

Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Chabháin agus Mhuineacháin

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET) STRATEGY 2021-24



Rialtas na hÉireann
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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
an Chabháin agus Mhuineacháin
Cavan and Monaghan
Education and Training Board

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FOREWORD



JOHN KEARNEY
Chief Executive

Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB) fully appreciates the transformative impact that Further Education and Training has for our learners, our communities, and the development of our economy. I thus welcome the publication of this CMETB Further Education and Training Strategy, setting out the direction of the delivery of Further Education and Training services for the Cavan and Monaghan region.

This Further Education and Training Strategy is timely and outlines an ambitious agenda for the delivery of CMETB services. Covid-19 has had a serious impact on the regional employment status with this Strategy facilitating Further Education and Training to enable learners and employers to upskill, re-skill and best position themselves for our post Covid-19 economy.



This Strategy provides a means for our learners and communities to become equipped with the skills needed to adapt to living and working sustainably in an increasingly global, digital and automated world. The Strategy also seeks to provide significant opportunities of supporting our learners to engage with Further Education and Training at every stage of their lives.

I would like to thank all those who engaged and helped with the development of this Strategy in determining a future pathway for service delivery within the CMETB organisation. I particularly appreciate the contributions, dedication and enthusiasm of staff and stakeholders in enhancing CMETB's commitment to providing a responsive and dynamic contribution to the region.

I look forward to delivering the ambitious objectives of this Further Education and Training Strategy, together with Dr Linda Pinkster CMETB Director of FET, with CMETB colleagues and our wider stakeholders within CMETB.

John Kearney
Chief Executive
Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board

INTRODUCTION

This FET Strategy has been developed in a time of unprecedented turbulence and change. The Covid-19 pandemic and associated closures and restrictions necessitated a complete change of delivery across all FET services.

While this level and rate of change may be unprecedented, the FET sector is well accustomed to, and indeed characterised by, change. Over the course of the previous FET strategy, the sector broadened its activity into a range of areas, including, but not limited to, workforce development with a dedicated programme Skills to Advance, new apprenticeships and traineeship programmes, wider range of learner supports, refugee resettlement programmes, third level linkages, developments in Quality Assurance (QA) systems and processes, new data collection and analysis systems.

Similarly, the profile of the FET learner is continuously changing. While FET provision supports all learners, e.g. school leavers, early school leavers, young adults and mature learners, the focus and demand can change based on environmental factors. In times of economic downturn and rising unemployment, much focus and provision is centred on programmes for those experiencing unemployment/redundancies. Improved economic performance and higher employment levels lead to a focus on upskilling those in employment. CMETB FET provision continuously adapts to meet the profile of learners.

Over the past year, FET has reinvented itself. Significant advances in Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) have enabled programmes to be delivered online. Learners and staff have enhanced their ICT skills and availed of ongoing support from a newly established TEL Department and in-house expertise. Alternative assessments and mechanisms have been developed and applied to enable learners, in so far as possible, complete their programme of study in line with the course schedule.

Now, as CMETB prepares to launch this new strategy, it is hoped that the end of the pandemic is in sight and a return to onsite learning for all will be achieved in 2021. While a return to onsite learning is a key priority, CMETB also prioritises the retention and further development of some of the systems, structures and skills applied over the past year. The intention is to continue with strong TEL activity as an option for learners who prefer to engage in remote / blended learning, whilst offering onsite provision for learners best suited to this form of teaching and learning.

This strategy aims to identify key goals and actions that CMETB will pursue during 2021-2024. These are framed under three overarching strategic pillars:

STRATEGIC PILLARS



and underpinned by four enabling themes:



This strategy is aligned to the National FET Strategy 2020-24 as developed by SOLAS. In this way, CMETB will ensure its actions are consistent with national direction and policy. The creation of a new government department, the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Skills (DFHERIS) with a clear remit for FET is a welcome development. This will undoubtedly influence the direction of and carve a path for FET over the coming years. Recent plans set out by DFHERIS, such as a reform of the CAO system to include FET options and new apprenticeship management structures will enhance FET's standing as a quality option for all. Through DFHERIS, SOLAS and ETB actions nationally, there is greater awareness and promotion of FET and its full array of programmes, this should lead to increased demand from a wide range of learners for FET programmes both as a lead to employment and/or as a progression route into Higher Education.

CMETB is confident that this strategy provides clear direction regarding the path its FET services should take both individually and collectively, while still retaining flexibility to adapt to the changes in the environment and circumstances that will inevitably occur over the lifetime of the strategy.

CMETB FET Services/Locations



CMETB CONTEXT: THE EVOLVING ENVIRONMENT



Socio-Economic & Political Context

In the immediate future, education policy relating to FET in Ireland will likely be shaped to aid the country's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the challenges arising from it. The outlook is uncertain and the country is further challenged by navigating the impact of Brexit. As a further education and training provider, CMETB supports government policy on assisting Ireland's economic recovery. CMETB is committed to ensuring its FET services can respond to the political, economic and societal challenges by collaborating with all stakeholders, particularly learners and employers.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Irish labour market was close to full employment. Many sectors of the domestic economy have been severely affected as a result of the pandemic with widescale job losses in areas such as hospitality, tourism, retail, arts and entertainment. The speed at which these sectors may be restored remains uncertain. Some sectors however stayed afloat during the crisis, export companies such as medicinal, engineering, pharmaceutical products and computer services performed well and in some cases demand for their services increased.

Nationally, FET has the opportunity to be proactive in its contingency planning, in responding to economic changes to support a large base of unemployed people or vulnerable workers in need of upskilling to rejoin or remain in the workforce. CMETB remains committed to actively engaging with SOLAS and government agencies to facilitate the development and review of policies and practice across the FET sector.

The social implications of the pandemic are far-reaching, the public health measures have presented challenges for individuals, families and communities, particularly the most vulnerable groups in society. The ongoing restrictions have seen numerous barriers and challenges emerge for both learners and practitioners. Furthermore, given the rural nature of counties Cavan and Monaghan, CMETB has an active role to play in promoting FET and increasing the awareness of FET programmes.

Brexit remains an evolving issue particularly given CMETB's proximity to the border with Northern Ireland, although its impact has yet to be fully identified. There is a possibility that the Republic of Ireland will become more attractive financially for Northern Ireland students wishing to study (within further education or higher education). Students living within the border region who would have availed of FET provision in Northern Ireland may increasingly look to the Republic of Ireland now. CMETB will continue to support and pursue strategic objectives that will enable economic growth and minimise the impact of Brexit. Cross-border collaboration and student/staff mobility are of critical importance from an economic, social and cultural perspective. CMETB will support initiatives aimed at minimising issues arising from Brexit.

CMETB is located in a region where there is a shortage of technology companies in operation. The ICT sector is an important driver of Ireland's productivity growth, a key contributor to total value added to the economy, as well as a driver of exports and highly paid employment. To address ICT skills shortages, CMETB will work to create pathways within the wider ICT sector and education field to offer routes for learners seeking a career in the sector.

CMETB actively monitors its teaching and delivery capacity in the event that provision necessitates a change as a result of environmental factors. CMETB consistently engages with local industry to undertake labour market analysis and forecasting to identify the most at-risk skills areas. CMETB is committed to offering upskilling and reskilling supports across all industries particularly to those who are facing challenges or undergoing changes.

Attracting and retaining qualified and experienced staff is a concern for CMETB. Employing and retaining staff with the required skill set is necessary to meet the needs of the FET Service and its stakeholders. The constraints of public sector pay scales can leave working in FET a less desirable option, relative to private industry, and pose difficulties for CMETB in recruiting suitably qualified staff.



Technology Context

Reliable and up-to-date technology and infrastructure have never been as vital. As CMETB deals with a temporary Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT) environment as part of society's efforts to reduce the spread and impact of Covid-19, blended and online learning will become more mainstream in a post-pandemic society. Consequently, progress to date needs to be protected and advanced to ensure that FET remains accessible to all whether it is delivered face-to-face, online or via a blend of both.

Access to reliable broadband, particularly in rural settings, devices, up-to-date software, including specialist software, have been amongst the primary issues preventing learners from engaging fully. The recent introduction of the Mitigating Against Education Disadvantage Fund (MAEDF) and ICT Grant has helped alleviate some of these barriers through the provision of devices, for example, to those learners having most difficulty in engaging online. Additionally, the ongoing roll-out of the National Broadband Plan (NBP) will be critically important, particularly for the Cavan/Monaghan region, in ensuring consistent and reliable access to high-speed broadband for learners and staff living and working in rural areas.

CMETB is also aware of the fact that a greater reliance on technology and associated infrastructure required to support blended and online learning heightens risks in the area of cybersecurity. CMETB, through the work of its IT Department is working to mitigate against the security risks posed, by strengthening its IT security processes, procedures and infrastructure.

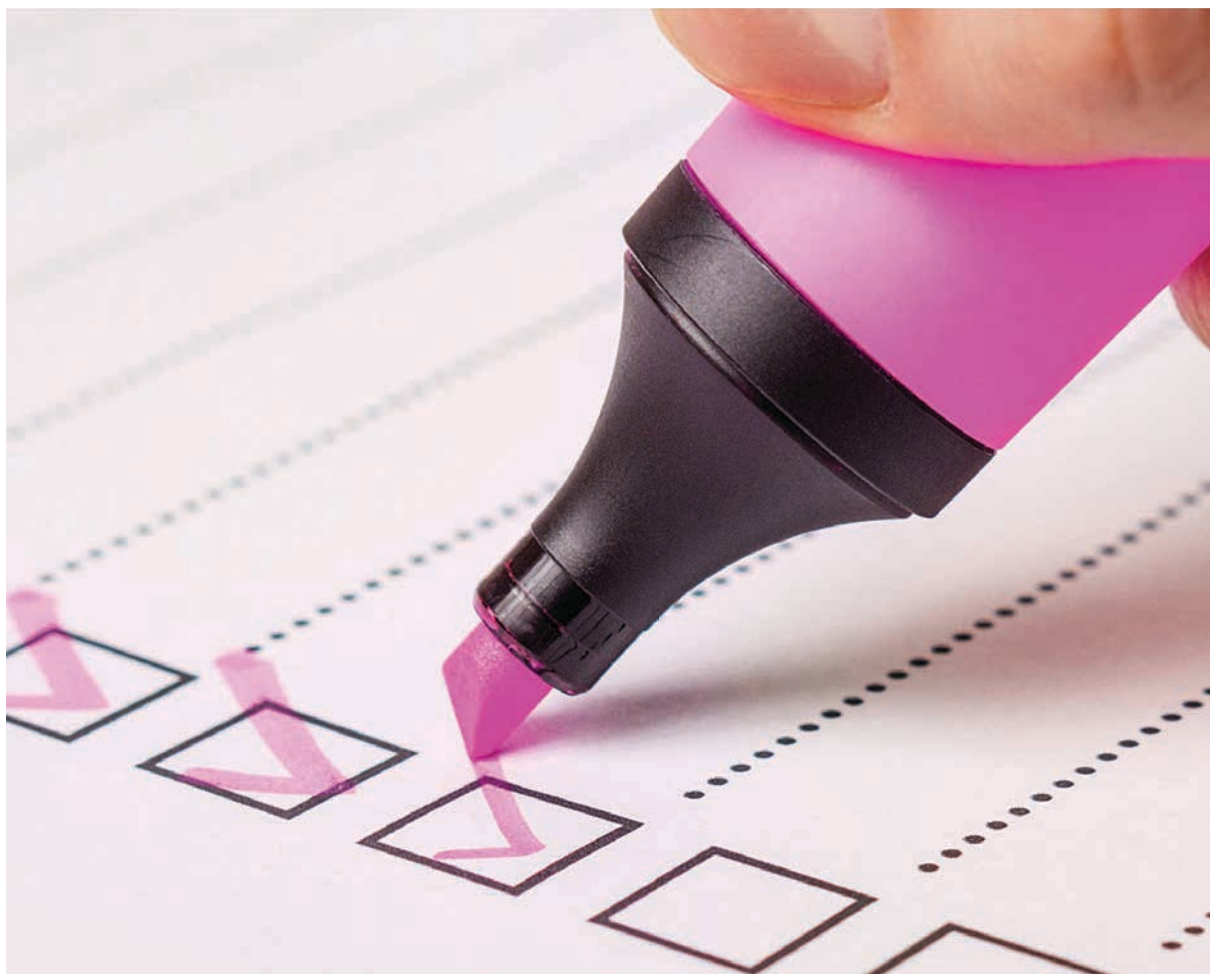
A greater focus on blended and online learning also presents numerous opportunities for CMETB into the future. Blended or fully online approaches to teaching and learning can make FET a more accessible and realistic prospect for specific cohorts of learners, including those in full-time, part-time or self-employment or with no access to transport. CMETB is aware of the potential negative impact blended or online learning may have on the mental health and wellbeing of learners and staff. CMETB is committed to ensuring appropriate supports are in place for learners and staff.

Legal Context

CMETB is aware of its obligations regarding the performance of its statutory functions. To ensure it remains compliant, CMETB adheres to the Code of Practice for the governance of ETBs. CMETB actively and openly engages in all required auditing processes and uses these as opportunities to enhance compliance and mitigate against any potential risks to the organisation and its reputation.

In addition, CMETB is committed to maintaining an open and transparent relationship with all stakeholders and ensuring efficient and responsible management of public funds. Equally, CMETB is committed to ensuring it remains fully compliant with all relevant legislation. To this end CMETB has, in place, a broad range of policies and procedures and these are communicated to staff on a regular basis. Ongoing staff training ensures compliance with the most up-to-date legislative and regulatory requirements.

In addition, CMETB remains abreast and cognisant of legislative and regulatory developments and the impact they may have on programme provision, particularly in areas of Health & Safety, Social Care and Childcare. CMETB FET, Quality Assurance and Compliance Sections will work to ensure requirements are met.





Environmental Context

CMETB is mindful of its environmental impact and fully committed to the reduction of its carbon footprint by becoming a greener, more sustainable and environmentally friendly organisation. Using its recent experiences of remote working, CMETB will remain open to ongoing use of online working, teaching and learning infrastructures. Equally, CMETB sees considerable opportunities in reducing both its usage of paper and landfill waste outputs. In the development of its capital infrastructure, CMETB is committed to maximising energy efficiency and minimising its environmental impact.

As a provider of education and training programmes CMETB can also play its part in furthering the development of the green and smart economies. To this end, CMETB is committed to developing new programmes and practices which contribute to the attainment of these goals and will remain responsive to the needs of the local and regional economies.

Recent experiences of remote working, teaching and learning will, in future, help reduce the negative impact and disruption caused by severe weather and climate emergencies.

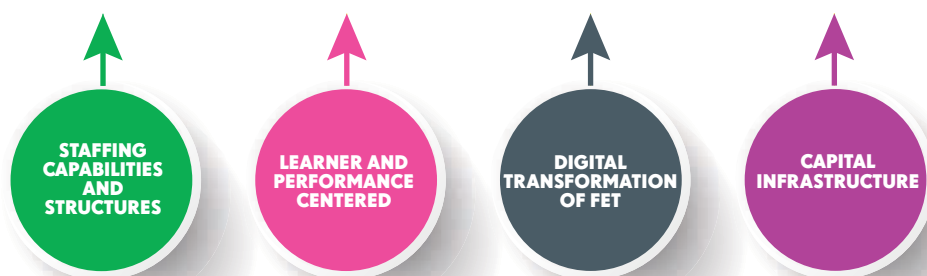
Business continuity plans and processes will now allow for a move to online working and delivery, thereby eliminating the disruption caused to services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ENABLING THEMES

Aligned with the National FET Strategy 2020-2024, this strategy is based around the three core pillars of **Building Skills, Creating Pathways and Fostering Inclusion**. Within each pillar are associated future strategic priorities for CMETB. These strategic priorities further set out a number of goals and actions. To deliver on these strategic priorities CMETB will focus on four key enabling themes.

The diagram below sets out CMETB's proposed strategic framework.

PILLARS	Strategic Priorities
01 BUILDING SKILLS	Meeting Critical Skills Needs
	Upskilling the Workforce
	Delivering on Apprenticeship
	Streamlined FET Provision
02 CREATING PATHWAYS	From School to FET
	Within FET
	From FET to HE
	Facilitating Lifelong Pathways
03 FOSTERING INCLUSION	Prioritise Target Cohorts
	Embed Inclusive Practice
	Literacy & Numeracy



ENABLING THEMES

BUILDING SKILLS

Meeting Critical Skills Needs

CMETB aims to identify critical skills gaps and offer a response that is inclusive of evolving local and national needs. As the world of work changes due to world-wide trends such as globalisation, digitalisation and climate change, it is anticipated that skills requirements in the workplace will continually and rapidly evolve.

Through the strategic priority of 'Meeting Critical Skills Needs' CMETB will focus on facilitating clear pathways that demonstrate linkages to a particular career or profession. This will benefit target cohorts - for the learner (in gaining employment or accessing further or higher education) and for the employer (in ensuring a pathway to upskill their employees).

Meeting Critical Skills Needs - this strategic priority requires a focus on three core goals as set out in the sections below:

Goal 1:	Enhance and expand the range of programmes available to school leavers, jobseekers, employers and the employed
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CMETB will focus on enhancing and expanding the range of FET programmes available to school leavers, jobseekers, employers and those in employment. Within this effort, CMETB will continue to develop and expand industry engagement in the region to build on the provision of FET programmes such as apprenticeships, traineeships, Skills to Advance and Skills for Work. It is intended that these programmes will continue to enhance the skill sets of learners, enable learner progression and meet industry/sectoral needs.

Under this strategic priority, CMETB has identified the expansion of Evening Provision (part-time accredited courses) as a critical step in enhancing skills development in the region. Further advancement of Evening Provision will enable more skills development opportunities for those looking to upskill by facilitating flexible part-time programmes that offer mixed provision, i.e. blended/online/classroom delivery to enhance learner access and facilitate greater engagement. Similarly, the development of the Enterprise Ireland funded project to establish and operate a Centre of Excellence for Supply Chain Logistics & Procurement will be a priority new initiative.

Goal 2:	Ensure programme provision is targeted and meets key skills needs as identified by employers, learners, Higher Education Institutions and through reports / research
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For CMETB to remain responsive to local and national demands for critical skills, ongoing collaborative relationships and linkages with external stakeholders are crucial to inform appropriate FET programme design and delivery. CMETB will continue to build and expand on relationships with industry, industry forums, Higher Education Institutions, the Department of Social Protection and other agencies to work to identify and respond to skills/training needs. CMETB will continue to engage with learners to ascertain skills and training needs. This will allow CMETB to design training programmes that give learners the skills, knowledge and competences to increase their mobility whether that is into employment, progression within their current role or to further study.

It is essential that CMETB continues to strengthen and develop the research and data analytics functions within the organisation. Efficient data collection/analytics and research will in turn inform relevant, timely and targeted FET provision.

Goal 3:	Increase focus on and delivery of STEAM programmes at all levels in FET
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STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) learning has remained a key priority within Irish education policy in the past number of years as a means of enhancing the skills base of the workforce and creating a renewed focus on innovation and creativity. CMETB has identified STEAM as a key area for the development of projects and initiatives within its service delivery. CMETB will focus on the development and delivery of STEAM programmes at a range of levels and support learning through technology. CMETB will work to increase participation in STEAM education by raising awareness and signposting learners to relevant programmes.



BUILDING SKILLS

Upskilling the Workforce

CMETB aims to position itself as a key education and training partner for employers in the region by fostering relationships to build awareness of the benefits of engaging with FET. Employers seeking to upskill their workforce will identify CMETB as a key strategic partner when exploring options for workforce skills development.

Upskilling the Workforce: this strategic priority necessitates a focus on four core goals as set out in the sections below:

Goal 1:	Position CMETB as a key actor in workforce development in Cavan and Monaghan
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To position itself as a key stakeholder in workforce development, CMETB will raise awareness of its approach to employer engagement and promoting the significant benefits of FET. CMETB will develop a centralised and co-ordinated approach to business and industry engagement that will highlight employer engagement as an important/valued relationship that evolves with each organisation's needs and requirements.

With CMETB's intervention, organisations can develop their vocational and technical skills as well as addressing skills gaps in emerging areas such as automation, smart technology and big data.

Having a close relationship with industry will benefit learners as they will be engaged in programmes informed by industry and therefore equipped with relevant skills to gain employment.

Goal 2:	Prioritise skills for industry and employment across all FET provision to enhance employability of learners
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Effective and coordinated engagement with industry allows identification of future skills needs that inform FET programme delivery. CMETB will liaise with industry to explore relevant certifications which would add value to programmes and enhance the employability of learners. Based on skills needs and employer feedback, CMETB will work to extend industry certifications available across a range of programmes.

Goal 3: Increased focus on languages throughout CMETB FET Services

While providing language learning opportunities in Ireland's official languages, Irish and English, CMETB will also increase focus on learning foreign languages. CMETB will work to encourage the lifelong learning of languages and intercultural education. CMETB will seek to diversify and increase the uptake of languages by maximising opportunities for learners to engage with language development programmes. This will be of particular benefit in the engagement of multinational companies in the region who may require staff to have proficiency in another language. Language education is also a fundamental aspect of social inclusion and education for democratic citizenship. This is referred to in more detail in the Fostering Inclusion section of this strategy.

Goal 4: Enhance skills of CMETB staff through relevant, timely Professional Learning & Development (PL&D)

Aligned to SOLAS' Professional Learning and Development (PL&D) Strategy, CMETB will develop and implement an annual PL&D Plan that is informed by consultation (with FET management and staff) and training needs analysis. CMETB's goal is to offer an array of supports to enhance versatility of staff through reskilling and upskilling opportunities. This will ensure staff are supported in their roles and with new areas of work, e.g. Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL).

CMETB will continue to operate a peer mentor/champion system to support staff members. CMETB will also establish an effective feedback mechanism for staff to enable open communication. The development of practitioner led communities of practice in key areas such as TEL, Blended Learning and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will also help promote and support a culture of continuous Professional Learning and Development amongst staff. CMETB will expand the range of staff teaching and training assignments through Erasmus projects and partnerships. Developing these opportunities will help to future-proof education and training allowing participants to develop personally, professionally and academically.



BUILDING SKILLS

Delivering on Apprenticeship

CMETB is responsible for the day-to-day management of statutory apprenticeship programmes in Cavan and Monaghan. CMETB delivers a number of Phase 2 electrical and post-2016 apprenticeships such as the Original Equipment Manufacturing (OEM), Commis Chef and Accounting Technician programmes. CMETB will align its efforts with the national action plan and continue to develop apprenticeship provision and registrations in the region.

This strategic priority requires a focus on one core goal as set out below:

Goal 1:	Further develop and enhance apprenticeship provision and support
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To further develop and enhance apprenticeship provision and support, CMETB will seek to expand its electrical and post-2016 apprenticeship provision and develop an additional craft apprenticeship. CMETB will work with SOLAS in national actions to increase capacity/address backlog in the system and to incorporate blended learning into apprenticeships. The development and delivery of learning support materials to assist apprentices with core skills will continue to be an integral element of CMETB's apprenticeship service.



BUILDING SKILLS

Streamlined FET Provision

The offering of a myriad of programmes within FET can present confusion for the learner seeking to find a suitable pathway. Streamlined FET provision will help to communicate FET programmes more clearly and effectively - linking them with clear employment or progression outcomes.

This strategic priority requires a focus on three core goals as set out in the sections below:

Goal 1:	Establishment of FET College of Future in CMETB
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CMETB will work to develop, resource and implement an action plan for operation of the FET College of the Future model incorporating and integrating FET provision and ancillary supports and services.

Goal 2:	Continued Integration of FET Services
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CMETB will continue to expand and deliver a broad range of provision at all levels creating further opportunities and entry points, ensuring FET offers a pathway for everyone. Expansion of co-provision models and programmes across CMETB will work to maximise learner choice and progression opportunities.

Across the organisation, CMETB will continue to foster greater integration of FET services which will allow enhanced collaboration and sharing of resources.

Goal 3:	Provide structured, quality work placement options for FET learners
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CMETB will seek to further develop quality work placement opportunities for FET learners that are both meaningful and constructive. Development of a Placement Office with dedicated staffing, will enable a co-ordinated approach to work placement provision and greater alignment between programme delivery and employer needs.

CREATING PATHWAYS

From School to FET

FET can activate a variety of pathways for school leavers - whether a learner wants to undertake a PLC programme, a traineeship, pursue an apprenticeship or take up a foundation course that will lead them into higher education. CMETB will work to position FET as an attractive, progressive option for all school leavers.

This strategic priority requires a focus on two core goals as set out in the sections below:

Goal 1:	Development of strong linkages and joint projects with schools
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CMETB is committed to promoting FET as a viable progression route for school leavers. A lack of appropriate vocational learning opportunities within schools has been identified as a key barrier preventing school leavers from showing interest in FET. CMETB will work with schools across the region to create a better understanding and awareness of the breadth of FET programmes and supports available. Through the development of strategic links and joint projects with schools CMETB will ensure that FET is positioned as a viable progression route.

CMETB will work with schools to develop a better understanding of FET and what it has to offer via a number of targeted initiatives as follows:

> **Development and delivery of structured FET sampling programmes**

The national FET Strategy extolls the notion of utilising Transition Year as the platform for the delivery of apprenticeship taster programmes while reference is also made to the benefits of utilising FET and apprenticeship ambassadors who can speak of their own personal experiences while providing ‘inspiration and insight.’ CMETB will deliver a FET Into Schools Programme, affording learners the opportunity to sample apprenticeships and PLC programmes and prepare for FET and/or the world of work.

> **Development and delivery of preparation for work programmes**

As part of the national commitment to the marketing of FET as a viable progression route for school leavers, CMETB recognises the need to provide a more streamlined and simplified FET proposition. CMETB will engage in national actions towards developing a simplified structure that is more meaningful and understandable to school leavers.

Preparation for work programmes will be offered to senior cycle students thereby providing them with key skills and familiarising them with FET provision and options.

> **Provision of appropriate numeracy and digital resources and supports**

Literacy and numeracy skills, including digital literacy skills, are critical competencies across all facets of society. DFHERIS' commitment to the development of a new 10-year literacy and numeracy strategy further underpins how essential these skills are. CMETB will continue to utilise and build on its expertise in the area of literacy and numeracy supports to ensure all FET learners are afforded equal opportunities to succeed and achieve their respective learning and life goals.

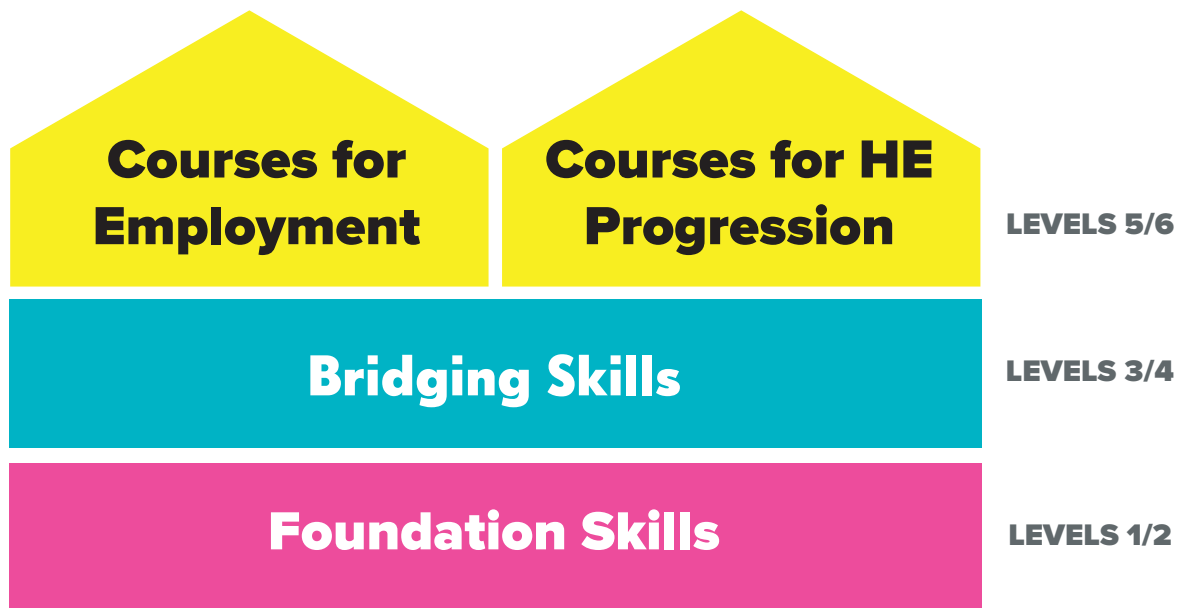
> **Shared curriculum development and delivery**

CMETB is committed to working with schools on the development and delivery of a range of short, vocationally focused programmes as part of the new junior cycle. These programmes will introduce students to FET, presenting it as a viable and attractive progression route at the earliest possible stage.

Goal 2:	Increase recognition of FET achievement for purposes of entry requirements to work
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CMETB is dedicated to working with all relevant stakeholders and employers to ensure a better understanding of FET. Part of this approach will involve ensuring FET equivalences are more widely understood and accepted. A targeted awareness campaign, aligned to the national 'This is FET' initiative, will be launched and adequately resourced over the lifetime of this strategy. The commitment illustrated by SOLAS in the National FET Strategy to simplify the 34 existing pathways within FET will contribute significantly to the ability to market FET in a competitive and easy-to-understand manner.

The proposed framework for restructuring FET provision outlines the following pathways:



As a result of this restructuring, prospective learners, parents and employers will have an improved understanding of the various opportunities available through FET with CMETB.

CREATING PATHWAYS

Within FET

Simplified pathways are critical for FET to progress both locally and nationally. Communicating clear entry and progression routes for people at all life stages is central to CMETB's approach to creating meaningful pathways within FET.

This strategic priority requires a focus on three core goals as set out in the sections below:

Goal 1:	Develop and implement transition programmes and supports to facilitate learners' progression within FET
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CMETB is aware of the need to provide additional supports for some learners to enable and encourage them to progress. CMETB will develop a suite of targeted programmes aimed at supporting learners to progress to broader aspects of FET provision such as apprenticeships, traineeships or PLC provision.

To further accelerate this goal, CMETB will endeavour to strengthen existing linkages with other providers such as Local Training Initiatives (LTIs) and Specialist Training Providers (STPs) to assist learners in these settings to advance to FET provision at NFQ Levels 5 and 6.

Goal 2:	Development of Recognition of Prior Learning processes and systems
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CMETB acknowledges the value of formally recognising prior learning and experiences of learners. Such educational and professional experiences are fundamental to the continuance of the lifelong learning agenda and greatly enhance a learner's experience of FET. The National FET Strategy acknowledges alternate means of validating learning outcomes, advocating the need to explore and develop these particularly in the context of shorter courses, which can facilitate a 'dip in, dip out' approach to lifelong learning. Aligned with this vision, CMETB supports the development of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes and systems capable of supporting both learner transfer and progression opportunities. An RPL policy and framework will be developed and implemented to support this measure.

Goal 3:	Develop and implement clear progression paths
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CMETB is committed to developing greater synergies and pathways between different levels of FET provision through continued efforts to centralise FET provision in larger centre and college facilities. This will be an integral element of planning for the FET College of the Future. The FET College of the Future, and associated centralised provision and services, will create a clearer roadmap for learners and employers. CMETB will also work to ensure awareness of progression opportunities and pathways amongst all FET staff and learners. Integration and collaboration among all CMETB services will be central to the achievement of this goal.

CREATING PATHWAYS

from FET to HE

CMETB supports a more coordinated and consistent approach to facilitate transitions from FET to Higher Education (HE).

This strategic priority requires a focus on one key goal as set out below:

Goal 1:	Develop and strengthen mutually beneficial links between FET and HE
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The creation of the new Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) serves as an important endorsement of the individual and interconnected roles both further and higher education play in pursuit of Ireland's lifelong learning agenda. There is a clear role for FET and HE to act individually and in tandem in making post-second level and lifelong learning more accessible.

CMETB is committed to maintaining, developing and promoting mutually beneficial links between FET and HE. Both Cavan Institute and Monaghan Institute have long established track records of building synergies and partnerships with regional, national and international Higher Education institutes as part of concerted efforts to encourage transfer and progression from FET to HE. These progression routes may take the form of direct or advanced entry routes and may also be delivered on an outreach basis.

CREATING PATHWAYS

Facilitating Lifelong Pathways

This strategic priority requires a focus on one key goal as set out below:

Goal 1:	Expansion and Integration of Guidance Services
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CMETB provides ongoing support and guidance to current, future and former adult learners through its guidance services. CMETB will work to expand and integrate guidance provision to ensure all learners can access timely and appropriate supports.

CMETB is committed to playing its part in ensuring that the new 'The Right Course' portal becomes an essential signposting and support tool which benefits all learners.



FOSTERING INCLUSION

Prioritise Target Cohorts

CMETB will align itself to national efforts in responding to the issues faced by marginalised groups in society. Regardless of background or formal education level, FET presents an opportunity for everyone to learn and develop. CMETB is committed to promoting a strong inclusive ethos in the communities of Cavan and Monaghan. By targeting and facilitating participation by the most marginalised groups in society, CMETB will continue its efforts in providing tailored programmes and resources to meet learner needs.

This strategic priority requires a focus on three core goals as set out in the sections below:

Goal 1: Develop a centralised approach to learner supports and wellbeing

Supporting the increasing and welcome diversity of learners and their associated needs is a key priority for CMETB. FET Services will work to develop a centralised learner support system that will enable learners to access the equipment and assistance they require to engage in and complete their programme of study. In tandem with and integral to this, a dedicated Health and Wellbeing post will be created.

Goal 2: Develop and deliver programmes and supports to facilitate inclusion and progression of learners with additional/special needs

CMETB has a track record of providing targeted literacy, numeracy and core skills supports for adult learners with additional and special needs. CMETB has built up strong relationships with a broad range of disability and special needs providers across the region.

The National FET Strategy highlights the importance of providing consistent learner supports while rooting FET in the community. Aligned to this vision CMETB is committed to the development and provision of targeted programmes to facilitate the inclusion and progression of learners with additional and special needs. A commitment to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will be central to this approach.

Goal 3: Support successful delivery of Refugee Resettlement programme and offer post-programme supports

CMETB has been involved in delivering the Refugee Resettlement Programme across the region over the past number of years, however gaps in provision for post-completion of the programme have been identified. CMETB recognises the need to provide ongoing support to refugees following completion of the programme through the delivery of targeted English language and key skills training. This training will build on the learners' progress on the resettlement programme and will support their social, economic and cultural integration.

FOSTERING INCLUSION

Embed Inclusive Practice

A learner-centred approach and ethos lies at the heart of CMETB's core values. CMETB recognises the importance of inclusive practice and will work to provide consistent supports to respond to learner needs.

This strategic priority outlines one core goal:

Goal 1: Facilitate learners to access provision in a format that suits them

A strategic approach to embedding inclusive practices across FET is required to ensure equality of access to programmes and supports. CMETB has learnt a great deal from the experiences of implementing emergency remote learning processes and procedures in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, in looking to a post Covid-19 environment, more strategically designed interventions are required to enhance and diversify the inclusiveness of existing and future FET provision. This will be facilitated by enhancing CMETB's offering through the development and delivery of blended learning and fully online training and support services. This will allow for greater flexibility in provision, while also ensuring that those most removed from FET have equality of access and opportunity. In tandem, and cognisant of the challenges and barriers faced by those living in rural/remote communities, CMETB is committed to delivering and improving outreach provision to ensure that those lacking adequate digital literacy skills and/or without the necessary technology are not excluded from accessing FET.



FOSTERING INCLUSION

Literacy, Numeracy and English Language Support

CMETB will continue its efforts to address the needs of adults with low literacy and numeracy levels in its communities and work to raise awareness of the issues faced. CMETB will also advance and expand its ongoing work in responding to the specific English language needs of migrant learners.

This strategic priority outlines one core goal:

Goal 1:	Ensure access to literacy, numeracy and English language support throughout all CMETB services.
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CMETB will continue to ensure access to literacy and numeracy support throughout FET. This integrated approach is in keeping with national priorities on literacy and numeracy to include a consistent approach to assessment and achieving integration across all FET programmes. CMETB will continue to support local and national projects to ensure the development of English language provision and supports to assist with societal integration and to aid sustainable transition into the labour market.

ENABLING THEMES

STAFFING, CAPABILITIES AND STRUCTURES

CMETB FET Services are led and delivered by a strong team of dedicated practitioners. Their commitment and expertise enables learners to engage in a wide variety of programmes and work to realise their potential. FET is a dynamic, rapidly changing sector and it is imperative that CMETB staffing levels and staff capabilities can respond to meet the changing requirements. CMETB will work to further develop and enhance FET staffing levels, structures and capabilities over the duration of this strategy.

Under this enabling theme three key areas of focus have been determined.

FET Staffing

CMETB aims to ensure that each service has the required staffing level and skillset to enable programme delivery, management and administration. Where gaps may arise, management will highlight these and seek to identify an appropriate solution. If this cannot be solved from within CMETB, sanction from DFHERIS and SOLAS for additional staff may be sought. As this strategy covers a four-year period, many and some very significant changes may happen – the current Covid-19 crisis being a key example. These changes may impact staffing levels and approvals. It may be necessary to consider alternative ways of working and reassigning staff across the service to address areas of greatest need. Likewise, skills needs and learners interest vary, and this will be reflected in demand for certain programmes. CMETB will monitor this and work to ensure staff are assigned to the area that best meets their skills set. Where upskilling or reskilling is required, CMETB will consider this and work to identify options in this regard. Blended Learning and associated TEL capabilities will be key skills areas for development, both in the immediate term as part of CMETB's response to Covid-19, and medium term as a strategic move towards adding online learning to the service delivery options.

Staffing Structures

While some progress has been made on the organisational design of FET within ETBs, with the three-pillar approach providing a dedicated overarching FET structure, additional work is required. In many areas, FET is staffed based on systems that do not lend themselves to rapidly changing demands and the flexibility required to respond. Staffing arrangements, as found in second level schools, are not always the optimum arrangement for FET – particularly as the service aims to move to the ‘FET College of the Future’ model with year-long delivery. Likewise, CMETB recognises the need for an appropriate FET Co-ordinator role and grade (rather than the interim Community Education Facilitator arrangement) to lead out on the many and diverse areas of FET activity, for example TEL Supports. CMETB recognises that these are national issues; it cannot act unilaterally and change will take time. CMETB will work with key stakeholders in pursuit of a fit-for purpose FET staffing model.

Staffing Capabilities

Professional Learning and Development Strategy

SOLAS’ Professional Learning and Development (PL&D) Statement of Strategy 2020 – 2024 will act as a key conduit for the development and enhancement of FET staff skills to meet the current and future needs of an evolving economy and to help achieve the ‘Future FET’ agenda.

CMETB will continue to deliver high-quality PL&D programmes for all staff and has designated a Professional Learning and Development Co-ordinator to oversee, implement and develop service wide PL&D programmes. The successful delivery of diverse and responsive PL&D programmes will help build confidence and capacity amongst practitioners leading to a high-quality learning experience.

Over the lifetime of this strategy, CMETB is committed to prioritising critical professional learning and development areas of need to include:



All PL&D programmes and initiatives will continue to be aligned to these critical areas of need, while also remaining responsive to new and emerging areas of priority. In responding to these needs, CMETB will continue to offer a range of certified and uncertified options for staff. CMETB is committed to the development of a Professional Learning and Development Strategy which both documents and builds on the existing infrastructure and supports with a greater focus on the development of blended and e-learning options. Progress has been made in this regard in recent times with the delivery of a number of online and blended learning courses via Moodle, Microsoft Teams and eCollege.



Annual Professional Learning and Development Plan

Staff will be consulted at least annually as part of the development of an annual PL&D plan which will outline the various initiatives and interventions to be delivered. The PL&D Co-ordinator is responsible for the development of an integrated PL&D calendar. The most recent consultation identified needs in a number of areas, to include, project management, wellbeing and resilience, environmental awareness, Microsoft Office Specialist and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

CMETB will also work to conduct an updated skills audit of all staff employed across FET. This audit will feed into the preparation of the CMETB PL&D Strategy. In addition, following the roll-out of national training by SOLAS, CMETB will work to conduct Training Needs Analysis with relevant staff as part of the annual PL&D planning process.

Tracking and Monitoring of PL&D

CMETB will work to develop an appropriate mechanism for tracking and recording all internal and external professional learning and development undertaken by staff.

LEARNER AND PERFORMANCE CENTRED

The ability to be truly learner and performance centred is a key enabling mechanism in this strategy. To achieve a strategy focused on skills development, learning pathways and inclusion, it is vital to consider thematic areas that will enable reform, integration and performance improvement.

Under this enabling theme three key areas of focus have been determined.

1. Performance Frameworks

A performance framework for FET has been established through the Strategic Performance Agreements with SOLAS. This system, facilitated through the PLSS platform, is a key enabler in linking FET delivery on the ground and quantitatively and qualitatively measuring its impacts for learners, communities and employers as well as its effect on the economy and society as a whole.

CMETB is building its capacity to ensure agreed performance indicators which will contribute to new national FET system targets. CMETB through its PLSS Advisory Group and its full-time Data Reporting Officer will monitor and report on agreed indicators of FET achievement including employment outcomes, progression, active inclusion, lifelong learning, meeting critical skills needs and new models of delivery.

Management Information Systems (MIS) reporting will continue to inform decision-making at governance level and facilitate feedback of key performance indicators. In addition, internal audit teams have been put in place to test the reliability of data sources and their applications.

2. Learner Feedback and Engagement

To ensure informed and timely decision making, CMETB is acutely aware that appropriate mechanisms must be in place around learner feedback and engagement. Work has commenced on a tripartite approach to learner feedback and engagement which hopes to triangulate the information gained from a CMETB annual Learner Survey, Learner Forum event and Learner Advisory Network.

(i) Learner Survey

An annual FET-wide, online Learner Survey is conducted, which aims to illicit both profiling and benchmarking data from all learner groups in relation to their experience and journey within FET.

(ii) Learner Forum Event

Learners are invited to participate in a CMETB Learner Forum event in order to further interrogate the data received from the survey through the use of focus groups. From these interactions it is proposed to invite learners from across the services to further represent the CMETB learner voice on a Learner Advisory Network.

(iii) Learner Advisory Network

It is intended that this advisory group would be consulted on matters of importance such as planning provision, delivering support services, curriculum review and development, quality assurance and improvement and future strategy.

It is also recognised that learner participation on other relevant governance, strategic and decision-making structures is paramount to any future learner centred approach. More effective means of representation will be developed, ensuring a clear learner voice on oversight and governance bodies. This will require consideration of the fact that learners are for the most part, very transient i.e. only staying in the system on average one academic year. These appointments will be accompanied by initiatives to build the capacity of learners to engage effectively in these structures and articulate views that in turn can be presented to SOLAS, ETBs and other stakeholders.

Learners can be hugely effective ambassadors for articulating and representing the value of learning within FET. They are also the most powerful way of showcasing the progression opportunities afforded by participating in FET through sharing their own stories and individual journeys. CMETB will actively recruit learners and empower them to share their story as a means of promoting FET in schools, with stakeholder companies and within the wider community.

3. Informal or Wider Benefits of Learning Performance Metrics

CMETB is considering, through its surveying and learner engagement processes, how learning outcomes can be validated without always relying on formal certification as the single most important indicator of success. As a result, CMETB is evaluating how best to develop a distance travelled metric which will be used to measure transversal or wider benefits of learning development.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Digital technologies have transformed everyday lives and opened opportunities to evolve programme delivery within FET provision. Rapid digital transformation necessitates educators to adapt and adopt methodologies to strive for the best possible educational experience for learners. Digital skills are required for an increasing number of jobs and FET must adapt to provide learners with the necessary skills to enable them to compete in an already challenging labour market.

CMETB is committed to embracing digital technology in its effort to deliver accessible services while observing fundamental changes to the evolving FET landscape. CMETB will continuously engage with SOLAS, ETBs, learners and other stakeholders to embrace digital transformation.

Under this enabling theme three key areas of focus have been determined.

Making better use of digital technology for teaching and learning

The appointment of a TEL Officer within CMETB has afforded the resource to guide and embrace digital transformation across FET. This dedicated position informs new and emerging technologies within CMETB to support curriculum areas to implement new tools/technologies and encourage these as an integral element of teaching. Models of good practice in technology enhanced learning both regionally and nationally will be shared with relevant curriculum areas.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, CMETB made rapid adjustments to its programme delivery and moved, where possible, its teaching, learning and assessment online, as part of emergency response measures. This represented a seismic shift in terms of the use of technology in teaching, learning and assessment. CMETB is committed to continuing the momentum gained as a result of this emergency response and to develop an operational framework and suite of policies to support the option of blended learning delivery in the future. Blended learning is not intended to replace 'traditional' teaching, learning and assessment practice at CMETB, rather it will extend the range of delivery provision to widen inclusion. Blended Learning as a mode of flexible delivery will provide greater reach for learners who may have caring responsibilities, travel limitation or work commitments.

Developing relevant digital competencies and skills for digital society

CMETB is consistently exploring ways in which TEL can support the creation of new online learning opportunities and enhance the learning experience of all learners. CMETB will continue to utilise technologies across programmes, recognising the evolving needs of the diverse learner cohort and adapting to meet those needs appropriately.

CMETB will collaborate with other ETBs piloting new digital innovations and adopt or replicate in an effort to stay ahead of the curve. Blended learning and online learning will be supported as these offerings are critical to meeting the needs of learners, employers and local enterprises.

High quality technology enhanced learning will require a committed, well-resourced effort. A staff induction programme will provide ideas for incorporating TEL in the classroom as well as communicating support mechanisms available. Dedicated support channels have been created for staff with video tutorials and webinar recordings available to view on demand. For learners, a detailed induction serves to effectively introduce new technologies and offer support mechanisms for those who require assistance.

Improving planning, systems and processes through enhanced data and analysis

CMETB recognises the importance of data and the role of technology as a driver of planning, communication and reporting of quality data outputs. CMETB acknowledges that quality data can provide evidence that assists decision-making and advocacy for required change. CMETB is committed to continuously monitoring how its data is collated, evaluated and reviewed.

PLSS and FARR systems have been implemented in CMETB for data collection, reporting and analysis purposes. CMETB will explore new methods to assist the development of a fit for purpose data infrastructure to streamline processes in engaging learners and industry. Linked with PLSS, the introduction of the “Tableau” software will play a key role in data analytics. The appointment of a Data Reporting Officer within CMETB represents the necessity of accessing and analysing data across FET. The Data Reporting Officer has responsibility to cross-analyse data to support planning at the operational, managerial and strategic formulation level. This data will inform management processes and ensure that there is adequate record capture during the learners’ journey with CMETB and beyond.

CMETB will continue to engage with SOLAS and associated stakeholders to progress efficient reporting based on interlinking outputs of various digital platforms.

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

CMETB's learner population has grown significantly in recent years and consequently learner needs have also increased. Similarly, the range of programmes has become more diverse and a number of highly specialised programmes have been introduced. These changes and developments in turn create capital requirements.

CMETB is striving to meet those needs by providing modern, fit for purpose, fully accessible facilities that learners and staff can enjoy. This requires capital expenditure to ensure availability of quality FET centres that are open, welcoming and accessible to all.

CMETB has identified key capital priorities to be progressed during the period of this strategy. They include a plan for new suitable rented accommodation and new purpose-built buildings for Cavan Institute, Monaghan Institute, new/upgraded accommodation for Adult Education Services, Cavan Youthreach and Carrickmacross Youthreach. These capital developments will have enormous benefits for learners, staff and the wider community, enabling delivery of a broad suite of programmes – specialised and general, and further highlight FET as an attractive option for all.

The key capital priorities for CMETB during the period of this strategy are set out below.

Cavan Institute

The plan is to build a new permanent purpose-built building and to develop temporary modular accommodation in the interim:

a. ***Permanent Purpose-Built Accommodation***

The new build is on the Department of Education's 5-year building plan and was due to commence works in 2019. A site has been identified on the FET Campus, Dublin Road. CMETB is progressing this with the Department and SOLAS.

b. ***Temporary Modular Unit Accommodation***

This accommodation will be adjacent to the proposed new building and will be used in the interim period while the permanent structure is being built. This has been approved with the aim to use it in the 2021/2022 academic year.



Benefits to Learners and Staff

The new building for Cavan Institute will have enormous benefits for learners, staff and the wider community, ensuring accessibility for all. It will become a focal point for FET in the locality, with facilities for a wide array of FET provision. Improvements to current accommodation would address staff and student requirements to fully deliver and engage in learning.

Monaghan Institute

Expansion of facilities at Monaghan Institute

The current College is a modern well equipped welcoming venue. However, it lacks the space required for apprenticeship programmes and practical skills training. It is planned to seek approval and funding to expand the Institute and provide this much needed space.

Benefits to Learners and Staff

The extension will create necessary additional space for apprentices and large equipment required for programme delivery. It will provide a comfortable safe space for learners and staff and enable secure storage of equipment and materials. It will also provide scope for additional practical skills training programmes to be delivered at Monaghan Institute.

Adult Education Services

Adult Education Services are located in multiple premises in Cavan that do not meet current needs. It is planned to seek new premises which would house multiple classrooms, practical rooms, office space and outdoor space. In addition, it is planned to expand the Adult Education Centre in Monaghan to provide practical classroom space.

Benefits to Learners and Staff

These developments would enable all Adult Education services to be located under the one roof. Learners could access training, ancillary supports and services, e.g. guidance, in the one location. The premises would also enable delivery of a broad range of practical programmes.

Youthreach Centres

> Carrickmacross Youthreach

The current accommodation was built in 1953 and is unsuitable for use. It is proposed to provide alternative premises, which will offer learners and staff purpose-built, modern, well-equipped facilities and a welcoming environment in which a broad range of modules can be delivered.





> Cavan Youthreach

It is planned to upgrade the current facility to provide warmer, safer classrooms and a purpose-built kitchen and dining area to cater for learners and staff.

Benefits to Learners and Staff

New and upgraded Youthreach centres would lead to smoother running from an operational, behavioural management and health and safety point of view, while also reducing maintenance and operational costs. This would give learners a sense of pride and improve the morale and motivation of every member of the Youthreach community. Most importantly, new/upgraded centres would enhance the learner experience and positively impact the learners and staff.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this strategy will be the responsibility of all FET services and centres. The goals and actions outlined in the strategy document were developed by a dedicated committee representative of the various services and centres. Strategic actions have been developed and designated to services and centres to form the basis of their operational plans.

The strategy committee will remain in operation for the duration of the strategy. It will meet 3 times per annum to review actions and report progress, issues or challenges. The committee will also consider any amendments that may need to be made to the strategy to ensure its relevance over the 3-year period.

This strategy will be an integral element of the wider CMETB Strategy Statement. This is reviewed quarterly by the Senior Management Team.

At service and centre level the relevant actions will be operationalised and reported on through existing reporting structures.

CMETB has defined governance structures, including a QA Sub-group, Programme Development and Implementation sub-group, Programme Proposal Committee and Programme Approval Committee. Many of the actions and enabling themes will be delivered through these fora. The key decisions and actions from these fora are then considered by the FET Management and Quality Council and communicated to the FET Board, a sub-committee of the CMETB Board.

The resources required to implement the strategy will be sought through appropriate channels, including: SOLAS FARR annual planning process, SOLAS/DFHERIS capital application process, DFHERIS/ SOLAS staff sanction, Erasmus+ projects and other opportunities that may arise over the duration.

FET is a dynamic sector with continuous change and innovation. CMETB needs to lead change and innovation within its environment and keep pace with national developments and this strategy highlights actions in this regard. The strategy has taken cognisance of its environmental factors and their impact on its operations. It sets out clear goals and actions which services and centres are committed to implementing while retaining flexibility in responding to changing conditions.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	SERVICE RESPONSIBLE
SKILLS – Meeting Critical Skills Needs	Enhance and expand the range of programmes available to School Leavers, Jobseekers, Employers & Employed	Continue to develop and expand industry engagement and provision of Traineeship, Skills to Advance and Skills for Work programmes that: > Meet industry & sectoral skills needs > Enhance learner skills set > Enable learner progression Development of Enterprise Ireland funded project to establish and operate a Centre of Excellence for Supply Chain Logistics & Procurement Expansion of Evening Provision across Cavan and Monaghan Offer mixed provision, i.e. blended / online / classroom delivery to facilitate learner access and engagement	All FET Services
	Ensure programme provision is targeted and meets key skills needs as identified by employers, learners, Higher Education Institutions and through reports / research	Ongoing development and maintenance of effective working relationships and linkages with: > Industry and industry forums > Department of Social Protection (DSP) and other agencies to identify and respond to their skills & training needs / those of their clients	All FET Services

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	SERVICE RESPONSIBLE
		Continue to engage with learners formally and informally to ascertain skills and training needs Strengthen and develop research and data analytics functions to ensure relevant, timely and targeted FET provision	All FET Services
	Increase focus on and delivery of STEAM programmes at all levels in FET	Develop and deliver up to date and relevant STEAM Programmes at a range of Levels across FET service Work to raise awareness of importance of STEAM and signpost learners to relevant programmes Prioritise Mathematics and its importance for progression, and deliver programmes accordingly Work to increase and support self-directed learning through technology	All FET Services
SKILLS - Upskilling the Workforce	Position CMETB as a key actor in workforce development in Cavan & Monaghan	Establishment of centralised employer engagement unit Ongoing development of linkages and strategic partnerships with industry Dedicated promotion campaign to raise awareness of CMETB's role in Workforce Development	Training Services & PLC
	Prioritise skills for industry and employment across all FET provision to enhance employability of learners	Liaise with industry to explore relevant certification which would add value to programmes and enhance employability of learners	Training Services & PLC

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	SERVICE RESPONSIBLE
		Extend industry certification available across a range of programmes based on skills needs and employer feedback	
	Ensure timely and effective response to industry training needs	Access tool to undertake training needs analysis and work with industry to utilise this Offer flexible range of upskilling programmes to enable employees to progress in their career Develop / access a range of alternative / additional programmes and certifying options and establish links necessary to enable local delivery Offer mixed provision, i.e. blended / online / classroom delivery to facilitate learner access and engagement Accelerate programme development / access / certification processes to enable CMETB respond swiftly to request for training from Industry To enable CMETB to respond swiftly to requests for training from industry	Training Services, PLC, Quality Assurance
	Increased Focus on Languages throughout CMETB FET services:	Endeavour to develop language provision at all levels across FET services	All FET Services
	Enhance skills of CMETB staff through relevant, timely PL&D	Develop and implement annual PL&D Plan that is informed by consultation & Training Needs Analysis and aligned to SOLAS PL&D Strategy	PL&D Co-ordinator, FET Service Managers, TEL Officer

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	SERVICE RESPONSIBLE
		Ensure balance of PL&D provision that includes: > ICT/TEL > STEAM > Subject specific skills > Wellbeing > Skills required when working with increasingly diverse groups, or groups affected by multiple issues > Blended / online options Explore options to enhance versatility of staff through upskilling / reskilling Ongoing development and operation of peer mentor / Champion system to support staff Expand the range of staff teaching and training assignments through Erasmus projects and partnerships	
SKILLS - Delivering on Apprenticeship	Further develop and enhance apprenticeship provision and support in CMETB	Expansion of electrical apprenticeship facilities Development of additional Craft apprenticeships in CMETB Continued operation and expansion of Post 2016 Apprenticeships Ongoing development and delivery of learning support materials to assist Apprenticeships with core skills Explore options for blended / online learning in apprenticeships	Training Services & PLC

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	SERVICE RESPONSIBLE
SKILLS – Streamlined FET Provision	Establishment of FET College of Future in CMETB	Develop an action plan for the FET College of Future in CMETB Work to resource and implement this plan	Senior Management All FET Services
	Continued Integration of FET Services	Continue to develop and deliver a broad range of provision at all Levels in Cavan Institute & Monaghan Institute Share resources, maximise synergies and work to minimise duplication Expand co-provision models and programmes across CMETB and work to maximise learner choice and progression opportunities Offer mixed provision, i.e. blended / online/classroom delivery to facilitate learner access and engagement	All FET Services
	Provide structured, quality work placement options for FET learners	Expand and enhance industry partnership to co-construct programmes Expand and enhance work practice across relevant programmes Work to develop Placement Office with dedicated staffing Develop and facilitate options for workplace study visits for Youthreach Learners Where feasible, explore and avail of opportunities for internships and international placements	All FET Services

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	SERVICE RESPONSIBLE
		Utilise technology and FET facilities to provide simulated Work Experience settings for students within the college environment	
PATHWAYS – from school to FET	Development of strong linkages and joint projects with schools	Development and delivery of strong FET into Schools programme incorporating: > Structured apprenticeship/PLC sampling programme > Preparing for work programmes > Numeracy & digital literacy > Maths Support for Leaving Cert students > Shared curriculum development & delivery > Clear pathways from School to PLC	Training Services, Adult Education & PLC in partnership with Schools
	Continued development and maintenance of links with relevant partners to ensure early school learners can access alternative learning options	Develop and strengthen links with partners, including: Educational Welfare Officers, Home School Liaison Officers, School Principals, Youth Organisations, Alternative Learning Programme Work with schools to ensure awareness and understanding of Youthreach and other alternative provision for early school leavers	Youthreach & CMETB Youth Service

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
	Increase recognition of FET achievements for purposes of entry requirement to work	Work with the sector and employers to ensure that FET equivalents to Leaving Cert are more widely accepted and are advertised as such	Guidance, SOLAS / ETBI / DFHERIS
PATHWAYS – within FET	Develop and implement transition programmes and supports to facilitate learners' progression within FET	Develop targeted programmes to prepare and support learners progress to Level 5 programmes in PLC & adult education and into apprenticeships / traineeships Strengthen linkages with other providers (e.g. LTIs & STPs) and facilitate these learners transition to Level 5 & 6 programmes	All FET Services
	Development of Recognition of Prior Learning processes and systems	Continued work to develop RPL processes and systems that will support learner access transfer and progression	QA in co-operation with FET Services
	Develop and implement clear progression paths	Create a road map for learners, staff and employers Ensure awareness of progression paths among all FET staff and learners	All FET Services, Communications Officer
PATHWAYS – from FET to HE	Develop and strengthen mutually beneficial links between FET & HE	Consolidate links with higher education partners to identify progression routes for PLC graduates via direct or advanced entry	PLC, Adult Education

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
		Continued engagement with HE institutions towards development and delivery of Level 7 & 8 programmes in FET Colleges Work to develop linkages between adult education and HE that will facilitate learner access and progression Offer mixed provision, i.e. blended / online / classroom delivery to facilitate learner access and engagement Ongoing promotion of HE linkages and opportunities available to learners	
PATHWAYS - Facilitating Lifelong Pathways	Expansion and integration of Guidance Services	Expand and integrate provision to ensure all FET learners can access Guidance Services	Adult Guidance Service
INCLUSION – Prioritise Target Cohorts	Develop a centralised approach to Learner Supports & Wellbeing	Work to develop a centralised learner support system that will enable learners to access the equipment and assistance they require to engage in and complete their programme of study Establish a Health & Wellbeing Officer position and associated programme of work, including provision of psychological supports	All FET Services

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
	Develop and deliver programmes and supports to facilitate inclusion and progression of learners with additional / special needs	Work to develop and deliver targeted programmes for learners with additional / special needs, including: > supported employability provision for adults with intellectual disability > Autism hub project > Pathway to sheltered employment/ volunteerism programme > Life Skills prison education programmes > Learners presenting with multiple issues	Adult Education
	Further develop and deliver programmes and supports to facilitate inclusion and progression of early school leavers	Introduction of Alternative Learning Programme for those outside of school to facilitate their re-entry to school or access to Youthreach / other FET provision Continued development and delivery of the Youthreach Programme to cater for early school leavers Continued delivery of PLC Access Programme to support vulnerable learners to progress to and engage in Level 5 Further Education programmes	Youthreach, Youth Service, PLC

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	GOAL	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
	Support successful delivery of Refugee Resettlement programme in Cavan & Monaghan	Provide comprehensive ESOL and other key skills training to learners engaged in the Refugee Resettlement programme Develop tailored provision post Resettlement Programme	Adult Education
INCLUSION – Embed Inclusive Practice	Facilitate learners to access provision in a format that suits them	Enhance the CMETB offering through Blended Learning, online training & support services provision and flexible delivery Continued development and delivery of outreach provision to enable those living in rural / remote areas engage in FET programmes	All FET Services, TEL Officer
INCLUSION – Literacy & Numeracy	Ensure access to literacy and numeracy support throughout all CMETB services	Continued delivery of literacy awareness training to all staff. Ongoing literacy and numeracy support provision across all FET services Strengthen focus on numeracy in all services to enhance learner access and progression	Adult Education, All FET Services

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition	Description
CAO	Central Applications Office	The Central Applications Office receives and processes applications for undergraduate courses in Higher Education Institutions.
CMETB	Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board	One of sixteen national statutory Education and Training Bords responsible for the delivery of Further Education and Training in the Cavan-Monaghan region.
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science	Newly formed Irish government department with responsibility for policy, funding and governance of Ireland's Further and Higher Education and research sectors.
DSP	Department of Social Protection	Irish government department which directly funds a wide range of employment programmes and provides welfare supports to individuals.
ERT	Emergency Remote Teaching	Process engaged to ensure continuity of teaching and learning supports for Further Education and Training learners online in an emergency capacity for the duration of Covid-19 linked lockdowns.
ESOL	English to Speakers of Other Languages	Process of learning English as a second/additional language to reach functional competence in personal, social, work-related and cultural settings.
ETB	Education and Training Board	Statutory education authorities with responsibility for education and training, youthwork and a range of designated functions.
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland	Representative body for Ireland's sixteen Education and Training Boards.

Term	Definition	Description
FARR	Funding Allocation Request and Reporting	Process by which Education and Training Boards apply for funding annually and provide updates at designated times throughout the year.
FET	Further Education and Training	Post-compulsory programmes of education and training generally aimed at individuals over the age of sixteen and offered up to and including Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.
HE	Higher Education	An umbrella term used to describe third-level institutions in Ireland, including Institutes of Technology and Universities.
LTI	Local Training Initiative	Community-based education and training programme aimed at unemployed persons aged between 18 and 35.
MAEDF	Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund	Fund introduced for 2021 to support community education for those adult learners who have high levels of needs. A key focus on the fund was to provide devices and software to help increase capacity to provide online learning.
MIS	Management Information System	Computer system designed to aid the collection, analysis and reporting of data relevant to the provision of core services and supports.
NBP	National Broadband Plan	Irish government initiative to deliver high speed broadband services to residential and commercial premises across Ireland.
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications	10-level framework used in the development, recognition and awarding of certified qualifications across the Irish education system.
OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturing	Refers to the QQI Level 6 Original Equipment Manufacturing Apprenticeship launched in 2019 to address demands from the machine manufacturing industry.

Term	Definition	Description
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate	Full time education and training programme for adults generally leading to awards at Levels 5 and 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications.
PL&D	Professional Learning and Development	A continuous process of professional skills development, upskilling and reskilling for staff of Education and Training Boards.
PLSS	Programme Learner Support System	Central data repository utilised across the sixteen Education and Training Boards for the purpose of gathering and tracking key data relating to FET provision, to include, a national course database and calendar and a learner database. The PLSS system is also used for the purpose of reporting to SOLAS on learner outcomes and progression routes achieved.
QA	Quality Assurance	The process employed to ensure that the teaching, learning and assessment environments achieve and retain an appropriate level of quality.
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning	Process used by education institutions, employers and other bodies to assess, recognise and validate an individual's knowledge and skills against agreed national standards and qualifications.
SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúaigh agus Scileanna/Further Education and Training Skills Authority	SOLAS is responsible for managing, co-ordinating and supporting the effective delivery of Further Education and Training programmes and support services by Education and Training Boards.
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics	Educational approach to real-world learning that integrates Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics as interlinked subjects.

Term	Definition	Description
STP	Specialist Training Provider	Provision of learner-focused training to assist persons with disabilities who are experiencing exclusion and labour market disadvantage.
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning	Term used to describe the application of technology to support teaching and learning processes.
UDL	Universal Design for Learning	A set of curriculum design principles which provide equal opportunities for learning for all learners, including learners with disabilities.



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