conforms to, and evolves with, the requirements of the occupation; is enterprise-led; and meets labour market needs, through the formal involvement of the CSG.
6. Ensure that there is adequate consultation with stakeholders in the development of the programme.
7. Make sure there are systems that ensure employers and labour market trends influence and lead curriculum development, while providing for apprentices' personal development and their preparation for progression.
8. Where it is proposed that the programme should include elements of syllabus content or assessments from external agencies the Coordinating Provider shall ensure that this

body's advice is available to the programme development group and that all appropriate agreements are in place.

9. Ensure the development, in consultation and agreement with employers and other relevant stakeholders such as occupational bodies, of binding memoranda of understanding or memoranda of agreement which commit all parties to a process of implementation of the agreements.

10. Develop in conjunction with the National Programme Board assessment instruments that adequately support certification of achievement of learning outcomes. The assessment systems should embrace both on-the-job and off-the-job phases. The challenges posed by the on-the-job assessment must be given careful and thorough consideration.

11. Apply to the awarding body for validation.

12. Develop and maintain systems for access (in collaboration with employers of apprentices), transfer, progression, and expulsion of participants, including all necessary appeal processes.

13. Where the relevant occupation is regulated, consult with regulators to ensure that the criteria for access to the apprenticeship and the apprenticeship programme remain consistent with applicable regulation.

14. Adhere to QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines that apply to providers' procedures for the provision of apprenticeship programmes.

5.4 Stages in the Development of an Apprenticeship Programme for Validation

The following phases lead to developing a programme leading to an award, incorporating both internal and external activity.

Schedule for new Apprentice Programme Development

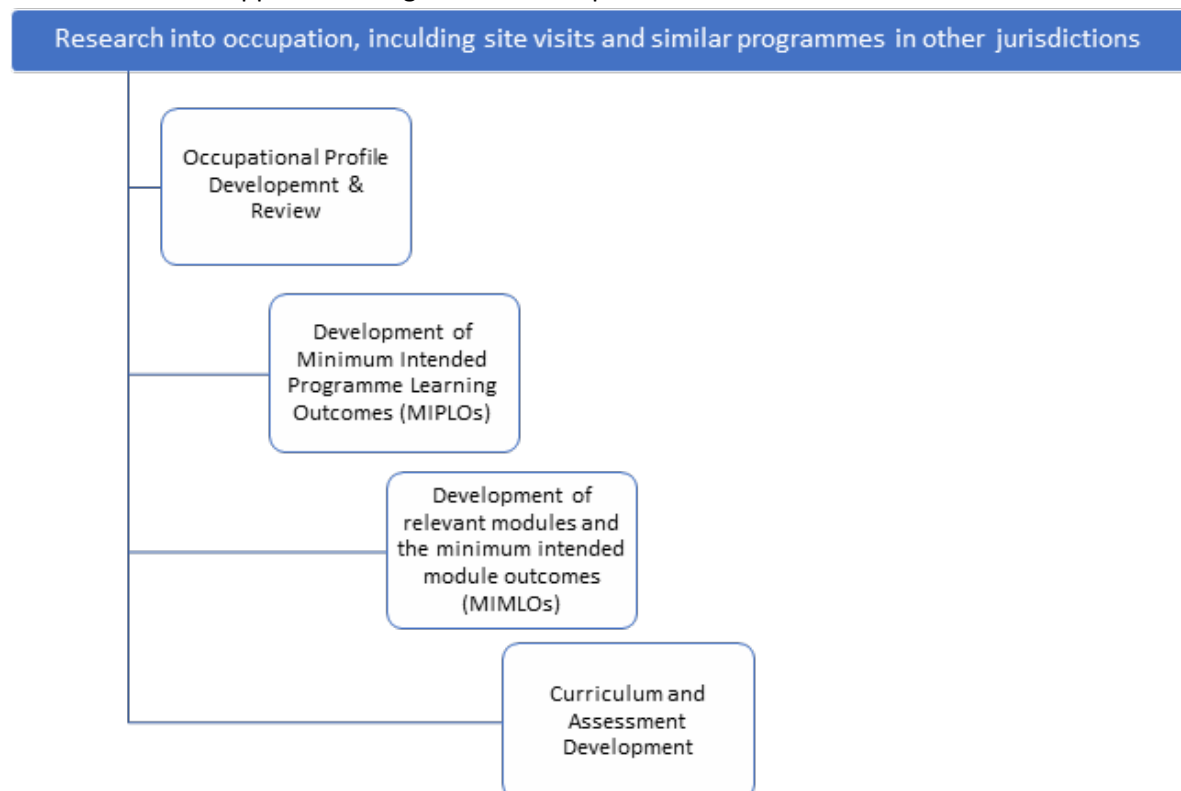


Figure 1.

5.5 Programme Documentation

LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, will ensure that the programme related documentation is developed to the point that it is ready to be offered to apprentices. It needs to comprise of sufficient information to address the applicable validation criteria which include:

1. An outline of the programme and identification of the QQI award(s) to which it designed to lead.
2. The documented programme should incorporate or be supported by:
 - a. The programme’s assessment strategies and procedures.
 - b. The programme’s teaching and learning strategies (this covers education and training)
 - c. Precise specifications of the programme’s staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) and an identified complement of staff (or potential staff)
 - d. Staff profiles for the programme’s key staff (e.g., the programme leadership)
 - e. Precise specifications of the programme’s physical resource requirements (required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) and an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources)
 - f. Comprehensive listing of the programme’s key physical resources.
 - g. Documented procedures for the operation and management of the programme; -Five-year plan for the programme
3. Samples of the material to be provided to prospective apprentices.
4. Samples of the material to be provided to enrolled apprentices.
5. Samples of assessment tasks, model answers and marking schemes for each award stage. Additional documentation may be required to address the applicable validation criteria.

Section 6 – Access, Transfer and Progression

Title	Access, Transfer and Progression
Date Approved	
Effective From	
Date of Review	
Summary	This chapter summarizes the pathways available to apprentices to commence a new apprenticeship programme, the process by which they may transfer from one programme to another and the process by which they may progress from one programme to another where each programme is of a higher academic level than the preceding programme.

Table 7

LMETB, provides an optimal education experience to the apprentice by creating innovative and creative programmes in an apprentice centric environment. The key objective is to provide a dynamic learning environment which encourages and supports the apprentice to realize their full potential. The National Programme Manager (LMETB) is responsible for managing the implementation of this Access, Transfer and Progression policy and for ensuring the availability of relevant information to apprentices.

As Coordinating Provider, LMETB will ensure that:

1. Apprentices commencing apprenticeship programmes are informed of the name of the awarding body and the title, award-type and framework level designation of the award associated with that programme.

2. The following information is published in a standard and accessible format:
 - a. Eligibility to enter, including the Occupational Profile outlining the knowledge, skill and competence needed by the apprentice.
 - b. A statement of arrangements available for recognition of prior learning, for entry to each of their programmes, and for access to an award.
 - c. Support available for target groups such as apprentices with disabilities or apprentices whose first language is not English.
3. Entry arrangements are clear, decisions on allocation of places on programmes are transparent, and all applicants are treated in a fair, equal, and consistent manner.
4. Appropriate arrangements are made for an appeal process.
5. For each apprenticeship programme, there is clear definition of the awards in the framework that are recognized as demonstrating eligibility for entry and, where relevant, the attainments required in these awards.

Coordinating Providers implementation of access, transfer and progression is monitored through programme validation and through review processes for quality assurance arrangements.

6.1 Apprenticeship Entry/Access Criteria

The entry requirements for admission to an apprenticeship programme are set out and agreed at validation. The requirements define a minimum admission standard and a standard for English Language and Maths where applicable. While these are the minimum statutory entry requirements, the Coordinating Provider will set entry requirements specific to and appropriate for the RAA Apprenticeship programme which are detailed in the validated programme documentation.

Programme access arrangements are as follows:

- Interview: Apprenticeship applicants will be selected by an interview with the prospective employer.
- Registration: SOLAS registers successful apprenticeship applicants as the Regulatory Authority for the Apprenticeships.

Minimum entry requirements are as follows:

- Applicants will be required to complete an initial aptitude test,
- Applicants must be 17 years or older,
- Applicants must have achieved a passing grade (O6/H7) in 5 or more subjects (to include Maths and English) at Ordinary Level in the Leaving Certificate OR
- A full QQI Level 5 or higher qualification
- For those who may not hold this certification, equivalence may be decided through a Recognition of Prior Learning procedure.
- Applicants must hold a minimum of a grade B2 CEFR in writing, reading, listening and speaking or recognised equivalent (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

Skills and attributes are as follows:

- Must be numerate and literate,
- Have good learning skills,
- Be interested in manufacturing technology and customer service,
- Have the ability to absorb product knowledge,
- Be motivated and analytical,
- Possess effective communication skills, and excellent interpersonal skills,
- Be able to work as a team member, be adaptable and flexible.

In some cases, an applicant will not have achieved the standard entry requirements. Those

applicants are deemed ‘non-standard’ and their application must be assessed by the Coordinating Provider or the Collaborating Provider for suitability for admission to the apprenticeship.

Non-standard applicants are considered on a case-by-case basis. The admission of a non-standard applicant is determined through a considered review of the candidates’ qualification and experience and other relevant admission data by the LMETB National Programme Manager.

Procedure for Access to a National Apprenticeship Programme for a Non-Standard Applicant

1. Applicants who do not reach the minimum entry requirement but who are looking to access the RAA can do so if they have relevant work experience as specified in the validated Apprenticeship Programme. Candidates wishing to avail of RPL for Experiential Learning must have a minimum of two years’ experience in the Robotics and Automation industry.
2. Advanced entry to the RAA programme does not apply, as statutorily all apprentices must be registered with SOLAS on the National Register of Apprentices for a minimum of two years.
3. Applicants and their employer are informed of entry requirements including reference to relevant work experience in the programme related area.
4. Collaborating ETBs/Providers will adjudicate on applications from potential apprentices seeking to use RPL as a method of satisfying entry requirements to the RAA New National Apprenticeship Programme.
5. Applicants are interviewed (including reference to work activities carried out with previous and current employer as appropriate) by Subject Matter Expert and LMETB National Programme Manager/Programme Leader (Collaborating Provider).
6. Applicants and employer informed of interview outcome.
7. Successful applicants registered as apprentice.

6.2 Transfer

LMETB is committed to enabling and facilitating the apprentice to transfer to other appropriate programmes leading to awards at the same level of the National Framework of Qualifications. In the context of further development of the National Framework of Qualifications, routes of transfer and progression will be established for all awards including L7/L8 Advanced Certificates. LMETB will work closely with the Collaborating Providers to facilitate transfer between programmes.

6.3 Progression

LMETB will work in collaboration with the Consortium Steering Group and National Programme Boards to identify progression opportunities and pathways for new apprenticeship programmes. Progression opportunities will be identified and made known to the apprentice.

Specific transfer and progression opportunities are detailed in the validated programme documentation.

6.4 Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the generic term for mechanisms for assessing prior learning that are used in the awarding of credit/exemptions to apprentices based on demonstrated learning that has occurred prior to admission.

LMETB, as Co-ordinating Provider, is committed to utilizing RPL as an instrument for determining standard access equivalences and for the award of credit or exemptions to apprentices with qualifications or prior experience in the area.

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

RPL concerns learning that has taken place but has not necessarily been assessed or measured and may be used as a supplement or alternative to formal learning for programme admission. It is the responsibility of RPL applicants to provide sufficient evidence to enable such a determination to be made.

This prior learning can be certified or experiential (non-certified).

- Prior Certified Learning is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding body such as Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) or other state recognized universities, colleges/institutes. Prior certified learning can also include qualifications awarded by third parties, such as the City & Guilds of London Institute.
- Prior Experiential Learning (Non-Certified Learning) is learning acquired through experience or learning achieved from non-accredited bodies, e.g., learning acquired in the workplace, learning gained from voluntary/community activities or learning gained from experience working in the home.

LMETB, as Co-ordinating Provider, in conjunction with Collaborating Providers, will ensure that all apprentice applicants are made aware of the potential benefits of RPL. Appropriate support services relating to portfolio preparation shall be made available within the ETBs to interested apprentices. Further details on the policy and procedures for the management and operation of RPL are attached in [Appendix E](#).

6.5 Transfer between Employers

An apprentice may need to transfer between employers for reasons of specific skills enhancement or redundancy.

6.5.1 Temporary Transfer for Skills Enhancement

1. It is the policy of LMETB to ensure that all apprentices have an opportunity to obtain the necessary workplace skills and competencies specified in the programme.
2. Through the monitoring of on-the-job training and assessments, it may emerge that a specific employer does not have the capacity to provide the apprenticeship with the full range of skills and competencies. This may also be brought to the attention of the Instructor or Authorized Officer by the apprentice. In this event, the National Programme Manager will:
 - a. Seek information from both the employer and the apprentice on the background to the reason why they cannot meet their obligations as agreed in the Employer Suitability to Train Agreement.
 - b. Explore with the employer the possibility of identifying another employer for the temporary transfer of the apprentice for specified skills training and assessment.
 - c. Advise the apprentice of his or her responsibility to actively seek another employer to facilitate a temporary transfer for skills enhancement.
 - d. Encourage alternative approved employers to facilitate apprentices in a temporary transfer for specified skills training and assessment.

6.5.2 Redundancy/Request Scenario for permanent transfer/deferral due to personal circumstances

- In the event of the National Programme Manager or Authorized Officer being advised of the redundancy of a registered apprentice, both will work collaboratively to:
 - Seek information from both the employer and the apprentice on the background to the reason for the redundancy.
 - Remind the employer of their obligation under the Labor Services Act 1987 – Apprenticeship Rules 1997, Section 7 (2) to take all reasonable steps to have the obligations under the contract of apprenticeship transferred to another employer.
 - Explore alternative employment through the employer representatives of the Consortium Steering Group.
 - Update the SOLAS Apprenticeship Client Services System to record the apprentice’s status as appropriate.
 - Advise the apprentice of his or her responsibility to actively seek employment with another employer.

- Encourage alternative approved employers to take on redundant apprentices, identify alternative approved employers who may be able to recruit the apprentice and provide relevant information to the apprentice and/or existing employer (as appropriate) of the alternative employer's details.

Section 7 – Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy

Title	Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy
Date Approved	
Effective From	
Date of Review	
Summary	This section outlines the approach to learning and teaching and the variety of learning methodologies which will be used on National Apprenticeship Programme in Robotics and Automation.

Table 8

7.1 Teaching and Learning Strategies

Introduction

LMETB is committed to excellence in teaching and learning and the creation of a learning environment whereby apprentices are encouraged to actively engage and take responsibility for their own learning. LMETB understands that a quality teaching and learning environment, provision of education supports, and reliable governance are instrumental for quality education. It is the policy of LMETB to manage the development of a teaching and learning strategy to deliver relevant, high-quality programmes to apprentices, and to enhance apprentice learning and progress, both on and off-the-job.

QQI Validation requirements

All new national apprentice programmes are required as part of QQI validation process to have an associated set of Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLOs) and Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs). These are used as the basis for deciding approaches to teaching and learning, and to assessment. This new RAA apprenticeship programmes offered by LMETB is structured to facilitate the learning process and has considered external reference points on knowledge, skill and competence standards as expressed in the QQI Professional Awards Standards.

Teaching and learning strategies employed by LMETB are intended to facilitate apprentices taking ownership of, and responsibility for their own learning in partnership with their employers and education provider. A range of learner and topic-focused teaching strategies are engaged with a view to providing the optimum learning environment. Instructor led classes including skills-based training and development, directed learning, practical work, the use of IT, automation and robotic equipment to support learning, guest lectures and skills demonstrations are examples of approaches and methodologies designed to actively engage the apprentice.

The programme's curriculum aims to:

- provide an academically robust and vocationally relevant programme that reflects the current and projected needs of the advanced manufacturing sector. The rationale for the curriculum structure is firmly rooted in (ongoing) consultation with industry (the CSG) and feedback from employers;
- is learner-focused and aims to provide the opportunity for both breadth and depth of learning and challenges in line with current industry requirements and anticipated future needs; and,
- is designed to foster the development of core practical skills, on a foundation of sound knowledge and competence that will enable apprentices to grow in confidence and become skilled technicians in the advanced manufacturing space.

Key Principles:

- Adopting an apprentice centred approach to promote the application of learning into the workplace whereby the learner/apprentice will be enabled to contribute both practically and productively.
- Acknowledging that the programme requires learning that takes places both on and off job, and that the dual approach allows the apprentice to acquire learning from observing, practicing, experiencing and reflecting.
- In respect of the key teaching and learning strategies outlined a spiral approach to embedding these methods within the course will be adopted providing variety and innovation in the learning suitable to the module being delivered.
- Providing classroom-based instructor led training delivered by experienced Instructors who meet the profile.
- Ensuring that the apprentice gets exposure and practical experience of using state-of-the-art robotic, and manufacturing automation systems, during scheduled class module time and within their workplace setting. This will include access to software-based design and robotic programming software systems.
- Utilizing subject matter and industry experts in the format of regular guest lectures and site visits throughout the duration of the programme.
- Reinforcement of learning in the workplace with the support of a Work Based Employer Work-based Mentor, who will encourage the apprentice to integrate theory and practice, enabling them to gain deeper knowledge through exploring real-world operations, challenges and problems.
- Provision of a proven and highly interactive Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Moodle which will support and reinforce the instructor delivered classes and scaffold both a community of practice and independent, proactive learning.
- Embedding both formative and summative assessment in the classroom-based learning facilitating feedback from the instructor and through the provision of self-testing instruments e.g. reflection, quizzes, multiple choice questions etc. in the VLE.

Learning Methodologies

A variety of learning methodologies will be used on the RAA Apprenticeship Programmes to communicate and develop understanding of the curriculum. These include but are not limited to:

- Classroom based delivery
- Guest lectures
- Formative assessment
- Problem solving
- Inquiry-based learning
- Employability skills development
- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Group work
- Case Study Analysis
- Research supervision and project work
- Simulation activities (e.g., Digital Twin simulations)
- Videos and feedback -Field trips (including in company visits)
- Self-directed learning
- Work based Logbook

- Summative Assessment

As Coordinating Provider, in collaboration with the National Programme Board, LMETB will develop and apply an appropriate range of teaching methods, supported by effective assessment mechanisms, which match the learning outcomes and enable apprentices to take responsibility for their own learning. Active apprenticeship participation is encouraged to ensure an apprentice-centred approach. Guest trainers/speakers will be included and will expose apprentices to contemporary knowledge and expertise. Self-directed learning is actively encouraged. Apprentices will be directed to a [range of resources](#) including books, academic, industry journals, articles, videos and Internet sources to provide them with the ability to follow autonomous learning paths and to encourage an ethos of life-long learning.

LMETB have a planned investment strategy on the development of teaching and learning materials which will support the effective and efficient delivery of the RAA Apprenticeship Programme while reinforcing the associated quality assurance requirements. Considerable work has already commenced for the development of resources for the delivery of the Special Purpose Award in Advanced Manufacturing Level 6

Teaching and learning tools

Specific Teaching and Learning Tools will include but are not limited to:

- Traditional instructor led classes
- Practical Skills demonstrations
- Learner practice of skills demonstrated,
- Guest speakers
- Formative assessments –, discussions, case studies, practical exercises
- Teach back sessions & peer-to -peer learning
- Presentations,
- Subject-specific handouts,
- TEL Tools will be used extensively as part of class-based instruction.

Learning objectives will be fostered through appropriate teaching and learning methodologies and assessment procedures. These include the ability to evaluate critically, to identify problems as well as solutions, to work independently and in multidisciplinary teams. Readings, desk research and the use of the Internet as a research tool will be important components of the apprentices' learning experience.

The employer, workplace mentor and apprentice will receive the 2-year academic calendar schedule in advance of registration which will assist in planning in the workplace. The workplace mentor will provide opportunities to enable the apprentice to achieve the module's minimum intended learning outcomes by facilitating the apprentice's learning in the workplace by leading by example and promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

The profile of the apprentice will lend itself to studying the modules in an integrated fashion and thus reinforce the learning and will ensure that all apprentices are provided with learning opportunities that will develop their full potential and allow them to fulfil their roles within an advanced manufacturing environment.

Role of the Instructor for the work-based project supervision

Apprentices will be allocated an instructor who will act as their work-based Project Supervisor. Apprentices are encouraged to be pro-active and seek the support of their project supervisor. As part of their role supervisors will:

- Facilitate discussions around ideas for the Work Based Capstone Project with apprentices and encourage consultation with the employer.
- Suggest relevant reading materials and resources.
- Provide support with structuring, write-up and particular unit requirements.
- Agree objectives and targets and guide apprentices in project planning.
- Schedule 1-to-1 supervisions for the project over the course of the project.
- Provide remote support via telephone/ email/video calls (where appropriate)

Programme teaching and learning strategies for the RAA programme

Induction

A key support for apprentices is a comprehensive induction programme delivered by the National Programme Manager with the support of the Programme Delivery Team. Included in this induction, is training for apprentices on how to access Moodle and the use of the Microsoft Office Suite will be delivered and an awareness created in order that apprentices will know how to access resources/supports.

Personal Development

LMETB recognises that the personal development of apprentices is essential if they are to succeed in the industry. They must not only acquire knowledge but should also develop attributes, traits and competencies which will enhance their performance. In the teaching of all modules, instructors will be conscious of the need to develop these personal attributes and to reinforce and build upon learning which takes place in a more focused way through the communications and personal development components of the programme.

Learning scaffolding

Classes will be available for individuals and small groups, as appropriate, to meet with instructors to progress development needs, especially where one-to-one support is required.

LMETB acknowledges that Apprentices have diverse learning styles and may be referred for academic support for a variety of reasons – for example English language supports, academic writing support or numeracy support. The objective of this service is to diagnose individual apprentice difficulties as they relate to all aspects of academic work and provide feedback and guidance to Apprentices in meeting academic performance variances.

Collaborating Providers will ensure these supports are available to the apprentice in their own ETB.

UDL

LMETB are cognisant that every learner is different, and this must be built into the curriculum using methods of teaching, learning and assessment based on the Universal Design for Learning framework. LMETB is committed to the application of the '[UDL for FET Practitioners: Guidance for Implementing Universal Design for Learning in Irish Further Education and Training](#)' guidance. UDL fits perfectly into everything LMETB does to support all learners by using a variety of teaching methods to reduce barriers to learning. This means that inclusive teaching and learning approaches are built-in at design stage so that all learners' needs are addressed where possible. By applying the principles of UDL in FET programmes, accessibility, variability and the flexibility that addresses learners' strengths and needs are built-in, thereby improving outcomes for all learners.

LMETB actively encourages inclusive and alternative assessment formats, in the context of this programme this includes collections of work and skills demonstrations.

Technology Enhanced Learning

LMETB is committed to using technology where it adds value to the learning environment and engages in active evaluation of new technologies on an ongoing basis. The usage of the Moodle VLE will provide instructors and apprentices with a virtual learning environment to complement, enrich and support the more traditional learning environment.

LMETB has significantly invested in TEL to enhance the teaching and learning experience across its provision. From the RAA apprenticeship perspective, TEL leverages digital tools, software, and platforms to create engaging and interactive learning experiences for students. Examples include:

- Online Learning Platforms: MOODLE is used as the preferred learning management system. This platform provides a virtual environment where apprentices can access programme materials, submit assessments and receive their online feedback from instructors. Apprentices are given training on this platform during induction and 1-1 training should they need it to ensure they can engage in the classroom environment.
- Multimedia Content: MyAcademy may be used to host multimedia content such as videos and other multimedia content;
- Collaborative Tools: The programme team promotes collaborative learning by providing tools for online collaboration, such as discussion forums, group projects, and real-time collaboration platforms (e.g. padlet). These tools enable the apprentices to work together, share ideas, and learn from their peers.
- Digital twins: Digital twins are used to improve manufacturing operations, test new products and train people on virtual representations of real-world machines. The objective may be to demonstrate robotic assets simulation models for on ground monitoring, predictive maintenance, model driven operations, effective operation/planning of the robotic asset (rover, arm, driller, etc) or The objective of this activity is to demonstrate a digital twin for a selected manufacturing process such as composite or additive manufacturing technologies.

Language, Literacy and Maths supports:

The required level of prior educational attainment to access the programme ensures that applicants who are enrolled as apprentices on the programme will have a fair and reasonable chance of participating fully in all programme elements. LMETB benchmarked this requirement with equivalence to a B2 on the CEFR framework.

LMETB views the integration of literacy and numeracy/maths into the organisations's apprenticeship offering as a key priority and is cognisant of the impact it can have on learner retention and progression. Given the duration of this programme, additional learning supports may be required. It might be the case that some of the apprentices commence this programme after having been away from education and/or the workplace for a period of time and therefore study skills will need to be updated. This programme requires independent learning by apprentices, and some may need help to follow this new style of learning and thus by offering literacy and maths supports, the learner can enhance both their professional and personal development.

Specifics supports include:

- Literacy diagnostic test prior to induction with a 1-1 literacy check in during registration to review any literacy needs.
- An *"Introduction to Academic Skills"* Workshop including academic writing during induction delivered by an LMETB Adult Education tutor(s).
- Literacy (if required), writing and study skill classes will be delivered throughout the off the job phases.
- One to one support classes will be delivered if required.
- [ETBI Literacy, Numeracy and Scholarly Resources for FET](#) provide a suite of literacy and numeracy information for apprentices in the FET sector. These include the sectoral - Academic Writing for Learners in the FET Sector & Referencing Handbook for Learners in the FET Sector
- Access to an [LMETB Guidance Counsellor](#) when required.
- Access to a fully functioning computer with appropriate software applications
- Programme specific equipment and facilities
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Advocacy support
- Access to additional [literacy and numeracy support](#)
- [Access to FET Learner Support Office](#)
- [FET Learner Virtual Support Hub](#)
- Professional Counselling funding by LMETB and provided through MyMind.org
- Assistive Technology (AT) and training in Assistive Technology (AT)
- RAA Support [visualisation chart](#)

LMETB are cognisant that every learner is different, and this must be built into the curriculum using methods of teaching, learning and assessment based on the Universal Design for Learning framework. LMETB is committed to the application of the '[UDL for FET Practitioners: Guidance for Implementing Universal Design for Learning in Irish Further Education and Training](#)' guidance. UDL fits perfectly into everything LMETB does to support all learners by using a variety of teaching methods to reduce barriers to learning. This means that inclusive teaching and learning approaches are built-in at design stage so that all learners' needs are addressed where possible. By applying the principles of UDL in FET programmes, accessibility, variability and the flexibility that addresses learners' strengths and needs are built-in, thereby improving outcomes for all learners.

LMETB actively encourages inclusive and alternative assessment formats, in the context of this programme this includes collections of work and skills demonstrations

Assessment

The programme development team have purposely ensured that the number of exams are minimised and are utilising an authentic form of assessment relating it back to the organisation which employs the apprentice in the form of the work based task logbook and the capstone project module (module 9). To support apprentice learning, workplace tasks are aligned to certain modules and are completed in the workplace and recorded in the workplace log book. The proposed structure will facilitate working with apprentices, employers, workplace mentors and LMETB as education providers collaborating.

Each stakeholder will be required to contribute effort and commitment. The workplace is the key site for learning in this programme and the programme delivery team will have equipped employers, and the workplace mentors with the knowledge, skills and competencies to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively. Employers are expected to provide opportunities for apprentices to implement their learning. The workplace tasks to be completed in the workplace will be monitored closely by the workplace mentors and LMETB instructors.

Facilitation of learning in the workplace by a Work-based Mentor, who will:

M: Meet regularly with apprentices and plan ahead to ensure dates are scheduled for reviewing project milestones and review of deliverables

E: Encourage apprentices through the whole project, helping them to identify barriers to success and strategies for overcoming these. Not all projects will run smoothly, and the Work-based Mentor can provide a valuable sounding for apprentices when things go awry.

N: Negotiate project topics and scope with apprentices to ensure that they link to their organisation and have clear and meaningful impact. Ensure that the complexity of the project enables the apprentice to apply knowledge and demonstrate a range of practical skills and behaviours that align with the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship programme. The workplace task logbook completed as part of other modules may form part of the planning and research for the

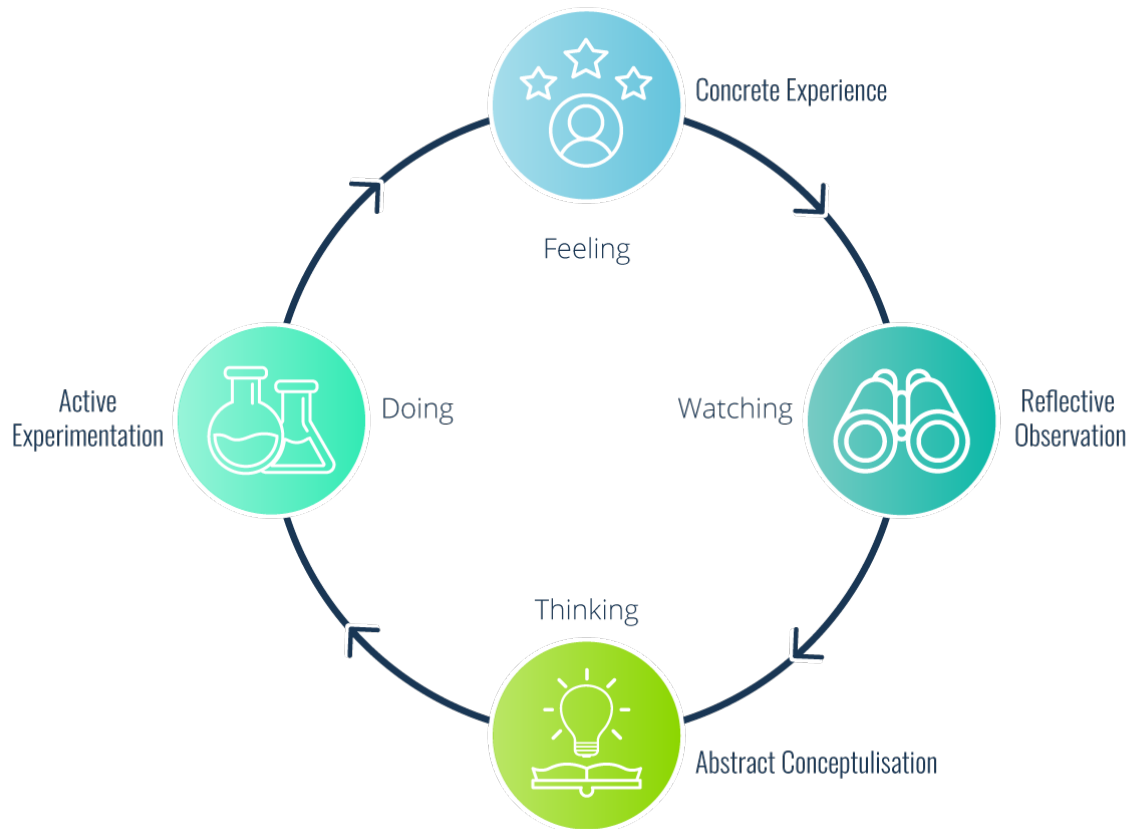
T: Target development areas and guide apprentices on resource or training information in order for the required knowledge, skills and behaviour gaps to be addressed. This will form part of the discussions with the instructors during their site visits.

O: Offer ongoing support and attend progress reviews and other manager and Work-based Mentor information sessions to share best practice and stay up to date with requirements and developments.

R: Remind apprentices about positive time management. This is key and managing this is a skill apprentices should demonstrate as part of any project.

S: Signpost apprentices to helpful information, share knowledge and expertise in relation to the organisation and enable apprentices to gain access to relevant internal resources and information.

The structure adopted for the programme involves a number of phases for the apprentice and incorporates many of the principles associated with Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle. In this theory Kolb argued that learning is most effective when following the cycle presented in the figure below



The Teaching and Learning strategy of the apprenticeship revolve around Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory in general. According to Kolb, effective learning takes place when an individual completes a cycle of the four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. This process is believed to be best represented by a cyclical model where apprentices progress through four different phases. This learning cycle highlights the importance of experience in education whereby the creation of knowledge is a process "created through the transformation of experience". As the name suggests this "experiential learning theory" supports the importance and relevance of experiential activities such as those experienced in a work-based learning scenario. The apprentice can start at any phase; however, s/he must follow each stage sequentially, ensuring that effective links are made between each stage.

The Kolb Learning Style Inventory (LSI) and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) are often utilised in educational settings, including apprenticeships, to understand how individuals learn and to tailor teaching strategies accordingly. Kolb's theory suggests that individuals may have preferences for certain stages of the learning cycle. These preferences form the basis of the Learning Style Inventory (LSI), which categorizes learners into one of four styles:

<p>Preferences for certain stages of the learning cycle</p>	<p>In an apprenticeship setting, understanding these learning preferences can aid mentors/educators tailor their teaching strategies to better meet the needs of each apprentice. For example:</p>
<p>1 Diverging (Concrete Experience/Reflective Observation): People with this style are good at viewing situations from different perspectives. They excel in brainstorming sessions and are imaginative.</p>	<p>Diverging learners might benefit from group discussions or creative projects.</p>
<p>2 Assimilating (Abstract Conceptualization/Reflective Observation): These learners are more interested in logical theories and ideas. They prefer reading, lectures, and exploring analytical models.</p>	<p>Assimilating learners may prefer lectures, reading assignments, or case studies</p>
<p>3 Converging (Abstract Conceptualization/Active Experimentation): Learners with this style are practical and prefer to apply ideas to real-world situations. They enjoy problem-solving and decision-making activities.</p>	<p>Converging learners might thrive with hands-on projects, simulations, or real-world applications.</p>
<p>4 Accommodating (Concrete Experience/Active Experimentation): Individuals with this style prefer hands-on experiences and are more likely to take risks. They learn best through trial and error.</p>	<p>Accommodating learners could benefit from practical experiences, experimentation, and immediate feedback.</p>

By incorporating various teaching methods that align with the preferences of different learners, the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship can be effective in promoting skill development and knowledge acquisition.

Programme teaching and learning strategies of the RAA programme

The teaching, learning and assessment strategies for this programme have been informed by QQI guidelines, policies, and procedures. These strategies endeavour to develop an understanding of core theory and practice with a specific orientation to the role of an Robotics and Automation Technician. The main objective of this programme's teaching and learning strategy is that it is learner-centric and that the relevant modules are delivered coherently. This ensures that all graduates of the programme will be competent employees that value continuous professional development and life-long learning and possess the knowledge, skills and confidence to pursue further study if they wished to do so.

The success of any curriculum is through the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning and the diversity of teaching methodologies is a key feature of this curriculum. Instructors will implement various approaches to teaching, learning and assessment all of which are varied, and learner focused.

As previously acknowledged LMETB are cognisant that every apprentice is different, and this must be built into the curriculum using methods of teaching, learning and assessment based on the Universal

Design for Learning framework. Due to the diverse profile of the Apprentices, instructors will establish a supportive relationship with the apprentice by focusing building on his/her strengths.

Classes are delivered with a ratio of 1:16 (minimum class sizes 14) thus learning will be enhanced by more class participation, more time available for formative assessment and feedback and thus apprentices will become more confident and comfortable with their peers. There are many teaching and learning strategies that instructors use to support inclusion and they will need to have knowledge of and the skill to choose ones that best meet the differing learning needs of this diverse cohort of apprentices. It is envisaged that by 2025 all instructors on the programme will have completed the AHEAD Digital Badge in UDL.

Teaching is designed to create a relevant and meaningful context for apprentices to make practical connections to the knowledge and skills they are acquiring. Teaching styles and contexts are flexible and aim to motivate and engage the Level 6 learner. Assessments are recognised as learning opportunities in themselves and are designed to match the required level of study, validate achievement of the MIMLOs and MIPLOs, and prepare apprentices for progression in their career. The following Teaching & Learning Strategies will be evident in the programme:

Facilitative learning

This approach emphasises the role of a facilitator in guiding and supporting the learning process. The facilitator acts as a guide or mentor rather than a traditional instructor, focusing on creating an environment that encourages active participation, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Instructors (as facilitators) on the Robotics and Automation apprenticeship programme acknowledge that learners have different backgrounds, experiences, and learning styles. They create a learner-centred environment where apprentices can take ownership of their learning and engage in meaningful interactions with both the facilitator and their peers. Their role is to provide support, ask thought-provoking questions, and encourage reflection, rather than simply delivering information.

Key principles of facilitative learning on the programme include:

- Active participation: Apprentices are actively engaged in the learning process, participating in discussions, problem-solving activities, and hands-on practical experiences.
- Collaboration: Apprentices work together, sharing ideas, perspectives, and knowledge. It fosters social interaction, cooperation, and the exchange of diverse viewpoints.
- Critical thinking: Apprentices are encouraged to think critically, analyse information, and develop their own conclusions. This type of learning promotes questioning, exploration, and the ability to evaluate different sources of information.
- Reflection: Apprentices are encouraged to reflect on their learning experiences, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and make connections between new knowledge and prior understanding.
- Supportive environment: The facilitator creates a safe and supportive learning environment where learners feel comfortable expressing their thoughts, asking questions, and taking risks.

Facilitative learning can be applied in various educational settings, such as face-to-face sessions in a classroom, workshops, and training sessions. It is particularly effective in promoting active engagement, critical thinking skills, and deeper understanding of the subject matter. Throughout the programme, the apprentice will be provided with opportunities to learn from others. In the workplace, the apprentice is allocated a workplace mentor and should also be introduced to experienced

colleagues willing to share their knowledge and skills. The opportunity to attend meetings, conferences or other workplace events will also facilitate learning. The assessments and workplace tasks require the apprentice to engage with others in the organisation in sharing and seeking knowledge, and skills. The classroom will provide a further opportunity for the apprentice to learn from their instructors and their peers. Introducing guest lectures and subject matter experts enhances the learning experience by providing advanced knowledge of a particular subject area. Specific examples relating to the RAA apprenticeship include:

- Traditional instructor led classes.
- Practical classes/workshops using role-plays
- Formative assessments –discussions, case studies, practical exercises, peer to peer learning
- Guest speakers
- Completion of their on-the-job Workplace Task Logbook
- Shadowing their mentors and other experienced colleagues
- Engagement with customers
- Skills demonstrations

Cooperative learning

This approach is seen where apprentices will work together in small groups to achieve a common goal or complete a learning task. It involves active participation, collaboration, and mutual support amongst the group members. In a cooperative learning setting, the apprentices are encouraged to interact with one another, share knowledge and resources, and take collective responsibility for their learning.

The concept behind cooperative learning is that apprentices can benefit from working together and supporting each other. It promotes social interaction, communication skills, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. By engaging in cooperative learning activities, apprentices can develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter and enhance their overall learning experience.

Cooperative learning can take various forms, including group activities, discussions, problem-solving activities, and jigsaw activities/team teaching (where each group member becomes an expert in a specific topic and teaches it back others). The instructor on the programme plays a crucial role in structuring and facilitating these activities, providing guidance and support to ensure that each group member is actively engaged and that learning objectives are met. Cooperative learning will involve the following key elements:

- Positive interdependence: Apprentices are dependent on one another to complete the task or achieve the goal. Each individual's success is tied to the success of the group as a whole.
- Individual accountability: Each apprentice is responsible for contributing to the group's efforts and ensuring their own learning. This helps to promote group work and for the apprentice not to rely solely on others to do the work.
- Face-to-face interaction: Apprentices actively engage in discussions, share ideas, ask questions, and provide feedback to one another. This interaction fosters a supportive and collaborative learning environment.
- Cooperative skills: Students learn and practice skills such as active listening, communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution, which are essential for effective collaboration.
- Group processing: Groups reflect on their performance, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and make adjustments as needed. This helps to enhance the learning process and improve group dynamics over time.

Specific examples relating to the RAA apprenticeship may include:

- **Jigsaw:** Also referred to as a teach-back, with a jigsaw activity, apprentices are divided into small groups, and each group is assigned a specific topic or piece of information. They become experts on their assigned topic and then regroup with apprentices who were assigned different topics. In the new groups, they share their knowledge and teach each other, so that everyone in the group gains a comprehensive understanding of the entire topic.
- **Think-Pair-Share:** This activity involves three stages. First, apprentices individually think about a question, problem, or topic given to them by the instructor. Then, they pair up with a partner and discuss their thoughts. Finally, pairs share their ideas with the whole class. This strategy encourages active participation and gives apprentices the opportunity to learn from their peers.
- **Group Work:** Apprentices are organised into small groups and given a problem or project to investigate. Each group member has a specific role or responsibility within the group, and they collaborate to gather information, analyse data, and develop solutions. This approach encourages critical thinking, research skills, and teamwork.
- **Roundtable:** In a roundtable activity, apprentices sit in a circle and take turns discussing a topic or question. Each apprentice contributes their thoughts or ideas, and the discussion continues until everyone has had a chance to share. This promotes equal participation and active listening skills.
- **Learning Stations:** Learning stations involve setting up different activity/learning stations in the classroom. Apprentices work in small groups and rotate through the stations, engaging in various tasks or activities related to the lesson. This allows for collaborative learning, hands-on-experiences, and differentiated instruction.
- **Problem-solving groups:** Apprentices are divided into small groups and given a problem or challenge to solve together. They work collaboratively, brainstorm ideas, analyse different perspectives, and come up with solutions. This activity promotes critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills.

Feedback from instructors on the programme has indicated that cooperative learning works best in a face-to-face environment, leads to improved academic achievement, increased motivation, enhanced interpersonal skills, and a positive classroom environment. It promotes a sense of belonging, cooperation, and mutual respect amongst the apprentices, fostering a more inclusive and collaborative learning community.

Peer to Peer Learning

This recognises the importance of social interaction and the value of learning from one's peers. It promotes active engagement, collaboration, and the development of essential skills needed for success in industry and has proven to be critical in the delivery of teaching and learning on the RAA apprenticeship programme. It involves the exchange of knowledge, skills, and experiences among apprentices who are at similar levels of understanding or expertise academically however would have different levels of experience in the workplace.

In a peer-to-peer learning environment, apprentices take an active role in their education by interacting and collaborating with their peers. This approach recognises that apprentices have valuable insights, perspectives, and knowledge that can benefit their fellow learners. The age group of apprentices is potentially from 17 upwards thus the sharing of experiences and knowledge can be very rich in terms of learning. Instructors on the programme encourage peer to peer learning by

Collaboration: Encouraging apprentices to work together on projects, assignments, or problem-solving tasks. By collaborating, learning can engage in discussions, share ideas, and learn from one another's experiences.

- **Active engagement:** Apprentices are actively involved in the learning process, which can enhance their motivation and interest in the subject matter. They become more responsible for their own learning and take ownership of their own educational journey.
- **Diverse perspectives:** Peer-to-peer learning brings together apprentices with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This diversity fosters a rich learning environment where apprentices can gain new insights and broaden their understanding of a topic.
- **Improved communication skills:** Engaging in peer-to-peer discussions and group work assists apprentices develop effective communication and interpersonal skills. They learn to articulate their thoughts, listen actively to others, and collaborate effectively.
- **Enhanced critical thinking:** Peer-to-peer learning often involves problem-solving activities and discussions that require the apprentice to think critically and analyse information. Through these interactions, apprentices can develop their analytical and reasoning abilities.
- **Increased confidence:** Working with peers can help boost apprentice's confidence in their abilities. As they share their knowledge and receive feedback from their peers, they become more self-assured and develop a deeper understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Social and emotional growth:** Peer-to-peer learning provides opportunities for apprentices to build social connections, develop empathy, and learn from one another's experiences. It creates a supportive and inclusive learning community where individuals can feel valued and respected.

Peer-to-peer learning can take various forms on the RAA apprenticeship such as

- Group discussions
- Collaborative projects
- Study groups
- Peer tutoring
- Online discussion forums
- Collaborative document sharing
- Online study group
- Discussion boards
- Cap-stone Project (apprentices can attend the final presentation of their colleagues project)

Work based learning

The RAA has been designed to integrate classroom learning with real-world work experiences. It provides the apprentice with the opportunity to acquire and apply knowledge and skills in a workplace setting, allowing them to gain practical experience and develop career-related competencies. Key learning takes place by:

- **Skill Development:** The apprentice applies theoretical knowledge in their workplace, enhancing their practical skills and competencies.
- **Industry Insight:** Apprentices gain first-hand exposure to the professional work environment, industry trends, and practices, helping them make informed career choices.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Their workplace mentor facilitates connections with professionals in the field, expanding the apprentices' professional networks
- **Personal and Professional Growth:** The RAA apprenticeship promotes essential workplace skills such as teamwork, empathy, communication, problem-solving, and adaptability.

Apprentices will be provided with a Work Based Task Logbook whereby workplace tasks are required to be completed for relevant module with the support of their workplace mentor. Where relevant, the

apprentice can upload evidence of tasks they complete. The majority of modules are assessed via practical work-based assessments where the workplace acts as a live case study. This action- learning orientated style of assessment requires the apprentice to utilise the learning acquired on the programme and implement it in their own workplace setting.

Assessment Strategy

LMETB recognises that assessment is an integral part of the process of teaching and learning and supports an understanding of core theory and practice for the apprentice. Assessment is required to be a positive activity, which contributes to and enhances apprentice development and progression. The apprenticeship will employ a broad and balanced range of assessment techniques, with an interdisciplinary approach being adopted where possible.

Programme assessment strategy and Review

A programme assessment strategy will be available in the validated programme specification. This will provide guidance for the Instructor/Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor, apprentices and the on-the-job and off-the-job mentors who are involved with the programme.

Review of teaching methods and assessment

The National Programme Board will consider the effectiveness of the learning outcomes in during and after the programme provision process. They will also ensure that over-assessment of the apprentice is avoided. They will play a key role in ensuring that assessment is valid, reliable, fair, transparent, and authentic. The assessment tasks (and marking criteria) devised will enable the apprentices to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes both on and off-the- job and will facilitate robust decisions. Within the modules, a range of assessment instruments have been specified for use to avoid over-reliance on any single instrument.

The National Programme Board for the RAA programme will undertake periodic evaluations of the range of teaching methods and assessment methods to identify best practice as well as areas for improvement, and, where necessary, training and resource requirements. The Programme Leader will ensure such information is available to the National Programme Board.

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

Use of formative assessment and feedback:

Formative feedback plays a vital role in the learning process by providing apprentices with valuable insights and guidance to improve their understanding and performance. Unlike summative assessment that measures final outcomes, the programme delivery team will use formative feedback to focus on progression and development which will include constructive comments, suggestions, and assessments provided by instructors, peers, or self-reflection. This feedback encourages apprentices to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement, helps them set goals, and guides them towards effective learning strategies. By highlighting specific areas of improvement and offering actionable advice, formative feedback enables the apprentices to take ownership of their learning,

fosters a growth mind-set, and ultimately enhances their academic achievement.

Instructors will adopt and implement formative assessment strategies into their teaching practices for the delivery of this programme. The ethos of formative assessment is to ensure instructors are aware of where their learners are at in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get them there. At team planning and assessment design meetings, instructors will engage in discourse around the implementation of effective formative feedback into their practice, and how best this can be achieved for the benefit of learners, consider the timing of giving effective feedback and the method used. There will be an emphasis on instructors sharing their formative assessment techniques and methodologies in a collaborative approach. Modules will have built-in formative assessment and can take the form of skills demonstrations, group discussions, teach back sessions and individual feedback. These practices help to develop learners' self-reflective and cognitive skills. For the purpose of this programme and in order to increase the apprentices personal and academic confidence to ensure knowledge has been transferred, regular formative feedback will be provided by the instructor. It is intended to be constructive in nature, in that the apprentice can easily identify where the apprentice can strengthen their work, in line with the assignment guidelines.

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Programme assessment strategy

LMETB recognises that assessment is an integral part of the process of teaching and learning and enhances the development of the apprentice. The workplace provides an excellent opportunity to test the learning achieved and all assessments are authentic and practical whilst ensuring academic integrity is maintained. It is the responsibility of all apprentices and instructors to maintain and promote academic integrity.

For the on-the-job phases LMETB in conjunction with the employers will have designed assessment tasks which provide opportunities for the apprentice to consolidate their learning, receive feedback, reflect on their progress, and apply their knowledge in the workplace. This approach supports the development of a deeper understanding of the subject matter and enhances overall learning outcomes. Building on assessment practices can be an effective way to consolidate learning over the duration of the apprenticeship programme.

The programme delivery team will provide timely and constructive feedback to apprentices on their assessments and will encourage them to reflect on their performance and identify areas of strength and areas that require improvement. This helps the apprentice understand their learning progress

and reinforces key concepts.

Regular formative assessments will be provided throughout the learning process. These assessments focus on providing feedback and identifying areas for improvement. They can take the form short assignment etc. By engaging in frequent formative assessments, apprentices can gauge their understanding, correct misconceptions, and solidify their learning.

LMETB operate a system of criterion-referenced assessment for all accredited programmes. Criterion referenced assessment is an assessment based on learning outcomes, established, and agreed upon for all modules, stages and programmes accredited by QQI and with regard to [QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2022](#). This system ensures that assessment, in all instances is valid and reliable and applied fairly and consistently, for all apprentices, across all programmes and assessors.

The National Programme Board wish to avoid the over-reliance on examinations. The following teaching and learning strategies have been included in this proposed programme:

Examinations

Exposure to examinations as the apprentice may wish to progress to another programme after completing the apprenticeship programme and experience completing exams would be beneficial. Suggested Types to be utilised include:

- MCQs which are a valuable learning tool for the Level 6 learner and will test a wide range of higher order thinking skills
- Short answer questions will allow the apprentice to answer an open-ended prompt and affords the apprentice to reveal their knowledge in a few sentences.

Authentic Assessments:

Incorporate authentic assessments that mirror real-world tasks or scenarios in the workplace. These assessments require apprentices to apply their knowledge and skills in a workplace environment. Examples include project-based assessments, case studies, or simulations. Authentic assessments not only consolidate learning but also promote higher- order thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.

Skills demonstrations:

This involves the examining the skills of the Robotics and Automation Apprentice. This includes testing in a real-life environment. This assessment methodology will be used to evaluate a variety of practical learning outcomes. The apprentice will be required to execute a task or a set of tasks as part of a skills demonstration in the presence of their instructor or may be required to upload videos to their MOODLE page for correction by their instructor.

Workplace Task Logbook:

The development of a portfolio in the form of a Workplace Task Logbook provides an opportunity for the apprentice to create evidence of their progress and achievements which they can share with their employers, mentors, instructors, and peers. Collections of work via photography, video and via the Workplace Task Logbook will be uploaded to Moodle and assessed by Instructors in consultation with the Workplace Mentor. It can also include projects completed during the off-the-

job phases as well as any additional learning or achievements. By assessing the Workplace Task Logbook on a regular basis and formally during the site visits by the instructor it will allow the programme team to track progress, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and document the apprentices' development throughout the programme.

Presentations with Questions and Answers/Debates

are an effective teaching and learning strategy that fosters critical thinking, active engagement, and the development of effective communication skills. By encouraging apprentices to research and present a proposal for a solution, defend their proposal and debate with colleagues it will stimulate their curiosity and promotes a deeper understanding of the module.

Through the process of preparing arguments and rebuttals, apprentices learn to evaluate information, analyse evidence, and construct persuasive reasoning. Additionally, it cultivates respectful discourse and tolerance for diverse viewpoints, as apprentices must listen to opposing arguments and respond with well supported rebuttals. By participating in presentations and defence of their proposal apprentices not only enhance their knowledge of the subject matter but also build confidence, teamwork, and public speaking skills.

It also encourages active participation and fosters a positive learning environment where apprentices feel encouraged to voice their opinions and engage with the content.

Active engagement promotes deeper understanding and retention of the content. When apprentices are actively involved in the learning process, they are more likely to process information, make connections, and apply concepts, leading to improved learning outcomes.

From the outset of the programme the apprentice is encouraged to engage in discussions and collaborative activities which enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills. By awarding marks for this type of engagement, instructors are emphasising the importance of actively thinking about and analysing their subject matter content, leading to the development of higher order thinking skills.

Actively participating in class and receiving recognition for engagement can boost apprentice's confidence and self-esteem. When apprentices feel their contributions are valued and acknowledged, they are more likely to become active learners, take risks, and develop a positive attitude towards learning.

Engaging in group discussions or collaborative projects cultivates and nurtures teamwork, collaboration, and effective communication skills. Awarding marks for engagement encourages apprentices to actively listen, articulate their thoughts, and respectfully interact with their peers, which are essential skills for success in the world of work.

Table: The following Assessment strategies will be employed

Year	Phase	Module No	Module Title	Weeks	Directed Hrs	Assessment	Module Weighting	Programme Weighting	Completed by
1	1	On the Job							
	1	1	Introduction to Advanced Manufacturing and Industry 4.0/5.0 Technologies and Application	14 to 20	90	Assignment 1	16%	10.3%	Week 20
				Ongoing		Exam 1	40%		
	2	2	Personal & Professional Career Development and EHS	17 to 21	90	Project 1(2 case studies 1,500 words each)	24%	10.3%	Week 21
				Ongoing		Mentor Assessment 1 in Work Based Task Logbook	20%		
	3	3	Maths for Advanced Manufacturing	21 to 23	65	Assignment 1	40%	6.9%	Week 23
				Ongoing		Mentor Assessment 2&3 in Work Based Task Logbook	60%		
	4	4	Digitisation of Manufacturing Operations	24 to 26	90	Case Study Scenarios 1, 2 & 3	75%	10.3%	Week 26
				Ongoing		Skills Demonstration 1/ Exam	25%		
	5	5	Work Based Project (Introduction)	50	50	(learner to use their employer as a comparison to case study provided in class)	32%	10.3%	Week 26
				Ongoing		Assignment 2 (2,000 words)	28%		
	6	6	Equipment Control, Automation and Actuation	83 to 87	90	Skills Demonstration 2	20%	10.3%	Week 26
				Ongoing		Mentor Assessment 4 in Work Based Task Logbook (assessed on all phases)	20%		
	7	7	Work Based Project	50 to 104	50	Assignment 2 i/Presentation/Podcast etc	20%	10.3%	Week 48
				Ongoing		Assignment 3 supported by evidence in the Work Based Task Logbook	80%		
	8	8	Industrial Systems and Operations and Workshop Skills	45 to 49	90	Exam 2	20%	10.3%	Week 49
				Ongoing		Skills Demonstration 3 & 4	40%		
	9	9	Work Based Project (Introduction)	50	50	Practical Project & presentation 1	40%	10.3%	Week 49
Ongoing				Mentor Assessment 5 in Work Based Task Logbook (assessed on all phases)		0%			
10	10	Work Based Project	50 to 104	50	Assignment 4	40%	10.3%	Week 83	
			Ongoing		Exam 3	17%			
11	11	Robotic Programming/Simulation, System Integration and Functional Safety	80 to 83	90	Practical Assessment 2(2hrs)	22%	10.3%	Week 83	
			Ongoing		Mentor Assessment 6 in Work Based Task Logbook (assessed on all phases)	20%			
12	12	Equipment Control, Automation and Actuation	83 to 87	90	Exam (MCQ)	20.0%	10.3%	Week 87	
			Ongoing		Skills Demonstration (3hrs)	40.0%			
13	13	Work Based Project	50 to 104	50	Assignment 7 supported by evidence in the Work Based Task Logbook	40.0%	10.3%	Week 87	
			Ongoing		Assignment 7 supported by evidence in the Work Based Task Logbook	40.0%			
14	14	Work Based Project	50 to 104	50	On the Job		20.8%	Weeks 50 to 104	
			Ongoing		Work Based Project				

All assessments outside of the work based Task book must be successfully completed prior to moving from one phase to the next. A final assessment of competency/capstone assessment will be conducted. The Work Based Capstone Project is a synoptic project. It is the accumulation of the apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviours which have been developed across the apprenticeship learning journey. The final assessment of competency is designed to provide an opportunity for the apprentice to integrate learning attained across all phases of the programme and to demonstrate professional competency.

By implementing the above assessment strategy, instructors provide opportunities for apprentices to consolidate their learning, receive feedback, reflect on their progress, and apply their knowledge in the workplace. This approach supports the development of a deeper understanding of the subject matter and enhances overall learning outcomes.

Providing a fully inclusive learning environment is extremely important to LMETB and creating a culture of engagement and inclusion for all apprentices is something that is central to the teaching, learning and assessment strategies employed by all instructors. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides an effective framework to improve the learning experience of all apprentices within the teaching environment and it is envisaged that by 2026, all instructors on the programme will have completed the AHEAD Digital Badge in Universal Design for Learning.

LMETB provides reasonable accommodations to apprentices to provide necessary support and adjustments to ensure equal access and participation for apprentices with disabilities. The type of accommodations can vary depending on the specific needs of the apprentice and the nature of their disability. Some examples include:

- Assistive technology: Members of the RAA programme delivery team will attend training with AHEAD to gain knowledge about assistive devices or software, for example screen readers or speech-to-text software to assist with communication or learning. Information from [AHEAD AT HIVE](#) is provided to apprentices at induction and where relevant throughout the duration of the programme.
- Extended time for exams: Allowing apprentices with certain disabilities, such as learning disabilities, additional time to complete exams or assessments.
- Modification of instructional materials: Providing alternative formats for textbooks and other instructional materials, such as braille, large print, or audio formats, for students with visual impairments or print disabilities.
- Sample assessments will be available in Moodle

7.2.1 Process for Collaborating Provider Access to Assessment Instruments

Access to the new apprenticeship validated programme assessment instruments is arranged by the National Programme Manager for nominated Collaborating Provider staff. Assessment instruments comprise of:

- Guidelines that explain the format to be used for assessment outputs.
- Details on what should be contained therein.
- Marking schemes – devised in line with assessment criteria.

Apprentices are provided with formative and summative feedback on assessment outputs and how performance relates to future course assessment. Formative and summative feedback is constructive

in nature, in that apprentices can easily identify where he/she can strengthen their work, in line with the assignment guidelines.

Records of the formative and summative feedback provided are maintained by Contracted Trainers/Instructors/Tutors and are available for Internal Verification and to the External Authenticator, and for programme evaluation and review purposes. All assessments issued to apprentices have a submission date included on the assessment.

7.2.2 Off-the-job Assessment

Off-the-job assessment will be conducted by a Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor as per the validated programme document and in accordance with assessment procedures.

The Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor will:

1. Request assessment documentation, including assessment instruments, from the National Programme Manager (LMETB coordinating provider)
2. Conduct assessments as specified in the validated programme documentation, assessment instrument specification and in compliance with the agreed Assessment Procedures.
3. Conduct examinations as specified in the assessment instrument specification and in compliance with the agreed Assessment Regulations
4. Mark the assessment in compliance with the validated programme documentation.
5. Provide written feedback to the apprentice following each assessment.
6. Provide the apprentice with the opportunity to repeat if they do not reach the specified standard in the assessment in compliance with the agreed Assessment Regulations.
7. Input apprentice results as required.
8. Assist the apprentice in completing the Request for Assessment Support document if additional supports are required.

7.2.3 On-the-job Assessments

1. On-the-job assessments will be conducted by trained Workplace Mentors/Assessors who will be given appropriate support and guidance to make work-based assessment decisions. Workplace Mentors are required to undertake the LMETB Workplace Mentor Training.
2. The Collaborating Provider Programme Leader will at the time of Workplace Mentor conduct a follow-up briefing with the on-the-job assessors.
3. The Workplace Mentor will:
 - a. Assess the apprentice on each task as specified in the on-the-job assessment instrument specification and when he/she deems the apprentice to have reached the specified standard, complete and sign off the assessment sheet.
 - b. Guide the apprentice in the completion of his/her programme workbook.
 - c. Monitor the apprentices recording of their daily experiences in the workbook.
 - d. Provide the apprentice with written feedback following each assessment.

7.2.4 Internal Verification

1. Internal verification is the process by which the provider's assessment processes and procedures related to planning, managing, and operationalizing all aspects of assessment practices will be internally verified i.e., monitored by the provider itself.
2. The National Programme Manager (coordinating provider LMETB) will collate all the assessment documentation with the Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor and with the workplace mentors.
3. Internal verification of results for both on and off-the-job will be conducted by the relevant quality assurance staff member within LMETB.
4. Before submitting results, the National Programme Manager (LMETB) will:

- a. Collate all the assessment documentation with the Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor associated with off-the-job and with the Authorized Officer for results associated with on-the-job.
 - b. Ensure that evidence is available for all modules and assessments, and that this evidence is marked and signed off in accordance with the agreed Assessment Procedures, collated by module and by apprentice surname in alphabetical order.
5. Internal verification of results for both on and off-the-job will be conducted as per the ETB's QQI Quality Assurance policies and procedures.

7.2.5 External Authentication

External Authenticators are considered an indispensable element of peer judgement in monitoring the quality and standard of each apprenticeship programme and their expertise and experience should be such as to enable fulfilment of his/her responsibility in the maintenance of the academic standards of the apprenticeship programme.

LMETB will appoint External Authenticators, including those with international expertise, appointed by the Coordinating Provider LMETB for the programme to ensure that all assessments associated with the programme are fair, valid, consistent, and meet the requirements of the validated programme. It is the responsibility of the External Authenticator to declare an interest if placed in a position of making a judgement about any apprentice with whom there has been previous direct contact.

External authenticators should be drawn from academia and where relevant, from the new national external authenticators panel, business, industry, and professional practice. Expertise and breadth of experience may be denoted by:

- present (or last, if retired) post and place of work
- range and scope of experience across further education and training
- current and recent active involvement in research/scholarly/professional activities in a relevant field of study.

External Authenticators are responsible for:

- Examining assessment materials to ensure they are authentic, valid, and supported by auditable records.
- Moderating assessment results in accordance with standards outlined in the Award Specification.
- Acting as a source of advice and support, including help with the understanding of the National Standard.
- Promoting best practice
- Providing prompt, accurate and constructive feedback to the National Examination Board and other relevant parties on the operation of assessment systems.
- Confirming that required corrective actions have been implemented where required.
- Producing External Examination Reports, as per the ETB template in [Appendix D](#).
- Attendance and reporting at National Examination Board Meetings.
- Ensuring that there is no conflict of interest involving them or the ETB.

7.3 Apprentice Wellbeing and Pastoral Support

LMETB will appoint a designated person who will have responsibility for the pastoral care of registered apprentices.

The provision of literacy, numeracy and other apprentice supports is good quality assurance practice and common practice within ETB Further Education colleges/centres and ETB training centres.

For all new apprenticeship programmes, apprentice support/study skills workshops will be scheduled and offered to apprentices if required. A dedicated support/resource/study room will be made available in the off-the-job premises to enable one-to-one meetings between the Adult Literacy Officer and apprentices, and to provide a space where apprentices can work on their assessment tasks. If it is not feasible, within available resources, the Provider Programme Leader will source external expertise to resource the establishment of the workshops.

All Collaborating Providers for the new apprenticeship programme will be required to confirm to LMETB appropriate apprentice supports are being made available. An Apprentice Learning Support handbook will be used to support apprentices on the National Apprenticeship Programme.

ETBs have collaboratively developed a range of apprentice support material for providers and instructors/trainers/tutors on integrating apprentice supports within the apprenticeship programme. Once endorsed as good practice by the Director of FET, they will be implemented in all ETBs offering new apprenticeship programmes.

In addition to the scheduled workshops, request for specific apprentice support needs can be made by an individual to the teacher. An application form and process are in place to apply for this individual apprentice support. This information is made available to apprentices at their induction.

7.4 Apprentice Rights and Responsibilities Charter

1. Apprentices must comply with the statutory Apprentice Obligations³ as outlined in the Industrial Training Act, 1967 (as amended) and any Apprenticeship Rules (which may apply in respect of the relevant Apprenticeship Programme from time to time).
2. The SOLAS Apprenticeship Code of Practice and Disciplinary Procedures apply to all apprentices. The apprentice is primarily an employee and as such is expected to be a productive and dutiful member of the employer's staff. The apprentice is the focus of the programme and as such his/her progress is of interest to programme deliverers and managers.
3. As Coordinating Provider for new apprenticeship programmes, LMETB recognizes that the apprentice has certain rights and duties over and above the normal employment rights and responsibilities.
4. The New Apprentice Rights and Responsibilities Charter has been adopted by LMETB and is agreed with New Apprentices at induction. It applies to all new apprentices on programmes for which LMETB is the Coordinating Provider.
5. The apprentice is expected to follow diligently the prescribed programme of training in the workplace and is entitled to a schedule of training. This schedule of training will be prescribed by the National Programme Manager. It will be organized by the employer/supervisor. The workplace mentor/assessor will support the apprentice in following the training programme. The apprentices will be observed on occasion by members of the programme team and can receive further support from them if necessary.
6. The apprentice is expected to complete the on-the-job assessment instruments for the validated programme.
7. The apprentice will attend the off-the-job activities required by the validated programme. He/she will complete all work assigned to him/her. He/she will complete all assessment tasks and attend such meetings as may be required.
8. The apprentice will complete surveys and feedback forms as required by the local Programme Leader.
9. For issues relating to employment, the apprentice will be subject to the employer's complaints and disciplinary procedures. In such cases the employer or the apprentice will inform SOLAS and the National Programme Manager through the Authorized Officer.
10. For issues relating to the programme, the apprentice will be subject to LMETB complaints and disciplinary procedures. In such cases the Programme Leader will inform the Authorized Officer and the employer.

7.5 New Apprentice National Complaints Procedure

This is a national apprentice complaints procedure which applies to all apprentices registered on New Apprenticeship Programmes run by LMETB as Coordinating Provider.

This procedure does not cover academic appeals for which there is a separate procedure (See Assessment Appeals Procedure in [Appendix F](#)).

The procedure allows for up to four formal stages, that allow for a complaint to be escalated and includes an appeals stage.

Full details of the procedures are attached in [Appendix G 'Apprentice National Complaints Procedure'](#).

7.6 Apprentice Community of Practice

In developing their skills and expertise within their specific craft, LMETB recognizes the importance of providing opportunities for collective learning for the new apprentice and in the apprentice developing an affinity with the community of practice. It LMETB policy to facilitate this process in a few ways:

- Organized discussions in class will be facilitated for peer groups.
- The new apprentice will be exposed to the industry community both through the on-the-job learning and through visits or talks by prominent or successful members of the profession.
- Apprentices will be encouraged to share experiences and will through the on-the-job elements of the programme be exposed to senior colleagues in the occupation.

Section 8 – Ongoing Periodic Reviews

Periodic reviews are necessary to ensure that the new apprenticeship programme maintains currency and validity and is normally a requirement of the validation conditions and will be performed in advance of any submission to QQI for revalidation. Revalidation of a national apprenticeship programme is required every 5 years.

LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, recognizes the importance of periodic reviews in giving an opportunity for an extensive reconsideration of the apprenticeship programme, its purpose, outcomes, effectiveness and the necessity for its provision. It will conduct periodic programme reviews of new apprenticeship programmes within a maximum period of 5 years, in line with QQI requirements.

Reviews of the apprenticeship programme and Quality Assurance Procedures are routinely monitored throughout the academic year to ensure that:

- Programmes are progressing satisfactorily both operationally and academically.
- Teaching and Learning Strategies are appropriate to facilitate the achievement of the learning outcomes of the module and programme.
- Assessment methods are appropriate to determine the achievement of learning outcomes for the different modules and are distributed appropriately throughout the academic year.
- Academic procedures are being followed.
- The suitability of the existing apprenticeship programme meets the current and future needs of both Apprentices and employers.

Data and feedback are collated and reviewed by the National Programme Coordinator and can include:

- External reports such as validation and review
- External Authenticator Reports
- Programme team feedback
- Apprentice feedback
- Graduate surveys
- Industrial liaison and employer feedback
- Workplace Mentor feedback
- Authorized Officer feedback
- Professional body reviews

Information collated through the monitoring activities may result in amendments and/or improvements to delivery and assessment of programme modules during the academic period. In some instances, the information is used to enhance the programme academic quality and the apprentice experience within the boundaries of the formal programme structure.

8.1 Occupational Profile Reviews

An Occupational profile review allows for a detailed look at the activities, skills, and techniques of practitioners within a particular occupation. It also re-examines the position of the practitioners in the industry. This may involve looking at broader changes in the industry in terms of its operations and organization. It also allows for a reassessment of the demand for apprentices in the occupation.

The occupational profile review is a critical input to the programme review for apprenticeship programmes. The purpose is to ensure that the programme remains relevant to the occupation and to the career aspirations of the apprentices. It is also an opportunity to develop interest and support from employers and the industry.

If necessary, changes in the occupation in other jurisdictions can be examined if it is felt that these might affect the career prospects of the apprentices and the operation of the industry in Ireland. There may be a need for flexibility to ensure that the profile reflects the changing requirements of industry.

The Consortium Steering Group is responsible for ensuring that the occupational profile review is carried out. The Consortium Steering Group will either commission a review from the industry or carry out the review itself. The Consortium Steering Group might ask the Co-ordinating ETB, (LMETB in the instance of the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation) to act for them. The person or persons undertaking the review should have knowledge of the industry and ideally have access to those involved in the industry.

The process and guidelines which the Consortium Steering Group will apply to undertake the review is the responsibility of SOLAS.

The Occupational Profile Review Report should be detailed and cover the full extent of the occupation. It should emphasize the additional skills which are necessary and critically examine the existing profile to ensure that redundant skills are no longer included. The draft report should be circulated to the industry by the Consortium Steering Group to ensure that it has got wide acceptance. If satisfied, the Consortium Steering Group should formally adopt the report. It should be sent to the Coordinating Provider as an input to the programme review.

8.2 Consortium Steering Group Review

The function of the CSG review is to provide an opportunity to review its activities and structure and may allow the group to address any major issues which have arisen in the intervening period.

Objects of the review would be to consider:

- the efficiency and effectiveness of the consortium
- the relationship with the Coordinating Provider
- the form of agreements with the employers
- necessary changes to membership or structure of the consortium
- other issues agreed by the consortium.

The review will be conducted by members of the consortium. They will seek input from relevant stakeholders who may include:

- Members of the consortium
- the Coordinating Provider
- partner employers
- partner providers

Following this input, a brief report, outlining the issues if any, will be circulated to all the members of the consortium. The report will be considered at a meeting of the consortium and necessary changes will be decided upon.

8.3 Annual Programme Evaluation

LMETB has the primary responsibility for the quality of its programme provision, the implementation and evaluation of its QA procedures and its on-going enhancement of procedures. It is committed to the on-going evaluation of its new apprenticeship programmes to ensure continued relevance to stakeholders and to facilitate continuous improvement. It will ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of the programme to address labour market requirements, social cohesion, and economic competitiveness at a national, geographical, sectoral, organizational, and individual level.

Quality assurance self-evaluation is a formal and structured process, undertaken by LMETB's QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, which includes employers, the National Programme Board and apprentices directly involved in a programme.

The National Programme Manager shall establish an annual schedule for the evaluation of each new apprenticeship programme. The scheduled reports and data will provide evidence to the evaluation process.

The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will carry out an evaluation of the programme in a formal, inclusive, and evidence-based way and will:

- include the findings of all programme reviews and feedback from all providers.
- include evaluation contributions from apprentices, staff and other key stakeholders.
- use standardized quality assurance self-evaluation checklists to ensure that the relevant policy and procedures are being implemented.
- involve an External Authenticator for the programme. This External Authenticator is independent of programme delivery and capable of comparing the quality of the programme being evaluated with that of a similar programme available elsewhere.
- Produce a standardized Programme Self-Evaluation Report which identifies strengths, areas for improvement and recommendations in relation to:
 - Programme design and content
 - Programme delivery
 - Assessment of learning
 - Associated services and resources.
 - Attainment of programme objectives and learning outcomes
- Produce a Standardized Programme Improvement Plan based on recommendations from the Self-Evaluation Report, and which specifies the following:
 - Identification of improvement actions agreed
 - Responsibilities for improvement actions required
 - Agreed timeframe for implementation of improvement actions
 - Implementation of improvement actions
- Submit the Programme Self-Evaluation Report and the Programme Improvement Plan to the Consortium Steering Group for consideration and agreement. Recommendations for improvement shall be implemented by the National Programme Board, following adoption of the report by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.

Minor changes to the programme can be endorsed by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee and/or National Programme Board on an annual basis.

8.4 Programmatic Review

The programmatic review is an important part of the quality assurance system. It is designed to ensure that continuing validation of the programme and will ensure that the programme continues to be fit for purpose over the following 5 years. It is an opportunity to reconsider all aspects of the programme, its outcomes, its delivery processes, and its assessment.

LMETB's QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will direct the programmatic review, in conjunction with the Consortium Steering Group and the National Programme Board and it will be conducted in line with QQI requirements.

The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will determine the terms of reference of the review and may add special items for consideration. This may be done after consultation with the consortium, SOLAS and/or QQI. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will direct the Programme Leader to oversee the review and to present the review to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee for consideration.

The National Programme Manager will establish a team to conduct the review, including members of the programme team and Workplace Mentors. If necessary, the employers will act in an occasional capacity. Representatives of the other providers will also be part of the review team.

The key objectives of Programmatic Review are to:

- Analyse the proficiency of the validated apprenticeship programme including detail of apprentice numbers, attrition, and retention rates.
- Review the development of the programme in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy, and international developments.
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for apprentices and the processes for acting on this feedback.
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the apprenticeship programme.
- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business, and the wider community to maintain the relevance and currency of its programmes.
- Evaluate feedback from graduates and employers of the programmes' graduates.

The review will result in a revised programme submission including the occupational profile review and the programme review and will be submitted to the QQI programme revalidation process. There may also be a requirement to submit the reformed programme to SOLAS and/or the Apprenticeship Committee.

Inputs to the Review

1. A critical input to the programme review is the occupational profile review conducted by the Consortium Steering Group. Specific changes to the skills set required for the occupation may require changes to the module outcomes. More major changes skills may require and updating of the programme outcomes and consequent changes to the modules. Major shifts in the activities of the industry may require reconsideration of the structure and module set of the industry. Any changes indicated by the occupational review must be dealt with in the revised programme.
2. Statistical information will be available from the SOLAS apprentice information system on registration, progression, and assessment of apprentices. This will give an overall figure for the efficiency of the programme. An analysis of this will ascertain whether the graduation rate is in line with expectation and with similar programmes and whether the outcomes from individual modules are satisfactory. It will also allow for comparison between providers and deliverers of modules, which will assist in the establishment of best practice. This might trigger a review of content or delivery of modules.
3. Survey of employment of apprentices will indicate how effective the programme has been. This, combined with occupational profile review input, will give an employment rate as well as the perceptions of the graduates as to the relevance of the programme to their current employment. This information may suggest a broad reconsideration of programme structure and content.
4. The annual survey of apprentices and the annual programme reports to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee including External Authenticator reports, will be used to prompt changes that have been delayed until the programme review. The review also is an opportunity to re-examine the effects of minor changes introduced during the preceding period. Delivery and assessment processes could be affected by this data.
5. Reports from government agencies and industry bodies will be used to ascertain future possible changes to occupation and the industry,

A SWOT analysis process will allow programme team members and workplace mentors an opportunity to highlight strengths and weaknesses of the programme. The SWOT analysis will be undertaken when the data from sources (1 to 5 above) have been gathered and examined by the team. Besides the outcomes and processes, the SWOT will allow an examination of the facilities necessary for the programme as well as necessary skills development of staff and workplace mentors in the occupational area as well as in delivery and support to apprentices.

Section 9 – Information Provision

9.1 Provision of Information to the Public

LMETB is committed to the provision of effective communications systems and information for all stakeholders. It recognizes the importance of providing information to prospective and current apprentices, the public, staff and other stakeholders.

Prior to commencement/application stage

Prior to commencement, prospective apprentices can access information from several sources as outlined below. This information will be provided by and monitored by Louth and Meath Education and Training Board to ensure that it is consistent and accurate through:

- The Website
- Collaborating Provider(s) website(s) (when applicable)
- SOLAS National Apprenticeship website and marketing campaign
- Participating employer websites
- An information brochure for each new apprenticeship programme

On registration

Once an apprentice has registered, they will have access to several materials, some of which are restricted to registered Apprentices and some which is publicly available via the student area of LMETB website. They will be provided with

- A Programme Handbook
- Programme Moodle Pages
- Module Moodle Pages
- Access to the Apprenticeship Portal

Every new apprentice will attend an induction programme.

9.2 Feedback Systems

Feedback on all new apprentice programmes is conveyed through apprentice, employer, Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor, and workplace mentor/assessor reports which the National Programme Manager/Programme Leader organizes.

9.2.1 Apprentice Participation and Feedback

The Apprentice will be provided with timely, accurate and constructive feedback on their assessments by their Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor and on-the-job workplace mentor/assessor.

Apprentices will be encouraged to participate meaningfully in the LMETB's QA processes and groups, including the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee and National Programme Board.

The Coordinating Provider will use programme surveys to gain feedback on the programme. These are implemented on an annual basis and will be submitted to and collated by the Coordinating ETB from Collaborating Providers.

Apprentice feedback will also be sought, as part of periodic monitoring, on the existing and potential support services. Apprentices will participate in self-evaluation and external QA review processes for new apprenticeship programmes.

9.2.2 Teacher Participation and Feedback

1. The design, development, implementation, and ongoing improvement of each new apprenticeship programme will include inputs from a range of stakeholders including instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers from all the collaborating providers on the National Programme Board.
2. Instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers will also participate in the LMETB's self-evaluation and programmatic review processes for the new apprenticeship programmes.
3. The instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers will be provided with feedback from the Internal Verifier and the External Authenticator on the consistency of their assessment judgements across apprentices' performances.

9.2.3 Workplace mentor Participation and Feedback

1. The Workplace mentor will be provided with feedback from the Internal Verifier on the consistency of their assessment judgements across apprentices' performances.
2. The Workplace mentor/assessor will provide feedback on apprentice performance in the workplace to the National Programme Manager and the Authorized Officer on scheduled workplace monitoring visits.

9.2.3 Feedback Processes

1. The Internal Verifiers will provide feedback to the National Programme Manager on how the instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers and on-the-job workplace mentors are maintaining the standard of assessment for the programme across all apprentices.
2. The External Authenticator will provide independent confirmation of fair and consistent assessment of apprentices in line with QQI requirements and to ensure consistency of assessment results with the MIPLO and award standards.
3. The National Programme Manager will collate the feedback received from the apprentice, the Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor, the on-the-job workplace mentor, the internal verifier/the external authenticator, the employers and the SOLAS Authorized Officers, and make this collated information available to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, the National Examination Board, the National Programme Board, and the Consortium Steering Group for the purpose of continuous improvement of the programme and services.
4. The National Programme Board considers the views and suggestions from those directly engaged in apprenticeship formation and the apprentice body, together with the reports referenced above, in both the programmatic and occupational reviews.
5. The National Programme Board and the Consortium Steering Group contributes to both programme and occupational review processes. Drawing from their expertise as a community of practice of organization's engaged in apprenticeship formation, they consider and advise on issues relating to assessment design, assessment operation on multiple sites, and actions that should be undertaken to strengthen consistency of assessment and sharing of practice between workplace mentors/assessors and instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers to strengthen practice in the delivery and assessment of the programme.
6. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will be provided with feedback from all the parties engaged in the process. They will review and approve new assessment instruments and direct the National Programme to inform the National Programme Board and Collaborating Providers on actions to be taken which will address any inconsistencies in assessments identified by the review process.
7. The external ETBI National Monitoring and Enhancement Panel provides feedback to the Coordinating Provider Apprenticeship QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, as outlined in the Governance procedures.

Section 10 – Collaborations and Agreements

10.1 Providers

1. LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, requires that all Collaborating Providers enter a formal (MOA) Memorandum of Agreement with it to provide the new national apprenticeship programme.
2. Within the LMETB a standard Memorandum of Agreement Template has been agreed for implementation by all Coordinating and Collaborating ETBs. The Memorandum of Agreement is signed off on by the Chief Executive or Director of FET of those ETBs.
3. Supplementary documents, processes and reporting arrangements underpinning the Memorandum of Agreement are outlined previously in [Appendix A](#).
4. The ETBI Co-ordinating & Collaborating ETB Provider (MOA) Memorandum of Agreement Template is provided in [Appendix B](#).

10.2 Employers

The elements of the relationship between the Co-ordinating Provider and Employers have been outlined in Section 5.2 of this document.

10.3 Consortium Steering Group

As outlined in the template in [Appendix C](#), the Purpose of this agreement is to ensure the delivery of a statutory national apprenticeship programme in the occupation area. The agreement recognizes the central position of employers/enterprises in the Irish apprenticeship system and recognizes the named Coordinating Provider as the sole Coordinating Provider of the National apprenticeship programme.

10.4 Contracted Training

Contracted Training refers to the structure, procurement and management of Training or Education provision outsourced to contractors by LMETB. It is a flexible, innovative, and responsive tool to facilitate the delivery of provision based on the labour market landscape in the region as well as the specific needs of learners.

Contracted training, is delivered through a specific formal Framework called the:

[Multi Supplier Framework Agreement for Contracted Further Education & Training \(FET\) Services by the Education and Training Boards \(ETBs\) – Guidelines for the Operation of the contracts for the framework](#)

The terms and conditions of the outsourced provision are primarily governed by the framework contracts, the terms of the procurement framework, this Operational Document, contract(s) and any supporting documents and forms.

While Contracted Training Services are subject to public procurement regulations, dedicated Contracted Training Procedures have been developed to support the implementation of this Multi Supplier Framework Agreement for Provision of Contracted Training Services, including specific requirements for contractors

Contracted trainers are integral to the ability of LMETB FET provision to respond to identified training needs as the companies engaged for contracted training provide a range of flexible and responsive training programmes in instances where LMETB does not have the staffing allocation or expertise to deliver from within its existing staffing structures. Contracted training providers are engaged by LMETB to deliver FET-funded courses in various locations throughout Co. Louth and Co. Meath and in our various FET centres.

LMETB's Contracted Training team involves contracting with, monitoring and evaluating the contracted training company's effectiveness in respect of the operation of the contract.

Contracted Training can be used for any procured training or education activity by the LMETBs that have been allocated appropriate funding within the FET Service Plan.

While the Operational Document may note requirements relating to specific aspects of Contracted Training, all parties must adhere to any applicable legislation regardless of the depth of treatment of specific legislative requirements within the Operational Document.

Contracted Training will be procured and managed in line with Irish and European law and will meet the applicable requirements and guidelines of the funding authorities e.g. the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), SOLAS, the European Social Fund (ESF) and the requirements of the ETBs.

10.4.1 Quality Assurance

A central concern of LMETB FET provision is the need to provide appropriately recognised and quality assured courses including ensuring that Quality Assurance procedures are implemented in all our education and training programmes. Therefore, each contracted trainer is required to operate within the ETB's quality assurance procedures and guidelines. Community education providers often have their own quality assurance procedures in line with QQI's guidelines. The recruitment of training staff is the direct responsibility of the contracted trainers, and it is their responsibility to ensure they have sufficient staff with the appropriate skills to meet their contractual obligation with the ETB. Quality Assurance oversight remains the responsibility of the Training Standards Officer.

10.4.2 Monitoring of Contracted training

Contracted Training Officers with responsibility for Contract Training conduct regular monitoring visits of courses provided by Contract Training companies to monitor the progress of the course. The course may be visited at any stage and as often as required to ensure quality of service provision. During the monitoring visit, the Training Officer establishes learner feedback regarding training delivery, assessment, premises and equipment, and areas for improvement. The Training Officer also discusses a range of issues with the Tutor/Contractor, including training delivery, QA requirements (Training Officer having linked with TSO prior to visit), and individual learner issues.

Appendices

Appendix A Guideline on the Establishment of a Memorandum of Agreement for New Apprenticeship Programmes
Appendix B LMETB and Collaborating ETB Memorandum of Agreement Template
Appendix C MOA between the ETB as Coordinating Provider and Consortium Steering Group
Appendix D External Authenticator Report Form Template
Appendix E Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures
Appendix F Assessment Appeals Procedure
Appendix G Apprentice National Complaints Procedure
Appendix H Collaborating Provider Approval Procedure for Apprenticeship Programme
Appendix I LMETB Quality Assurance Policy Statement
Appendix J LMETB's Quality Assurance RAA QA Policy's

Appendix A: Guidelines on the Establishment of a Memorandum of Agreement for New Apprenticeship Programmes

Scope

The Memorandum of Agreement entered between ETBs, and between ETBs and other Collaborating Providers, should cover the extent of the programme. It should indicate the actual programme to be delivered, the outcomes to be delivered and the staffing, physical facilities and materials required for the programme. It should also cover how the programme is managed. Details of the relationships between the Coordinating Provider and the collaborating ETB or other provider should be clear. The operating mechanisms for the programme should be included. A dispute resolution mechanism should be specified.

Delivery, Resources and Local QA

The agreement must specify the programme that the apprentice is expected to follow. This includes the details of the modules. It should also include the assessment processes as well as the staffing required to deliver the programme. This can be done by referring to the validation document or to relevant paragraphs of the validation document or to other documents. The programme schedule can be used as a basic contract with the apprentice as it specifies the modules and the assessment regime for the programme. Recruitment and induction processes should also be agreed.

ETBs and/or other Collaborating Providers must agree on the internal QA processes within each site. These would cover feedback and complaint systems, support to teaching staff and reporting mechanisms from staff to local management. Assessment processes to ensure integrity and authenticity of assessment should be agreed. ETBs, in agreeing a common approach within the sector and working towards the implementation of common quality assurance policies and processes, would simplify this process.

Collegiality

The approach of the ETBs to the joint provision of the new apprenticeship programme is one of collegiality. This approach is embedded in the procedures and communication systems between the ETB partners. It will be achieved by recognising that each ETB has an equal part to play in the NPB and that they play that part. It will be helped by the ETB partners appointing authoritative representatives to the NPB.

Authority and Responsibility

The validation process requires that one ETB be ultimately responsible for the programme nationally. That ETB must be able to demonstrate that it has the systems in place to ensure that the programme is delivered as proposed and that the quality of the programme is consistent in each site and enterprise. If an ETB has this responsibility, then it must have the commensurate authority to carry out that responsibility. This is based on the principle that one cannot be responsible for activities over which one has neither sight nor control. This ultimate authority must be exercised in a proportional way and through agreed procedures.

In the normal course of events, it should not be necessary for this authority to be exercised. In operation, the principle of subsidiarity will apply. This requires that all those activities that can be performed at a local ETB level should be performed at that level. This includes induction, delivery, and assessment. The processes of allocation of responsibility should be included in the agreement.

Managing the Programme

The requirements outlined above can only be achieved by assuming that the Coordinating Provider is the primus inter pares. The collaborating ETBs and other providers are responsible for operating the programme in their own sites. The NPB is responsible for keeping an overall view of the programme. The National Programme Board is entitled to full reports on the operation of the programme from each site. The format of these reports will be agreed in advance. The operation of the NPB is critical to this. All collaborating ETBs and providers should nominate at least one member of the National Program Board. The Coordinating Provider will act with the support of the other providers.

Transparency

It is particularly important that the operation of the National Programme Board is transparent. All reports to the NPB must be shared with all members from the other providers. In addition, all reports from the National Programme Board should be agreed with the National Programme Board.

If the National Programme Board identifies an issue with a site, the provider from the site and the Coordinating Provider will seek to resolve the matter.

Outline of an Agreement

The following is a guideline on the outline of the MOA. Introductory Material

- Title of the agreement
- Purpose of the agreement
- Names of partners to the agreement
- Nature of the relationship between the partners
- Duration of the agreement
- Reviewing the agreement
- Amendment of the agreement
- Managing disputes related to the agreement
- Suspension of the agreement
- Termination of the agreement
- Details of the signatories

The terms used in the agreement should be clarified. These may be:

Coordinating Provider – the ETB designated by the consortium as lead provider with primary responsibility for the programme.

Collaborating Provider – the Collaborating Provider that is party to the agreement and is offering the programme.

Programme – the validated new apprenticeship programme to be delivered.

National Programme Board – this NPB is managed by the Coordinating Provider and has representatives of the employers and of each provider.

QAGMC- Quality Assurance Governance Management RAA Sub- Committee – this is established by the Coordinating Provider as the overarching governance entity for the new apprenticeship programme.

Appendix B: MOA Template: LMETB and Collaborating Providers

Purpose of the Agreement

The Purpose of this agreement is to ensure that the off-the-job services and those services proper to a Provider as specified below are delivered to apprentices registered on the {insert name} programme and with the {insert name} provider, and that these services are delivered in a professional manner and to the standards required by QQI, the regulator and the consortium.

The agreement also facilitates the involvement of the Collaborating Provider in the development of the programme and as part of the NPB in the management of the programme.

The agreement is not a legally binding agreement and is not exhaustive in its identification of the two organisations' responsibilities. Further necessary responsibilities identified during the agreement will be negotiated between the ETB partners.

Names of Partners to the Agreement

This agreement is between the:

Coordinating Provider		Collaborating Provider
Position -		Position -
	And	
Signature -		Signature -
Date -		Date -

Duration of the Agreement

The duration of this agreement will be until the next periodic review of the agreement. In the event of the {insert name} ETB as Collaborating Provider being unwilling or unable to accept an intake of apprentices, the agreement may be suspended. In this case, LMETB as Coordinating Provider will continue to provide services for current apprentices until they complete their programme.

Reviewing the Agreement

The agreement will be reviewed when the programme is being reviewed. It may also be reviewed annually on request by either party.

Amendment of the Agreement

This agreement may be amended following agreement between the parties. As similar agreements are made with other providers, it is accepted that any changes will be applied to all such agreements. In these cases, joint negotiations between the providers and the Coordinating Provider will propose changes.

Managing Disputes Related to the Agreement

In the event of disputes relating to the agreement, both parties will attempt to resolve the issues by discussion and negotiation. In the event of a failure at this stage, matters may be referred to an agreed third party such as ETBI or a person with appropriate expertise. When agreement cannot be reached, this agreement may be suspended.

Suspension of the Agreement

In a situation where there is serious dispute which cannot be resolved, the agreement can be suspended by either party. Where the Collaborating Provider is unwilling or unable to accept a new cohort of apprentices, the agreement may be suspended by the provider. It may also be suspended by the Coordinating Provider when the Coordinating Provider feels that the numbers are such that the provision of the programme in that site is made unrealistic.

In either case, both parties will continue to provide services to all continuing apprentices. Following negotiations, a suspended agreement may be reinstated by mutual consent of both parties.

Termination of the Agreement

This agreement will terminate when the last cohort of apprentices recruited prior to the periodic review of the programme graduate. It may also terminate on agreement of both partners. In this case also, both partners will agree to provide services to continuing apprentices.

Details of the Signatories

Coordinating Provider	Collaborating Provider
Name	Name
Position	Position
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

Terms Used

Coordinating Provider – the provider ETB designated by the CSG as lead provider with primary responsibility for the National Apprenticeship Programme.

Collaborating Provider – the Collaborating Provider offering the National Apprenticeship Programme.

Programme – the validated National Apprenticeship Programme to be delivered.

National Programme Board – this NPB is managed by the Coordinating Provider and has representatives of the employers and of each provider.

National Apprenticeship L6 in Robotics and Automation Programme – this is the name of the new national apprenticeship programme as validated by QQI.

General Principles

1. Both parties agree that the Coordinating Provider is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the programme as agreed is delivered and assessed to the standards specified in the programme document.
2. Both parties agree that as far as possible, responsibility for the local delivery and assessment of the programme will be devolved to the Collaborating Provider.
3. Both parties agree that the Coordinating Provider has the authority to oversee the delivery of the
4. programme and assessment of apprentices in the Collaborating Provider's facilities, and to enquire into any matter affecting the quality of the standards achieved by enrolled apprentices on the programme. This authority will be exercised in the context of principle b) above.
5. Both parties agree that the operation of principles a) to c) above will be done in a spirit of collegiality and that they will seek to find a balance between autonomy and necessary accountability.
6. Both parties agree that the operation of the NPB and all reports to it will be transparent to all ETBs/providers and that all parties will maintain necessary confidentiality.

Responsibilities of the Coordinating Provider LMETB

1. Ensure that the programme is delivered and assessed as submitted to the QQI evaluation panel.
2. Designate a Coordinating Programme Manager with overall responsibility for the programme.
3. Oversee the quality of delivery and assessment of the programme.
4. Report to the CSG and LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee on the operation of the programme.
5. Manage the NPB.
6. Appoint a Programme Manager.

7. Appoint External Authenticators and deal with issues raised in the reports of the External Authenticators.
8. Agree, with other collaborating ETBs/providers, the reports to be submitted to the NPB and the Programme Manager.
9. Develop the assessment instruments and organize the assessment schedule.
10. Manage the examinations board.
11. Confirm the results of the examinations board through its QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.
12. Report to QQI on the programme and propose successful apprentices for awards.
13. Release staff for necessary career and skills development as agreed by the NPB.
14. The external ETBI National Monitoring and Enhancement Panel provides feedback to the Coordinating Provider QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, as outlined in the Governance procedures.

Responsibilities of Collaborating ETBs/Providers

1. Register and induct apprentices to the programme as per the programme validation document.
2. Provide off-the-job training as specified in the programme document.
3. Liaise with employers of apprentices.
4. Ensure that the on-the-job parts of the validated programme are being followed by employers of apprentices registered with them.
5. Workplace mentors of apprentices.
6. Appoint a member of the programme team to liaise with the workplace mentor, confirm assessments made on- the-job, and observe the apprentice on-the-job.
7. Appoint a Programme Leader responsible for the day to day running of the programme and responsible for reporting to the NPB.
8. Appoint a member to the NPB who can speak with authority for the ETB on matters associated with the programme.
9. Give the Coordinating Provider and the External Authenticators reasonable access to data, persons and apprentices associated with the programme when this is required.
10. Attend NPB meetings as required.
11. Operate agreed Quality Assurance procedures.
12. Co-operate with the national ETBI New Apprenticeship QA Monitoring and Enhancement panel.

Financial Matters

The Coordinating Provider LMETB will, through the FARR planning process, seek the necessary resources from SOLAS for management of the new apprenticeship programme. There are no additional fees charged to other collaborating ETBs or providers. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee may at a later stage determine a fee schedule to be applied to Collaborating Providers for access to the programme and supporting quality assurance services.

Appendix C: MOA between Coordinating Provider and Consortium Steering Group

Purpose of the Agreement

The Purpose of this agreement is to ensure the delivery of a statutory apprenticeship programme in the occupational area of Robotics and Automation. The agreement recognizes the central position of employers/ enterprises in the Irish apprenticeship system. It identifies the Consortium Steering Group as the entity representing industry for the purposes of the apprenticeship programme. It also recognizes the critical role of the LMETB in the provision of the programme.

The agreement recognises LMETB as the sole Coordinating Provider of the National Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme. The agreement sets out the responsibilities of both parties. It recognizes that the CSG has a responsibility to ensure that Industry is provided with well-trained crafts persons. It recognizes that the ETB as an autonomous educational body has a responsibility to QQI to provide the programme as validated and to adhere to QQI policies for the delivery and assessment of apprentices.

The agreement is not a legally binding agreement and is not exhaustive in its identification of the two organizations' responsibilities. Further necessary responsibilities identified during the agreement will be negotiated between the partners.

Names of Partners to the Agreement

This agreement is between the

RAA Consortium Steering Group		Coordinating Provider LMETB
Address 1		Address 1
Address 2	And	Address 2
Address 3		Address 3
Eircode		Eircode

Duration of the Agreement

The duration of this agreement will be until the next Periodic Review of the CSG. In the event of the LMETB as Collaborating Provider being unwilling or unable to accept an intake of apprentices, the agreement may be suspended. In this case, LMETB will continue to provide services for current apprentices until they complete their programme.

Reviewing the Agreement

This review will take place in conjunction with the occupational and programmatic review of the programme or after five (5) years, whichever is the sooner. It may also be reviewed annually on request by either party.

Amendment of the Agreement

This agreement may be amended following agreement between the parties. This agreement may also be replaced by standard national agreements designed to regularize the relationships between CSGs and Coordinating Providers.

Managing Disputes Related to the Agreement

In the event of disputes relating to the agreement, both parties will attempt to resolve the issues by discussion and negotiation. In the event of a failure at this stage, matters may be referred to an agreed third party such as ETBI, QQI or SOLAS or a person with appropriate expertise. When agreement cannot be reached, this agreement may be suspended.

Suspension of the Agreement

In situations where there is serious dispute which cannot be resolved, the agreement can be suspended by either party. In either case, both parties will continue to provide services to all continuing apprentices.

Following negotiations, a suspended agreement may be reinstated by mutual consent of both parties.

Termination of the agreement

This agreement will terminate when the last cohort of apprentices recruited to the programme graduate. It may also terminate on agreement of both partners. In this case also, both partners will agree to provide services to continuing apprentices.

Details of the Signatories

Coordinating Provider	Collaborating Provider
Name	Name
Position	Position
Signature	Signature
Date	Date

Terms Used

Quality Assurance Governance Management Sub-Committee/QAGMC – this is the Committee which oversees all apprenticeship programmes.

Coordinating Provider/ETB – the provider/ETB designated by the consortium as lead provider with primary responsibility for the programme.

Collaborating Provider/ETB – the Collaborating Provider/ETB offering the programme.

Programme – the Apprentice Programme to be delivered.

National Programme Board – the NPB is managed by the Coordinating Provider and has representatives of the employers and of each provider.

National Examination Board – the National Examination Board is organized by the Coordinating Provider for the Robotics and Automation New Apprenticeship Programme.

Robotics and Automation New L6 Apprenticeship Programme – this is the name of the new apprenticeship programme as validated by QQI.

General

1. The RAA CSG appoints the LMETB Education and Training Board as the sole Coordinating Provider for the L6 Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation programme.
2. LMETB recognizes the central role of the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation CSG in representing the interests of employers and industry in the Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme.
3. LMETB recognizes the governance role of the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation CSG in the governance of the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme, as detailed in the Quality Assurance Procedures.
4. The Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation CSG recognizes LMETB as being responsible to QQI and to other statutory authorities for the management delivery, assessment, and maintenance of the programme.
5. Both parties agree that LMETB may appoint Collaborating Providers to assist it in the provision of the programme. Such parties will be appointed subject to the agreement of the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation CSG.
6. LMETB agrees to provide Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation CSG with all data and reports necessary for its proper operation subject to the normal requirements of data protection and confidentiality.
7. Both parties agree that the operation of principles a) to f) above will be done in a spirit of collegiality and that they will seek to find a balance between autonomy and necessary accountability.

Secretariat and Communication

1. If requested by the Robotics and Automation CSG, the LMETB will provide the secretariat to the CSG. The extent of these services will be agreed by the parties.

2. Normally the communications between the parties will be through the National Programme Manager, who will be a member of the CSG.

Specific Responsibilities of the Robotics and Automation CSG

1. Advise the Robotics and Automation NPB on trends identified by SOLAS and other State agencies to ensure that adequate numbers of places are available both nationally and regionally to meet demand.
2. Support SOLAS in evaluating new employers' training capacity and where necessary in removing employers who are no longer deemed to have the capacity to adequately train apprentices.
3. Support ETB and SOLAS in dealing with surges and collapses in occupational recruitment and in responding to the redundancy of individual apprentices.
4. Act as a conduit for employer input to curriculum development.
5. Act to inform employers of training opportunities in their region.
6. Act in support of employers in the induction and registration of apprentices.
7. Develop the occupational profile and inform the Robotics and Automation NPB of significant changes to the role.
8. Carry out a review of the occupational profile periodically and initiate a review of the programme based on the new profile.
9. Advise LMETB on the development of the programme and approve its structure and MIPLOs.
10. Appoint two employers as members of the NPB.
11. Propose to the NPB new employers for participation in the programme.
12. Consider reports from the NPB on admissions, examinations and apprentice and employer feedback, and inform the NPB of its opinions on these matters where necessary. In the case of some reports, it may request action by the Coordinating Provider
13. Act in support of LMETB in promoting the programme to employers and to potential apprentices.

Specific Responsibilities of the Coordinating Provider – LMETB

1. Develop the programme in conjunction with the RAA CSG and submit the programme to QQI for validation.
2. Manage the programme.
3. Ensure that the programme is delivered and assessed as agreed with QQI.
4. Deliver the off-the-job elements of the programme in conjunction with Collaborating Providers, where necessary.
5. Report to the RAA CSG regularly on the operation of the programme. These reports include admissions, examinations and apprentice and employer feedback.
6. Appoint Collaborating Providers, where necessary.
7. Liaise with individual employers and support them in the delivery of the on-the-job elements of the programme.
8. Support the RAA CSG in its work and respond to concerns that the RAA CSG may have in relation to the programme.

Financial Matters

The Coordinating Provider LMETB will, through the FARR planning process, seek the necessary resources from SOLAS for management of the new apprenticeship programme. There are no additional fees charged to other collaborating ETBs or providers.

The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee may at a later stage determine a fee schedule to be applied to Collaborating Providers for access to the programme and for relevant supporting quality assurance services.

Appendix D: LMETB External Authenticator Report Template

Report of EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATOR for New Apprenticeship Programme

[To be submitted by the External Authenticator to the New Apprenticeship Programme C Annually]

Part 1: Details of National Apprenticeship Programme

National Apprenticeship Programme Code and Title	
Academic Year	
Subject(s)/module(s) and Year(s) of programme examined	
Details of Duties undertaken	
Date(s) of Visits	

Part 2: External authenticator's Report on National Robotics and Automation Apprenticeship Programme

Did you receive the validated programme documentation, including the Minimum Intended?

Programme Learning Outcomes (MIPLO) and Assessment Strategy? Yes No

Please comment on (if applicable):

Timeliness, Presentation, Appropriateness, in respect to MIPLOs being measured in on-the-job and off-the-job assessment instruments

--

Marking Schemes and Worked Solutions

--

Structure and Organisation of the Assessments

--

Presentation of Apprentice's Work

--

Was the quality of Apprentice's work in line with your expectations for a National Apprenticeship Programme of this level?

--

Overall Performance / Academic Standard of Apprentices, in relation to their wills nationally and internationally

--

Your general opinion of the National Apprenticeship Programme and the quality, fairness and consistency of the assessment strategies used in measuring the stated module learning outcomes and overall programme learning outcomes

--

Suggestions to improve the assessment of Apprentices on the programme
Aspects worthy of recommendation/Examples of best practice
Feedback received from the provider on implementation of previous recommendations, as appropriate
If this is your first year of appointment, please comment on the adequacy of briefing and training materials. Is there any additional information which you would have liked to receive?
Other Comments/Observations
Any matters you wish to bring to the attention of the National Program Board?
Any matters you wish to bring to the attention of the Apprenticeship Quality Committee of the Coordinating Provider?

[Please comment on other relevant issues, adding further pages as required.]

Part 3: External Authenticator Details

Name			
Address			
Year of appointment			
Signature		Date	

General comments including special circumstances impacting on the national apprenticeship group, exceptional or poor performance in particular, or elements of examination, or overall results, etc.:

Comments Apprenticeship Quality Committee Chair		
Signature Apprenticeship Quality Committee Chair	Date	

Comments National Programme Board Chair		
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Signature National Programme Board Chair	Date	
--	------	--

Comments Coordinating Programme Manager/Director of FET		
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--	--	--

Signature Coordinating Programme Manager/Director of FET	Date	
--	------	--

APPENDIX E: RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) POLICY AND PROCEDURES

E Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Procedures RPL Roles and Responsibilities The National Programme Manager

The National Programme Manager must ensure that all staff and apprentices are made aware of:

- the existence of an RPL policy and RPL requirements
- the potential benefits of RPL
- the appropriate support relating to portfolio preparation (RPEL only)
- the appropriate support relating to mapping of outcomes to assessment standards (RPCL only)

The National Programme Manager must inform the apprentice of the outcome of the RPL decision.

The National Programme Manager must also submit any appeals application to the Independent Appeals Committee and inform the apprentice of the outcome of the appeals application.

The Apprentice

Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL)

It is the apprentice's responsibility to apply for the RPCL. Apprentices must submit their application on the RPL Application Form (see Appendix 1) to the National Programme Manager within a reasonable timeframe (recommended timeframe: ten (10) working days) of the module commencement.

Apprentices should also include original certificates, results, programme details and, where possible, learning outcomes of certified modules completed. Apprentices should be advised to participate in the module(s) until a decision has been made (and written confirmation received) on whether to grant the exemption or not (in line with the individual Centre policy).

Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)

It is the apprentice's responsibility to apply for the RPEL. Apprentices must submit their claim on the RPL Application Form ([Appendix 1](#)) to their National Programme Manager within a reasonable timeframe (recommended timeframe: ten (10) working days) of the module commencement.

It is the apprentice's responsibility to gather and present the evidence required for assessment according to the instructions given by the RPL Mentor/Facilitator evidence may include, but is not limited to: CV, references, certificates or testimonials, products or samples, job descriptions and/ or evaluations, evidence of attendance at training courses or workplace assessments. Evidence for assessment may be presented in a Portfolio of Evidence and mapped to the requirements of the award for which the exemption is being sought.

The RPL Assessor

The RPL assessor will be a suitably qualified, experienced assessor and subject matter expert with ability to assess both Recognition of Prior Certified Learning (RPCL) and Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL).

The RPL assessor is appointed by the ETB.

The RPL assessor is responsible for assessing submitted assessment materials/portfolio in accordance with RPL process and the award standard.

Independent Appeals Committee

An Independent Appeals Committee must:

- Examine the apprentice appeal on RPL application outcome
- Investigate whether relevant assessment procedures were followed
- Make a decision on the appeal

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Process

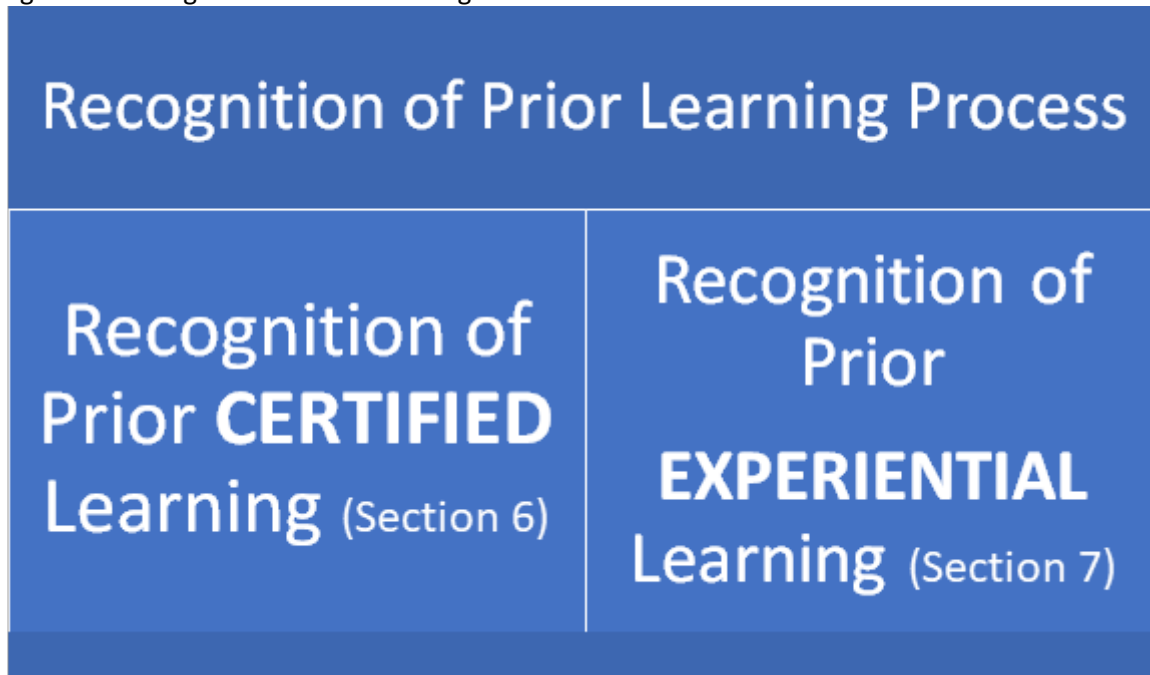
As outlined in Figure 1.1, the RPL process can follow the:

- Recognition of Prior CERTIFIED Learning (RPCL) process (See Section 3.4 for definition and Section 6 for process)

and/or

- Recognition of Prior EXPERIENTIAL Learning (RPEL) process (See Section 3.5 for definition and Section 7 for process)

Figure 1.1 Recognition of Prior Learning



Recognition of Prior CERTIFIED Learning (RPCL) Process About RPCL About RPCL

RPCL is learning that has already been accredited by an awarding body such as QQI or other recognised universities, colleges/institutes, and awarding bodies. Prior certified learning can also include qualifications awarded by bodies abroad, such as the City & Guilds of London Institute.

This prior learning can be recognised on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and may entitle the apprentice to:

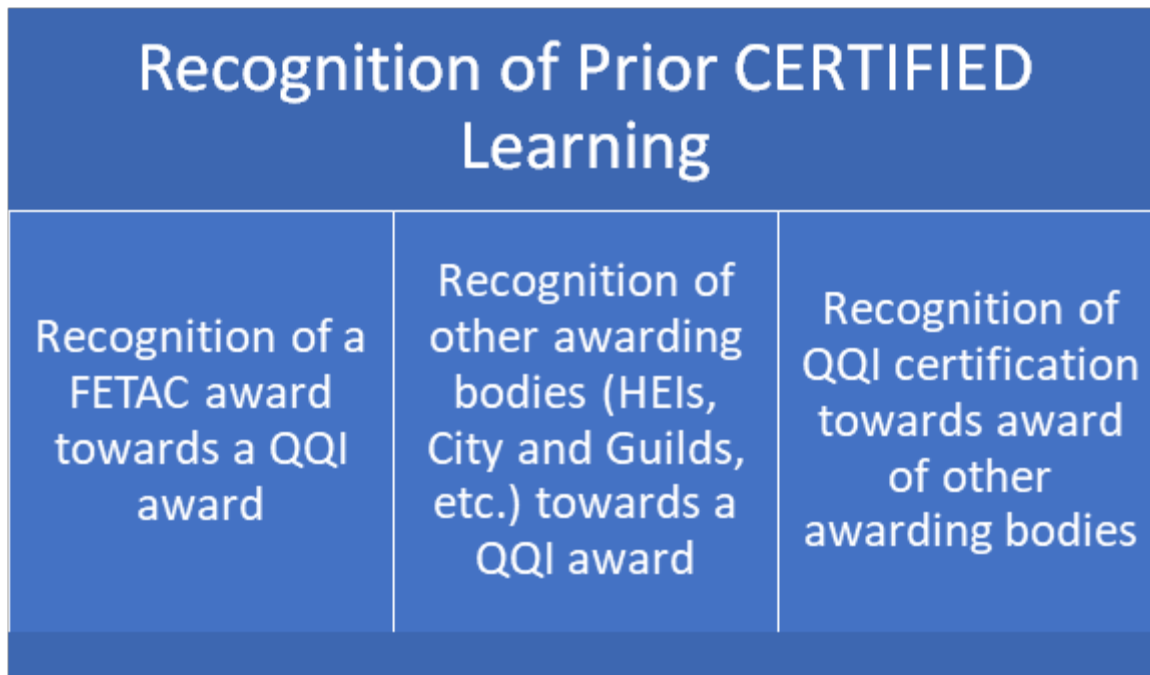
- Admission to a programme or programme of study
- Advanced entry on the programme
- Exemptions from some parts of a programme

QQI (2015) provide details regarding exemptions for the Purpose of a Compound (Major/Special Purpose/Supplemental) Award.

Types of RPCL

There are 3 types of RPCL considered in this process (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2 Types of RPCL



Recognition of a Further Education and Training Awards Committee (FETAC) award towards a QQI award

“Where a FETAC component is not mapped to a CAS (Common Award System) component, then direct exemption using that FETAC component is not possible” (QQI, 2015, p.1). In this instance, RPCL will apply.

Where a Further Education and Training Awards Committee (FETAC) component is mapped to a CAS component, but is more than 5 years old, then an exemption is not possible, and RPCL will apply.

Where a FETAC component is mapped to a CAS component and is less than 5 years old, then an exemption is possible, and RPCL will not apply.

Where an apprentice has achieved a CAS award, and has thus met the learning outcomes for that award as currently published on the QQI website, then the apprentice has achieved that award, regardless of the age of the certificate. In this instance, the 5-year rule does not apply: the apprentice’s award will be recognised by the QQI Business System (QBS), and it is not necessary to apply for either an exemption or RPCL.

If the learning for which recognition is sought for a QQI award, is certified outside of CAS, RPCL will apply. The following must be considered as part of this process (see Table 1.1).

Comparison of Learning Outcomes	It is recommended that the RPL assessor compares the learning outcomes of the prior certified learning to the learning outcomes of the module(s)/programme in which the apprentice is seeking the exemption(s): this must be completed in line with the provider’s RPL policy while adhering to the award standard and principles of assessment. Gaps in learning may be identified and supports put in place to address these gaps.
Currency of RPCL	It is recommended that the RPCL must have been achieved in an appropriate timeframe (timeframe dependent on discipline) and in line with the provider’s RPL policy. For example, ICT of ten years ago is of limited benefit today on a current programme, while some culinary training outcomes or communication skills may be more timeless.

Recognition of other awarding bodies (Higher Education Institution (HEI) City of Guilds, etc.) towards a QQI award

QQI recognises the value of awards made by another awarding body where the awarding body is:

- nationally recognised in its own country
- operating a quality assured awarding process (QQI, 2018)

QQI has identified a listing of awards to which RPCL may be applied (QQI, 2018). Where an award is not on the published list, the apprentice is required to provide the relevant learning programme and original transcript of results, with their application, in order to apply for RPCL.

Apprentices seeking *Statements of Equivalence* for foreign qualifications may be referred to National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) (<http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=recognitions>) to have their qualifications aligned with the appropriate Irish qualification. Qualifications Recognition is the QQI body responsible for the recognition of foreign qualifications.

Recognition of QQI certification towards award of other awarding bodies

The recognition of QQI certification towards an award of any other awarding body is dealt with in line with the procedures of the specific awarding body.

RPL applications for access to a programme:

Collaborating ETBs shall adjudicate on applications from potential apprentices seeking to use RPL as a method of satisfying entry requirements to a new National Apprenticeship programme. Such adjudication shall be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

RPL applications seeking exemption(s) or advanced entry to a new national apprenticeship programme(s):

- a. Applications may be made seeking exemption(s) or advanced entry through either the provisions of Recognition for Prior Certified Learning (RPCL), as described in Section 2 below, or Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL), as described in Section 3 below, or a combination of both.
- b. Advanced entry equates to the granting of sufficient exemptions/credit covering the early stage(s) of a programme. This process is adjudicated on by the Co-ordinating ETB through the National Programme Board.
- c. Applications for advanced entry or exemptions may only be considered in the case of an apprenticeship programme with duration longer than two years.
- d. The National Programme Board shall establish an RPL Committee with subject matter expertise, drawn from the National Programme Board and supported by such external RPL assessing expertise that it determines is required to carry out this function.
- e. The RPL committee, supported by the Co-ordinating ETB, shall establish a communications and support services plan to help apprentices in the preparation of their applications, particularly in relation to the development of a portfolio of evidence.
- f. The RPL committee shall establish a panel from which two representatives will be nominated to assess applications received.
- g. Outcomes from the RPL assessment process are subject to ratification by the New Apprenticeship National Examinations Board. This is appropriate as a positive recommendation on RPL leads to the grant of credit or exemptions.
- h. Apprentices have the right to appeal the outcome of their RPL application in accordance with the provisions below.
 - a. References
 - b. CV
 - c. Job descriptions and experiences
 - d. Personal statements
 - e. Details of any training completed
 - f. Certificates for qualifications, training programmes, etc.
 - g. Sample work (e.g., drawings, minutes from meetings, business plan, etc.)

- h. Evidence from the apprentice’s personal life
- i. Published work
- j. Professional licenses/registrations or membership of professional organisations
- k. Acknowledged accomplishments
- l. Video/audio recordings
- m. Relevant recreational activities or hobbies

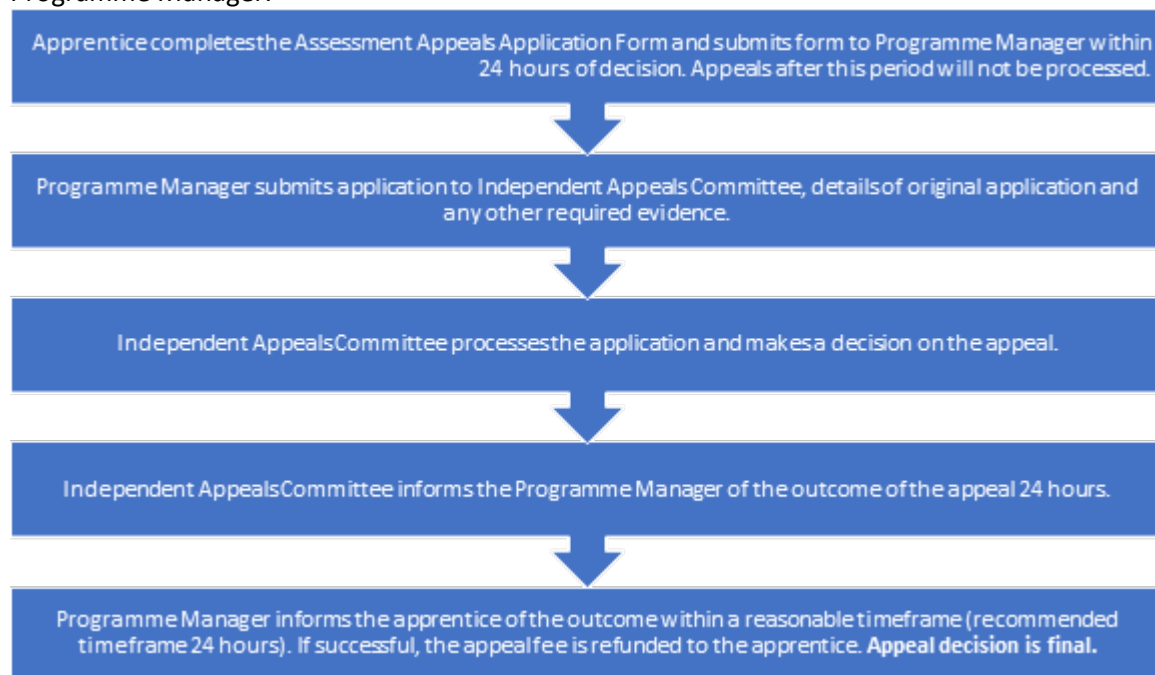
The apprentice may be required to provide verification from previous or current employers that the learning stated has been achieved by the apprentice.

The RPL committee appoints two RPL assessors to consider the Portfolio of Evidence. The assessors should examine the submitted portfolio and agree a decision within a reasonable timeframe (recommended timeframe: ten (10) working days). The portfolio is assessed, and an agreed grade is assigned by the assessors.

RPL Appeals

The apprentice has the right to appeal the decision in relation to RPL (can appeal decision on application or grade awarded). Appeals must be made within five (5) days of the decision. In exceptional circumstances, the AEO Manager/ Programme Manager may extend this time limit. All appeals must be made in writing using the Appeals Application Form (see Appendix 3).

Where possible, the apprentice discusses the appeal application with the Learning Practitioner and/or Programme Manager.



Recognition of Prior CERTIFIED Learning Application Form

Please complete all sections of the application form

Part A	
Centre Name:	
Apprentice Name:	
Apprentice Address:	
Apprentice Contact Number:	
Apprentice Email Address:	
Programme Code/Title:	
Award Code/Title:	
Date of Application:	

Part B	
Recognition for Prior CERTIFIED Learning (RPCL) If yes, please indicate which RPCL you are applying for:	Yes/No
a. Recognition of FETAC award towards a QQI award	Yes/No
b. Recognition other awarding bodies (HEIs, City and Guilds, etc.) towards a QQI award	Yes/No
c. Recognition of QQI certificate towards award of other awarding bodies	Please see specific awarding body Procedures

Part C		
Details of application:		
Supporting evidence: (Please list all supporting evidence included in this application)		
Exemptions (based on RPCL) in respect of:		
Module Code	Module Title	Module Level

Part D			
Apprentice Signature		Date	
Programme Manager Name			
Programme Manager Signature		Date	

Recognition of Prior EXPERIENTIAL Learning Application Form
Please complete all sections of the application form

Part A	
Centre Name:	
Apprentice Name:	
Apprentice Address:	
Apprentice Contact Number:	
Apprentice Email Address:	
Programme Code/Title:	
Award Code/Title:	
Date of Application:	

Part B
Details of Application

Part C			
Apprentice Signature		Date	
Programme Manager Name			
Programme Manager Signature		Date	

Apprentice Appeals Application Form

Part A: To be completed by the apprentice and returned to the Programme Coordinator by a specified deadline	
Centre Name:	
Apprentice Name:	
Apprentice Address:	
PPSN No (if required)	
Programme Code/Title:	
Are there impending deadlines which may need to be considered with this application: CAO Applicant/Other Applicant:	Yes/No
If yes, please give details:	

Please circle appropriate appeal:

Reasonable Accommodation in Assessment outcome	Yes/No
Assessment Deadlines (short-term extension) outcome	Yes/No
Assessment Deadlines (compassionate consideration in extenuating circumstances) outcome	Yes/No
Apprentice Assessment Malpractice outcome	Yes/No
Recognition of Prior Learning outcome	Yes/No
Other (please give details):	Yes/No

Details of appeal application (please provide full details of reasons for appeal):

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Apprentice Signature		Date	
Programme Manager Name			
Programme Manager Signature		Date	

Part B: To be completed by the Independent Appeals Committee

Independent Appeals Committee Members:			
Details of evidence received:			
Date received:			
Outcome of decision:	Successful/Unsuccessful		
Date:			
Decision Details:			
Independent Appeals Committee Signatures and Date:	Signature	Date	

Appendix F: National Apprenticeship Assessment Appeals Procedure

F1 Purpose

It is the policy of LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, to endeavour as far as is practicable to:

- a. deal, within its structures and quality assurance procedures, with all reviews, appeals and disputes in relation to assessment matters in accordance with the principles of natural and constitutional justice.
- b. provide arrangements in relation to reviews, appeals, and disputes in relation to assessment matters which ensure that they are dealt with fairly, transparently and in a timely way and which may involve, as necessary, experienced ETB staff and wholly independent persons of appropriate knowledge and experience in the process.
- c. ensure that any potential lessons are learned from the processing of rechecks, reviews, and appeals and where appropriate that this learning is captured in revised processes and procedures.

1.2 Overview of Procedure

- a. It is a requirement of LMETB, as Coordinating Provider, that any complaint or dispute arising in relation to any result considered, or to be considered by it for the purposes of an award of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) will fall to be resolved as a matter of first recourse, via the procedures set out below.
- b. The following are the levels at which decisions are taken in relation to an apprentice's examination performance:
 - Allocation of marks/ grades
 - Adoption of provisional results
 - Recheck
 - Review
 - Appeal

These comprise a hierarchy of decision-making whereby the decision taken at any level may be changed at the next proximate level, without referral backward and in which the decision-making entity at any particular level has full powers in relation to any decision brought before it.

An apprentice contemplating a recheck of an examination paper may wish to discuss the matter with the appropriate instructor, in the first instance. Apprentices considering a review may wish to consult their local Programme Leader regarding the scope of a review.

Glossary

Result: the decision taken by the National Examination Board in relation to an apprentice's progression or eligibility for award or the outcome of any recheck, review of or appeal against such decision

Recheck: the marks awarded for a particular module or part of a module can be the subject of a recheck. A recheck is carried out to ensure that there have been no arithmetical or clerical errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate and that all the marks to which the apprentice is entitled have been included in the final total.

Review: re-consideration of a decision of the National Examination Board in the light of additional information provided by the apprentice or the National Programme Coordinator in relation to the assessment process.

Appeal: re-consideration by the Appeal Board of the outcome of a review.

Outcome: a decision in relation to a recheck, review or appeal.

Status of Results

The result decided upon by the National Examination Board is a provisional result.

- a. A result that is the subject of recheck, review or appeal is provisional and remains so while within any recheck/review/appeal process.

- b. A provisional result will not be the basis for a QQI Award.
- c. A provisional result becomes an approved result when it has been approved by the QAGMC. RAA Sub-Committee
- d. In order that awards be made, the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will forward results to QQI in such format as will be agreed from time to time between QQI and providers, which format will show for each result the marks and/or grades and/or performance indicators which support it. QQI will not accept any result that for any reason is not supported by the marks and/or the grades and/or performance indicators that relate to it.
- e. A provisional result may be changed arising from the completion of the recheck/review/appeal process. The provisional result can then be approved by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee. The Quality Assurance Officer will ensure that all approved results are forwarded to QQI in order that awards can be made.

F2 Recheck

- a. An apprentice wishing to have the marks awarded for a particular module (or modules) re-examined should seek a recheck (or rechecks) of the relevant module(s). A recheck is a re-examination of the marks awarded for a module, or part of a module, to ensure that there have been no arithmetical or clerical errors, that the marks awarded are appropriate, and that all the marks to which the apprentice is entitled have been included in the final total.
- b. LMETB will endeavour to complete all rechecks within ten days where recheck requests have been received by the National Programme Manager (or his/her nominee) not later than five (5) working days after the provisional assessment results have been notified by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.
- c. The recheck will be coordinated by the appropriate Programme Leader and carried out by the instructor and validator and the external examiner, where feasible, or by one or more other appropriate instructor or another appropriate external examiner.
- d. Only a written request for a recheck made on the Apprentice Recheck Form and signed by the person concerned will be considered. The apprentice can supply details that he/she believes will help expedite the recheck.
- e. The Programme Leader will inform the apprentice in writing of the outcome of the recheck. The Programme Leader will also inform the National Programme Manager of the result of the recheck.
- f. The Programme Manager will not process recheck requests received more than ten working days after the examination results have been declared by. Cannot guarantee that rechecks requested more than five working days after the assessment results have been given to the apprentice will be completed before the next assessment sitting.

F3 Review

An apprentice wishing to have the marks awarded for a particular module (or modules) re-examined should seek a review (or reviews) of the relevant module(s).

3.1 Grounds for a review:

The grounds for a review of the National Examination Board are as follows:

- The examination regulations of have not been properly implemented.
- or
- The regulations do not adequately cover the apprentice's case.
- or
- Compassionate circumstances exist which may not have been considered by the National Examination Board. Normally, such compassionate circumstances must be notified in writing to the appropriate Programme Manager when they occur.

3.2 Procedures to be followed to request a review:

- a. LMETB will endeavour to complete all reviews within twenty days where review requests have been received by the National Programme Manager (or his/her nominee) not later than ten working days after the examination results have been displayed on the ETB notice boards or otherwise promptly regulated by the Chair of the National Examination Board.
- b. Only a written request for a review made on the Apprentice Review Form and signed by the person concerned will be considered.
- c. A request for a review must state the grounds in accordance with 3.1 above, upon which the review is sought.
- d. The apprentice must supply evidence in support of his/her request.
- e. Formal processing of reviews of examination matters will be carried out having due regard to the schedule of meetings of the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee and the annual conferring date.
- f. LMETB will not process review requests received more than ten days after the examination results have been notified to apprentices.
- g. LMETB cannot guarantee that reviews requested more than five working days after the examination results notified to apprentices will be completed before the next examination/assessment sitting.

3.3 Membership of Review Board

- Chair and Convener: Appropriate external member of the Apprenticeship QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, nominated by the Director of FET.
- One Programme Leader/Manager from a Collaborating Provider other than the one in which the apprentice is registered, nominated by the Director of FET.
- One internal member of the Apprenticeship QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, nominated by the Director of FET
- One Apprentice Representative, nominated by the apprentice/graduate member of the NPB.
- A quorum is three members.

The Quality Assurance Officer will act as Secretary to the Review Board.

3.4 Modus Operandi of the Review Board

- a. The Review Board will consider requests for a review received by the National Programme Manager, and will decide whether a review should be granted, having regard to the acceptable grounds stated above.
- b. Where a review is granted, the Review Board may request information, for example, from the apprentice's Programme Leader/Manager or the National Programme Manager to expedite the review.
- c. The relevant Programme Manager and the National Programme Manager will compile all the information necessary for the Review Board to complete its task.
- d. The Review Board will consider the evidence presented to it and decide the outcome of the review.
- e. In carrying out a review, the Review Board may consult with such persons as it deems appropriate. The Review Board may require that a re-marking of assessments be undertaken by the instructor and extern examiners, where feasible, or by one or more of other appropriate instructors or another external examiner.
- f. The Review Board will consult with the apprentice's employer in reaching its conclusion.
- g. All decisions of the Review Board will be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have a casting vote.
- h. The apprentice will be informed by the National Programme Manager, in writing, by registered post, of the outcome of the review.

- i. An apprentice dissatisfied with the outcome of a review may appeal the decision of the Review Board in accordance with section 2.5.3 below.
- j. The TSO/Quality Assurance Officer will notify the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee of the outcome of the review, unless an appeal is lodged in accordance with section 6, below. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will confirm the result, in line with the outcome.
- k. Where appropriate, the TSO/Quality Assurance Officer will notify QQI of the outcome of the review.
- l. The TSO/Quality Assurance Officer will notify the apprentice's Programme Manager of the outcome of the review.

F4 Appeal Stage

4.1 Grounds for Appeal

The apprentice can appeal the outcome of the review on the grounds that the review did not properly address his/her case. The introduction of new material that could have been included in the submission for the review will not be a valid ground for appeal.

The National Programme Manager may require that an appeal be conducted in respect of any review.

Procedure to Be Followed to Request an Appeal:

- a. A request for an appeal must be received by the Chief Executive not later than the date specified in the letter notifying the apprentice of the decision of the review.
- b. Only a written request for an appeal made on the Apprentice Appeal Form and signed by the person concerned will be considered.
- c. A request for an appeal must state the grounds, upon which the appeal is sought.
- d. The apprentice must supply evidence in support of his/her request.

4.2 Decision to Establish Appeal Board

The Chief Executive will decide whether an Appeal Board should be established, taking into account the provisions of 4.1 above.

4.3 Membership of an Appeal Board

- Chair: A person experienced in further or higher education procedures with particular reference to examinations, who is external to the ETB sector, who has had no previous involvement with the matter under appeal and who is nominated by the Chief Executive of the ETB to act as Chair of the Appeal Board.
- An experienced External authenticator who has had no previous involvement in the case. n A Director of the ETB, other than the Director of FET, who should not have had any previous involvement in the case.
- An Apprentice Representative nominated by the apprentice/graduate member of the NPB.

4.4 Modus Operandi of Appeal Board

The Appeal Board:

- Will consider the report of the relevant Review Board or National Programme Manager Programme Leader/Manager
- May ask the appellant to address it on the circumstances of the appeal. [Note: The appellant may be accompanied by a person of his/her choice.
 - Will seek (through the Chair) such information or advice as it considers necessary and, in such manner, as it considers appropriate.
- Will, having considered the circumstances, decide the outcome of the appeal.
- The Chief Executive reserves the right to engage the services of any appropriate professionals that he/she deems necessary.
 - All decisions of an Appeals Board will be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have a casting vote.
 - The Chair will inform the Chief Executive of the outcome of the Appeal.

- The appellant will be informed, in writing, by registered post, of the outcome by the Chief Executive.
- The Chief Executive will notify the National Programme Manager and the apprentice's Programme Manager of the outcome of the appeal.
- The Chief Executive will notify the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee of the outcome of the appeal. The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will confirm the result, in line with the outcome.
- Where appropriate, the TSO/Quality Assurance Officer will notify QQI of the outcome of the appeal.
- All decisions of the Appeal Board are final within the ETB.

Appendix G: Apprentice National Complaint Procedure

G.1 Introduction

- a. This is a national apprentice complaints procedure which applies to all apprentices registered on New Apprenticeship Programmes run by LMETB as Coordinating Provider.
- b. This procedure does not cover academic appeals for which there is a separate procedure ([See Assessment Appeals Procedure in Appendix F](#)).
- c. No apprentice will be disadvantaged through availing of the complaint procedure. However, LMETB expects that in raising possible issues of complaint, apprentices themselves will have observed their obligations and responsibilities in keeping with the Apprentice Rights and Responsibilities Charter. LMETB also expects that apprentices will not engage in frivolous or vexatious complaints.
- d. The intention is that most problems will be dealt with locally, in a spirit of conciliation. Thus, the formal complaints procedure should be seen as a last resort in the search for a solution.
- e. Any party involved in a complaint has the right to be accompanied and represented by a person of his/her choice at every relevant stage of the procedure. Apprentices may choose a representative, but they must make their own arrangements in this matter.
- f. The procedure is intended to produce a speedy and efficient resolution. The aim is to prevent unnecessary delay, whilst ensuring a full and fair assessment of the circumstances any individual complaint.
- g. Complaints provide an important source of feedback on the performance of LMETB's services and members. As such, the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee will monitor the registration of complaints and the progress towards resolution. The National Programme Manager will include a section on complaints in his/her annual report to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee to ensure complaint trends are monitored and that relevant quality issues are identified and addressed. Information that would identify any of the parties involved will not be included in this report.
- h. All complaints should normally be made within 21 days of the alleged incident, matter, or concern.
- i. The complaints procedure is based on the principle of Natural Justice. Consequently, anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

G.2 Stage I

- a. Apprentices who feel that they have been treated unfairly or inequitably have the right to express their complaint.
- b. The apprentice should first try to address the issue with the subject of their complaint or with the immediate manager/supervisor of the service.
- c. Stage I will generally be an oral process and a written record will not be made. However, staff members involved will be encouraged to share their experience of the process to the benefit of their colleagues.
- d. If the apprentice's complaint is not resolved locally, then Stage II of the procedure, outlined below, should be followed.

G.3 Stage II

- a. LMETB appreciates that there may be occasions where Stage I is inappropriate and/or that a more formal approach is necessary.
- b. The relevant Programme Leader will explain to the apprentice the operation of the remaining stages of the Apprentice Complaints Procedure.
- c. At this point the apprentice should complete a complaint form. The completed complaint form should be forwarded to the apprentice's relevant Programme Leader. The complaint should be specific and comprehensively documented. The complaint form must detail the apprentice's name and contact details, any relevant documentation, and dates,

locations, and witnesses as appropriate. Any previous efforts to resolve the matter should also be given.

d. Where the National Programme Manager is the subject of the complaint, the complaint form should be forwarded to the Manager. The National Programme Manager will identify an appropriate manager within LMETB to deal with the complaint consistent with this procedure.

e. The relevant Programme Leader will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days. It is aim LMETB's that all complaints under Stage II will be resolved within 21 days.

f. At this point the relevant Programme Leader will advise the person who is the subject of the complaint and provide that person with a copy of the complaint.

g. The relevant Programme Leader will arrange to meet with the apprentice to discuss the complaint. The apprentice may, if so desired, be accompanied by a fellow apprentice or a representative. The Programme Leader will make a written record of the meeting.

h. To establish the facts of the complaint, the Programme Leader will hold a separate meeting with the person who is the subject of the complaint (who may be accompanied by a colleague or union officer) and may also interview any material witnesses. The Programme Leader will make a written record of the meeting(s).

i. The Programme Leader will notify both parties in a written report, of the result of the complaint and the reasons for the decision. Where the result of the complaint includes consequent action or recommendations, the Programme Leader will notify the appropriate person(s) or committee, internal or external, without undue delay.

G.4 Stage III

a. If the complaint remains unresolved under Stage II, either party may write to the National Programme Manager, outlining how the complaint resolution process has progressed in their view.

b. The Programme Leader will be asked to submit the original complaint to the National Programme Manager, the evidence considered under Stage II and the Programme Leader's report on the complaint and the reasons for the decision.

c. The Programme Leader will forward the complaint and the accompanying information to two members of the senior management executive team of the ETB (nominated by the Chief Executive) for their consideration.

d. The Chief Executive's nominees will examine the material and may seek further information from the apprentice to clarify matters concerning the complaint. They may decide, if in their opinion the evidence justifies it, to uphold (or not to do so) a complaint without proceeding further with the complaint process.

e. The Chief Executive's nominees will otherwise interview, separately, the apprentice and the subject of their complaint and any appropriate witnesses. The apprentice may be accompanied by a fellow apprentice or a representative. The staff member who is the subject of the complaint may also be accompanied by a colleague or union officer.

f. The Chief Executive's nominees will agree a written record of these meetings.

g. LMETB aims to complete this stage of the complaint's procedure within 14 days. The parties to the complaint will be informed if delays are expected.

h. The Programme Manager will notify both parties in writing of the decision reached concerning this stage of the procedure and the reasons for it, together with any recommended consequent action.

i. The Programme Manager will notify the appropriate person(s) or committee without undue delay concerning changes recommended or required as a consequence of the complaint.

G.5 Stage IV (Appeal)

- a. Either party may appeal the outcome of Stage III within 14 days of receipt/knowledge of the decision. The relevant party must confirm the wish to appeal in writing to the Chief Executive of LMETB.
- b. The Chief Executive will seek appropriate advice on the composition of a complaints committee and the protocol to be adopted before establishing the complaints committee to examine the appeal.
- c. Typically, the complaints committee will have four members, chaired by the Chief Executive (or his/her nominee) and include an experienced manager from another ETB, a member of LMETB's senior executive and an external nominee. No member of the committee will have been previously associated with the complaint.
- d. The committee will receive the documentation so far generated by the complaint and will consider that documentation and hear other evidence at a hearing.
- e. The hearing will enable the committee to consider the way in which the complaint has been handled at any previous stage of the procedure and/or to reconsider the appropriateness of the result of the previous stage of the procedure. However, the hearing will not be conducted as an alternative to any part of the disciplinary procedures which apply to members of staff.
- f. The decision of the committee will be final as far as LMETB's Apprentice Complaints Procedures are concerned.
- g. The Chief Executive will inform both parties, in writing, of the decision of the committee and the reasons for the decision.
- h. If the committee decides that certain actions must be taken as a consequence of the complaint or appeal, the Chief Executive will nominate an individual to monitor such actions.

G.6 National Apprenticeship Programme: Apprentice Complaint Form

New Apprentice Complaints Form

An Apprentice completing the Apprentice Complaint Form should consult the Apprentice Complaints Procedure. This form should only be completed by Apprentices who wish to pursue a complaint beyond Stage I of the Institute's Apprentice Complaints Procedure. At this point, the relevant National Programme Manager /Programme Leader/Manager should have explained the remaining stages of the complaint's procedure to you.

Apprentice's Details	
Name	
ETB (off-the-job)	
Programme Year	
Address for Correspondence	
Email	
Phone Number	

The complaint should be specific and well-documented and include dates, locations, and witnesses as appropriate. Please outline the substance of the complaint

Please outline previous efforts to resolve the matter

How would you like the complaint resolved?

Signature		Date	
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The completed Complaint Form should be returned to your relevant National Programme Manager/Programme Leader/Manager

Appendix H: Collaborating Provider Approval Procedure

H1 Introduction

1.1 About this Document

In order to deliver the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme, as validated by QQI, the Education and Training Provider must demonstrate to the Coordinating ETB, that it meets the specified criteria for the validated National Apprenticeship Programme in the following areas:

- Quality Assurance
- Staff Resources and Environment and physical resources
- Assessment on and off-the-job

This guide will provide full details of the criteria and requirements for a provider to become an approved National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme Provider.

1.2 Collaborating Provider Approval for National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme

If the provider is not currently an approved Provider for the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation, it must apply for approval. The applicant provider will need to provide Coordinating ETB with evidence that it meets the approval criteria in four key areas of operation:

- Quality Assurance
- Staff Resources
- Environment and physical resources
- Assessment on and off-the-job

This will demonstrate whether the applicant provider has the overall systems and people in place to deliver the Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme.

1.3 Collaborating Provider Approval for a Cognate Programme

If the applicant provider already runs an Apprenticeship Programme with the Collaborating Provider and, as an Education and Training Provider, wish to run another apprenticeship programme in the same cognate area, it must apply for approval to the Collaborating Provider. The applicant provider must submit an application for Collaborating Provider Approval for a Cognate Programme for each additional apprenticeship programme.

1.4 Collaborating Provider Approval for the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme

Collaborating Provider Approval must be obtained by any Education and Training Provider that is seeking to become a collaborating provider for the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme.

Application procedures for Collaborating Provider Approval together with approval criteria and examples of supporting evidence appear in Section 3.8 below. An Application Form for Collaborating Provider Approval (Form ETB 01), with guidance for its completion, can be found in Section H4.

Once Collaborating Provider Approval is granted, it will be valid for a period of five years, subject to ongoing compliance monitoring, in line with the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria. After the five-year period has elapsed, a Provider must reapply for renewal of the programme approval, but approval will normally be a desk- based procedure unless:

- The Provider has not provided examinations or assessments for a viable number of apprentices within the five years.

and/or

- The Provider has had approval withdrawn because the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria were no longer being met.

H2 Providers and Responsibilities

2.1 What is a Provider?

The National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme, for which LMETB is the Coordinating Provider, may only be offered by providers of QQI awards.

A Provider may be one of the following:

- Education and Training Board
- Institute of Technology
- Independent Education and Training Provider

Only approved providers may offer the QQI validated Apprenticeship in Arboriculture Programme and assessments/examinations.

Specific programme related documentation applies:

- a. QQI Validated Programme
- b. Apprenticeship Quality Assurance Procedures

This programme-related documentation details the programme as validated, specifically:

- a. The programme's assessment strategies and procedures
- b. The programme's teaching and learning strategies.
- c. Specifications regarding the programme's staffing requirements
- d. Precise specifications of the programme's physical resource requirements
- e. Documented procedures for the operation and management of the programme

2.2 Applications from an Education and Training Board or an Institute of Technology (IoT)

The application process for an ETB or an IoT will differ from that for an Independent Education and Training Provider, which will normally be a private organization operating on a for-profit basis. In all cases, it is the Coordinating ETB's responsibility to ensure that it is satisfied that each Collaborating Provider can deliver the programme appropriately. However, ETBs and IoTs are experienced providers with quality assurance systems in place and while they may not have direct experience in the area in question, they have the capacity to develop the systems required to deliver the programme.

In these cases, the ETB will require the ETB or IoT that is seeking approval, to conduct a self-evaluation against their criteria and make a written declaration to the effect that they meet the criteria. Such a declaration, accompanied by the completed self-evaluation, will be included in the MOA that will be signed between the Coordinating ETB and the Collaborating Provider before the programme commences on that site.

2.3 Programme Approval for an additional Cognate Programme

Programme approval must be obtained by providers who are currently providing an apprenticeship programme and wish to deliver an apprenticeship programme in another cognate area.

Application procedures for Collaborating Provider Approval for a Cognate Programme together with approval criteria and examples of supporting evidence, appear in Section H 3.

2.4 Advisory Visits

An Education and Training Provider can request an advisory visit before applying for Collaborating Provider Approval, or after approval has been granted.

The purpose of the advisory visit can be to:

- Provide general advice on Collaborating Provider Approval criteria.
- Identify and clarify specific areas of provider approval that need further attention.
- Provide opportunities for the nominated Education and Training Provider staff to ask questions and resolve queries.

2.5 Programme Approval Application Information

Collaborating Provider Approval is granted based on information that the Education and Training Provider submits at the time of applying for approval. If at any time there are changes to those details, e.g., the Education and Training Provider adds a new Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor or internal verifier, it must notify the National Programme Manager immediately using the Programme Approval Application Update form.

(Form ETB 03), a copy of which can be found in Section 4.3 below.

Note: Failure to notify The ETB of changes may affect the provider's approved status.

2.6 Roles of key Assessment, Verification and Assessment/Examination Personnel

When submitting applications for Collaborating Provider's Approval, Education and Training Providers are asked to identify who will be undertaking various roles in the assessment, verification, and

assessment processes. These should be appropriate to the National Apprenticeship in Robotics and Automation Programme and the level of assessment activities both on and off-the-job. For example, Providers with one or more instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors will probably need more than one internal verifier and may therefore need to identify an Internal Verifier Coordinator to ensure consistency of the internal verification practice.

This section gives details of the requirements and responsibilities of each role involved in the assessment, verification, and assessment/examinations processes.

Two or more roles may be undertaken by the same person, e.g., Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor and internal verifier. However, it should be noted that Internal Verifiers who are also Contracted Trainers/Instructors/Tutors cannot internally verify their own assessments.

Please refer to the relevant apprenticeship programme specific documentation for the level of expertise required by the instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers and Internal Verifiers.

2.6.1 Collaborating Provider – Collaborating Provider’s Programme Leader

The Collaborating Provider’s Programme Leader is the person responsible for ensuring that the management, administrative and quality assurance systems for the programme are properly maintained. The operational role will be managed by the Collaborating Provider’s Programme Manager, Coordinating with the National Programme Manager, its Authorized Officer, the Quality Assurance Personnel, the Instructors/Trainers/Tutors/Instructors/lecturers, and the Internal Verifier(s).

The Collaborating Provider’s Programme Leader or their nominated subject matter expert representative will screen employers for suitability to train apprentices and ensure that all SOLAS approved employers sign the Coordinating ETB-Employer MOA (Reference SOLAS Employer Suitability to Train Process).

The Collaborating Provider’s Programme Leader will work closely with the National Programme Manager on the day-to-day management and administration of the Programme.

The Collaborating Provider’s Programme Leader must:

- Have an appropriate background in assessment management, administration, and quality assurance, and possess the necessary authority within the provider’s structures to ensure that management, administrative, assessment and internal verification procedures both on and off-the-job are implemented correctly and consistently across the Provider as a whole.
- Work closely with employers, maintain a database of employers and workplace mentors and forward employer and mentor details to the National Programme Manager, as required by the MOA.
- Ensure only suitably qualified staff are used in the assessment and internal verification processes both on and off-the-job and organize mentor training for Workplace Mentors/Assessors and/or assessors, where necessary.
- Ensure staff involved in training, assessment and/or internal verification have access to and regularly participate in activities for continuing professional development.
- Ensure instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers, Internal Verifiers and On-the job Mentors comply with the requirements of the validated programme.
- Attend meetings of the National Examination Board.

2.6.2 The SOLAS Authorized Officer

The SOLAS Authorized Officer provides an independent brokerage through which the integrity of the overall Apprenticeship programme is maintained on behalf of SOLAS.

Upon satisfactory registration of the apprentice, the Authorized Officer will:

- Establish the employers’ suitability to train apprentices, and the Authorized Officer may consult with the Consortium representative as required to establish suitability.
- Conduct an assessment site visit to assess the employers’ suitability to train apprentices.

- Brief employers on their roles and responsibilities in relation to the on-the-job elements of the apprenticeship as an initial briefing on behalf of the statutory regulator.
- Approve an employer in a specific statutory apprenticeship in which that employer has no previous record of training apprentices.
- Advise an employer accordingly if that employer fails to meet the criteria for suitability to train apprentices, give details of shortcomings, and invite for re-assessment for reconsideration when all the criteria specified is met.
- Brief the apprentices on their roles and responsibilities in relation to the on-the-job elements of the apprenticeship.
- Monitor the apprentices' activities in the on-the-job element of their apprenticeship.
- Employers and prospective apprentices are both required to complete an Apprenticeship Registration Form within two weeks of the apprentice commencing employment. The Registration Form is checked by the Authorized Officer, and providing all requirements are satisfied, the application is approved, and the apprentice registration details are entered on to the Apprenticeship Client Services System.

2.6.3 Quality Assurance Personnel

Quality Assurance Personnel must be appointed to be responsible for ensuring that:

- Registrations, examination results and claims for certification are processed in accordance with The ETB Quality Assurance procedures.
- Appropriate arrangements are in place for the proper conduct of all assessments.
- Appropriate records, results, or other evidence of achievement are released to other Providers, or the apprentice (as applicable) in cases where apprentices transfer to new Providers.
- Results and/or certificates are properly issued to apprentices.

2.6.4 Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor

The Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor will have a qualification in the area and have the requisite experience to deliver the off-the-job elements of the validated programme. He/she will maintain a strong collegiality with workplace mentors and will be involved in the verification of on-the-job assessment.

The Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor will engage with colleagues on the NPB and in the National Examination Board in a self-development role and in developing the community of practice for the benefit of all involved in the programme.

They will report to the Collaborating Provider's Programme Leader/Manager, who will in turn report any issues to the Coordinating Provider.

It is the responsibility of the Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor to:

- Introduce the apprentice to the off-the-job training location and to provide a full briefing on the validated programme including the programme structure, content, and assessment both on and off- the-job.
- Explain the programme content and the qualification they will have achieved following successful completion of the programme.
- Ensure that each apprentice is aware of his/her responsibility in relation to their own learning.
- Explain the meaning of equal opportunities with reference to Irish Equality Legislation.
- Provide the apprentice with continuous feedback.
- Follow assessment guidance in accordance with QA requirements of the Coordinating Provider's Quality Assurance Office/Provider Quality Assurance Personnel.
- Monitor the apprentice's performance in the workplace and in off-the-job locations and verify apprentice assessment evidence on Moodle.
- Ensure validity, authenticity, currency and sufficiency of evidence produced by apprentices as part of the assessment process.

- Provide apprentices with prompt, accurate and constructive feedback.
- Maintain accurate records of apprentices' achievement.
- Attend Examination Board Meetings and assist in conducting re-checks or reviews as required by the Collaborating Provider's Programme Leader/Manager.
- Co-operate with reviews of the programme.

2.6.5 Workplace Mentor

Workplace mentors should be occupationally qualified with appropriate experience to deliver the on-the-job elements of the validated programme.

The mentor should work closely with the Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor and internal verifier and bring any issues to the attention of the Collaborating Provider's Programme Leader/ Manager.

It is the responsibility of the Workplace Mentor to:

- Ensure that the sequence of course work set out in the validated programme document is covered in the schedule of training and that the apprentice gets opportunities to gain experience in all the relevant techniques.
- Ensure that the apprentice is trained in the techniques and skills of the occupation on-the-job as per the programme specification and guide the apprentice in completing his/her programme workbook.
- Assess the apprentice on the on-the-job practical assessments and complete the assessment protocols.
- Facilitate the apprentice's learning in the workplace by shadowing, coaching, observing, and guiding.
- Ensure that the apprentice is conversant with the normal work practices and include the apprentice in the community of practice within the workplace.
- Support the apprentice in communicating with the employer on training-related issues.
- Develop a sense of professionalism in the apprentice, including attributes such as dependability, maturity, politeness, respect, loyalty, and the ability to communicate effectively.
- Ensure the apprentice uploads all assessment documents and evidence of workplace assessment on Moodle.
- Attend Programme Board meetings if required and co-operate with reviews of the programme.

The mentor should work closely with the teacher/trainer/instructor and internal verifier and bring any issues to the attention of the Collaborating Provider's Programme Manager.

It is the responsibility of the Workplace Mentor to:

- Ensure that the sequence of course work set out in the validated programme document is covered in the schedule of training and that the apprentice gets opportunities to gain experience in all the relevant techniques.
- Ensure that the apprentice is trained in the techniques and skills of the occupation on-the-job as per the programme specification and guide the apprentice in completing his/her programme workbook.
- Assess the apprentice on the on-the-job practical assessments and complete the assessment protocols.
- Facilitate the apprentice's learning in the workplace by shadowing, coaching, observing, and guiding.
- Ensure that the apprentice is conversant with the normal work practices and include the apprentice in the community of practice within the workplace.
- Support the apprentice in communicating with the employer on training-related issues.

- Develop a sense of professionalism in the apprentice, including attributes such as dependability, maturity, politeness, respect, loyalty, and the ability to communicate effectively.
- Ensure the apprentice uploads all assessment documents and evidence of workplace assessment on Moodle.
- Attend Programme Board meetings if required and co-operate with reviews of the programme.

2.6.6 Internal Verifier

Internal Verifiers verify the work of all instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers and/or mentors involved with the Programme both on and off-the-job, to ensure the accuracy and consistency of assessment activities and decisions.

The responsibilities of the Internal Verifier include to:

- Ensure that instructors/trainers/tutors/instructors/lecturers and mentors follow the programme assessment guidance provided, and that learning has been assessed using the techniques and instruments as indicated in the validated programme.
- Monitor the consistency of assessment decisions and maintain accuracy.
- Maintain up to date records of internal verification and sampling activities.
- Check on a sample basis that assessment evidence is available for all apprentices and that results are recorded accurately, and grades are assigned according to QQI requirements.
- Marks are totalled and percentage marks are calculated correctly.
- Percentage marks and grades awarded are consistent with QQI grading bands.

2.6.7 External Authenticators

Approved External Authenticators, including External Authenticators with international expertise, are appointed by the Coordinating ETB, to ensure that all assessments undertaken by Providers are fair, valid, consistent, and meet the requirements of the validated programme.

Collaborating Providers will cooperate fully with the appointed external authenticators and provide all appropriate information requested.

2.6.8 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance monitors are appointed by the Coordinating ETB to ensure that Collaborating Providers comply with the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria. Their responsibilities relate to systems and quality assurance of programme delivery rather than programme-specific assessment requirements. They report to the National Programme Manager who will collate and bring reports to Programme Board.

The duties of quality assurance monitors include to:

- Conduct inspection or audits to ensure providers comply with the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria.
- Quality monitor Programme delivery both on and off-the-job.
- Provide prompt, accurate and constructive advice and feedback to all relevant parties.
- Provide advice to Providers on internal quality arrangements.

2.7 Access and Equal Opportunities

The ETB is committed to equality of opportunity and fair access to assessment for all our Programmes. The diversity of apprentices for whom this may be an issue is extensive so we offer guidance on access and equal opportunities.

2.8 Reviews, Appeals, Complaints and Infringement of Rules

The ETB always aims to establish and maintain excellent working relationships with our Collaborating Providers. However, on rare occasions, disputes over approved status and other matters may arise. Where these occur, procedures are in place, and these are outlined in [Appendix B](#).

2.9 Online Assessment Management System

Approved Providers will be provided with access to Assessment Management Systems which will enable it to access:

- Moodle (VLE)
- Programme Curriculum
- Apprentice Resources and Materials
- Assessment Instruments
- Grade book

H3 Procedures for Collaborating Provider's Approval

3.1 Initial application from Providers other than an ETB or IoT

Where the ETB has determined that a Provider is required to formally apply for approval to offer the programme, that provider is required to:

Complete an [Application for Collaborating Provider Approval](#) (Form ETB 01)

- Visit Request (Form ETB 04 If applicable)
- E-mail forms to: The ETB's National Programme Manager

The ETB's National Programme Manager will:

- Review the completed forms (The ETB 01/04 if applicable)
- Send an acknowledgement of receipt of the application and advise if any further information is required.
- Send copies of the forms, with necessary information, to the Coordinating ETB's QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee Quality Committee, who may also request additional information.
- Arrange for the Coordinating ETB representative to undertake an approval visit.
- Confirm to the applicant provider in writing the outcome of the application, normally within four six weeks of receipt.

3.2. Approval Visit

A visit will be undertaken by a Coordinating ETB representative who has expertise in the relevant Programme area or within the family of Programmes, or an External expert will be appointed to review specific programme resources, e.g., staff, programme and physical resources such as kitchen facilities and equipment, etc.

Please also note that if a Provider intends to deliver this programme in more than one location the Coordinating ETB representative will need to visit each location to ensure compliance with the approval criteria.

Prior to the visit

The Coordinating ETB representative will:

- Contact the education and training provider nominated contact person and agree the visit schedule.
- Indicate any points within the application which need clarification/discussion.
- Identify the members of staff which the Coordinating ETB representative wishes to meet.

During the visit

The Coordinating ETB representative will:

- Look for evidence to confirm that the provider meets, or has the potential to meet, the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria.
- Provide a briefing on the Coordinating ETB Quality Assurance policies and procedures in line with awarding body requirements. Access to the Coordinating ETB's Quality Assurance Procedures will be provided following approval.

- Ensure that systems exist for advising all staff involved with conduct of assessments/examinations, and assessment and verification of their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that Workplace Mentors/Assessors will be appropriately trained.
- Provide any help, support or advice required.

At the end of the visit

The Coordinating ETB representative will:

- Complete a report on the visit which will include an action plan.
- Send a copy of the report to The ETB's Programme Manager who will forward the application to the Coordinating QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee, who will advise the applicant provider of the outcome of the application.

3.3 Notification of Approval Decision

At the time of the approval visit the Coordinating ETB nominated representative will discuss their findings and recommendations with the applicant provider, but formal approval must be received from the Coordinating ETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee before undertaking any programme delivery and assessments/examinations.

The ETB will not grant conditional approval to Providers, unless there are minor issues which can be easily remedied within the required timescale, so there are only two possible outcomes of a Collaborating Provider Approval application:

a. Collaborating Provider Approval Granted

If the ETB's Apprentice Quality Committee QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee in LMETB is satisfied that the applicant provider meets the criteria, it will ask the Programme Leader/Manager to notify the applicant in writing that Collaborating Provider Approval has been granted and provide the applicant with access to all necessary Programme documentation and materials.

b. Collaborating Provider Approval Withheld

- Where insufficient evidence to satisfy the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria has been
- provided, the Programme Leader/Manager will advise the applicant provider of the following:
 - Areas that need to be developed further and any additional evidence required.
 - Once the action has been implemented, the applicant provider should contact the Programme Leader/Manager who will request evidence to confirm that the Collaborating Provider Approval criteria have been satisfied. If necessary, another approval visit may be made.
 - An applicant provider may not assess apprentices for the Programme until Collaborating Provider Approval has been granted. An applicant provider has the right to appeal against a decision to withhold Collaborating Provider Approval to the LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee who will establish a panel of at least two external independent experts to adjudicate on the appeal. The fee for such an appeal is €5000. The result of this adjudication on that application will be final. Notwithstanding this it is open to a provider to initiate a new application following a period determined by LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.

c. Collaborating Provider Approval Refused

An Applicant Provider has the right to appeal against a decision to refuse Collaborating Provider Approval to the LMETB Chief Executive who will establish a panel of at least two external independent experts to adjudicate on the appeal and the grounds on which it was refused.

The panel will make a recommendation to the Chief Executive who will make the final decision. Notwithstanding this it is open to an applicant provider to initiate a new application following a period determined by LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.

3.4 Period of Approval

Once granted, Collaborating Provider Approval continues for a period of **five years** unless withdrawn earlier.

Please note that Providers are subject to inspection visits at any time that LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee deems appropriate, including at assessment/examination time, to ensure compliance with the approval criteria.

3.5 Re-Approval

An approved provider must apply for re-approval by completing the appropriate Application for Re-approval (Form the ETB 03), at least six weeks prior to the approval expiry date.

Re-approval will normally be a desk-based procedure unless a Provider has undergone significant changes in staffing or has had approval withdrawn.

3.6 Updating Collaborating Provider Approval Information

If in future there are changes to the details the provider provided at the time of applying for Collaborating Provider's Approval, e.g., a change of Programme Contracted Trainer/Instructor/Tutor or personnel involved in assessment or an organizational change that has affected its ability to satisfy the approval criteria, the provider must notify the Programme Leader/Manager immediately and complete an Application for Re-approval (Form ETB 03).

Failure to notify the ETB of changes may result in withdrawal or suspension of Collaborating Provider's Approval.

3.7 Withdrawal and Suspension of Approval

3.7.1 Withdrawal

Collaborating Provider Approval may be withdrawn at any time by the Coordinating ETB, giving one month's notice in writing, for reasons including the following:

- The Provider fails to comply with the terms of the agreement with the Co-ordinating ETB, with the approval criteria or with any of the Coordinating ETB' policies, regulations, requirements, procedures, and guidelines which are in force from time to time and which have been sent to the person nominated by the training provider.
- There are major deficiencies in the assessment process and the Coordinating LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee reasonably believes that the appropriate quality of assessment provision can no longer be ensured.
- There is any change in the legal control of the Provider.
- In the event that an approved Provider becomes bankrupt or insolvent or goes into liquidation, or any resolution or order is made for the purposes of voluntary or compulsory winding-up, the Coordinating ETB will normally immediately withdraw approval to run the programme.

3.7.2 Suspension of approval

The LMETB QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee may suspend all or any of a Provider's involvement with delivery of the programme for a specified period of time or indefinitely. This may occur where:

- Time is required to determine whether the event that triggered the withdrawal of approval can be remedied.
- The QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee feels that it is appropriate to do so in order to protect apprentices or the Coordinating ETB, for example where the Provider is the subject of an investigation or breaches of assessment security.

3.7.3 Provisions applying to withdrawal and suspension of approval

In the event of a withdrawal or suspension of approval, in order to help affected apprentices, providers must provide them, within the timeframe specified by the Coordinating ETB, with whatever information (about how they can complete their Programme, for example) or supports the Coordinating ETB consider reasonable.

Providers **must** return to the Programme Manager, the originals and any copies of any documents which belong to the Coordinating ETB.

Withdrawal or suspension does not affect any earlier claims, or give rise to any new ones, as between the Provider and the Coordinating ETB, except that:

- The Coordinating ETB will seek compensation from Providers to make good any loss which it may suffer as a result of the withdrawal or suspension if it occurs as a result of anything which the Provider has done or failed to do.
- An approved provider has the right to appeal against withdrawal or suspension of programme approval to the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee who will establish a panel of at least two external independent experts to adjudicate on the appeal. The fee for such an appeal is €5000. The result of this adjudication will be final. Notwithstanding this it is open to a provider to initiate a new application following a period of time determined by the QAGMC RAA Sub-Committee.

3.8 Collaborating Provider Approval Criteria and Examples of Supporting Evidence

The criteria listed in this section relates to Collaborating Provider's Approval. Education and Training Providers will need to demonstrate how they satisfy the criteria.

The following is a sample list of the types of evidence that the Coordinating ETB representative will expect on the site visit. It is recognized that some may not be relevant until the provider is delivering the Apprenticeship Programme.

- Quality Assurance
- Provider Management and Administrative Systems
- Apprentice records and details of achievements are accurate, kept up to date, securely stored and forwarded to the Programme Manager. In addition, this information must be made available for External Examining and auditing by the Coordinating ETB if required.
- Attendance records of the apprentice
- Assessment results, on and off-the-job
- The roles, responsibilities, authorities, and accountabilities of the assessment/examination team across all assessment locations are clearly defined, allocated and understood.
- There are procedures to ensure effective communication between staff involved with the administration, delivery, assessment, and examination of the Apprenticeship Programme both on and off-the-job.
- In these circumstances the provider needs to list the type of evidence it will provide, as suggested above, and then at the time of the approval visit show/explain what systems/procedures it has/will put in place to ensure the accuracy and security of apprentice records. An External authenticator will wish to look at the relevant records when undertaking his/her examination visit.

Examples of evidence:

- Apprentice registration details
- Apprentice assessment records
- Procedures for maintaining and updating databases (IT or manual)
- Procedures for maintaining evidence files/portfolios.
- Security and access arrangements
- Organizational chart showing all assessment locations and staff.
- Documented and signed agreements indicating the lines of accountability of partner organizations in relation to the management of assessment and internal quality assurance.
- Records of staff having access to/having copies of all necessary documentation
- Organizational/communication flowcharts
- Records of Programme delivery (i.e., lesson plans, schemes of work, etc.)
- Written procedures/oral explanation.
- The Provider has access to the Coordinating ETB's access policy and assessment regulations, and they are understood by staff and apprentices.

- Procedures, accommodation, and equipment are fit for purpose to ensure the security of all assessment/examination and external test materials and apprentice scripts, assignments, projects, or portfolios, in accordance with QQI requirements.
- There are procedures to ensure assessments/examinations are conducted by appropriate staff in accordance with the Coordinating ETB assessment regulations as they relate to the apprenticeship programme.
- Apprentice records and details of achievements are accurate, kept up to date, securely stored and available for External Examining and auditing by the Coordinating ETB.
- The apprentice has available to them a copy of the ETB assessment appeals procedure.
- There are procedures to ensure the Coordinating ETB is notified of any changes which may affect the Provider's ability to meet the approval criteria.
- Examples of evidence of the above:
 - Documented policies and procedures (written and/or oral)
 - Access and fair assessment policy
 - Details of security and access arrangements (safe or non-portable, lockable steel or metal cabinet, secure room/area)
 - Records of appropriate staff accessing or having copies of Assessment Regulations and any other documentation relating to the administration and conduct of assessment.
 - Apprentice assessment records
 - Written/Oral explanation of procedures for notification of changes to the assessment, and/or verification team and/or other resources, etc.
- Resources necessary to satisfy the requirements for the Apprenticeship Programme and assessment and examination are/will be identified and provided.
- Equipment and accommodation used for assessment and examination purposes comply with the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation.
- Accommodation is provided for apprentice undertaking assessment/examinations which is suitably quiet, in an undisturbed location, with adequate heating, lighting and ventilation and complies with the relevant rules and regulations of the Coordinating ETB.
- Staff have sufficient time, resources, and authority to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively.
- A staff development Programme to support the delivery of the programme is established in line with identified needs for both on and off-the-job instructors/trainers/instructors/tutors and Mentors.
- Examples of evidence of the above
 - Records of available resources
 - Procedures used to identify and report deficiencies to senior management.
 - Evidence of additional resources obtained as necessary.
 - Records of accommodation checks
 - Equipment maintenance records/schedules including Health & Safety schedules.
 - Health and safety policies and audit report
 - Details of accommodation to be used.
 - Records of accommodation checks
 - Copies of the Coordinating ETB Assessment Regulations
 - Arrangements for assessment planning (practical assessments)
 - Record of/plans for Teacher/Trainer teacher/trainer/instructor/apprentice allocation

- Internal Verifier/Teacher/Trainer/Instructor/Tutor/Lecturer/apprentice ratios
 - Procedures for staff induction (new Teacher/Trainer/Instructor/Tutor/Lecturer)
 - Procedures for identifying and meeting staff development needs.
 - Records of meetings, briefings, and updates
 - Records of individual development plans
 - Procedures for taking remedial action to support staff having difficult.
- Accommodation and equipment required to deliver the National Apprenticeship programme as validated, having regard to the number of apprentices in a class group in the off-the-job element of the programme.
 - Resources necessary to satisfy the requirements for the apprenticeship programme and assessment and examination are/will be identified and provided.
 - Equipment and accommodation used for assessment and examination purposes comply with the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation.
 - Accommodation is provided for apprentice undertaking assessment/examinations which is suitably quiet, and in an undisturbed location, with adequate heating, lighting, ventilation and complies with the relevant rules and regulations of the Coordinating ETB
 - Examples of evidence of the above
 - Details of accommodation to be used and available equipment.
 - Procedures used to identify and report deficiencies to senior management.
 - Evidence of additional resources obtained as necessary.
 - Records of accommodation checks
 - Equipment maintenance records/schedules including Health & Safety schedules.
 - Health and safety policies and audit reports
 - Copies of The ETB Assessment Regulations
 - Arrangements for assessment planning (practical assessments)

Appendix I: LMETB's Quality Assurance Policy Statement

Introduction

Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) was established through the implementation of the Education and Training Boards Act of 1 July 2013. As a result of implementation of the Act VECs in Louth and Meath and, since July 2014, the services previously provided by FÁS/SOLAS in the region were amalgamated into the single established entity Louth.

LMETB is committed to the provision of an effective QA system for all stakeholders. This commitment is reflected in LMETB's overall FET Strategy and particularly in Strategic Goal 3 - Quality Provision⁷. LMETB recognizes the importance of providing quality assured further education and training services to prospective and current apprentices, staff, and other stakeholders. LMETB also recognizes the importance of obtaining and acting upon feedback from all apprentices, staff, and key stakeholders to continuously improve programme quality.

Policy

This policy statement provides overarching principles and guidelines that facilitate the implementation of a QA framework that meets LMETB's strategic aspirations and the needs of our Apprentice, Staff and stakeholders including awarding bodies.

Building on LMETB's existing good practice, the organization will operate a Quality Assurance (QA) policy framework that complies with and has 'regard to' published Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI) QA Guidelines as determined by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012.

The Core Statutory QA Guidelines, published by QQI, provide the common areas of quality assurance to be covered by all providers under the remit of QQI. The additional statutory sector-specific guidelines for Education and Training Boards add to the core by addressing specific responsibilities of the ETBs as set out in the 2012 Act.

LMETB is responsible for the design, development, approval, monitoring and review of all programmes including programmes leading to QQI Awards.

LMETB QA Procedures cover all further education and training services regardless of whether or not these lead to QQI Awards.

Principles

The QA Policy in LMETB is informed by overarching principles that underpin the organization's approach to QA for the delivery of its education and training services.

1. LMETB is responsible for the quality of all its education and training provision and the assurance of that quality.
2. QA in LMETB operates across a broad spectrum of education and training provision including Youth Service, Adult Education, Apprenticeships and Traineeships. LMETB will demonstrate its quality publicly across all of FET activities.
3. A quality culture will be integrated throughout LMETB's FET landscape. The culture will foster individual and organizational commitment a quality assured service and provision, and recognition that QA is a tool that drives continuous improvement.
4. Education and training exist principally for the purpose of enabling people to learn and, accordingly, LMETB programmes of education and training are, and will continue to be, designed, implemented, and evaluated with learning outcomes in mind.
5. Approved QA procedures and those procedures which must have regard to QQI guidelines will be implemented by LMETB and will be monitored for effectiveness.
6. LMETB QA system will make appropriate use of external persons who are independent of the organization and its agents and who are expertly qualified to make relevant national and international comparisons.
7. Continuous improvement is the goal of LMETB's quality assurance processes.
8. LMETB's quality assurance systems will enhance transparency. Processes will be developed through which LMETB can demonstrate its accountability, including accountability for the investment of public and private money.

9. LMETB's QA system will support public confidence in our capacity to provide programmes to agreed standards. LMETB will actively promote its QA system and proactively develop it as a tangible resource and an explicit part of its education and training infrastructure. LMETB views public confidence is a key objective of its QA system and will publish its QA outputs where appropriate.

Guidelines

The Core Quality Assurance Guidelines published by QQI are statutory guidelines. The 2012 Act further requires providers to 'have regard to' QQI's quality assurance guidelines when establishing their own quality assurance procedures.

Governance and management of quality.

LMETB will develop a system to oversee education, training, and related activity to ensure its quality. This governance structure will separate responsibilities between those who produce/develop material and those who approve it. Population of boards and sub-groups will take cognizance of this separation of functions.

1. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance.

The QA system is fully documented. The documented quality assurance system sets out LMETB's commitment to quality in terms of programme provision and related activities as appropriate. It also refers to arrangements for the internal evaluation or review and continuous improvement of the effectiveness of the policies and procedures. Policies and procedures are effective and fit for purpose. LMETB quality assurance procedures are regularly self-monitored to ensure ongoing effectiveness and procedures found to be ineffective are amended or replaced.

2. Programmes of Education and Training.

The development of new programmes is conducted systematically. Sufficient time is allowed for the necessary internal and external consultations with stakeholders to be undertaken. This includes an evaluation of new programmes by the appropriate internal decision-making structures, allowing for consideration of new programmes by both management and governance.

3. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

LMETB takes responsibility for the quality of its staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. There is a systematic approach to the fair and transparent recruitment and further professional development of people engaged in programme and service delivery.

Mechanisms are provided for staff communications and feedback and opportunities for continuous professional development are promoted to all staff.

4. Teaching and Learning

LMETB is committed to self-monitoring and improving the quality of teaching and learning on its education and training programmes and maintains an ethos that promotes learning.

5. Assessment of Apprentices.

LMETB provides an assessment framework that establishes its philosophy on, and approach to, the assessment of apprentices in both formal assessments (where programmes lead to certification) and in-house assessment. It also addresses the administration of assessment by LMETB. Guidelines to LMETB assessments are issued to all apprentices.

6. Supports for Apprentices.

The adequacy of the resources available to apprentices is monitored on an ongoing basis. Learning resources are updated and expanded as necessary to reflect up-to-date approaches and apprentice needs as identified through feedback on teaching and learning.

7. Information and Data Management.

Reliable information and data are available for informed decision-making and to ensure that LMETB FET Department and the Board know the areas that are effective and working well and areas needing attention. Controls and structures are in place to generate named data/reports which are communicated to staff and management for self-monitoring and planning purposes. The information gathered reflects the context and mission of LMETB.

8. Public Information and Communication.

LMETB will publish information about its education & training and related services including the organization's quality assurance policies and procedures, and apprentice information.

9. Other Parties Involved in Education and Training.

LMETB QA Procedures cover all further education and training services regardless of whether these lead to QQI Awards. LMETB QA procedures include provision for engagement with external partnerships and second providers such as contracted trainers and collaborating providers, including for apprenticeship programmes.

The QA system will include explicit criteria and procedures for the recruitment and engagement of external, independent, national, and international experts.

10. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Review and self-evaluation of quality, including review of programmes of education, training, and related services, is a fundamental part of the LMETB quality assurance system. The purpose of such self-evaluation is to review, evaluate and report on LMETB education and training services quality assurance system and procedures which underpin these. In doing so, existing effective practices are identified and maintained, while areas needing improvement are addressed. The findings from self-evaluations are recorded in LMETB's Quality Improvement Plan.

11. Continuous Development

LMETB will not simply issue guidelines and then consider them completed (notwithstanding the fact that guidelines, as issued are in full effect until replacement guidelines are issued). Guidelines will be continuously redeveloped and updated to keep up with changes in the education and training landscape. The guidelines will change as public policy changes, as providers innovate and as QQI's priorities change. Part of QQI's role as an external QA agency in this sense is to assess the effectiveness of the guidelines and to organize their on-going development in collaboration and consultation with the sectors.

12. Review of This Policy

This policy statement will be reviewed two years following the publication of this policy, or earlier if necessary.

Appendix J: LMETB's Quality Assurance RAA QA Policy's

[Link to folder containing all files](#)