Donegal ETB Quality Improvement Plan Review

Part 1: Overview of Quality Improvement Activities in 2018

During 2018 Donegal ETB's FET service focussed on 5 key areas for improvement as outlined in Quality Improvement Plan submitted to QQI. The 5 main areas of focus included:

- Governance and Management,
- Programme Development, Delivery, Review and Evaluation,
- Assessment,
- Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)
- Continual Professional Development (CPD)

These five areas were progressed to various stages of completion in 2018 and along with a number of *other areas* that are outlined below, are helping to create the foundations of building a quality culture across the FET service.

In 2018, in common with other ETB's, Donegal ETB entered into a three-year *Strategic Performance Agreement* with SOLAS which set out the FET service's strategic priorities and contribution to the achievement of key national FET sector targets over the period 2018-2020.

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*********Other areas that Donegal ETB progressed **outside and in addition** to the QIP are differentiated by an * as the end of each additional heading 2****************

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The QIP 2018 format was reviewed in terms of its usefulness in documenting the quality assurance work being carried out now and in planning for the future. In this context, and being mindful of the Statutory Review planned for 2020, it is felt that the core areas identified in the ***QQI CORE STATUTORY QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES*** are the most appropriate structure within which to report and plan.

The 2018 Quality Improvement Plan summary and report are in this format, as is the 2019 QIP; it is intended that this will be a rolling document.

Section 1. Governance and Management of Quality

1.1 Governance & 1.2 Management of Quality Assurance

Priority areas in 2018

- Donegal ETB will establish a QA Oversight Group

- It is intended that the **QA Governance Oversight group** will have a reporting role into the CE/Directors forum in order to progress items as needs be onto the risk register.

- DETB will incorporate Quality Assurance as an agenda item on each of the CE/Directors Forum and add QA to the ETB risk register.

- DETB will incorporate Quality Assurance as an agenda item on all agendas for all SMT meetings

- Donegal ETB will establish a programme approval committee.

- DETB will incorporate Quality Assurance as an agenda item on all agendas for all FET Co-ordinators meetings.

Main achievements in 2018.

- Revised governance and management structure proposed and is available in draft format currently. This was developed in consultation with staff after a number of governance workshops facilitated by a governance consultant commissioned by Donegal ETB via ETBI.
- Workshop held for Donegal ETB centre managers and coordination staff on QA. governance outlining the new structure with opportunity for feedback. This workshop facilitated by same governance consultant.
- QA is a standing agenda item on all SMT meetings and FET Coordinator Meetings.
- QA added to the corporate risk register of the ETB as a standing item.
- QA coordinator reports to all FET SMT and Coordinator meetings on QA issues and on local and national progress.

Section 1. Governance and Management of Quality: **Barriers and Challenges**

- One of the main challenge in implementing the new governance and management structure was introducing the benefits of the new approach to FET staff while still maintaining the usual operational service of the programmes.

- In implementing the change to processes we also had to be mindful that we weren't overburdening existing staff within the changing structure.
- Achieving consensus around a workable structure that was inclusive of all aspects of our delivery also proved difficult.
- The involvement of teaching/Instructing staff, learners, other external stakeholders as well as internal stakeholders from other divisions of the ETB is a work in progress.
- This, along with the change in requirements for planning FET provision from our funders SOLAS, will continue to be a challenge.

Section 1. Governance and Management of Quality: **Priorities in 2019 / 2020**

- Donegal ETB will establish a QA Governance and Management structure and have agreed terms of reference for each of the groups within the structure.
- Staff and stakeholders will have a clear understanding of the purpose of each of the FET Governance and Management groups as well as of the planning and decision making processes and proposed workplans and intended outcomes each group.
- A QA Support Service will be further developed to support the governance and management structure and will be embedded into the FET service across all provision types and centres.
- The QA Support Service will have a specific focus within each part of the structure in developing processes and resources which will in turn will inform the planning, approvals, quality improvement, review and evaluations required by the governance and management structure.
- A City & Guilds Superstructure is being progressed for the ETB's FET service and is to be in place for Autumn 2019.
- QA will continue to be an agenda item on the ETB's Risk register and at all SMT and Coordinators meetings.

2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

2.1 Documented policies and Procedures*

Main achievements in 2018.

Current Donegal ETB QA handbook and Training services TQAS QA handbook were published on website and approved by QQI in June 2018. These were the two operational handbooks that were being used at the time and as new policies and procedures are developed they will replace those currently on the Donegal ETB's website.

Section 3. Programmes of Education and Training

3.1 Programme Development and Approval

Priorities in 2018

- Donegal ETB will have developed **a procedure for new programme development** which will take consideration of the following:
    o Internal and External stakeholders including employers, learners and teaching and learning staff.
    o Access Transfer and Progression
    o Learner induction, supports and learning environments are considered
    o Work based learning is considered when learners are learning within the workplace
    o QQI Validation guidelines/policy and criteria are considered.

- A new programme request **Proposal Form** will be developed.

- A process and procedure for **timetabling/scheduling approved programmes** and courses on the PLSS course calendar will be devised allowing for information for learners to be communicated effectively.

Main achievements in 2018.

- Programme planning in 2018 was heavily influenced by the development of the *Strategic Performance Agreement*s with SOLAS and in particular by the national sector targets and priorities. Consideration was also given to Donegal ETB's Statement of Strategy, learner feedback from AONTAS/ ETB Regional Learner Forum, as well as to employer, DEASP and other external stakeholder feedback. Programmes at levels 1-4 on the NFQ as well as vendor based awards are used to create the building blocks for lifelong learning while at levels 5 and above an emphasis has been placed on the development of work based learning programmes such as traineeships and apprenticeships.
- Pilot procedure and process along with forms for new 'programme proposals' were developed in 2018.
- New programme approval process was piloted during Autumn 2018.
- Development of new *'Traineeship'* programmes undertaken with extensive engagement with employers through the FET Enterprise Engagement team and Guidance service. Integral to this process was Occupational Skills profiling in conjunction with the employers in the development of the proposals.

- Procedure created for the QA checking of programmes and courses being scheduled on the PLSS calendar was developed for the FET service leading to consistency in the information published on public facing websites.

3.2 Learner admission, progression and recognition *

Main achievements in 2018.

- Statements of entry for each of the levels (Levels 1 to 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications) are clearly outlined. .
- All promotional materials provide information on the award and entry criteria.
- To ensure that applicants are supported to start at the correct level, two screening tools are used : Skills Checker is a tool which supports determining the overall general level; a quick placement Language tool is used to assess language level.
- In 2018 Skills Checker was used introduced during the recruitment stages on the BTEI, VTOS, Specific Skills Training and Traineeship programmes
- Donegal ETB's FET Guidance Service and Recruitment Officers meet learners and support course coordinators ensure that learners are accessing programmes at a level that will support their success.
- Progression pathways documentation has been created outlining clear roadmaps between entry level programmes, progression and higher level FET programmes within the ICT discipline of learning.
- In a collaborative Donegal ETB-LyIT progression pathways project, 'Maps and Gaps', (arising from an MOU signed in 2015) LyIT reviewed the entry requirements to all programmes and the barriers that were preventing FET students accessing LyIT programmes. This has resulted in the removal of many of these barriers and a subsequent Articulation Agreement between both organizations.
- Donegal ETB has a policy on the Recognition of Prior Learning. This policy underscores the principle that non-formal and experiential learning is acknowledged when accessing programmes and seeking exemptions. Learners are also facilitated to apply and seek accreditation for non-formal and experiential learning.

3.3 Programme monitoring and review*

Main achievements in 2018.

- Creation of a strategic approach to programme planning that is encompassing of all FET programmes and facilitates progression pathways between FET and HE programmes
- Review of a range of programmes at level 5 along with industry accredited courses led to the development of a range of work based learning or 'Traineeship' programmes in conjunction with employers and leading to improved employment outcomes from these programmes.
- Development of a collaborative approach to programme planning and review which encompasses both learners and employers in the review process.
- A level 1 programme in Computer and Technology Skills was developed and offered as a starting point to support engagement of older people with digital skills development.
- Additional higher level IT programmes were developed to allow for progression within the service while also responding to expressed needs of employers.

Section 3. Programmes of Education and Training: **Barriers and Challenges**

- Development of enabling policies and procedures for the process has taken time.
- Making new programme/course proposal form fit with both SOLAS Strategic planning expectations and also QQI validation requirements
- The need to fit the programme planning process into the QA governance structure alongside of the current FET SMT operational model
- The need to build capacity among staff to adapt and engage in the programme approval process
- The need to build appropriate learner support frameworks and transversal skills into new programme proposals
- Building a programme/course review process for existing and newly developed courses within current staff capacity and structures.
- Development and implementation of learner surveys to inform programme development.
- Development of enabling policies and procedures for the process has taken time.

Section 3. Programmes of Education and Training: **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

3.1 Build in the identification and integration of transversal skills into the programme review process in order to evidence where these skills take place

3.2 Review and update current policies to produce one ATP policy which will support Access, Transfer and Progression within FET and to Higher Education and Employment.

3.3 Allowing for the analysis of data to make improvements to courses within a course review process while also being cognisant of the learner's voice and external stakeholder engagement within programme development

3.4 Within the programme review process, develop a Donegal ETB self-assessment/evaluation reporting resource.

Section 4. Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

4.3 Staff Development

Priorities in 2018

1. DETB will develop and deliver a FET CPD Plan in conjunction with the CPD strategy being devised by SOLAS.

2. CPD events will be organised centrally on a yearly basis and based around the outcomes and themes being generated from the findings of the QA Oversight group.

3. Appoint a CPD officer to research key CPD trends as required by the ETB.

Main achievements in 2018.

- Senior FET manager (AEO) has been assigned duties regarding development, delivery and coordination of FET CPD.
- FET staff development policies and procedures in place.
- A FET Staff Development plan for 2018 was informed by feedback from staff and learners (Aontas Regional Learner Forum and learner evaluations) and in accordance with national policies and *Donegal ETB- SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement (2018-2020).* CPD initiatives included:
  - o Extended CPD programmes across a number of FET centres with programme teaching staff Sept 2018, focussing on utilising technology in the classroom and integration of different teaching aids within programme curriculums
  - o FET service-wide staff seminar Sept 2018 on the *'Changing World of Work'* and employment ; training session on internal and external customer service.
  - o Specific 'customer service' training delivered to ETB management and to administrative staff networks.
  - o 75 staff participated in training 'Supporting learners with mental health issues'

o Utilised FESS (The Further Education and Support Service) to deliver "Creative teaching methodologies" workshops to FET staff across programmes.
o Workshops on Risk Management facilitated in conjunction with colleagues in the OSD division leading to more integration and increased staff knowledge on various factors that affect quality provision.
o Specific In-service CPD arranged for QQI Centre Coordinators regarding QBS entry and preparing for authentication visits.
o Collaborative CPD in conjunction with ETBI for colleagues who wish to engage in the new External Authenticator panel. Teaching and Learning staff were encouraged to participate allowing them to gain more experience across ETB's and towards assessment standardisation.
o Mandatory GDPR training for all staff as part of organisational policy
o Individuals participated in training eg management, guidance, ICT etc.

Section 3. Staff Development: **Barriers and Challenges**

● The development of common policies and procedures for all parts of the FET service to engage in CPD without a national overarching approach and also being cognisant of staff terms and conditions.

● Integration and practical application of learning from CPD events into the classroom and programmes.

● Balancing the CPD needs of the staff for our funders and the systems which are prevalent within the service while also timing a CPD quality assurance calendar that suits programme planning and course delivery

● Creating a balance between individual, organisational, mandatory/legislative, national/collaborative and vocationally specific/professional up-skilling CPD needs of the service.

Section 3. Staff Development: **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

A **calendar of CDP events** will be created and include:

● Vocational Upskilling of staff in conjunction with FET CPD strategy will be made available to teaching and learning staff.

● In service workshops in the RPL process will be made available to FET programme staff to further increase access to accreditation by employees.

● Workshops and seminars as well as staff mentoring programmes will be initiated to support technology in the classroom and innovative approaches to teaching and learning

- The delivery of a QQI Level 6 Assessment Practice module will be made available to teaching and learning staff to help create consistency in assessment.

- Arising from needs identified by staff through consultation "Creative methodologies in the classroom" and "Active Teaching and Learning" workshops will be delivered by the Further Education and Support Service (FESS) to teaching and learning staff.

- Staff development will be made available to staff in 'Working with Adult Learners' as part of the national CPD strategy for ETB's.

- Workshop and training in Universal Design for Learning in conjunction with AHEAD will be made available to centre managers and programme coordinators to improve access for learners with disabilities.

- A number of staff will avail of QA Support Service Seminars and training.

- A cohort of staff will undertake CPD within the newly formed External Authentication panel which will facilitate information sharing with colleagues nationally and improve internal practice.

Section 5. Teaching and Learning

5.4 Learning Environments (TEL)

Priorities in 2018

- Develop policies and procedures around TEL and its utilisation in formal and non-formal learning environments.

- Progress the national SOLAS TEL strategy and the TEL baseline activity with reference to the QQI core guidelines with focus on teaching and learning, Learning environments, staff development/CPD, programme development and organisational policies and practice.

- A number of themed CPD events help to integrate technology enhanced learning into the programmes of education and training

Main achievements in 2018.

- SOLAS TEL baseline activity and action plan submitted, reviewed and evaluated in conjunction with FET staff and SOLAS.
- A TEL working group established to implement TEL Action Plan ; chaired by a member of the FET SMT and includes representation from FET co-ordination and teaching staff.
- Sanction of a post for the ETB's FET service with initial duties in TEL.

- Implemented a number of improvements to infrastructure projects within FET centres
- Teaching and Learning staff engaged in integration of Virtual Learning Environments into their programmes and considered different modes of learning delivery
- Teaching and Learning staff and programme coordinators engaged in specific CPD for integration of TEL into learning environments
- Integration of Microsoft Office Modules (MOS) and office productivity within QQI level 5 Major programmes in Business, Office and Tourism Administration allowing for more current and industry recognised certificates within these programmes.
- Computer resources and internet policy adopted from the Training Services Quality Assurance system and put into place across the centres.

Section 5. Learning Environments (TEL): **Barriers and Challenges**

- Development of Policies and Procedures in keeping with the Digital Citizenship culture and ethos is difficult with technology changing so rapidly
- Staff competencies in using technology.
- Creating a consistent approach to utilising technology across programmes and within outreach learning environments and classrooms.
- The need for an embedded CPD framework for educators to engage with TEL in order to achieve a standard and consistent approach across all FET programmes
- The need for collaboration and communities of practice development for digital content creation
- The need for more experience in the development of blended learning programmes among FET QA support staff and programme staff
- Implementing TEL strategies and the technologies associated with it are a time consuming process and can sometimes be sacrificed for reverting back to normal practice.
- Making technology accessible for staff in their programme delivery methodologies

- Allowing staff time within to experiment, create and utilise technology in their learning environments while still having to deliver within their normal timetabled or calendared hours.

Section 4. Learning Environments (TEL): **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

- Appointment of TEL facilitator for the FET service.

- Infrastructure for learning environments within the 17 ETB FET centres improved through technology infrastructure investment.

- ICT skills baseline survey for all staff completed to assess appropriate CPD supports to help with upskilling.

- Digital content creation for work based learning/transversal skills created in Virtual Learning Environments such as moodle for integration into a FET programme.

- Further Integration of the Moodle and other online content management VLE's supporting programmes and learners.

- Continued CPD for staff in the form of workshops and seminars in TEL to encourage good practice.

- Continued development of appropriate policies for the creation culture of Digital learning and Digital Citizenship.

- Staff mentoring to take place on a pilot basis with TEL facilitator in order to build centres capacity on utilisation of technology in the classroom.

Section 6. Assessment of Learners

6.1 Assessment of Learning achievement

Priorities in 2018

- Develop a policy and procedure for the creation of **assessment materials** that maintains the integrity and security of the assessment process while also maintaining the standards of the programmes and awards based on learning outcomes.

- Develop a **connection** between developed assessment materials and programme development.

- Build a **feedback mechanism** into the current assessment system so that key stakeholders such as learners can feedback into the continual improvement of assessment instruments.

- Review the existing **IV processes** with a view to developing standardised procedures and documents across FET Centres and programmes.

- Development of a **centralised external authentication** process utilising a cross-centre approach at Programme Level (e.g. Childcare /Healthcare/ Business administration) and Programme Module level

- Process to be developed around implementing **centre and programme improvement plans** after each Results Approval Panel meeting. Outcomes of the EA report recommendations and internal verification findings will be fed back to the centre/programme for implementation, action and improvement in teaching and learning and programme delivery.

- Donegal ETB **Assessment Procedures** developed in line with the outcome of the sectoral review of the current National Assessment Procedures Handbook.

Main achievements in 2018.

- Centralised **External Authentication** has been taking place since the June certification round. EA's are booked to work in teams and look specifically at fields of learning across FET programmes and levels
- **Assessment handbook** in place and being utilised within most Further Education programmes both part time and full time at NFQ levels 4 and above.
- Centralised **Results Approval** meetings take place, chaired by the Director of FET and are inclusive of both Training services programmes and Further Education programmes and services
- A "**Quality Improvement log**" has been created that documents issues that arise at Results Approval Meetings in order for a common approach to be taken regarding such issues. The log will also help with the development of the Quality Assurance Handbook
- This Quality Improvement Log also helps to inform decisions on CPD requirements for staff which the QA support service staff then implement and report back on.
- Learners assessed and accredited through RPL process. Engagement at national level on RPL National Steering Group has facilitated the sharing of good practice.

Section 6. Assessment of Learners: **Barriers and Challenges**

- Engaging EA's who have experience in RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning). Only a small number have the expertise to complete this work.
- Development and implementation of learner feedback to inform assessment development process which would include module feedback processes allowing for systematic review of existing modular assessment.
- Developing an integrated approach to assessment development within the higher level programmes.
- Development of educators 'Communities of Practice' to help inform assessment development and a common approach to feedback on assessment.

- The need to build capacity among some FET programme staff to understand and utilise the ETBI developed assessment handbook as a resource which can help with consistency in assessment approaches.
- Centralised EA and centralised Results Approval lend themselves to programme improvement plans as opposed to centre improvement plans. Because of the nature of multi scheme centres (i.e., VTOS, BTEI, Literacy, VTOS) more thought will need to be given to integration and collaboration across centres.
- A methodology of developing a process for creating policy, procedure and resources for the QA handbook based around the findings of the 'Quality Improvement Log'
- A suitable and consistent means of communicating, feedback both positive and constructive, back to centres, schemes and programmes so that a continual improvement culture can be created across all our FET provision.

Section 6. Assessment of Learners: **Priorities in 2019/ 2020**

- Updates to assessment instruments taking place by fields of learning through communities of practice networks at stages during the year so that assessment is current, valid and reliable, fair and transparent and quality assured.
- Development of procedure for the creating and **updating of assessment materials** has been created and is being piloted by fields of learning
- Development of revised assessments for ECCE Level 5 programme will lead to improvements in the programme.
- Internal Verification procedure under current review as part of the introduction of a QA cycle.
- Revised External Authentication panel being formed in collaboration with colleagues in ETBI and FESS
- A mechanism in place for feedback from stakeholders into the assessment process and the development of assessment materials linking with programme development.
- Revised IV and EA templates/documentation in place and in use across FET programmes.
- Learner and employer forums taking place and feeding into the assessment process
- The ETBI developed 'Assessment Handbook' being utilised across all FET programmes supporting fair and consistent assessment of learners
- Utilisation of technology to enhance assessment approaches.
- Pilot RPL project expanded to one other enterprise in 2019.

Section 7. Supports of Learners*

7.1 Supports for learners *

Main achievements in 2018.

- Literacy support is available to learners in both Training Centres; this has led to consistency in requests for '**reasonable accommodation'** within the apprenticeship programme during its delivery of Phase 2 in the centres.
- A **Study Skills manual** was updated in 2018 and used to support BTEI, Youthreach, Literacy and VTOS learners organise their learning and study time.
- The **integration of literacy, numeracy and ICT** is ongoing in all Youthreach Centres and literacy organisers are available in all centres to mentor and guide teaching staff with resources and delivery strategies.
- A new ESOL resource to support learners was drafted in 2018. Completion and printing will take place in 2019.
- **Access programmes/courses** were developed to assist learners in their progression to higher level FET programmes with the utilization of Study skills, IT skills and the Communications Level 5 module facilitating a solid foundation of core skills prior to specific vocational skills learning.
- Contextualised **resources** are provided at levels 1 to 4 to support a high standard of tuition and to ensure that all national outcomes are met. Further teaching and learning supports are provided at the higher levels through tutor collaboration and also national initiatives such as those initiated by ETBI and FESS
- The introduction of a consistent approach to **'Reasonable accommodation'** in Assessment has meant that the service is now better placed for a move towards a Universal Design for learning and allowing for accessibility in assessment while still maintaining fairness and consistency.
- **Pastoral** care and **guidance support** is provided across all FET programmes with the intervention of coordinators, centre managers and the teaching and learning staff
- Staff have undertaken a range of CPD interventions **in 'Supporting adult learners'**
- Introduction of the **Skills Checker** during the recruitment process has made for more informed placement onto courses.

Section 7. Learner Supports: **Priorities in 2019/ 2020**

- Ongoing CPD for staff in dealing with learners with mental health issues
- Additional learner welfare supports to be introduced
- Continued support for learners from the guidance and information service across programmes
- Updating the Integrating Literacy policy to encompass all FET programmes
- Continued use of the resources developed by the Further Education and Support Service (FESS) to support programme delivery
- Availability of Staff mentors to assist with new teaching and learning delivery methods which are enhancing the quality of provision
- Continued use of AONTAS and other national bodies to elicit feedback from learner groups which can be actioned by programmes and centres

> - Availability and facilitation of learner forums allowing for the learner voice to be heard

Section 8. Information and Data Management*

8.1. - 8.7.*

Priorities in 2018

> With the further integration of the PLSS system inclusive of the programme database, learner database and course calendar, Donegal ETB prioritised the utilisation of the system in capturing information and data that would feed back to SOLAS and inform our provision planning and funding bids. The importance of this data and its validity was also prioritised in correlating information for reporting and analysing. In entering into the *Strategic Performance Agreement* with SOLAS, Donegal ETB committed to implementing a range of measures that would ensure collation of data was done in a consistent and quality assured basis which is also compliant with legal guidelines under GDPR.

Main achievements in 2018.

> - Integration and utilisation of the PLSS system in scheduling all course provision
> - Collation of learner records within the PLSS
> - Pilot procedure in place for the collection of data at centre level programmes
> - Continued staff development on the utilisation of the PLSS system and approaches to collecting learner data which are GDPR compliant
> - ETB staff have undergone mandatory GDPR training
> - ETB appointed data protection and compliance contact for advice and guidance

Section 8. Information and Data Management: **Barriers and Challenges**

- Building staff capacity in utilising the PLSS and FARR databases to their full potential.
- PLSS learner data is available in Spreadsheet format. Interpretation of this data can vary depending on the means in which the data is queried.
- Getting learner data into the PLSS in a way which doesn't impact on the learners participation within FET programmes has proved challenging
- GDPR compliance has had to be a key consideration in obtaining learner data.
- Collating all relevant and mandatory data in a timely manner has been difficult without notification of key dates from funders

Section 8. Information and Data Management: **Priorities in 2019/ 2020**

- Specific duties assigned to a member of the SMT for developing strategies for the inputting, maintenance, monitoring and analysis of PLSS, ESF and FARR data.
- Development of a PLSS working group to develop approaches to analysing and reporting on the Data in the PLSS
- Utilisation of data from the PLSS and MIS reports to inform programme planning
- Monitoring of the data in the PLSS on a scheduled basis to inform learner completion rates.
- Monitoring of the PLSS data and reports in order to make timely interventions when assessing programme outcomes and their success.

Section 9. Public Information and Communication*

9.1. Public Information* & 9.2 Learner Information*

Priorities in 2018

Donegal ETB focussed on developing its organisational brand while also focussing on informing the public about its range of services in a strategic manner. In promoting the service of the ETB, the range of Further Education and Training (FET) opportunities and the benefits to participants were highlighted to the general public, our external and internal stakeholders and to potential and current learners.

Main achievements in 2018.

- The development of an ETB wide **'Communications Advisory Group'** has helped to support a consistency in communication with learners and stakeholders through various media platforms including social media.
- Appointment of an ETB **Communications Officer** has significantly increased our public profile and improved our ability to deliver a cohesive message to stakeholders.
- Continued development and improvement of the **FET Prospectus** meant learners are more informed in their choices prior to and while engaging in the FET service.
- Re-design of Donegal ETB **website** which will be more user friendly in order for learners to access information in a more timely manner..
- The ETB's **FET Learner Fair** has been realigned to help learners make more informed decision prior to CAO deadlines and this has been in line with our progress to increase the standing of FET provision.
- *Donegal ETB-SOLAS Strategic Performance Agreement 2018-2020* published and available on ETB website.
- Donegal ETB **Annual report** 2017 published and available on website.

- Partner in 3 Regional Skills Forum- organised events to promote **ICT/Fintech education, training and employment opportunities** in the county; part of a strategic initiative to promote sectoral opportunities.
- Donegal ETB's **twitter** account identified as the third most utilised public service twitter account in 2018 for engagement activities with the account
- Local media outlet engaged to run a series of articles and editorial posts on stories and experiences of our FET learners and how their **journey with the Donegal ETB** had a positive impact on their lives.

Section 9: Public Information and Communication: **Barriers and Challenges**

- Informing and publishing items that current and potential learners and stakeholders can relate to and engage with.
- Maintaining a consistent message to the public from all the centres and programmes
- Consolidating and monitoring the range of social media accounts that centre and staff are using while also trying to advocate the responsible use of such in a professional capacity
- The creation of policies and procedures that are enabling for staff in a digital age.
- Creating a consistent image and brand for the ETB's FET service.

Section 9: Public Information and Communication: **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

- Launch new Donegal ETB website during spring 2019.
- Organisation of a second FET Fair in the Autumn 2019 to help to re-align the event with the appropriate time learners are making choices.
- Implement new approaches to the prospectus and promote FET programmes under the disciplines of learning that we offer.
- Create new enabling policies for Digital/Social media and usage by the organisation
- Continue the promotion of the FET service to stakeholders such as employers in order to ensure Donegal ETB is the provider of choice within this sector.
- Launch a series of animated explainer videos for the ETB that will help inform the public about its range of services.

Section 10. Other Parties Involved in Education and Training*

10.2 External Partnerships and Second Providers*

Priorities in 2018

> Donegal ETB's FET service placed a strong emphasis on enterprise engagement in 2018 and
> continued to build its capacity as a provider which has effective links with industry.
> Donegal ETB recognises that collaboration is essential if services are to be delivered effectively in
> such a geographically-large county. It continues to prioritise the development and maintenance of
> strategic relationships with community groups, statutory agencies and other stakeholders within
> the county .

Main achievements in 2018.

- Formation of employer networks during the development of Traineeship programmes.
- Partner in the ICT/Fintech North West Cluster group facilitated by NW Regional Skills Forum and member of the Forum.
- Collaboration with the Regional Skills Forum in the development of new informed FET programmes with an employment focus.
- Donegal ETB is a partner in the North West FE-HE cluster group of 4 FET and HE institutions in NW. Currently progressing a HEA -funded Landcape project which will identify and publish sectoral FE/HE options and progression routes in the North West Region.

- Strategic effort to support employers to engage with the ETB and use our services as the provider of choice when upskilling employees and facilitating employees to engage in lifelong learning.
- Continued collaboration with contracted training and specialist training providers in the delivery of specialised programmes and courses where expertise is not available within the ETB staff cohort in accordance with national policies and procedures.

- Continued development of processes and procedures to maintain relationships with community partners as second providers of community education provision.
- In collaboration with Donegal Community Education Forum, publication of research into community education in Donegal "*Purpose, People, Process- Community Education in*

Donegal 2018" which aimed to develop a shared vision and strategy for its continuation and development.
- Collaborative project with two community partners to develop a capacity building programme aimed at upskilling community groups in the area of community leadership in order to address sustainability issues. Funded and governed by Peace IV programme.
- Continued development of the DEASP/ETB working group and development of priorities.
- Signed Articulation Agreement re progression pathways with LYIT.
- Signed MOU with City & Guilds for the development of a Supercentre structure.
- Signed MOU with the Private Security Authority with Donegal ETB as a registered Training provider.

Section 10: Other Parties involved in Education and Training: **Barriers and Challenges**

- Having a quality assurance system in place that has oversight of all the various arrangements and provider relationships that are in place.
- Making most effective use of the information and data provided by other state agencies in order to inform programme planning.
- Channelling and coordinating information available from external stakeholders and assessing its benefit to Donegal ETB's FET service
- Implementing programme changes in an agile manner that meets the needs of external bodies while still maintaining the standards that are expected of the quality assurance arrangements.

Section 6: Other Parties involved in Education and Training: **Priorities in 2019 /2020**

- Continued development of relationships and partnerships with employers, state agencies and community groups to further develop and enhance FET provision throughout the county.
- Investigate approaches to collaboration that will lead to new initiatives within the country in conjunction with other education partners.
- Investigate approaches to collaboration with other ETB's on programme development.