Donegal ETB Quality Reporting 2020

Part 1: Overview of Quality Improvement Activities in 2019

1. Governance and Management of Quality

Priority areas in 2019

- Donegal ETB will establish a QA Governance and Management (G&M) structure and have agreed terms of reference for each of the groups within the structures.
- 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 work plans and intended outcomes for 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 item on the ETB's Risk Register and will continue to be an agenda items at all SMT and Coordinators meetings.

Main achievements in 2019.

- The development of a QA Governance and Management structure, supported by a new integrated Quality Assurance Support Service which enforces separation of responsibilities between those that produce/develop material and those who recommend and approve it. Governance and Management groups consisting of the Quality Council, Programme Sub Committee, QA Sub Committee and the Certification Approval Board have been established. The groups are populated with staff from across the FET service who have related expertise as well as external representation on the Quality Council. This will continue with growing the membership over the coming months with further internal representation as well as external representation. All groups (with the exception of the CAB) have agreed ToR which are reviewed by the groups every six months.

- New QA Support Service (QASS) delivered extensive briefing sessions across the service to inform staff about the new Governance and Management structure, to facilitate feedback and to accelerate embedding a shared QA system and quality culture.
- A Consultative Group was established with SIPTU, TUI and Forsa and FET SMT & QA Coordinator, to support the development of an integrated QA system, the Self-evaluation and Statutory Review process.
- The QA Support Service was fully operational from September 19. The QASS team is made up of representation from Further Education and Training, a PLSS coordinator and a QA Coordinator. The team has an overarching responsibility for QA across the organisation with FE and Training staff having specific roles within these areas. The QA Support Services have completed center visits to inform and introduce the QASS team members to the FET service staff, and to explain their roles and purpose.
- The QASS has a clear role in the 'producing and developing' part of the Governance and Management structure. A QASS representative has an advisory role on each of the governance and management groups. This provides support while maintaining a clear separation between producing, recommending and approving.
- The approval visit by City and Guilds was completed successfully and Donegal ETB is now an approved Supercentre.
- QA is a standing agenda item on all SMT meetings. A separate QA Advisory Group and separate SMT/QA meetings have been introduced to ensure quality assurance across the organisation is at the forefront of strategic planning. The QA Coordinator compiles a report which is delivered and reviewed at the SMT meetings with any supporting documentation to ensure that there is an internal management system which regularly reviews the progress of QA within the organisation. This also further supports the continued development of a quality culture by recognising the key importance of QA as a top level.
- A new template has been developed for the FET programme Coordinators meeting which encourages staff to consider progress in their areas under the 11 core guidelines. This is supporting the continued development of a QA culture as staff completing the report will be able to identify how and when they are meeting Quality Assurance in daily practice. It has also supported staff to become familiar with the requirements, terms and language used within the guideline documents.
- Quality Assurance is an item on the ETBs corporate risk register and is discussed and reported on within the Executive Forum

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- The nomination of teaching, tutoring, instructing staff as part of the Governance and Management membership has been a challenge. To support this process a Consultative Group has been established with SIPTU, TUI and Forsa, FET SMT & QA Coordinator, to discuss this issue as well as any further issues related to the development of an integrated QA system, along with the Self-evaluation and Statutory Review 2020/21.
- Resulting from this Consultative Group the staff representation bodies have nominated a representative to the Quality Council.

- A review of the Quality Council Membership identified that the group was to heavily focussed on internal membership. As a result of this, three external members were invited to join the group. Membership now includes a representative from LyIT, FESS and a QA SME.
- Student representation on the Governance and Management groups has been difficult to achieve as the shorter nature of the FET programmes means that students have a more transient involvement with the ETB, this makes it difficult to achieve a consistent representation.

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Finalise the "Terms of Reference" for the integrated Certification Approval Board
- Review and update the membership of the Governance and Management groups to ensure there is a full representation of staff from across the organisation and to ensure current members are fully aware of and able to commit to the requirements of the groups.
- Develop ways in which the student voice can be represented at each of the Governance and Management groups in a way that meets the needs of such a diverse organisation.
- Deliver Governance and Management information briefings more extensively to cover all stakeholder groups including external partners and stakeholders.
- Update the Donegal ETB website to include updated information including membership and structure diagrams ensuring the Governance and Management structure is available publicly.
- Continue to establish the QASS as an integrated service accessible to staff from across the organisation.

2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

Priority areas in 2019

- The development of an integrated QA system across the organisation
- Completion of a gap analysis to identify current policies and procedures across further education and training that fit into the new core guidelines and identification of any gaps that are present where new policies and procedures require development.
- The development of new policies and procedures, which are effective and fit for purpose, to replace current ones which are integrated across the organisation and not specific to Further Education or Training.

Main achievements in 2019.

- A number of policies and procedures are in various stages of development, with the requirements of the 11 core guidelines to the fore. Two policies are in the final draft stage and ready to progress to the Donegal ETB Board for information. Once this has been completed they will begin to populate the QA handbook.
- A number of activities were carried out to ascertain what new policies required development. A review of current policies within FE and Training was completed to see where they may fit under the core guidelines. A gap analysis was carried out to identify where there were no policies that met the core guidelines and consultation with staff events were carried out to gather staff feedback about the development of required policies.
- To move toward an integrated QA system new policies will be developed;, a process for this development has been agreed and a policy to support the process is currently being reviewed in preparation to go through the governance structure.

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Gaining staff consensus on a template format for the new policies that doesn't mirror previous policies from either FE or Training.
- Gaining 'buy in' from staff for the development of an integrated system and overcoming the 'we've always done it this way' attitude.

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Developing policies relevant to the 11 core guidelines that are robust and fit for purpose which are fully integrated across the organisation
- Ensuring stakeholders are consulted with to develop new policies to further support an inclusive and quality culture.

- Develop a system to ensure policies and procedures are monitored and evaluated to support continuous improvement
- Ensure QA is embedded in all activities at all levels and that this is monitored, evidenced and evaluated at local levels as well as at a management level to support improvements and planning.

3. Programmes of Education and Training

Priority areas in 2019

- Build in the identification and integration of transversal skills into the programme review process in order to evidence where these skills take place
- 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.
- Allow 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
- Within the programme review process, develop a Donegal ETB self-assessment/evaluation reporting resource.

Main achievements in 2019.

- Consultation with staff has commenced to gather feedback about the development of an integrated programme monitoring, review and evaluation process. This will enable the production of a policy and procedure that is fit for purpose and suits the needs of the whole service.
- Analysis of current policies has been completed and this will inform the development of the new integrated Access, Transfer and Progression policy.
- A Donegal FET integrated programme planning group has been set up with representation from managers across the FET service. This is to support a coordinated approach to provision planning and to further develop progression pathways across the Further Education and Training Service. Part of the process required managers of provision to submit a form to the Programme Sub-Committee outlining their plans for proposed courses so that they could undergo a QA check to ensure that they met the specific validation requirement or if another awarding body, their QA or qualifications approval requirements.
- A process for updating current assessments across all of the provision and at all levels has been developed and is currently being implemented across level 5 provision with roll planned for levels 4 and 6 from September 20. The process involves communities of practice coming together to

review and update current assessments on a new and agreed template which is then used by the whole Further Education and Training Service supporting an integrated quality assurance system. Assessments are designed with feedback from SMEs, EA's and other stakeholder groups including students.

- A draft RPL policy has been developed and in is in the consultation stage
- As part of the Donegal ETB Student Forum (February 2020) students were asked to provide feedback about programmes, courses and ATP. This feedback will be summarised and reported to managers to inform the future planning and development of programmes.
- Further work is continuing to develop ways in which PLSS can be used effectively to produce data to support performance against the national targets and as a robust means of analysis of data to make improvements to programmes and courses within a programme/course review process.
- The proposed Programme Design and Approval Policy and Procedure has been developed and is currently under review.
- The course recruitment process allows for fair recognition of education and training qualifications along with prior learning, both formal and informal as well as appropriate life experience when selecting suitable candidates to progress.
- Continuing cooperation with other provisions, providers and agencies to assist progression opportunities. For example, progression from our Level 5 major award programmes to the LYIT and access to their Level 6 programmes. Donegal ETB along with LYIT developed a 'maps and gaps' initiative last year which highlighted opportunities for FET learners and their progression to LYIT

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Developing an integrated approach to programme development that is fit for purpose across the service.
- Evaluating current programmes through a self evaluation process has been problematic due to the diversity of the FET service alongside the various current practices that are operating.

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Developing polices and procedures for programme monitoring and review
- Completing and implementing the ATP policy
- Completing and implementing the RPL policy
- The development of a standardised student induction for delivery across all FET programmes

- Completion of data reporting process for the SMT, Certification Approval Board and Quality Council to monitor and evaluate programme performance and future programme planning.

4. Staff recruitment, Management and Development

Priority areas in 2019

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 on 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.

Main achievements in 2019.

- Staff across the FET service are very proactive in attending CPD events including those identified as priority areas for 2019. A centralised record of all staff CPD has been developed so CPD can be recorded and monitored.
- **CPD** 2020 calendar of CPD events has been developed.
- A workshop to inform staff about the RPL process was delivered. In addition, staff from the Adult Guidance Service experienced the process by developing and successfully presenting portfolios for awards at QQI L6.
- A number of TEL training events were rolled out across the FET service to support technology in the classroom and innovative approaches to teaching and learning. These include 21st Century Learning Design (Blended Learning), TELMS Project - Technology Enhanced Learning Mentoring Support and Digital classroom and Intranet Training.
- The annual FET Staff Seminar was held in September 2019 and ETB Management Seminar was held in December 2019.
- Staff were surveyed and feedback gained regarding their experience of CPD events and further CPD needs.
- In 2019 the QASS team planned to engage with staff to gather feedback, consult and inform in relation to quality assurance. In February 2020 a staff information and consultation event was carried out across three locations and dates with attendance from staff from across the FET service. The purpose of these briefings was to inform staff about the new QA system and the Inaugural Review and to consult with them about QA matters. The feedback from these events will be analysed and reports will be developed to inform SMT, G&M groups and staff about the outcomes.
- A QA Professional Development event 'The QA Handbook through the lens of QA Governance and Management' with Trish O'Brien was attended in October 2019 by staff from across the FET service.
- An identification of CPD needs, in line with Strategic organisational development requirements, takes place on an annual basis in collaboration with SOLAS/ETBI at national level and in consultation with FET Management and Coordinators at local level.

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Developing a systematic approach to communicating with staff from across the organisation to gather feedback to ensure all staff have an opportunity to feedback in way that meets their needs
- Ensuring that all staff are engaged with CPD across the organisation taking into consideration staff terms and conditions

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Continue to improve communication with staff to ensure the views of staff members are captured and used to inform the development of an integrated QA system.
- Collection and utilisation of student feedback on teaching to support continuous improvement
- Develop a QA induction for all staff
- Ensure staff development is organised for staff in 'Working with Adult Learners' as part of the national CPD strategy for ETB's.

5.Teaching and Learning

Priority areas in 2019

- Appointment of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) coordinator for the FET service.
- Infrastructure for learning environments within the 17 ETB FET centres improved through technology infrastructure investment.   For example, the upgrade of broadband and internet connections across the centres to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

- 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.

Main achievements in 2019.

- A TEL coordinator has been appointed. This has enabled a systematic and coordinated approach to introducing and enhancing TEL across the organisation.

- FET staff have participated in a range of CPD to support and enhance teaching and learning. CPD availed of included: 'working with learners with mental health issues, supporting dyslexic learners, creative methodologies and using lego to support skills acquisition.
- An ICT skills baseline survey for all staff has been completed. This has enabled the planning of specific CPD to help meet individual needs and support upskilling.
- Collaboration with schools has taken place to discuss plans for Content Creation within Google applications for Education
- Staff have been supported with an induction session to help prepare them for work on the development of content.
- Google Drive & Google Classroom training sessions were delivered in various locations around the County. Participation and feedback was very positive.
- 2020 TEL Seminar has been planned
- Staff from across the FET service attended a TEL Mentoring Support 1-day session coordinated by FESS (Further Education and Support Service) . A representative from each FET Centre attended, the proposal is that attendees will act as TEL Mentors within their respective Centres.
- Practitioners from across FET have been proactive in attending the assessment updating events. Communities of practice have come together from various fields of learning to review and update assessment. A further positive development of these events is the opportunity it has created for staff to share good practice and to support one another in sharing resources, problem solving and giving advice and guidance on module delivery.
- During the recent Student Forum students were asked to feedback on various aspects of their learning experiences. The results of this feedback have been collated and will form part of a report which will be utilised by staff and management to action, plan, and identify improvements to the quality of teaching and learning across the service.
- Staff from across the service came together to develop a childcare student work placement/experience and mentor handbook to support students and their workplace mentors ensure that students and employers got the most out of the process.

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Creating more opportunities for the development of blended learning approaches within programmes at the higher levels
- Allowing staff the time to engage with innovative teaching methods including the integration of TEL whilst still delivering a quality provision.
- Creating a consistent approach to evaluating teaching within the classroom across the organisation

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Developing means of evaluating the learning experience on an ongoing basis to inform practice and continuous improvement.
- Continue to develop different modes of delivery to be responsive to the needs of students.
- Update the student complaints and accolades policy to ensure an integrated approach across the service.
- Update student appeals policy to ensure an integrated approach across the service.
- Develop an integrated work placement/experience policy
- Further develop the student work placement and mentor work placement handbook
- Staff training related to developing blended learning programmes
- New position of Programme Development Officer to be advertised 2020

6. Assessment of Learners

Priority areas in 2019

- Updates to **assessment instruments** are 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
- Revised IV and EA templates/documentation in place and in use across FET programmes.
- A mechanism in place for feedback from stakeholders into the assessment process and the development of assessment materials linking with programme development.
- 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.

Main achievements in 2019.

- Updates to assessment instruments have been completed across all of the level 5 provision as planned. Communities of practice networks and where possible SME were brought together at stages during the year to review and update assessments so that they are current, valid and reliable, fair and transparent and quality assured. Once completed the new assessments were reviewed by External Authenticators and SMEs, feedback was taken and assessments further updated. Following a QA check assessments were then made available for release. Following 6 months of delivery the communities of practice were brought back together to review assessment delivery, the review included feedback from students. Any proposed changes were discussed and recorded for consideration for further updates to the assessments.
- A strategic approach to standardisation of assessment through communities of practice within subject areas will take place at the end of delivery where grading, assessment content, student feedback and moderation and standardisation activities will take place.
- The development of a policy for the creating and updating of assessment materials is underway to support a quality assured approach to the updating of assessments.
- Staff members within the QASS have been actively involved in the development of the ECCE programme, attending national meetings and information sessions.
- Following the development of a national EA directory Donegal ETB is creating its own panel. In order to support this a new EA policy and procedure has been developed, in conjunction with HR, to ensure a quality assured approach. Part of this procedure will require all EAs to undertake a Donegal ETB QA induction to ensure they are cognisant with our QA procedures and to offer support if required.
- As part of the Student Forum, students were asked to provide feedback relating to assessments so this information can be used to make improvements and ensure a student centered approach.
- Subject matter experts and external authenticators were involved in the assessment update events which allowed for the sharing of current practice, legislation, etc to inform assessment content.
- Donegal ETB continues to be responsive to employers needs and is working with employers to develop courses and programmes that are specific to their requirements. An example of this is the new Weaving qualification we are developing in conjunction with SQA and the local weaving community and businesses. The content of the qualification has been derived from the needs of the industry and we have worked very closely with employers to create a qualification (with teaching content, resources and assessments) that will enable successful students to enter this profession.
- Creation of an integrated Donegal ETB assessment handbook to support staff with fair and consistent assessment. The same is under development for students.

- Utilisation of technology to enhance assessment approaches.
- RPL process supported 214 employees from two companies (tourism and food processing) to gain recognition for skills gained in the workplace.

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Release of staff from across the FET service for participation in the communities of practice when updating assessments.
- Staff resources within the QASS to undertake the task of updating all assessment materials in response to feedback from the communities of practice.
- Developing an integrated standardised approach across the organisation with regard to Internal Verification processes and procedures.
- Identify and implement further ways in which all stakeholders (especially learners and employers) can feed into the assessment instrument development process.

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Complete an assessment instrument update plan for level 5 provision
- Update levels 1 to 3 in light of new award standards being developed by QQI, including an assessment update plan.
- Continued integration and standardisation of approaches to Internal Verification
- Developing a process which aims to identify centre and programme improvement plans following EA report recommendations and IV feedback along with data reporting which will help inform the CAB regarding centre/programme performance and form the basis of information that will be required as part of the monitoring, review and self evaluation of programmes.
- Content creation on transversal modules will lead to curriculum development in these areas at level 1-4 and for Work Experience/Practice at level 5 also.
- Exams office to have revised and updated process and procedures
- Continue with the consultation, development and implementation of the integrated Donegal ETB assessment handbook

7. Supports for Learners

Priority areas in 2019

- 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

Main achievements in 2019.

- A number of staff from across the organisation have participated in training, Supporting Learners with Mental Health Issues
- The guidance team are piloting a student induction across the organisation, which would normally have focused on a small part of the organisation. The purpose of the induction is to help students bond and settle into their course which in turn lessens student anxiety and improves retention. Feedback from the new areas of delivery has been excellent.
- 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
- Staff from across the organisation have attended training in Technology Enhanced Learning Mentoring Support. Donegal ETB are planning to introduce a peer mentoring scheme which will support the embedding of TEL to enhance teaching and learning and the quality of provision.
- The preparation and planning for the Donegal ETB Student Forum began in 2019. The Forum took place in February 2020 with over 110 students attending from across the organisation. This gave us the opportunity to gather feedback from students in relation to various issues including their learning experience, assessments, student support, teaching and learning and the development of an online Student Hub. Initial analysis of feedback has been carried out and an overarching detailed report will be developed. This report will form the basis of summary reports that will be issued to management, Centres, programmes and students. Action planning will be formulated in response to the student feedback to support the quality improvement cycle.

- Award presentations have been held across the various centers and programmes to recognise and celebrate student achievement.
- A FET Fair was held on the 6th and 7th November 2019 to offer insight and information on the range of opportunities available from Donegal ETB FET Service. Progression opportunities information was also available for existing students. The fair was well received with nearly one thousand people in attendance. Feedback was gathered from attendees which was extremely positive and will inform the planning of the Fair in 2020.
- QASS are in the process of developing a student evaluation which will be issued to all Donegal ETB students at three points during a programme to cover feedback relating to induction, services, teaching and learning, assessment etc. This feedback will then be issued to inform monitoring and evaluation of courses/programmes and the services offered by Donegal ETB.
- Ending Hygiene and Period Poverty - A number of centers are offering support to students by providing free and easily accessible sanitary protection. Consideration is being given to rolling this out across the service.
- Chromebook Trolleys have been purchased and will be set up in various FET Centres to provide access to TEL within centers.

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Resource within the guidance team to support the rolling out of a standardised induction across the organisation
- Creating a standardised student questionnaire that meets the requirements of a diverse organisation.

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Roll out further training to support staff to help students with mental health issues
- Continue to develop 5 core days across the year where certain subjects such as mental health, sexual health, celebrating diversity etc are a focus for staff and students. Resources will be developed and shared so that we can support the sharing of information and building knowledge about key themes.
- Continue to offer TELMS training to support the embedding of TEL across the organisation.
- ETB/AONTAS Student Forum planned for Oct 20 to support the recent Donegal ETB Student Forum.
- Complete student questionnaire for first issue September 2020
- Continue to develop a standardised approach to student induction which includes employability and transversal skills in collaboration with Recruitment and Guidance.
- Plan for the 2021 Student forum
- Support for Learners research - complete the external review of learners' support across the service to provide information about what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following this action planning in light of the feedback to make improvements.

8. Information and Data Management

Priority areas in 2019

- 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.

Main achievements in 2019.

- A Data Management working group was established, the Chair of which is an SMT member. The working group has specific duties for developing strategies for the inputting, maintenance, monitoring and analysis of PLSS, ESF and FARR data. They also feed into the development of policies and procedures relating to data management and reviewing current approaches and how they can be improved.
- A number of monitoring and evaluation reports are in progress. These will support SMT and Governance and Management to identify areas for improvement and inform future planning.
- Work is continuing in relation to managing and reporting activity under Skills to Advance and a shared drive has been set up to communicate activity, progression, and log supporting data etc.
- Research is ongoing in the search for an effective and simple CRM system to track and record employee/employer engagement.
- Community Education is currently trialling the use of shared drive in the processing of grant applications. This is to provide greater transparency around the decision-making processes. This will also improve access to material online for internal and external audits.

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Gaining access to reliable sources of information and data, which is live or up to date to support monitoring and evaluation of the various aspects of the service.

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Donegal ETB will prioritise the utilisation of the PLSS system to capture information and data that will feedback to inform provision planning. The importance of this data and its validity is also prioritised in correlating information for reporting and analysing. Data will be recorded on a consistent and quality assured basis which is also compliant with legal guidelines under GDPR.
- Continue to develop a reporting system that allows access to reliable information and data to inform decision making in order to robustly evaluate what is working well and what improvements need to be made.
- Update data management and related policies and procedures.

9. Public Information and Communication

Priority areas in 2019

- Launch new Donegal ETB website during spring 2019.
- Organisation of a second FET Fair in Autumn 2019 to re-align the event with the appropriate time where learners are making choices.
- Implement new approaches to the prospectus and promote FET programmes under the disciplines of the 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.

Main achievements in 2019.

- The Irish translation of the Donegal ETB website has been completed this caters to the needs of Irish speakers and promotes inclusivity.
- A FET Fair was held on the 6th and 7th November 2019 to offer insight and information on the range of opportunities available from Donegal ETB FET Service. Progression opportunities information was also available for existing students. The fair was well received with nearly one thousand people in attendance. Feedback was gathered from attendees which was extremely positive and will inform the planning of the Fair in 2020.
- Work is continuing on the development of the new prospectus. The prospectus is being redesigned with support of an editor. This will incorporate new artwork and standardise the content.
- Staff from across the organisation continue to promote the organisation at public events. For example, attendance at DEASP information session, local stakeholder meetings, employer Breakfast events with Donegal Business Network, Parents Evenings at local schools and Community Colleges, Education and Training Fairs, Career Symposium, Driving Our County Forward and Pramerica ADAPT.
- QA portal developed for QA information and development of resources
- Online QA public calendar identifying key dates is now live on the QA website
- Public Information and Communication Policy and Procedure has been approved by the Quality Council
- An increase in School Tours to the Letterkenny Training Centre in comparison to 2018
- Course recruitment staff are collecting information during the interview process to ascertain how and where the prospective student heard about our services. This is then sent to the Communications Officer to compile data to gain a better understanding of the impact of marketing activities.
- Community Education Seminar held for providers on 5th December. Léargas representative made a presentation on Erasmus funding. Two students shared their learning experiences. Professor John Sweeney was the keynote speaker and contributed to learning by sharing his experience and knowledge on global and local environmental issues.
- A Community Education Toolkit was developed and made available to all providers.
- All press releases and news stories translated into Irish
- Extensive use of social media continues to be used to communicate available courses, relevant student activities, course highlights etc.
- Publication of a brochure for secondary schools to provide information about FET services for students and to raise awareness of Donegal ETB as an option for Further Education and Training

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Keeping published items current to reflect what courses are being delivered
- Course Titles in PLSS?
- Publishing the Prospectus?

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Update website to include the new Governance and Management structure, reports, staff and student feedback etc.
- Monitoring of the usage of the ETB website through google analytics and usage will inform its continued development and areas for improvement
- Following staff and student feedback continue to develop further ways to improve communication with stakeholders to meet their needs
- Publish all QQI inaugural review documents as required

10. Other parties Involved in Education

Priority areas in 2019

- 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.

Main achievements in 2019.

- The organisation has continued to develop relationships and partnerships with employers, state agencies and community groups to further develop and enhance FET provision throughout the county. This includes a collaborative information event with DLDC, Social Inclusion week to promote support for Community Providers, Donegal Co. Co. and Interagency partners - Refugee Resettlement Families, Donegal Travellers Project

for the delivery of Nutrition and Healthy Eating on a Budget, Skills for Work – Social Media for Small Business and IT Skills for Farmers, Social Media Skills for small business, etc.

- Attendance at Early Learning and Care (ELC) information and training events to support collaboration with other ETBs in the progression of this new award and shared curriculum..
- The development of E-Hubs in FET centres. Integrating learner support and TEL resources. Learners can access support and resources to support their learning. Staff can also access resources and support for teaching and learning.
- Application to SOLAS for the RPL project has been approved. This project is a collaborative project with Limerick-Clare ETB and LYIT.
- Re-start and Regional Alliance - LYIT, the purpose of this event is to share national and international good practice in engaging and supporting communities to build capacity.
- Development of the Employer Engagement working group which has agreed ToR. The group meets periodically to review engagement activities and to discuss ways of improving employer engagement across the organisation.
- During 2019, Enterprise Engagement activity in FET took a stronger strategic sectoral approach with employers: input of employers in informing provision across Digital Sales and Marketing Traineeship, Special Needs and Intellectual Disability Studies, Accounting and Hospitality was prioritized. Stakeholder meetings were set up and staff organized visits to employers and invited guest speakers from industry to address course groups. A three-day event in Digital Sales and Marketing with experts in the area was organised, including a visit to behind the scenes in McElhinneys Online Store. Students and staff also participated in a Business Bootcamp in Sales, Marketing, IT and Finance.
- Work began in earnest on promoting the Skills to Advance Initiative with employers and employees and an Employment Coordinator was appointed. Overall, in 2019, 159 employees accessed the Skills to Advance Initiative across a wide range of evening classes as well as courses such as the ILM course in Leadership and Management which was aimed at employees of a large organization. The Diploma in Business and Professional Administration was introduced with 17 employees of an IDA client. A course in Presentation Skills was delivered to employees from SITA who engage in global communications in the area of aviation technology.
- A Training Needs Analysis was conducted across the following sectors- Weaving/Craft, Retail, Care Sector and IT. In terms of weaving, training opportunities were explored that would allow for the preservation of Ireland's indigenous craft that is part of Donegal's unique heritage and would assist small medium enterprises within our County and Gaeltacht communities to continue to provide local employment. Work was conducted with the Engineering Sectors to explore the reskilling and upskilling of staff to ensure that they were well positioned for imminent growth opportunities. Planning provision for supports commenced for 2020.
- Collaborations with LEO, Donegal County Council, Letterkenny Chamber, Donegal Business Network (DBN) and Donegal Women in Business (DBWN) have fostered a spirit of togetherness in our efforts to support training and growth in local businesses while raising the profile of Donegal ETB in the arena of enterprise engagement. In response to this Donegal ETB is planning a collaborative event with the Chamber, DBN and DWBN for April 2020.

- A member of the FET SMT, at the invitation of Donegal Co Co, was part of a high level Cross-Border Employer/Provider delegation who visited Philadelphia and Boston in Nov 2019 to help encourage Inward Investment into the Northwest City Region (Donegal, Derry and Strabane)

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- Resources to release appropriate staff to engage in meetings

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Roll out of the new national EA directory and local EA panel (as discussed under assessment of learners).
- Donegal ETB recognises that collaboration is essential if services are to be delivered effectively in such a geographically-large county. It will continue to prioritise the development and maintenance of strategic relationships with community groups, statutory agencies, education providers and other stakeholders within the county.
- Continue to engage and collaborate with other ETB's as appropriate in the development of sectoral initiatives
- Develop a process for recording engagement with employers and employee/employer development
- Carry out information sessions with external partners and second provisors in relation to QA updates including the new Governance and Management structure and the Inaugural review.

11. Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Priority areas in 2019

- Developing means of assessing what review, self evaluation and monitoring processes take place across the organisation.

Main achievements in 2019.

- Various ways of supporting programmes to evaluate their use of digital technology, for example, SELFIE Digital Evaluation of Centres and Survey Monkey which is being used to gather feedback from all CPD sessions which will be analysed and discussed with the TEL Working Group.
- Both the student forum and staff briefing have generated a wealth of information and feedback to support the organisation to review and evaluate the service and identify actions to improve, and to celebrate areas of good practice.
- Some areas engage with self evaluation through various means such as providing feedback at programme meetings of classroom and student experiences, QA as a standing agenda item enabling staff to monitor and review QA processes, Centre Evaluation and Improvement Plans and learner evaluations.
- Successful awarding body center and qualification approvals

Barriers and Challenges 2019/20

- The inconsistent approach to review, self evaluation and monitoring across the organisation
- Motivating staff to engage with self evaluation processes

Priorities in 2020 / 2021

- Developing a systematic approach to internal review, self evaluation and monitoring across the organisation.
- Develop report formats for course/programme development which includes data from various sources for example, student feedback, PLSS data, EA reports, IV reports, teaching evaluations etc. These can be culminated to review the performance of courses so robust action planning for improvements can be put into place.
- Preparation for the external review by QQI

Part 2: Detailed update of activities in the ETB's Quality Improvement plan 2019/20

1. Governance and Management of Quality

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● Donegal ETB will establish a QA Governance and Management structure and have agreed terms of reference for each of the groups within the structure.	**Completed.**	To be reviewed every 6 months.
● 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 work plans and intended outcomes for each group.	**Completed.**	
● 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.	**Completed**	
● 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.	**Completed**	
● A City & Guilds Superstructure is being progressed for the ETB's FET service and is to be in place for Autumn 2019.	**Completed**	

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● QA will continue to be an agenda item on the ETB's Risk register and at all SMT and Coordinators meetings.	**Completed**	

2. Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● The development of an integrated QA system across the organisation	**On track**	
● Completion of a gap analysis to identify current policies and procedures across further education and training that fit into the new core guidelines and identification of any gaps that are present where new policies and procedures require development.	**Completed**	
● The development of new policies and procedures, which are effective and fit for purpose, to replace current ones which are integrated across the organisation and not specific to Further Education or Training.	**On track**	

3. Programmes of Education and Training

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
Build in the identification and integration of transversal skills into the programme review process in order to evidence where these skills take place	**On track**	

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
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.	**On track**	
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	**On track**	
Within the programme review process, develop a Donegal ETB self-assessment/evaluation reporting resource.	**On track**	

4. Staff recruitment, Management and Development

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
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 on 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 ● Arising from needs identified by staff through consultation "Creative methodologies in the classroom" and "Active Teaching and Learning"	**Completed**	

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.		
● 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.	**Delayed**	**September 20**
● A number of staff will avail of QA Support Service Seminars and training.	**Completed**	
● 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.	**Completed**	

5. Teaching and Learning

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale

● Appointment of TEL facilitator for the FET service.	**Completed**	
● Infrastructure for learning environments within the 17 ETB FET centres improved through technology infrastructure investment.	**On track**	
● ICT skills baseline survey for all staff completed to assess appropriate CPD supports to help with upskilling.	**Completed**	
● Digital content creation for work based learning/transversal skills created in Virtual Learning Environments such as moodle for integration into a FET programme.	**On track**	
● Further Integration of the Moodle and other online content management VLE's supporting programmes and learners.	**On track**	
● Continued CPD for staff in the form of workshops and seminars in TEL to encourage good practice.	**Completed**	
● Continued development of appropriate policies for the creation culture of Digital learning and Digital Citizenship.	**On track**	
● 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.	**On track**	

6. Assessment of Learners

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
• Updates to level 5 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	**Completed**	
• Development of procedure for the creating and **updating of assessment materials** has been created and is being piloted by fields of learning.	**Completed**	
• Revised External Authentication panel being formed in collaboration with colleagues in ETBI and FESS	**Completed**	
• The ETBI developed 'Assessment Handbook' being utilised across all FET programmes supporting fair and consistent assessment of students	**On track**	
• Development of revised assessments for ECCE Level 5 programme will lead to improvements in the programme.	**On track**	
• Internal Verification procedure under current review as part of the introduction of a QA cycle.	**Delayed**	January 21
• A mechanism in place for feedback from stakeholders into the assessment process and the development of assessment materials linking with programme development.	**On track**	
• Revised IV and EA templates/documentation in place and in use across FET programmes.	**On track**	

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● Learner and employer forums taking place and feeding into the assessment process.	On track	

7. Supports for Learners

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● Ongoing CPD for staff in dealing with learners with mental health issues	On track	
● Continued support for learners from the guidance and information service across programmes	On track	
● Updating the Integrating Literacy policy to encompass all FET programmes	Completed	
● Continued use of the resources developed by the Further Education and Support Service (FESS) to support programme delivery	On track	
● Availability of Staff mentors to assist with new teaching and learning delivery methods which are enhancing the quality of provision	On track	
● Continued use of AONTAS and other national bodies to elicit feedback from learner groups which can be actioned by programmes and centres	Completed	
● Availability and facilitation of learner forums allowing for the learner voice to be heard	Completed	

8. Information and Data Management

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● 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.	**Completed**	
● Development of a PLSS working group to develop approaches to analysing and reporting on the Data in the PLSS	**Completed**	
● Utilisation of data from the PLSS and MIS reports to inform programme planning	**On track**	
● Monitoring of the data in the PLSS on a scheduled basis to inform learner completion rates	**On track**	
● Monitoring of the PLSS data and reports in order to make timely interventions when assessing programme outcomes and their success	**On track**	

9. Public Information and Communication

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● Launch new Donegal ETB website during spring 2019.	**Completed**	
● 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.	**Completed**	
● Implement new approaches to the prospectus and promote FET programmes under the disciplines of learning that we offer.	**Completed**	
● 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.	**On track**	
● Launch a series of animated explainer videos for the ETB that will help inform the public about its range of services.	**Completed**	
● Create new enabling policies for Digital/Social media and usage by the organisation.	**Completed**	

10. Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale

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

11. Self Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Activity	Status Update	Revised Timescale
● Developing means of assessing what review, self evaluation and monitoring processes take place across the organisation.	**On track**	

Donegal ETB Quality Improvement Plan 2020/2021

Quality Area	Key Task and Activity	Responsible	Timeline
Governance and Management of Quality	● Terms of Reference for Certification Approval Board ● Review and update the membership of the Governance and Management groups to ensure there is a full representation of staff from across the organisation. ● Develop ways in which students can be represented at each of the Governance and Management groups in a way that meets the needs of such a diverse organisation. ● Deliver Governance and Management information briefings more extensively to cover all stakeholder groups including external partners and stakeholders. ● Complete the development of the website to include updated information and structure diagrams to ensure information relating to the new Governance and management structure is available publicly. ● Continue to establish the QASS as an integrated service accessible to staff from across the organisation	QASS, Chair of CAB Governance and Management Group Chairs QASS, SMT, G&M groups QASS AEO (CG), QA Coordinator SMT, QASS	March 2020 April 2020 April 2020 Ongoing May 2020 Ongoing
Documented Approach to Quality Assurance	● Quality Assurance Policy ● Developing policies that are robust and fit for purpose which are fully integrated across the organisation ● Ensuring stakeholders are consulted with to develop new policies to further support an inclusive and quality culture. ● Develop a system to ensure policies and procedures are monitored and evaluated to support continuous improvement ● To ensure QA is embedded in all activities at all levels and this is monitored, evidenced and evaluated at local levels as well as at a management level to support improvements.	SMT, QASS QASS QASS QASS All areas	April 20 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Programmes of Education and Training	● New course development against strategic goals, Access, Transfer and Progression policy, Learner Recruitment/Admissions Procedures	QASS, G&M, SMT	Ongoing
	● Programme monitoring and review	QASS, G&M, SMT	September 20
	● Completing and implementing the ATP policy	All staff	April 20
	● Completing and implementing the RPL policy	All staff	April 20
	● Standardised student provider and programme induction	QASS, Guidance	September 20
	● Completion of data reporting process for the SMT, Certification Approval Board and Quality Council to monitor and evaluate programme performance and inform future programme planning.	QASS, SMT, G&M	May 20
Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	● Continue to improve communication with staff to ensure the views of staff members are captured and used to inform the development of an integrated QA system.	QASS, SMT, G&M	Ongoing
	● Develop a process for the collection and utilisation of student feedback on teaching staff to support continuous improvement	QASS, SMT, G&M	September 20
	● Develop a QA induction for all staff	QASS	May 20
Teaching and Learning	● Integrating TEL, Modes and methods of delivery	TEL Coordinator, teaching staff	Ongoing
	● Developing means of evaluating the learning experience on an ongoing basis to inform practice and continuous improvement.	QASS, SMT, G&M	January 21
	● Continue to develop different modes of delivery to be responsive to the needs of students.	Programme coordinators, TEL coordinator, QASS, teaching staff	Ongoing
	● Update the student complaints policy to ensure an integrated approach across the service.	QASS, G&M	September 20
	● Update student appeals policy to ensure an integrated approach across the service.		September 20
	● Develop an integrated work placement/experience policy		
	● Further develop the student work placement and mentor work placement handbook	QASS	August 20
	● Staff training related to developing blended learning programmes	SMT	Ongoing
Assessment of Learners	● Complete assessment update cycle for level 5 provision	QASS	May 20

		QASS	September 20
	● Start assessment update cycle with levels 4 and 6	QASS	September 20
	● Continued integration and standardisation of approaches to Internal Verification	QASS	
	● Developing a process which aims to identify centre and programme improvement plans following EA report recommendations and IV feedback along with data reporting which will help inform the CAB regarding centre/programme performance and form the basis of information that will be required as part of the monitoring, review and self evaluation of programmes.	QASS, G&M	September 20
	● Content creation on transversal modules	TEL Coordinator, teaching staff AEOs	Ongoing
	● Exams office updated procedures	QASS	September 20
Supports for Learners	● Roll out further training to support staff help students with mental health issues	AEOs	Ongoing
	● Continue to develop 5 core days across the year where certain subjects such as mental health, sexual health, celebrating diversity etc are a focus for staff and students. Resources will be developed and shared so that we can support the sharing of information and building knowledge about key themes.	QA Sub committee	January 21
	● Continue to offer TELMS training to support the embedding of TEL across the organisation.	TEL Coordinator	Ongoing
	● AONTAS planned for Oct 20 to support the recent Donegal ETB Student Forum.	QA Coordinator	Oct 20
	● Complete student questionnaire for first issue September 2020	QASS	September 20
	● Continue to develop a standardised approach to student induction which includes employability and transversal skills in collaboration with Recruitment and Guidance.	QASS/Guidance	January 21
	● Plan for the 2021 Student forum	QASS	February 21
	● Support for learners research - complete the external review of learners support across the organisation to provide information about what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following this action planning in light of the feedback to make improvements.	SMT, G&M	September 20

Information and Data Management	● PLSS and Data management group, infographics development through Tableau	Data management group	Ongoing
	● Donegal ETB will prioritise the utilisation of the PLSS system to capture information and data that will feedback to inform provision planning. The importance of this data and its validity is also prioritised in correlating information for reporting and analysing. Data will be recorded on a consistent and quality assured basis which is also compliant with legal guidelines under GDPR.	QASS, G&M, SMT, Data management group	Ongoing
	● Continue to develop a reporting system that allows access to reliable information and data to inform decision making in order to robustly evaluate what is working well and what improvements need to be made.		Ongoing
	● Update data management and related policies and procedures.		December 20
Public Information and Communication	● Ratification of policy	Donegal ETB Board	May 20
	● Procedure to be developed	QASS	May 20
	● Update website to include the new Governance and Management structure, reports, staff and student feedback etc.	QA Coordinator, AEO	May 20
	● Monitoring of the usage of the ETB website through google analytics and usage will inform its continued development and areas for improvement	Communications coordinator	Ongoing
	● Following staff and student feedback continue to develop further ways to improve communication with stakeholders to meet their needs	QASS	Ongoing
	● Publish all QQI inaugural review documents as required	QASS	Oct 20
Other Parties involved in Education and Training	● EA Panel	QASS, HR	May 20
	● Donegal ETB recognises that collaboration is essential if services are to be delivered effectively in such a geographically-large county. It will continue to prioritise the development and maintenance of strategic	Enterprise engagement group, SMT, QASS	Ongoing

	relationships with community groups, statutory agencies, education providers and other stakeholders within the county. ● Continue to engage and collaborate with other ETB's as appropriate in the development of sectoral initiatives ● Develop a process for recording engagement with employers and employee/employer development ● Carryout out information sessions with external partners and second providers in relation to QA updates including the new Governance and Management structure and the Inaugural review.	QASS, SMT, Teaching staff QASS QASS	Ongoing June 20 June 20
Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review	● Developing a systematic approach to internal review, self evaluation and monitoring across the organisation. ● Develop report formats for course/programme development which includes data from various sources for example, student feedback, PLSS data, EA reports, IV reports, teaching evaluations etc. These can be culminated to review the performance of courses so robust action planning for improvements can be put into place ● Preparation for the QQI Inaugural review	SMT, QA Coordinator, Governance and Management groups QASS All staff	Ongoing September 20 February 21