

# Further Education and Training (FET) Options for School Leavers: **Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Courses**

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DonegalETB



**etb**

Bord Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Dhúin na nGall  
Donegal Education and  
Training Board

## ► What is your Next Move?

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Are you about to leave school or have left recently and are wondering what next or where do I go from here?

Have you thought about Further Education and Training **(FET)**?

Did you know that Donegal ETB, as the largest **FET** provider in Co Donegal, offers a comprehensive range of options on your doorstep?

If you want to earn while you learn or fast-track your way into employment or need a stepping stone into third level with nationally and internationally recognised qualifications then consider applying for an apprenticeship, **Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) course**, specific skills training course or traineeship.

**This brochure looks at PLCs in more detail.**

## ► 10 Reasons to study with Donegal ETB's FET Service



**LOW OR NO  
COURSE FEES**

Progression to  
Employment  
and/or Degree  
Courses in Third  
Level Institutions



**CAREER  
GUIDANCE**

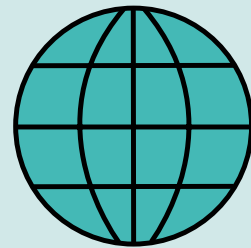


**EARN WHILE  
YOU LEARN**



**FLEXIBLE LEARNING  
FOR THE CHANGING  
EMPLOYMENT MARKET**

S M A L L  
**CLASS  
SIZES**



**RANGE OF NATIONAL  
AND INTERNATIONAL  
CERTIFICATION**



**LEARNERS OF ALL  
AGES CATERED FOR**



**VARIETY OF  
LEARNING AREAS**



**QUALIFIED,  
EXPERIENCED AND  
DEDICATED STAFF**

## ► What is a PLC?

PLCs are full-time one year courses that offer a mixture of practical work, academic work and work experience. They are ideal progression routes from Leaving Certificate for those who want an extra year to study a specific vocational area and for adults returning to education. Post Leaving Certificate courses adopt an integrated approach, focusing on technical knowledge, core skills and work experience. Almost half of the time spent on a PLC is devoted to knowledge and skill training related to employment, with a further quarter (one day per week for the duration of the course) spent on relevant work-based experience. They prepare students for entry level employment or progression to further study.

**Donegal ETB has a direct entry agreement with Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) to facilitate the progression of PLC students who have completed their awards for progression into LYIT courses.**

**Donegal ETB offers PLC courses at QQI Level 5 in:**

- Art, Craft & Design (5M1984)
- Building Technology (5M5010)
- Business Administration (5M2468)
- Business Studies (5M2102)
- Early Childhood Care & Education (5M2009)
- Health Service Skills (5M3782)
- Nursing Studies (5M4349)
- Sports, Recreation & Exercise (5M5146)

**Why should I consider a PLC?**

PLCs are designed as a step towards skilled employment and, as such, they are closely linked to industry and its needs. Progression to higher education is also an option; Donegal ETB PLC students have the highest progression rates to higher education in the country.<sup>1</sup>

**What does it cost to do a PLC?**

A registration fee of €100 applies to all students. Non-medical card holders must also pay a PLC Government levy of €200 and a QQI Exam fee of €50.<sup>2</sup>

PLC students may be eligible for a SUSI Maintenance Grant and should check out <https://susi.ie/eligibility/plc-student/> for more information.

**Where can I do a PLC?**

Donegal ETB's **FET** Service offers PLCs in three locations – Killybegs (St Catherine's Vocational School), Letterkenny (Errigal College) and Stranorlar (Finn Valley College).

**When can I apply for a PLC?**

You can apply for a PLC anytime between January and September each year for starting in September. You can apply through the school or online through [www.fetchcourses.ie](http://www.fetchcourses.ie) (use Donegal as your Location and PLC as your Keyword).

<sup>1</sup>DES, ETBI, HEA, IUA, QQI, SOLAS, THEA, Transitions Reform Sub-Group – Further Education and Training (FET) Progression to Higher Education (HE) Working Paper, March 2020 (Table 2: PLC Progression to HE 2017 by ETB and HEI, p.11).

<sup>2</sup>You don't have to pay the contribution if you hold a full medical card in your own right, are the dependent child of a full medical card holder, are eligible for a student grant or are getting Back to Education Allowance.

## ► Art, Craft & Design

This course is for students interested in building an exciting, creative and competitive portfolio in different fields of Art, Craft and Design. There is a strong emphasis on many art practices, for example, painting, drawing, sculpture and design. It is of interest to both students who wish to pursue a career or progress to further study in this field. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course. An Erasmus+ work placement is also a possibility.

**Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.**

### Modules\*

- Communications - 5N0690
- Drawing - 5N1862
- Design Skills - 5N0784
- Painting - 5N1302
- Safety and Health at Work – 5N1794
- Sculpture - 5N1918
- Wood Turning – 5N1359
- Work Experience - 5N1356

**\* May be subject to change**

**Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview.**

**Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.**

### Course Title:

Art, Craft & Design (5M1984)

### Certification Body Award:

QQI Level 5

### Location:

Errigal College, Letterkenny

### Entry Requirements

#### Education:

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

#### Aptitude:

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

#### Previous experience:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

## ► Building Technology

This course is for students interested in starting a career in the building industry. It provides students with a broad basis to develop more specialised interests in the areas of building design or renewable energy. Completion of this course will enable students to directly pursue a career in this area or progress to further study in this field including potentially applying for an apprenticeship programme. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course. An Erasmus+ work placement is also a possibility.

**Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.**

### Modules\*

- Architectural Drawing – 5N1588
- Building Construction – 5N1570
- Communications - 5N0690
- Computer Aided Draughting (2D) – 5N1604
- Mathematics – 5N1833
- Renewable Energy Systems – 5N4975
- Safety and Health at Work – 5N1794
- Wood Fabrication – 5N1999
- Work Experience - 5N1356

**\* May be subject to change**

**The Safe Pass legal requirement for the building industry will form an optional part of the course (costing €120 to the student).**

**Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview.**

**Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.**

### Course Title:

Building Technology (5M5010)

### Certification Body Award:

QQI Level 5

### Location:

Errigal College, Letterkenny

### Entry Requirements

#### Education:

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

#### Aptitude:

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

#### Previous experience:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

## ► Business Administration

This course is for students interested in building an exciting career in the field of administration. The course has a practical focus with an emphasis on preparing graduates for employment or progression to further study. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course.

**Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.**

### Modules\*

- Audio Transcription - 5N1549
- Bookkeeping Manual and Computerised – 5N1354
- Business Administration Skills – 5N1610
- Communications – 5N0690
- Customer Service – 5N0972
- Text Production – 5N1422
- Word Processing – 5N1358
- Work Experience – 5N1356

**\* May be subject to change**

**Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview (in the event of oversubscription).**

**Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.**

### Course Title:

Business Administration (5M2468)

### Certification Body Award:

QQI Level 5

### Location:

Finn Valley College, Stranorlar

### Entry Requirements

#### Education:

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

#### Aptitude:

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

#### Previous experience:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

## ► Business Studies

This course is for students interested in building an exciting career in the world of business. It is designed to introduce students to the world of business, enterprise and FinTech and to develop practical administration, marketing, information and communication technology and office skills, essential tools in the modern business world. The course has a practical focus with an emphasis on preparing graduates for employment in this field or progression to further or higher education. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course. An Erasmus+ work placement is also a possibility.

**Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.**

### Modules\*

- Business Administration Skills - 5N1610
- Communications – 5N0690
- Financial Services – 5N1383
- Information & Communication Systems – 5N1952
- Marketing Practice - 5N1400
- Programming and Design Principles – 5N2927
- Text Production - 5N1422
- Work Experience - 5N1356

**\* May be subject to change**

**Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview.**

**Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.**

### Course Title:

Business Studies (5M2102)

### Certification Body Award:

QQI Level 5

### Location:

Errigal College, Letterkenny

### Entry Requirements

#### Education:

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

#### Aptitude:

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

#### Previous experience:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.



## ▶ Early Childhood Care & Education

This course is for students interested in working in a range of Early Childhood Care and Education settings. The course has a practical focus with an emphasis on preparing graduates for employment in this field or progression to further and/or higher education. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course.

**Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.**

**Modules\***

- Children with Additional Needs – 5N2396
- Child Development - 5N1764
- Child Health & Well Being - 5N1765
- Communications – 5N0690
- Early Care & Education Practice - 5N1770
- Early Childhood Education & Play – 5N1773
- Nutrition - 5N2006 (Errigal College)
- Special Needs Assisting – 5N1786 (St Catherine’s Vocational School)
- Work Experience – 5N1356
- Word Processing - 5N1358 (Finn Valley College)
- Creative Arts for Early Childhood – 5n1769 (St Catherine’s Vocational School)

**\* May be subject to change**

Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview (Errigal College only; Finn Valley College in the event of oversubscription).

**Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.**

**Course Title:**

Early Childhood Care & Education (5M2009)

**Certification Body Award:**

QQI Level 5

**Location:**

Errigal College, Finn Valley College, St Catherine’s Vocational School

**Entry Requirements**

**Education:**

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

**Aptitude:**

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

**Previous experience:**

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

## ▶ Health Service Skills

This course is for students interested in working in a variety of healthcare settings. With an increasing ageing population, in addition to advances and developments in health care services in Ireland, the demand for skilled and competent personnel is expected to grow significantly in the coming years. The course has a practical focus with an emphasis on preparing graduates for employment in this field or progression to further and/or higher education. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course.

**Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.**

**Modules\***

- Anatomy & Physiology - 5N0749
- Care of the Older Person - 5N2706
- Care Skills – 5N2770
- Care Support - 5N0758
- Communications - 5N0690
- Human, Growth & Development - 5N1279
- Infection Prevention & Control - 5N3734
- Nursing Theory & Practice – 5N4325
- Work Experience - 5N1356

**\* May be subject to change**

Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview.

**Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.**

**Course Title:**

Health Service Skills (5M3782)

**Certification Body Award:**

QQI Level 5

**Location:**

Errigal College, Letterkenny

**Entry Requirements**

**Education:**

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

**Aptitude:**

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

**Previous experience:**

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

► Nursing Studies

This course is for students interested in working in a range of hospital and healthcare settings. The course has a practical focus with an emphasis on preparing graduates for further and/or higher education and/or employment in this field. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course.

Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.

Modules\*

- Anatomy and Physiology - 5N0749
- Care of the Older Person - 5N2706
- Care Skills - 5N2770
- Communications - 5N0690
- Human Growth and Development - 5N1279
- Infection Prevention and Control - 5N3734
- Nursing Theory and Practice - 5N4325
- Work Experience - 5N1356

\* May be subject to change

Entry procedure is by application form or online.

Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.

Course Title:

Nursing Studies (5M4349)

Certification Body Award:

QQI Level 5

Location:

St Catherine’s Vocational School, Killybegs

Entry Requirements

Education:

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

Aptitude:

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

Previous experience:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

► Sports, Recreation & Exercise

This course is for students interested in working in the leisure/ sports industry. The course has a practical focus on sports such as basketball, Gaelic football and adventure activities with an emphasis on preparing graduates for employment in this field or for entry to further or higher education. Graduates can progress from this course to Institutes of Technology and universities through the CAO and/or Higher Education Links Scheme on obtaining a full award. Work experience is an essential part of the course and gives students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the course. An Erasmus+ work placement is also a possibility for those undertaking the course in Errigal College.

Examination is by both continuous assessment, skills demonstrations and end of year examinations.

Modules\*

- Adventure Activities – 5N4646
- Basketball Coaching - 5N4888
- Communications - 5N0690 (Errigal College)
- Exercise & Fitness - 5N2668
- Gaelic Football Coaching - 5N5085
- Nutrition – 5N2006
- Safety & Health at Work – 5N1794 (Errigal College)
- Soccer Coaching - 5N4887
- Sports & Recreation Studies - 5N2667
- Work Experience - 5N1356
- Word Processing - 5N1358 (Finn Valley College)

\* May be subject to change

Entry procedure is by application form or online and interview (Errigal College only; Finn Valley College in the event of oversubscription).

Successful applicants will undergo Garda Vetting to gain permission to undertake work placement while on these courses. Please note any issues regarding Garda Vetting may hinder your work placement approval.

Course Title:

Sports, Recreation & Exercise (5M5146)

Certification Body Award:

QQI Level 5

Location:

Errigal College and Finn Valley College

Entry Requirements

Education:

Students must have successfully completed the Leaving Certificate/ Leaving Certificate Applied/ Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Examination or QQI Level 4. Alternatively, applicants should have a standard of knowledge, skill and competence equivalent to NFQ Level 4 when accessing a Level 5 programme.

Aptitude:

Applicants must have a motivation to learn, an interest in the subject and the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies set out in the course.

Previous experience:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate a moderate range of knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the course, be able to work with responsibility and demonstrate the ability to work on their own initiative.

## What do our students say?

**As a graduate of PLC Level 5 Art, Craft & Design, I created an extensive portfolio of work. The course allowed me the opportunity to experiment and find and develop my own strengths both artistically and personally. I am now studying for my degree. My PLC course has been a life changing experience for me—the possibilities are endless.**

—

Stephanie McGowan,  
former Errigal College PLC; progressed to BA  
Fine Art, Sligo IT

**I came to Finn Valley College to do the QQI Level 5 Business Administration PLC; my previous school was large so I could not believe the difference in individual attention I received. I have gained in confidence and practical skills. I have grown immensely as a person and I am now looking forward to moving onto third level college with the confidence I have gained.**

—

Maria Coyle,  
Business Administration PLC student,  
Finn Valley College

**I decided to return to my former school and undertake a PLC Level 5 Nursing course. I was initially put off by the notion of going back especially now as a man in my 30s. The guidance and tuition I got however, really prepared me for any academic environment. I successfully progressed to Nursing in the LYIT and completed a Bachelor of Science (Hons.) in Psychiatric Nursing. My PLC courses gave me a clear goal and the determination to get there. I would highly recommend a PLC programme to anyone!**

—

Nigel Harkin, former Errigal College PLC;  
Psychiatric Nurse, HSE, Letterkenny

**Looking back, I am so glad that I chose to do the PLC course at Finn Valley College because it encouraged me to thrive at a 3rd level Institution and the skills I learned have come in so handy for me at college.**

—

Shannon Kelly,  
former Finn Valley College PLC;  
Teacher at Scoil Mhuire, Buncrana

**I am a graduate of the Level 5 PLC in Business Studies at Errigal College and was provided with all the necessary support and encouragement needed to achieve my potential. Through links introduced with external third level institutions I was able to further progress to higher education. Through this transfer system, and equipped with the skills, confidence and knowledge provided to me, I am now preparing for the job of my dreams.**

—

Liam Gillespie,  
former Errigal College PLC; progressed to a  
Bachelor of Science in Computing

**Doing a PLC was the best decision I ever made as it was a stepping stone to gaining full-time employment. I obtained skills and knowledge that I still use to this very day. The tutors were excellent; they empowered students to use their own initiative and release their inner skills.**

—

Paddy Kelly,  
PLC, Finn Valley College;  
Administration, Donegal ETB, Letterkenny

**Throughout my Leaving Certificate year, I remained undecided regarding third level education courses to pursue. Upon good advice from my Guidance Counsellor I joined the Sports & Recreation PLC course at Errigal College in 1997. Needless to say this was definitely one of the best decisions I made. Along with gaining valuable insight into the world of Sports Nutrition, Coaching and Management, I can also attribute much of my self-confidence and social communication skills to this course. The extra year proved invaluable in terms of my entrance to University life and my application towards a 3 year Sports Scholarship in NUI Galway which I was awarded in 1998. As a post-primary teacher, I can honestly say that the**

**teachers at Errigal College not only provided the highest standard of education but also acted as key role models for the career path I chose. As someone who is hugely passionate and very active in the arena of sports, I would highly recommend this course to any student.**

—

Maureen O'Donnell,  
former Errigal College PLC; Teacher at Deelee  
College, Raphoe



## Contact us

Further information on our FET courses, including PLCs, can be found at [https:// www.donegaletb.ie/further-education-training/course-finder/](https://www.donegaletb.ie/further-education-training/course-finder/)

You can apply online for many of Donegal ETB's **FET** courses through [www.fetchcourses.ie](http://www.fetchcourses.ie) or apply directly to our PLC centres:

— Michelle O'Reilly, PLC Coordinator, Errigal College, Letterkenny  
T. 074 9121047  
E. [michelleoreilly@donegaletb.ie](mailto:michelleoreilly@donegaletb.ie)  
[www.errigalcollege.ie](http://www.errigalcollege.ie)



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Errigal College Letterkenny

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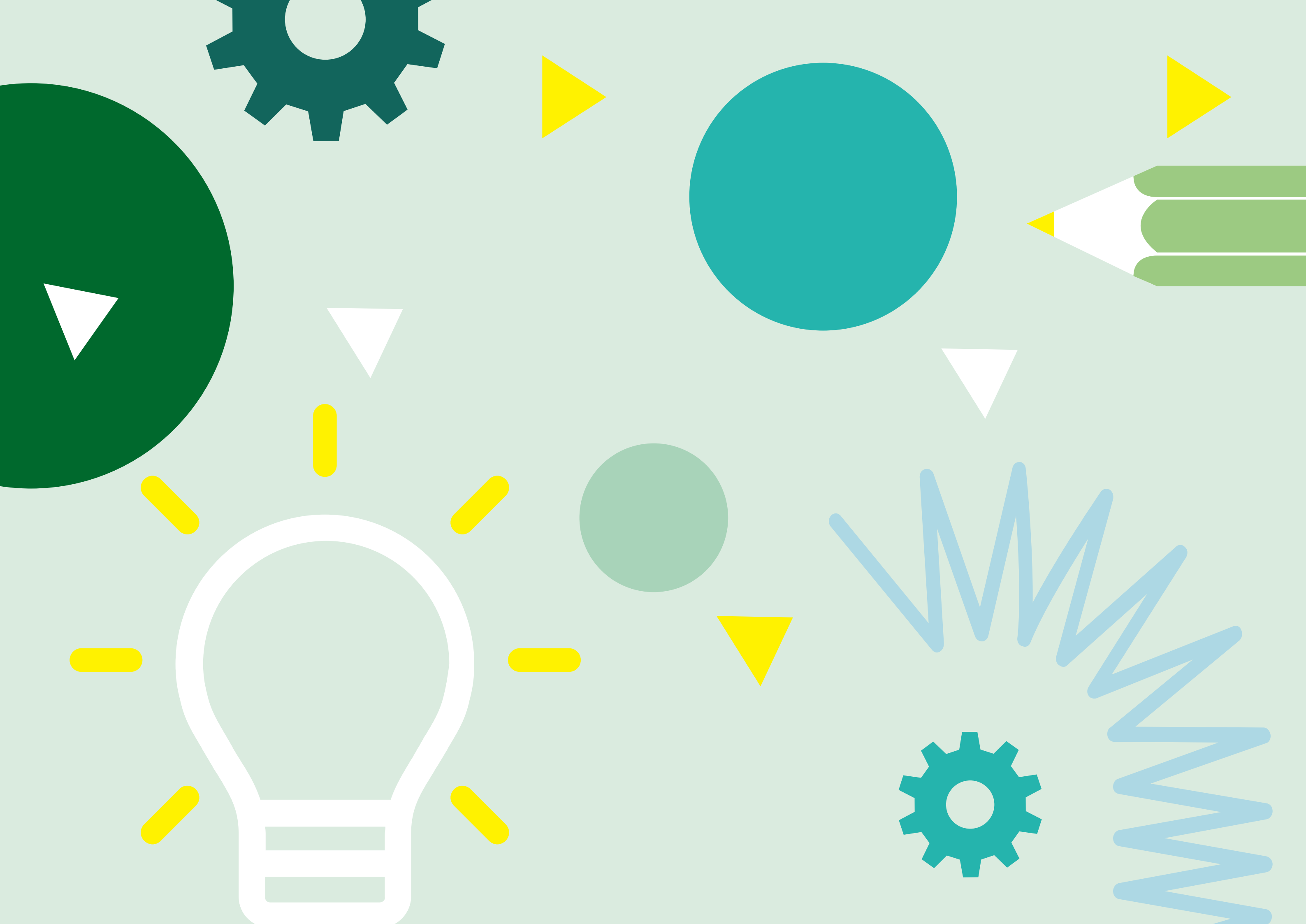
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