QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPPORT SERVICE
NEWSLETTER

February 2019 | Issue 4

Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR

LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

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Welcome to the Quality Assurance Newsletter for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Division.

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1. LIMERICK AND CLARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Implementation planning is ongoing for the introduction of the new single version Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Assessment Procedures. The framework for these procedures was developed by an ETBI working group through consultation and reflection on best practice across the Further Education and Training sector. Adopting common assessment procedures will assure consistency and standardisation of practice across all Limerick and Clare ETB Further Education and Training Centres, and will help ensure that learners receive an equivalent experience across our provision.

Following on from working group meetings with programme managers in early February 2019, an implementation plan has been developed for the adoption of these new procedures.

Implementation Plan

- All Limerick and Clare ETB Further Education and Training centres to adopt **Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Assessment Procedures.**
- All part-time and full time provision, including Core Skills, BTEI, Prison Education, VTOS, Youthreach and PLC Further Education and Training Centres to adopt and implement the procedures in September 2019.
- Limerick College of Further Education, also the provision aligned to the Shannon and Raheen Further Education and Training campuses to adopt procedures by September 2020.

Staff Communication Plan

- February 2019 – Centre coordinators meeting to agree on approach to naming conventions and timelines.
- March 2019 – QA Support Service available to meet centre coordinators on adoption of procedures.
- April 2019 – QA Support Service meet with all provision coordinators from part-time and full-time provision to communicate and finalise implementation detail.
- May 2019 – Staff resources will be available online for download from Quality Assurance StaffCONNECT.
- End August/early September 2019 – QA Support Service will host a series of staff information and training seminars.

Resource Development

- Summarised versions of each of the nine procedures have been completed.
- Plain English versions of the procedures to be developed for learners.
- Implementation guides, with frequently asked questions and typical scenarios will be developed.
- Training and communication materials.

The link to the StaffCONNECT folder hosting the original ETBI working group source documents is available from this link – Assessment Procedures StaffCONNECT Folder[1]

Assessment Malpractice	Short Term Extensions	Assessment Results Appeals
Assessment Process Appeals	Reasonable Accommodation	Compassionate Consideration
Examinations	Secure Storage	Recognition of Prior Learning

Figure 1: Assessment Procedures

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[1] https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Communication/Assessment%20Procedures

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE GOVERNANCE - GROUP MEMBERSHIP & SERVICE REPRESENTATION

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board have formalised the establishment of the Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Governance structures, including the establishment of a Quality Council.

The role of the Quality Council is to "Oversee all Quality Assurance aspects related to the design, development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of the Further Education and Training provision offered by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.

It protects, maintains and develops the standard of Education and Training programmes and related activities. In doing so, the Further Education and Training Quality Council is ensuring, as far as possible, that all learners receive an equivalent experience

Quality Assurance Governance[2] folder is available on StaffCONNECT.

The Quality Council Sub-Group (Quality Assurance) will replace the former Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Implementation Group, and will have responsibility for the development, oversight, planning, co-ordination, and improvement of quality assurance policies, procedures and processes.

The Quality Council Sub-Group (Programme Governance) will replace the former Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Programme Group, and will have responsibility for the oversight, planning, co-ordination, development and quality of all of the programmes of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.
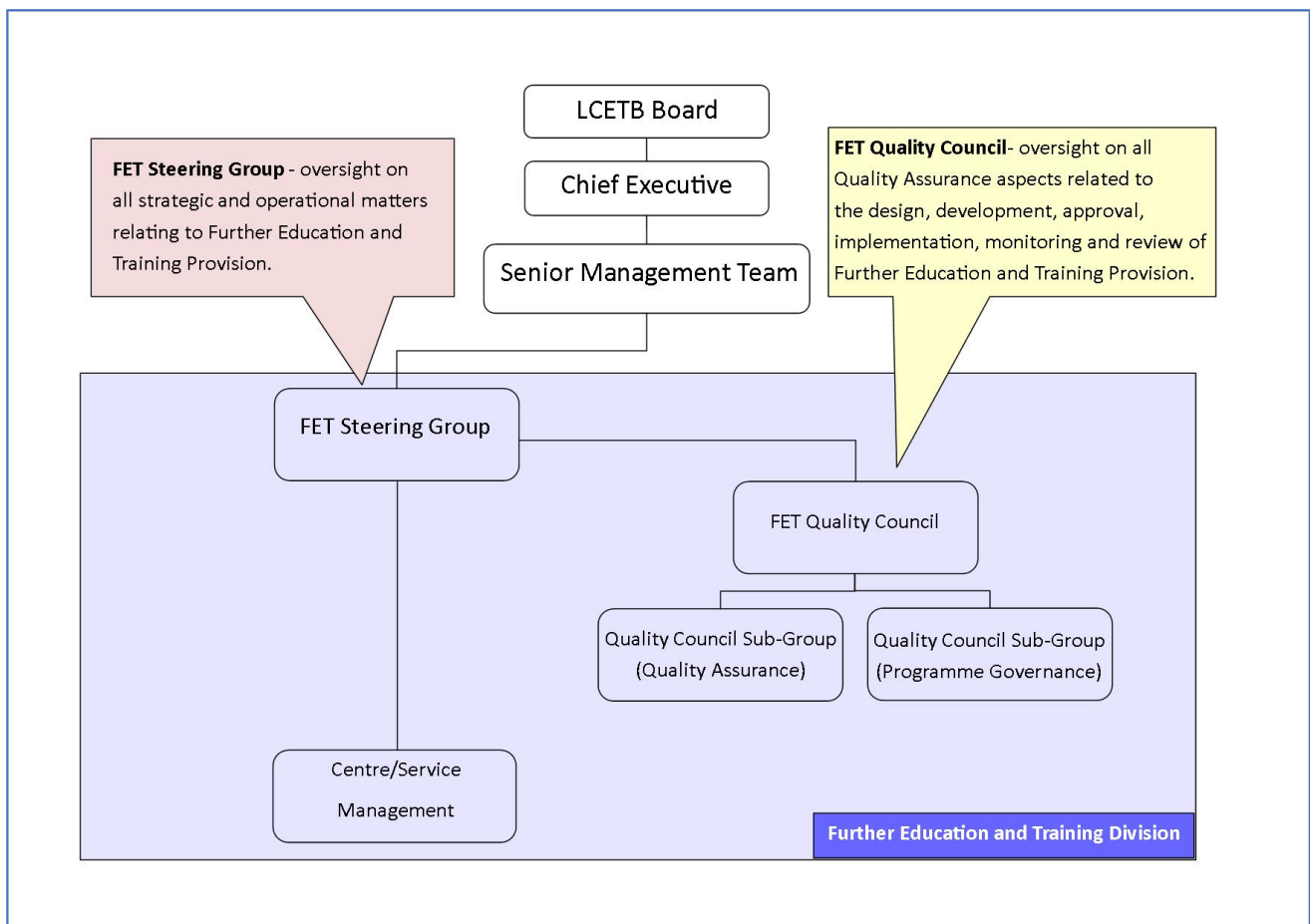

FET Steering Group - oversight on all strategic and operational matters relating to Further Education and Training Provision.

FET Quality Council- oversight on all Quality Assurance aspects related to the design, development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of Further Education and Training Provision.

LCETB Board

Chief Executive

Senior Management Team

FET Steering Group

FET Quality Council

Quality Council Sub-Group (Quality Assurance)

Quality Council Sub-Group (Programme Governance)

Centre/Service Management

Further Education and Training Division

Figure 2: Governance Structure

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[2] https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Communication/Quality%20Assurance%20Governance

FET Quality Council	Quality Assurance Sub-Group	Programme Governance Sub-Group
Quality Assurance Policies and procedures • Approving policies and procedures as recommended by QA Sub-Group. **Programme Responsibilities** • Approving programme documentation prior to submitting to QQI for validation, as recommended by Programme Governance Sub-Group. **Monitoring and Review Responsibilities** • Approving programme and organisational review documentation prior to submission to QQI. **Assessment Responsibilities** • Ratifying External Authenticators, noting assessment reports, ratifying assessment results. **Apprenticeship Responsibilities** • Reporting from apprenticeship Consortium Steering Group(s), National Programme Board(s) and National Examinations Board(s).	**Quality Assurance Policies and procedures** • Approving schedule for review, amendment and development of QA policies and procedures. • Reviewing draft QA policies and procedures. • Recommending QA policies and procedures to Quality Council. • Recommending revisions to policies and procedures to Quality Council for approval. **Monitoring and Review Responsibilities** • Approving schedule for quality reviews. • Making recommendations to Quality Council for the approval of programme and quality review documentation and outcomes that is required to be submitted to the awarding body. • Receiving reports from follow-up actions to quality reviews and reporting to Quality Council. • Receiving reports on issues arising through monitoring process and reporting to Quality Council. • Escalating identified areas of risk to the FET Quality Council.	**Programme Responsibilities** • Reviewing proposals for development of new programmes. • Approving appointment of programme development group to draft programme documentation. • Reviewing and commenting on draft programme documentation. • Recommending programme validation documentation to Quality Council for approval. • Reviewing proposals for the provision of newly validated or existing programmes. • Making recommendations to Quality Council for appropriate structures to support new or existing programmes. • Approving modified programme documentation submitted by Programme Development Group. **Assessment Responsibilities** • Agreeing External Authenticators. • Receiving reports of assessment appeals. • Receiving and considering quantitative and qualitative analysis reports from Results Approval Panels and making recommendations to Quality Council on teaching, learning and assessment. • Reviewing analysis of Internal Verification and External Authentication reports. • Questioning effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment strategies being implemented by validated programmes. • Receiving reports from National Programme Boards.

Table 1: Terms of Reference

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Council

The first meeting of the Further Education and Training Quality Council is scheduled for **25th February 2019.**

Name	Title	Role
Paul Patton	Director of Further Education and Training	Chair
Alan Hogan	Quality Assurance Officer	Secretary
Hanorah Lyons	Quality Assurance Support Officer	Member
Triona Lynch	FET Manager	Member
Pat Maunsell	Principal Limerick College of Further Education	Member
Arlene Douglas	Director of Adult Education, Limerick College of Further Education	Member
Colin Cummins	Training Services Manager	Member
James Power	Training Services Manager	Member
Bernadette Enright	Hospitality Education and Training Centre Manager	Member
Martin Cournane	Assistant Manager, FET Youth & Community Training Services	Member
Brendan Ryan	Learning Technology Development Officer	Member

Table 2: Further Education and Training Quality Council Membership

3. LIMERICK AND CLARE ETB/QQI QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN - UPDATE & PROGRESS REPORT

As per agreed Quality Improvement Plan "Implementation and Monitoring" section, Limerick and Clare ETB Quality Assurance Officer provided a progress update against the planned outcomes and activities to the Further Education and Training Steering Group Meeting of 15th November 2018. This presentation is uploaded to StaffCONNECT and is available to download from the StaffCONNECT folder – QQI Executive Self-Evaluation[3]

The details of the Quality Improvement Plan can also be viewed on the Quality Assurance page on the Limerick and Clare ETB Further Education and Training website. http://learningandskills.ie/our-courses/quality-assurance/.

In compliance with the agreed timeline for the Statutory Review of the ETB's, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and all other 15 ETBs will be required to submit to QQI and publish a progress report on 2018 Executive Self-Evaluation Report and Quality Improvement Plan by 28th February 2019.

QIP Action	
	Implement updated Quality Assurance Governance structures, as recommended through ETBI Quality Enhancement Governance Initiative.
1	Updated Terms of Reference documentation for FET Steering Group, QA Implementation Group, QA Steering Groups.
2	Develop processes and procedures related to LCETB City & Guilds SuperCentre Provider registration, aligned to existing QA Governance and Management system.
	Continued development of specific initiatives focussed on ensuring consistency of assessment.
3	Development of Marking Seminars and LCETB exemplars of assessment materials in programme thematic areas.
4	Developed process for analysis of QA critical indicators.
5	Implement Assessment Procedures as developed by National Assessment Working Group.
6	Implementation of updated External Authentication panel as developed by ETBI quality enhancement process.
	Review of FET staff Quality Assurance Professional Development systems and mechanisms.
7	Automatic system for new staff recruitment for QA induction Training.
8	Formalised tutor mentor process, trained tutors as mentor to new tutors, with roles and responsibilities agreed.
9	Developed online elearning professional development courses for staff.
10	Competency matrix of existing staff to manage qualifications of staff to deliver programmes, both subject specific knowledge and core QA competencies.
	Development of LCETB Quality Assurance policies, appropriate to all FET centres, with associated procedures relevant to the nature of provision.
11	Development of single admissions policy and agreed procedures for learner admission across all LCETB centres.
12	Formalise communication policies and processes in relation to Quality Assurance.
13	From common set LCETB QA policies agree provision appropriate procedures across centres.
14	Development of LCETB RPL processes following on from learning from VISKA and defence forces projects.
	Review of LCETB programme policy and processes.
15	Updated LCETB Programme Development, Delivery and Validation policy following review of Programme Group function and process.
16	Begin process of consolidating multiple versions of programmes that exist at lower levels across LCETB regions.
17	Programme review cycle to be developed, formalise evaluation and review of validated programmes.
18	Development and implementation of learner feedback process, on an ETBwide systematic basis, as part of overall ETB self-evaluation process.

Table 3: Quality Improvement Plan Action Points

Significant progress against the agreed 2018 Quality Improvement Plan

- Quality Assurance Governance structures reviewed and updated as per sector governance framework.
- City and Guilds Supercentre established, single provider structure and QA governance approved by City & guilds, pilot satellite programme underway.
- QA marking seminar developed and implemented, 250 learning practitioners attending.
- Exemplar bank in development, four Level 5 module examinations developed.
- Limerick and Clare ETB Quality Assurance Assessment procedures in implementation planning, working with centres to begin introduction from September 2019.
- Broadening of staff professional development, "Assessing Learner Evidence", "Internal Verification", "Academic Referencing", and in particular "QA Induction Training for New Tutors".
- Working group agreed model for formalising provision of Mentors to Further Education and Training staff.
- Broadening of Quality Assurance communications platforms – Newsletter, SignageLive, Twitter, Learning and Skills web page, QA Support Service survey, etc.
- TOBAR RPL project – Limerick City Core Skills/BTEI in conjunction with Defence forces – first ever cohort of Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPeL) to achieve certification in Limerick and Clare ETB.
- Programme revision process introduced, with modules being reviewed and updated.

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[3] https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Communication/QQI%20Executive%20Self-Evaluation

4. MARKING SEMINAR

"I realise that I tend to mark more harshly when I do not know the learners, I need to keep this in mind when correcting my own learners work". Assessor feedback from Marking Seminar

As outlined in the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Executive Self-Evaluation Report "Consistency of Assessment is considered an area of critical importance and continues to inform the priorities of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's Quality Assurance Support Service.

This was also highlighted at the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance conference in February 2016, 'Ensuring Consistency of Assessment across Multi-Centre Provision', where analysis of certification results data showed a significant variance in achievement of results in centres across the ETB, over 30% variance was observed."

The Executive Self-Evaluation Report continues "Consistency of assessment in multi-centre provision, and the unique challenges this presents in a post-amalgamation environment has been of core focus for the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Support Service since its inception in September 2016. Significant progress has been achieved thus far, and there are a number of specific initiatives identified in this report which will advance the process further, such as: marking seminars and assessment exemplars; implementation of agreed procedures, input and rollout of revised external authentication process; and importantly, development

of system to monitor and flag critical quality indicators."

Associated development of the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board "Quality Improvement Plan October 2017 To December 2018" stated Quality Improvement Objective "Procedures for the assessment of learners to ensure fairness, consistency and fitness-for-purpose and monitoring at centre level and Limerick and Clare ETB level.", with associated Measure/Benchmark "Development of Marking Seminars and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board exemplars of assessment materials in programme thematic areas."

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Governance structure established a Quality Assurance Working Group to develop a series of Marking Seminars for Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board staff in September 2018.

The purpose of these seminars was to allow teaching staff from all provisions in all regions of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board to come together for a Professional Development event focussing on training around consistency of marking in modules from level 4-6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

As well as giving examples of best practice marking of the various types of assessment, the event allowed teachers/tutors to participate in hands-on marking activities and most importantly, to come together in a valuable networking opportunity.

Content of the Seminar included the following:

- Consistency of marking – what does this mean and how will we achieve it?
- Understanding grading criteria and award standards
- Marking Collections of Work, Assignments, etc.
- Best practice around feedback and marking – where and why marks are allocated
- **Workshops**
  - Getting Creative with Assessment Briefs
  - Alternative Approaches to Assessment
  - Rubrics – using this technique for marking assignments, interviews, role-plays, etc.
  - Moodle – online marking best practice approaches

Five subject areas were chosen as models for practical exercises, with Pass / Merit / Distinction examples of Completed Learner Assessment Evidence with associated Assessment Brief and Marking Scheme –

- Work Experience (5N1356)
- Communications (4N0689)
- Child Development (5N1764)
- Care of the Older Person (5N2706)
- Information and Communication Systems (5N1952)

Examples of assessor feedback from the seminar included –

- Today showed the importance of a good brief, explain what you want and how it should be done."
- Understanding of standards and the variability in standards and methods of marking.
- Talking with colleagues, getting their thoughts on marking, comparing notes with others.
- Collaboration. Meeting others, as I usually prepare and operate in isolation.
- To see other briefs in my subject area was great.
- Seeing how a brief can affect a learner's grade, ensure it matches marking scheme.
- Useful to see how variety of media can be used to assess work – good to know, use audio/video more especially for clinical skills.
- Looking at how to interpret the module descriptor (alternative ways to present).
- Hearing "don't be afraid to think outside the box" when devising briefs.
- Good to hear recognition of how demanding marking can be.
- I realise that I tend to mark more harshly when I do not know the learners, I need to keep this in mind when correcting my own learners work.
- I will look at assessments with a fresh eye and change them for the future.

250 assessors from Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board attended 3 marking seminars, which were delivered in late August/early September 2018

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPPORT SERVICE SURVEY

The Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Support Service invited all Further Education and Training Learning Practitioners to complete a short survey in December 2018. This survey allowed for reflection on the progress made against the Quality Improvement Plan and to focus the priorities of the QA Support Service for 2019.

The survey included a range of questions in relation to staff participation, communication and awareness of Quality Assurance. Its role was to assess the impact of the implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan and its role in developing a Culture of Quality across the Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Further Education and Training division.

122 FET Staff responded to the survey within the two weeks. As per "Strategic Performance Agreement 2018-2020"[4] between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and SOLAS, Section 3.1 - Staffing and Infrastructure "There are 669 FET staff employed by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, of which 449 are learning practitioners (teachers, tutors, resource workers or instructors."

QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines[5], Section 1.3 - Embedding a Quality Culture requires that
"A positive, quality culture is embedded – the totality of a provider's teaching and learning community is working in a coherent and cohesive way towards implementing the quality agenda.
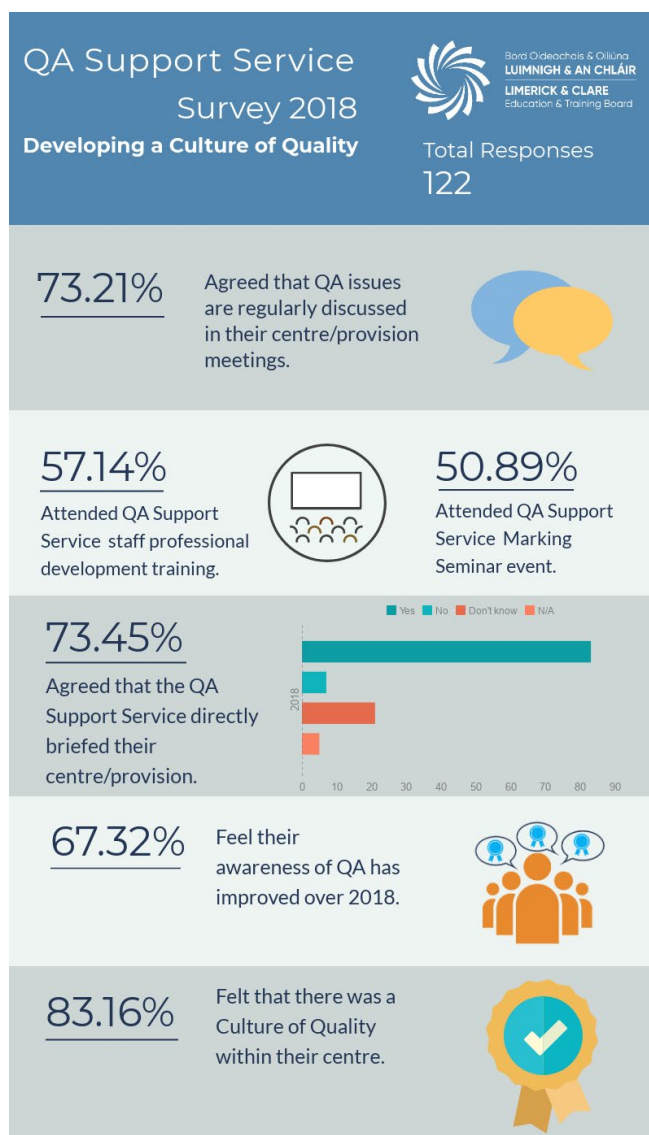The provider is committed to the active development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, quality assurance, quality improvement and enhancement.
To support the development of a quality culture, the provider develops a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality in all activities and measures the achievement of the objectives set, as in the case of other corporate or organisation planning strategies, plans and goals."

QA Support Service Survey 2018
Developing a Culture of Quality
Total Responses 122

73.21% Agreed that QA issues are regularly discussed in their centre/provision meetings.

57.14% Attended QA Support Service staff professional development training.

50.89% Attended QA Support Service Marking Seminar event.

73.45% Agreed that the QA Support Service directly briefed their centre/provision.

67.32% Feel their awareness of QA has improved over 2018.

83.16% Felt that there was a Culture of Quality within their centre.

powered by PIKTOCHART

The survey results highlight the effects of increased direct tutor and centre support of quality assurance by the QA Support Service, including such measures as –
- Quality Assurance Working groups – involving centre representatives in developing QA policy.
- Individual centre supports, briefings, quality improvement plan meetings, focussed professional developments to centres, direct support of IV and EA processes, telephone and email support.
- Staff professional development initiatives, particularly Marking Seminar, also 20 "Assessing Learner Evidence" sessions to 230 staff, 14 IV training sessions to 102 staff, QA induction to 45 staff.
- Improved communications – regular Quality Assurance Newsletter, QA StaffCONNECT site, staff emails.

These measures have contributed to the survey results of the majority of respondents feeling their awareness of Quality Assurance has improved in 2018, their feeling that support for Quality Assurance by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board has improved in 2018, and that there is a "Culture of Quality" within their centres.

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[4] http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/14717_SOLAS_ETB_limerick_clare_web.pdf
[5] https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf

6. APPRENTICESHIP DEVELOPMENT

The new National Apprenticeship in Professional Hairdressing (Level 6) is being developed by a Consortium Steering Group (CSG) with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board as 'co-ordinating provider'.


Consortium Steering Group following approval of Hairdressing Apprenticeship programme for submission.

At a meeting of the Hairdressing Apprenticeship Consortium Steering group on 15th January 2019, approval was granted for the submission of the developed Hairdressing Apprenticeship programme to QQI for validation.

This programme has been in development since March 2018, and the approval of the CSG of the completed programme application is a significant milestone in the project.

The development of this programme has involved extensive consultation and workshops with industry experts, including three national consultation workshops, a two day writer's symposium and a two day peer review workshop.
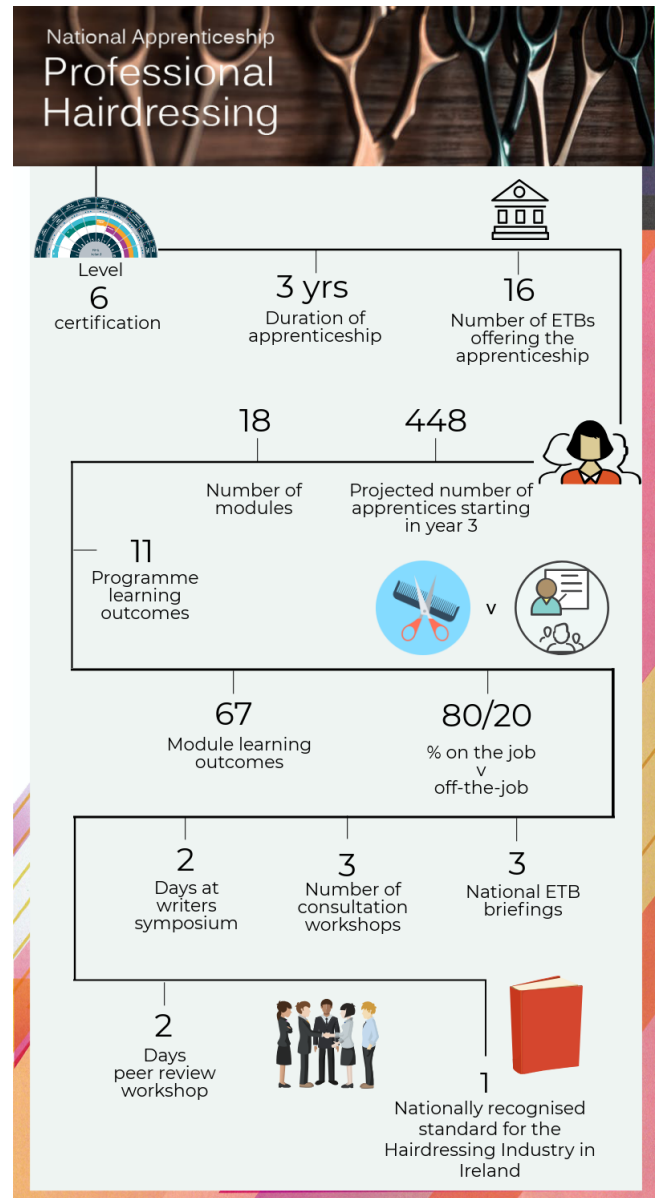
Attendees at Writers Symposium, Radisson Hotel, Athlone. 25th & 26th Sept 2018.

Attendees at ETB Peer Review Conference, Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar, 30th & 31st October 2018.

QQI programme validation process will include an external panel visit, which it is planned will be complete for QQI Programme Awards Executive Committee consideration in April 2019.

7. FEATURED ARTICLE: CORE SKILLS CO. CLARE

For 2018 authentication, County Clare Core Skills decided to change their approach to internal verification. In a recent interview with Margot Walsh (Adult Literacy Organiser) and Victoria Hook (QA coordinator) (pictured) they explained why they decided to modify the process and how a new approach has altered colleagues' understanding and attitude towards internal verification.

QA: Could you give me a brief introduction to Core Skills Clare?

MW: Core Skills in Co. Clare provides classes to 2,000 learners across 5 centres. Within Core Skills there are four strands of provision: ESOL, Family Learning, General Literacy and Workplace Learning. We offer a range of provision from one-to-one to small groups for learners who typically have not completed Leaving Certificate or have been out of education for a while. The average class size is 6 with up to 12 in ESOL classes. We would have approximately 300-350 learners for certification across the 5 centres.

QA: **Let's go back to the IV process of 2017. How was this organised and carried out?**

VH: All IV took place in Ennis. All tutors would drop their folders to me. I would do most of it with help from anyone who was trained in IV and was available. It was difficult to schedule. If there was an issue with portfolios from a group in Kilrush, for example, the portfolios would have to go all the way back out to Kilrush to be corrected.

QA: **You decided to make some changes in 2018?**

MW: Yes, Victoria proposed a new approach to the IV process. When the QA Support Service offered the new IV training and the roll out of the new templates, it gave us an opportunity to re-evaluate and introduce a new process, one that would get everyone involved. It would allow staff to fully understand and appreciate the level of work that goes into internal verification and as a result own the process.

QA: Could you outline for me your new approach?

VH: IV now takes place in each of our five centres with me and a local IV team of 2-3 colleagues. I download the Authentication Timeline Calendar that the QA Support Service upload to StaffCONNECT. This calendar allows me to plan everything in advance and I can contact staff well in advance to let them know what week I will be out in each centre for IV.

Prior to IV, the portfolios go to the coordinator who organised the class, they do an initial check.

QA: So you have a team of resource staff carrying out IV in the centre?

VH: Yes, a group of us carry out IV, led by me. All Core Skills staff, approximately 20 people have completed the training and are all now involved in IV.

MW: It is well planned everyone knows when Victoria is coming to the centre and when IV will be taking place. There is no pressure on the tutors to travel to Ennis on a particular day for IV anymore. They are given a schedule and they can plan for it locally now.

QA: Are you happy with this process?

VH: Yes, now any issues are corrected in the centre and the finished folders are brought back into Ennis ready for EA. I also think the tutors find it easier; before they had to contact me to organise a time to drop the folders to Ennis which could be challenging. Now they know they have to have the folders ready for IV in the centre by a certain date. It is more organised. Also, I feel tutors and Core Skills

colleagues have a better understanding of the process and there is a greater awareness of the whole QA process.

MW: I do think that everyone is much happier with the process – the coordinators, tutors and Victoria. The responsibility had been on a small number of people. Now, everyone understands the process and everyone is involved.

QA: Do you feel the templates have helped with the IV process?

VH: Absolutely, everything is now streamlined – everything is the same in terms of paperwork so it is much easier to check the portfolios. It's much more obvious if something isn't right because it is clearly visible. The new templates have really helped. I know people weren't happy when they were introduced because no one likes change, but it has made things easier.

QA: The IV report that Core Skills produced for both authentication periods last year included very robust comments, a point the EA highlighted in her report.

VH: Yes, I believe there was a concern about making comments before but now staff realise that it is part of the whole continuous improvement process and that it is necessary and beneficial to all. It's better to say something and get the tutor to correct the issue so they learn and it doesn't happen again. Also, when only a few people are carrying out IV, the comments will be similar but when you have 14 or 15 people working on the report it will be more detailed, it is good to get alternative perspectives.

MW: The issues highlighted are never anything big but comments are made for improvement and an opportunity to learn.

QA: You implemented the new approach for June 2018; did you make any changes to the process for December authentication?

VH: December was easier; all the templates were the same. In May there was still a mixture of paper work so it was a bit harder. December was more streamlined; resource staff are now familiar with the process and more confident. Also, we have noticed that we are getting portfolios in before the IV dates. Tutors are submitting them for IV as they finish a course something that would not have happened before, which is great, because if there is an issue that needs to be fixed the learners are more than likely still available in the centre.

QA: What was the overall feedback from the EA?

VH: Very Good. We were very happy with the overall comments. She made reference to the 'streamlined paperwork' and the 'robust IV process in place which adds to the professionalism of the work in the centres'.

QA: How was this process received by Core Skills staff?

VH: The process works very well. It's more formalised. I think the tutors prefer it; no one wants to drive in from Kilrush to give me 6 folders. I think they are putting greater value on the process and that's important.

> *"A robust IV process is in place which adds to the professionalism of the work in the centres"*
> *(External Authenticator Feedback Dec 2018)*

8. NATIONAL EXTERNAL AUTHENTICATION PANEL

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) on behalf of the 16 ETB's are establishing a new national panel of External Authenticators (EA) for Further Education and Training programmes (QQI Awards) which will commence in Summer 2019. In collaboration with the Further Education Support Service a number of information briefing sessions are being held at venues throughout Ireland, with Limerick and Clare ETB hosting a session event on 12th February in Radisson Hotel, Limerick. During these Briefing Sessions the requirements for the role and the application process will be discussed. More information from www.etbi.ie. Closing Date for Applications: 28th February 2019.

9. PAYE MODERNISATION

The new PAYE Modernisation Project came into effect on 1st January 2019. Staff teaching Payroll Manual and Computerised modules 5N1546 and 6N4005 will be working with this new system from September 2019. In advance of this we have engaged the services of **SAGE** to deliver a full day training session on **March 5th in FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus, Limerick**. This session will look at how the PAYE sector has changed with the focus being from an educationalist point. Further workshops to bring learners up to date will be scheduled later in the year.

10. PRIVATE SECURITY AUTHORITY

In September 2018, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board became a PSA Approved Training Provider in accordance with the PSA Requirements for Training Providers (TP1:2018) Standard. Representatives from a working group attended the first briefing session in September in Portlaoise where the PSA outlined proposals for the full implementation of the requirements. A further briefing session was held at the end of January, with more throughout 2019.

Provision delivering 4N1118 Guarding Skills and 4N1114 Door Security Procedures within Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board must submit details of the course to PSA, with Limerick and Clare ETB QA Support Service being copied. To standardise all correspondence for such purposes with PSA, Limerick and Clare ETB QA Support Service developed a set of templates. These are all housed on StaffCONNECT[6].

The working group, which included subject matter experts in the areas of language and assessment development and administration, also developed a standardised Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Initial Assessment Tool for all applicants. A review of some of the elements is underway following a trial run in two centres in December and January.

11. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

QQI has provided an updates to providers "GDPR – additional responsibilities as a provider of programmes leading to QQI awards.[7]" Specific reference to "Notice to voluntary providers of education and training programmes leading to QQI Awards regarding the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the use of the Personal Public Service Number (PPSN)" - "The PPSN should not be processed … for any other purpose and should not be retained …. once used for the sole purpose for which it was collected."

The QQI core quality assurance guidelines require all providers to be compliant with Data Protection Legislation,

- All assessment material must be managed in a secure, confidential manner.
- Policy on the return of assessment to learners and/or policy on the disposal of all material, should be made clear to learners through programme information/learner handbook.
- Once the full assessment and certification cycle is complete, including the Appeals Process, QQI does not require holding of assessment material. The learners' results, grades and awards achieved by them while in each centre, will always be available to the centre. A Final Statement for any past learners can be printed, at any time, from QBS.

12. REFERENCING HANDBOOK
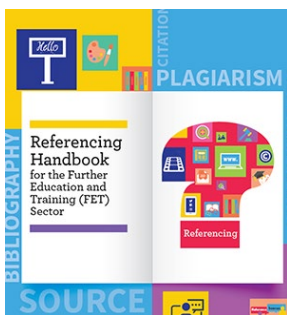
The final version of the Referencing Handbook for the FET Sector is almost ready to go! Aimed ideally at Levels 5 and 6, it is primarily an online tool due to the volume; however it is hoped that a limited number of printed copies will be available for each ETB.

Based around the Harvard referencing system, the Handbook is divided into two sections – content in first section includes a background on the need to reference a piece of work, plagiarism, a three step process to follow when referencing and the second section provides a comprehensive guide on how to reference many different sources of material.

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13. WRITING HANDBOOK FOR LEARNERS IN THE FET SECTOR

This Handbook is currently being developed by a national working group led by Further Education Support Service (FESS) and comprising of ETB representatives. The aim is to produce a resource for learners at Levels 4 to Level 6 to guide them through the different types of writing encountered for assignments. Content will include strategies on preparation and planning, drafting and structure, how to review and revise the work along with techniques for editing and proofreading before presenting and submitting the finished piece. There will be links along the way to the Referencing Handbook for Learners and it is hoped that this Writing Handbook will be ready for September 2019.

14. CENTRE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANNING MEETINGS

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Quality Assurance Support Service are currently meeting with each Further Education and Training centre to develop individual Centre Quality Improvement Plans.

These individual centre quality improvement plans will inform and in turn be informed by the Limerick and Clare ETB Quality Improvement Plan, and form the basis for the continued development and enhancement of the overall quality assurance system.

 The inputs to these individual centre quality improvement plans include:

- Internal Verification reports.
- External Authentication reports (This review will ensure that Limerick and Clare ETB comply with the requirement that any corrective actions identified at EA have been considered and addressed if appropriate).
- Results Approval Panel meeting minutes.
- Appeals Examiner feedback.
- Changes to programmes or modules being delivered by the centre in 2018/2019.
- Changes/updates in staff by centre in 2018/2019.
- QA Professional Development requirements of centre.
- QA needs/supports/queries/inputs as identified by centre.
- Limerick and Clare ETB led QA initiatives.
- National QA developments.

These meetings are proving very beneficial to the individual centre and to the Quality Assurance Support Service as they are helping to ensure that centres and staff are fully supported and that any Quality Assurance supports can be identified and put in place.

The following centres have completed Quality Improvement Planning Meetings with the QA Support Service, with remaining centres being scheduled.

| BTEI Ennis | VTOS Ennis | Youthreach Ennis | LCFE Day Provision |
Core Skills Ennis	VTOS Scariff	Youthreach West Clare	LCFE Evening Provision
Part-time Programmes West Limerick	VTOS Kilmallock Town	Youthreach East Clare	PLC Ennistymon
Core Skills O'Connell Avenue	VTOS Kilrush	Youthreach O Connell Avenue	
	VTOS KRC	Youthreach Shanagolden	

The themes arising from the QIP meetings, and which will be actioned on an individual, centre, or provision basis, as appropriate, include –

More detailed comments on IV report	Presentation of Electronic Evidence for Authentication
Whole staff IV Training	More detailed assessment briefs and marking schemes
New teaching staff Induction	General Professional Development requirements at local level
Writing exam questions	Links to be formed with other provision
Referencing	

15. QUALITY ASSURANCE UPDATES

Templates: As you are now aware, some changes have been made to the templates in relation to use, language and layout. A video outlining the background to the development of the templates, a summary of some of the changes and guidance as to where you can find further information is now available on StaffCONNECT.[8]

The Assessment Template Working group will reconvene in 5 years' time to review the templates, but currently the QA Support Service has no plans to make any further changes to the templates unless required to do so as a result of new policies and procedures adopted by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.
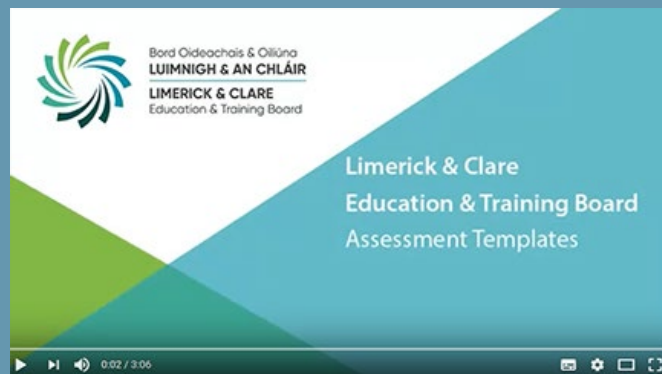
QA on SignageLive: QA Support Service will now feature on SignageLive. Look out for QA updates and information on past and future projects.

Twitter: Follow the QA Support Service on Twitter @QA_LimClareETB to keep up-to-date with all that is happening in Quality Assurance.

Weighting	Word Count
20%	1000-1250
25%	1250-1500
30%	1500-1750
40%	2000-2250

Word Counts: As a result of queries from assessors and External Authenticators on word counts for written project/assignment work at level 4-6, the QA Support Service is developing a guideline document.
The Word Count Guideline document is exactly that – a guideline to assist assessors if they choose to set a word count for an assessment piece. We are aware that some descriptors specify word counts for certain assessment techniques and the descriptor would always take precedent.
The attached table is a sample of the guidelines proposed; the full document can be viewed on StaffCONNECT[9]. We would appreciate any comments, please email qa@lcetb.ie.

Examination booklets: As part of our continued efforts to develop resources to ensure standardisation and consistency across Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, the QA Support Service is producing an examination answer booklet for use in all Further Education and Training centres.

The booklets will be ordered centrally through the QA Support Service and will be distributed to centres based on their needs. For more information please contact qa@lcetb.ie or your QA Support Officer.

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[8] https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Communication/Video%20Files/LCETB%20Assessment%20Templates_v2.mp4
[9] https://limerickandclareetb.sharepoint.com/sites/fetdivision/QAS/Communication/Word%20Count%20Guideline%20Document.pdf

Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR

LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board