



# etbi

Education and Training  
Boards Ireland

*Boird Oideachais agus  
Oiliúna Éireann*

**Annual Report  
2018-2019**





# Annual Report 2018-2019

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## Glossary of Acronyms & Abbreviations

Acronym	Full Name / Term		
<b>A</b>		<b>J</b>	
ACCS	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (representing 95 Community and Comprehensive Post-Primary Schools nationwide)	JCT	Junior Cycle for Teachers
<b>B</b>		JMB	Joint Managerial Body (representing School Management in Voluntary Secondary Schools)
BCP	Business Continuity Plan	<b>L</b>	
BOM	Board of Management	LAOS	Looking at our Schools
<b>C</b>		LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex
C & AG (C&AG)	Comptroller and Auditor-General	LPPS	Learner Payments Payroll System
CE	Chief Executive	LSSU	ETB Legal Services Support Unit
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	<b>M</b>	
CL	Circular Letter	MAPP	Multi-Annual Procurement Plan
CEFRL	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages	MSET	Michael Sweetman Educational Trust
CNS	Community National School	<b>N</b>	
CPD	Continuous Professional Development	NALA	National Adult Literacy Agency
CPP	Corporate Procurement Plan	NCC	National Course Calendar
CPSI	Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection	NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
<b>D</b>		NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
DCU	Dublin City University	NLDB	National Learner Database
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	<b>O</b>	
DEASP	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection - formerly the Department of Social Protection (DSP)	OEM	Original Equipment Manufacturer
DGOU	Digital Governance Oversight Unit	OGP	Office of Government Procurement
DES	Department of Education and Skills	OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
DFET	Directors of FET (Further Education and Training)	OSD	Organisation Support and Development
DGOU	Digital Governance Oversight Unit	<b>P</b>	
DP	Data Protection	PD	Professional Development
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	PLSS	Programme and Learner Support System
<b>E</b>		PMDS	Performance Management Development System
EA	External Authentication	PMO	Programme Management Office (DES)
EPS	Education Procurement Service	PSR	Public Sector Reform
ESBS	Education Shared Business Services	PSSA/PSSC	Payroll Shared Services Administration/Payroll Shared Services Centre
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages	<b>Q</b>	
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute	QA	Quality Assurance
ETB	Education and Training Board	QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland	<b>R</b>	
<b>F</b>		RfT	Request for Tenders
FAR	Finance, Audit and Risk (Committee)	RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
FET	Further Education and Training	RSE	Relationships and Sexuality Education
FETCH	Further Education and Training Course Hub	PSR	Public Service Reform
FOI	Freedom of Information	<b>S</b>	
<b>G</b>		SEN	Special Education Needs
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation	SLA	Service Level Agreement
GMGY	<i>Goodness Me, Goodness You!</i>	SLAR	Subject Learning and Assessment Review
<b>H</b>		SMIS	Student Management Information System
HAS	Health & Safety Authority	SOLAS	An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna, lit. 'Further Education and Skills Service'
HR	Human Resources	SRFT	Supplementary Request for Tenders
HR & IR (HR/IR)	Human Resources and Industrial Relations	SSE	School Self-Evaluation
<b>I</b>		<b>T</b>	
ICT	Information and Communications Technology (or Technologies)	TAPS	Trainee and Apprentice Payment System
ILP	Instructional Leadership Programme	TCC	Teachers Conciliation Council
IR	Industrial Relations	TEL	Technology-Enhanced Learning
ITE	Initial Teacher Education (Post-primary)	<b>U</b>	
<b>J</b>		UCC	University College (Cork)
<b>K</b>		<b>V</b>	
<b>L</b>		VEC	Vocational Education Committee
<b>M</b>		VOIP	Voice Over Internet Protocol
<b>N</b>		VUCA	"Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous"
<b>O</b>		<b>W</b>	
<b>P</b>		WRC	Workplace Relations Commission
<b>Q</b>		WSE	Whole School Evaluation

## Foreword from General Secretary

I am very pleased to present the ETBI Annual Report 2018-2019 to delegates at our Annual Conference 2019. The Annual Report provides an opportunity to display an overview of the work carried out by the staff over the course of 2018-2019.

This year the approach taken highlights key points and achievements. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the role ETBI plays in representing the ETB sector, a significant stakeholder in the education sector accounting for a total spend of approximately €2.1 billion annually and the provision of services to 425,132 learners.

There are many areas of growth highlighted throughout this report and, as always, the challenges associated with change are documented too.

Changes have taken place in ETBI over the course of the year, with further consultation and change planned for 2019-2020. Additional posts have been established based on identified need and subsequent submissions of business cases for funding to external bodies including DES, SOLAS and DCYA. The introduction of PMDS for staff evaluation and assessment will support the delivery of the organisational goals and ensure the maximisation of all available resources.

The outputs contained in this overview of the organisational activities would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of each and every member of staff in ETBI; so I would like to acknowledge the work of staff in presenting the Annual Report 2018-2019 to you. I wish you an enjoyable, informative and interesting ETBI Annual Conference 2019.



**Nessa White**  
General Secretary  
September 2019

## Education & Training Boards Ireland

The Board meets six times per year and the Annual General Meeting takes place at the ETBI Annual Conference. The two central and pivotal positions in these structures are the ETBI President, currently Cllr John Hogan of Tipperary ETB, and the ETBI Vice-President, currently Mr George O'Callaghan, Chief Executive of Limerick and Clare ETB.

ETBI has been working over the year to put in place a suite of organisational policies, including:

- Procurement policy;
- Gifts and Hospitality policy;
- Travel and Subsistence policy.

ETBI maintains a risk register and proactively manages its risks.

Work on an ETBI Climate Change Policy has commenced. ETBI is committed to leading action on climate change in the future.

### Forums & Working Groups

ETBI convened in excess of 180 meetings of the various forums, networks and working groups for the sector. These meetings provided opportunities for the development of policies and procedures as well as promulgating good practice across the ETBs. They also afforded the opportunity for collaboration and networking between ETBs.

### Finance, Procurement and Public Service Reform

Formal financial authority levels were approved by the Board, which establish spending thresholds by budget holder.

A Procurement policy has been adopted by the Board, which brings ETBI into line with other publicly funded entities. A workshop for staff on the implementation of the Procurement policy was held.

Further training in this regard is scheduled for Quarter 3, 2019.

A new financial management system has been procured and full implementation should be completed by the end of July 2019. A complementary purchase-to-pay management system is scheduled to be implemented shortly thereafter.

Work has commenced on implementing an online Travel and Subsistence system for ETBI staff. This is a fully integrated module in the Time and Attendance system.

Pay dates for both payroll and expenses are being brought into line with public service standards.

The Statement of Recommended Practice was applied in the financial statements for the first time in 2018.

### Legal Support Services Unit

The LSSU provided ongoing legal advices to ETBI in the discharge of its daily duties. This included:

- Review of draft organisational policies prior to recommendation to the Board;
- Completion of a tender for ETBI legal services in respect of Freedom of Information and Data Protection;
- Training in GDPR, FOI, Health & Safety and lobbying obligations.

## Information & Communication Technologies

Guidelines were developed in respect of the use of SharePoint to ensure consistent and uniform understanding, application and labelling;

A video conferencing facility has been tested to facilitate online meetings, web conferencing and webinars;

The Teams functionality of the MS Office suite is being tested with a view to rolling it out across ETBI and for use in the various forums.

## Human Resources & Industrial Relations

A number of internal HR policies were developed and approved during the year, including;

- Time and Attendance policy;
- Restructuring and Redundancy policy;
- Sick Leave policies (three);
- Maternity Leave policy.

A further suite of policies and procedures are in the final stages of development and will be submitted to the Board for approval:

- Performance Management Development System (PMDS);
- Grievance Procedure;
- Disciplinary Procedure.

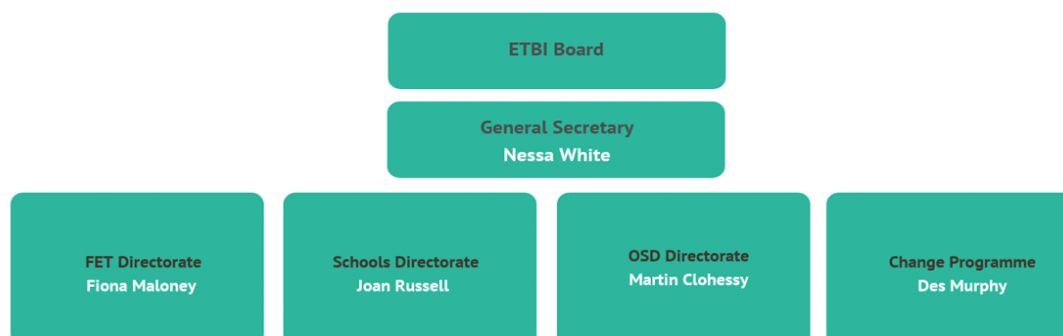


A new Time and Attendance system for staff was implemented in May 2019. This will modernise all aspects of time and attendance management across all levels and provide more flexible working opportunities for staff.

## Staff Consultation and Engagement

There was increased focus on staff consultation and engagement over the past year. This included the establishment of fortnightly staff catch-ups, a more standardised approach to staff meetings, consultation with staff on the ETBI building workspaces and two staff training sessions.

### Education and Training Boards Ireland Organisational Chart



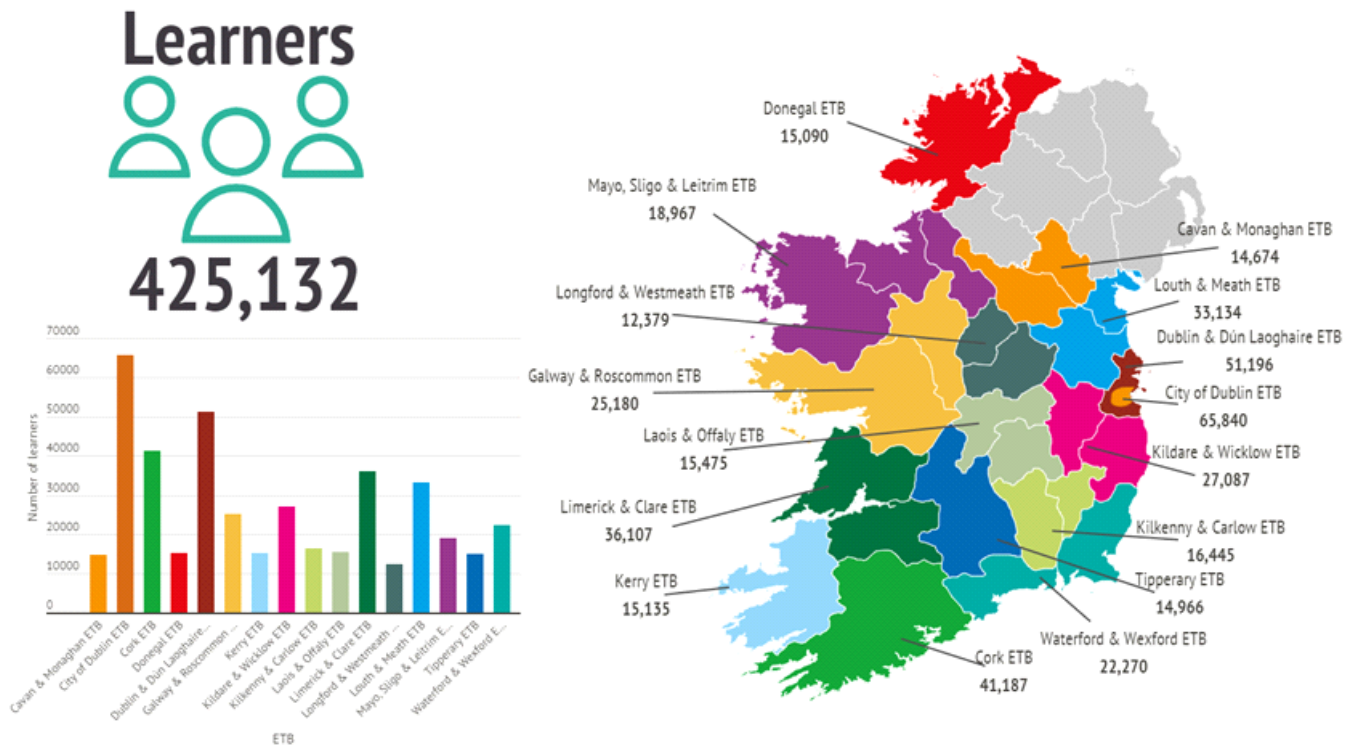
## The ETB Sector

### ETBs at a glance

#### About Education and Training Boards

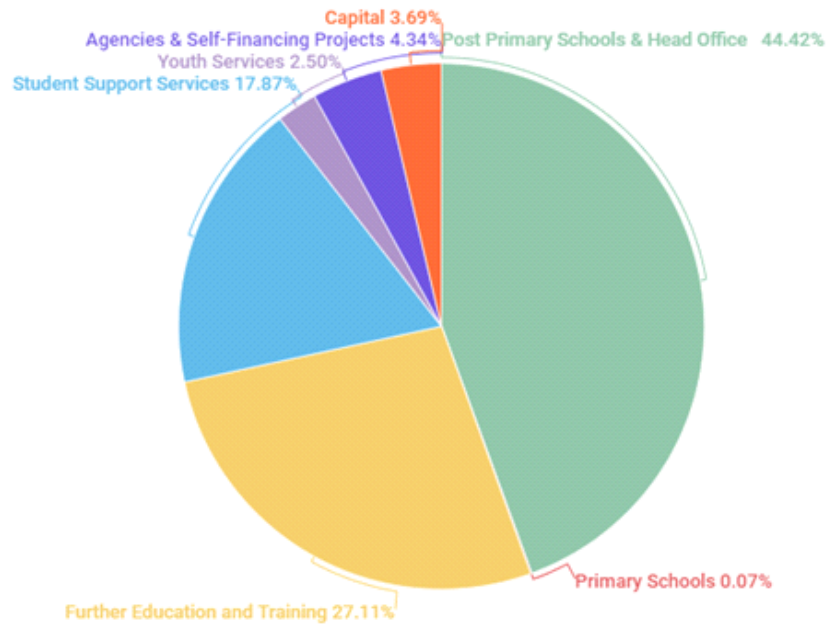
Ireland's sixteen Education and Training Boards (ETBs) were established on 1 July 2013, constituted from the former Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and FÁS Training Centres. They have statutory responsibility for education and training, youth work and a range of other functions. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges delivering adult and community education and training programmes, and multi-faith community national schools.

The vision underlying the creation of the ETBs has been realised through the establishment of larger and more robust bodies, delivering more opportunities and greater coherence and partnership across the sector, which are central to strategic innovation across education provision nationally. The ETB sector is now the leading provider of education and training in the state and will continue to respond in a proactive and dynamic way to the needs of the communities that it serves. There are sixteen ETBs in Ireland and the spend totals approximately €2.1bn annually.



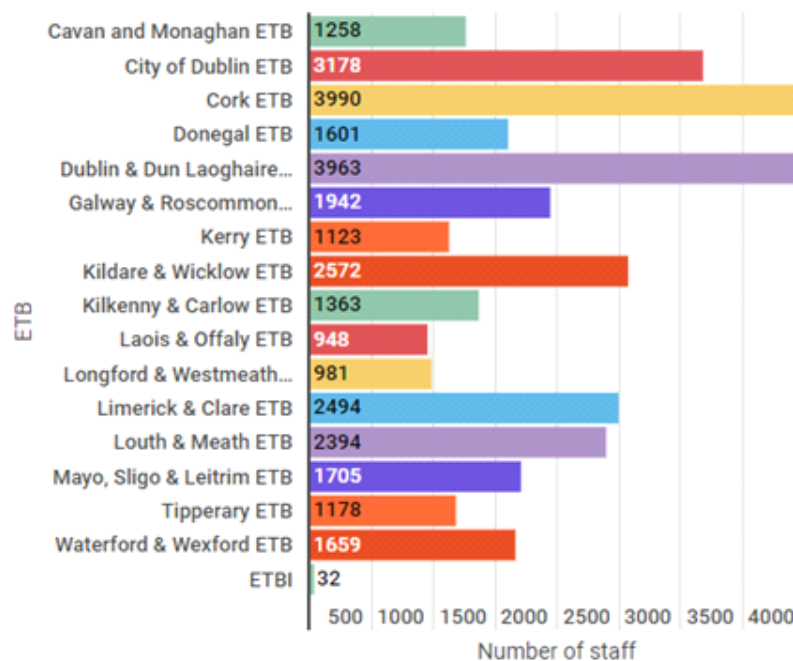


## Expenditures by service



Post Primary Schools & Head Office	930,486,626
Primary Schools	1,432,437
Further Education and Training	567,955,277
Student Support Services	374,366,577
Youth Services	52,336,502
Agencies and self-financing	90,920,974
Capital	77,319,800
Total	2,094,818,193

## Staff paid in ETBs in 2018



## Schools

### Second Level Schools

#### Strategic Planning

##### Workforce Planning

The Schools Directorate prepared a submission to the ETBI Board and DES for additional staff, including the establishment of a Primary Schools Directorate. The success of this submission resulted in securing the appointment of:

- Director of Schools;
- Educational Policy and Development Officer with responsibility for CNS ethos development and the implementation of GMGY;
- Education Policy and Research Officer with responsibility for education through the medium of Irish.

##### Director of Schools Forum


Since July 2018, eleven meetings of the Director of Schools Forum were facilitated, allowing Forum members to share ideas, opinions, good practice and providing them with opportunities to enhance their knowledge around key policy areas through presentations by officials from:

- DES;
- Centre for School Leadership;
- Junior Cycle Team.

Two strategic planning days were hosted for the Forum in October 2018 and April 2019.

##### Principals Networks


Five meetings of the Post Primary Principals Network were facilitated since July 2018. These Network meetings have been invaluable in informing the work of ETBI, particularly at policy level. The participation and contribution of the principals has grown in strength over the past nine months, with members providing valuable practical inputs on a range of topics including:

- RSE consultation;
- Admissions Policy;
- Patron's Framework;
- Teacher Placement consultation;
- History in the Junior Cycle Curriculum;
- Students who are members of the Travelling mmunity.

Four meetings of the CNS Principals Network were facilitated since July 2018. The Network meetings provide ongoing support to CNS Principals.

##### Líonra Gaeloideachas

Five meetings of the Líonra Gaeloideachas were facilitated since July 2018, including a session at the Annual Conference of Principals and Deputy Principals. This network group provided support and representation for several issues related to Irish education across the post-primary ETB sector, including:

- Island School Education 
- Aonad Lán-Gaeilge,
- Irish Education Policy 2017-2022,
- Teacher Supply.

### Patronage Competitions

A key area of work was providing training and ongoing support to ETB personnel involved in competing for patronage of new schools. A Patronage Competition Sub-Group was established to develop promotional materials and advice to guide ETBs during the patronage competition process. A workshop to present the new resources was held for ETBs that will be competing for new schools over the next three years.



Four new Community National Schools in two ETBs will open in July 2019.

## Conferences


### Induction of New Principals and Deputy Principals

In September 2018, 45 delegates attended Phase I of the ETBI Induction Programme for new Principals and Deputy Principals. Over the course of the two-day programme, participants engaged in a variety of workshops to inform their new role. Attendees heard presentations from:

- Dr Joe O'Connell, on Building and Developing Teams;
- Dr Johanna Fitzgerald on Special Education;
- Ms Elizabeth Flanagan on Managing Oneself in a Changing Role.

In March 2019, 63 delegates participated in Phase II of the Programme. Participants engaged in a variety of workshops and received a presentation from Dr Mark Fennell on Exploring Current Key Issues for Schools.

### Annual Education Conference for Principals and Deputy Principals

In January 2019, the annual ETB Principals and Deputy Principals conference was held in Mount Wolseley. Over 250 delegates attended over two days and participated in several educational  workshops. The first morning commenced with a session dedicated to Gaelcholáistí and Scoileanna Lán Gaeilge.

Ten workshops in total were provided for delegates on the following topics:

- Mapping the SEN Provision;
- Apprenticeships;
- Flexible models of delivery in FET;
- Social media use by young people;
- SSE, LAOS and WSE;
- Growing a School – one perspective;
- Leadership and Wellbeing;

- Leading Digital Learning;
- HSA – Health and Safety Guidelines for Schools;
- How was school today? Reflection on Student Voice.

The keynote speaker was Dr Simon Boucher of the Irish Management Institute, who provided insights for delegates on Leadership in a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous World. This was followed by a discussion on Leadership and Management Posts – One Year On, chaired by ETBI’s Valerie Lewis. On Day Two, the DES Inspectorate presented on the new SEN and CPSI Models of Post Primary School Inspections, and Seamus Conboy of ETBI presented on the findings of the Core Values Review.

### **Education and The Law Seminars**

The Schools Directorate and the LSSU together hosted two one-day seminars for ETB schools on current legislative changes impacting on schools as effective organisations with particular focus on:

- GDPR;
- Child Protection;
- Admission to schools.

The first seminar in Galway was attended by 104 delegates, and the second in Portlaoise by 170 delegates.

### **Ten-Year Anniversary of Community National Schools**

In October 2018, the 10th anniversary of the CNS model was celebrated in the Clock Tower of the Department of Education and Skills. The day included keynote speeches from Dr Thomas Walsh of Maynooth University and Prof Emer Smyth of the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI).

Two significant documents were launched on the day:

- *A Step-by-Step Guide to Becoming a Community National School*;
- *The Goodness Me, Goodness You! Curriculum* (Junior Infants to 6th Class).

The day concluded with a panel discussion on the CNS model, facilitated by Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin, with contributions reflecting the perspectives of parents, teachers, principals and patrons.

## **Governance**

### **Board of Management Training**

A Train the Trainer seminar for BOM trainers was facilitated in October 2018. Topics covered included:

- Child Protection;
- Looking at Our Schools.

Copies of the presentations, in both English and Irish, are available to download from the ETBI website/BOM Resources.

### **New Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection Model**

The Schools Directorate contributed to the consultation process with the DES Inspectorate for the development of new Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspection Guidelines. ETBI facilitated the piloting of these guidelines in a number of ETB schools and training was provided by the DES Inspectorate at the Annual Education Conference for Principals and Deputy Principals, January 2019.

### **New Special Education Needs Inspection Model**

The Schools Directorate contributed to the consultation process with the DES Inspectorate for the development of a model of inspection for the evaluation of provision for students with additional and special educational needs in post-primary schools. Training was provided by the Inspectorate at the Annual Education Conference for Principals and Deputy Principals, January 2019.

### **Contribution to Circular Letters**

The Schools Directorate represented the sector at consultative meetings with DES, thus ensuring that the voice of ETB schools was reflected in the development of the final draft of various circular letters pertaining to education and human resource issues throughout the year.

### **Revised Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2019-23**

The Schools Directorate represented the CNS model on the DES Working Group on the *Revised Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2019-2023*. This involved feeding into the drafting of the Governance Manual and attending a number of meetings of the task group. ETBI has also begun the process of developing the *ETBI Handbook on Governance Manual 2019-2023 for Community National Schools*, which will provide the specific governance arrangements for primary schools in the ETB sector.

### **Education (Admission to School) Act, 2018**

The Schools Directorate in partnership with the LSSU prepared and published a Draft Admission to School Policy and associated documents, including application forms and annual admission notice, for use in ETB schools in the enrolment of students for 2020-2021. The use of the documentation will be supported through the provision of training for principals and deputy principals in September 2019.

### **SNA Resource Materials**

The final version of a booklet on SNA Resource Materials was completed and circulated across the sector. This booklet contains information relating to the role and good practice guidelines for the SNA and also outlines the HR operational supports. Exemplars of good practice and suggested training approaches have also been included in the final 60-page document.

### **Core Values Review**

The Schools Directorate facilitated two workshops on core values, religion and beliefs in ETB schools in June 2018 and January 2019. Every post-primary principal and many deputy principals from all 17 ETBs have now engaged in these workshops. A comprehensive report on the findings from the core values review process was compiled. The report, which includes a number of significant recommendations for the sector, was presented at the ETBI Principals and Deputy Principals Conference in January 2019.

### **Development of Patron's Framework**

The Schools Directorate drafted a position paper on the place of religions and beliefs in non-designated ETB schools that will be used to consult with the sector. The Directorate has also developed a comprehensive RfT document for a literature review and preparation of a policy options paper to inform the development of a Patron's Framework for all ETB schools.

### **Governance of patronage issues**

The Schools Directorate provides secretariat support to the Patronage Task Group, and facilitated five meetings of the Task Group this year. Terms of Reference for the merging of the CNS Task Group and the Religion and Diversity Task Group were drafted and approved by the CE Forum. The Directorate also drafted revised Terms of Reference for the DES Steering Committee for Community National Schools, incorporating the work on core values.

### **Representing the sector**

The Schools Directorate represented the ETB sector at consultations with DES in relation to Circular Letters 13/2018 and 62/2018.

ETBI also engaged with the Irish Episcopal Conference in relation to religion in non-designated and designated schools.

The Directorate also presented to the National Association of Diocesan Advisors on the Core Values Review process, and responded to requests from other organisations, e.g. Atheist Ireland, in relation to the ongoing work on core values in ETB post-primary schools.

### **ETBI Competition to Celebrate and Promote Irish Culture, Irish Heritage and/or Irish Language**

The ETBI Competition to Celebrate and Promote Irish Culture, Irish Heritage and/or Irish Language was developed and launched in November 2018. The award is being given in the name of the late Joe McDonagh, former CEO of County Galway VEC, former CE of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB, and enthusiastic gaeilgeoir and champion of education, the GAA, and Irish language, culture and heritage.

Students in post-primary schools under ETB patronage were invited to submit entries for consideration, and 28 entries were received from 17 schools in three ETBs. The winning schools will receive their prize at the ETBI Annual Conference in September.

## Community National Schools Reconfiguration

Throughout the 2018-2019 academic year, the Schools Directorate assisted a number of ETBs working with 'early mover' schools who had made the decision to make the transition to become Community National Schools. The Directorate supported these ETBs at meetings with the stakeholders of the prospective schools, giving presentations and helping to prepare relevant agreements and materials.



Following on from the negotiations, six primary schools of various patronage will reconfigure to become Community National Schools in September 2019. In June 2019, the Schools Directorate provided a workshop for the relevant ETBs to outline their next steps to ensure the successful reconfiguration of these schools.

### Promoting understanding of Community National Schools

A major focus of the Schools Directorate this year has been to promote the CNS model, and a number of initiatives were undertaken to support this:

- Presentations on the CNS model were delivered to both ETBI Executive and Reserve members, and to a number of ETB boards;
- Presentations on CNSs were delivered in all ITE colleges of education and at various seminars and conferences;
- An article was authored on the Ten-Year Journey of Community National Schools for the *Education Matters* 2018-2019 publication.

### Ongoing support for Community National Schools

The Schools Directorate, in conjunction with the NCCA, provided, in four geographical locations, CPD for all CNS teachers on the CNS Patron's Framework and the *Goodness Me, Goodness You!* Programme. In conjunction with the Centre for Human Rights in DCU, the Directorate organised a summer course for CNS teachers in two locations, Dublin and Cork.

### Representing Community National Schools on National Groups

The Schools Directorate represented Community National Schools at a number of national fora and events.

## Instructional Leadership Programme

The Instructional Leadership (IL) Programme is a professional development programme for teachers which aims to enhance their pedagogical skills and develop a common language with which they can share their learning and practice.



### Blooms Taxonomy Poster

The Instructional Leadership Programme facilitated a competition for schools, which invited students to design a poster to promote the use of Blooms Taxonomy in classrooms. The winning poster, designed by Saibh Mangan, Sixth Year Student from Dominican College Dublin, was published and issued to all post-primary schools across the country.

### Annual Conference

Over 120 delegates from ETB, ACCS and JMB schools attended the IL Programme Annual Conference. The Conference, the theme of which was “The Instructional Leadership Programme: Supporting Policy and Practice”, also marked the tenth anniversary of the Programme. Keynote speakers included:

- Mr Jim Daly T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Health;
- Mr Tomás Ó Ruairc, Director of the Teaching Council of Ireland;
- Dr Becky Saunders, from Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia;
- Dr Conor Mellon, Teaching and Research Associate at the Teaching Council of Ireland;
- Mr. Barry Slattery, Director of the NCCA.

### Instructional Leadership in the primary sector

With a view to offering the IL Programme as part of the suite of summer courses available to primary teachers in July 2019. ETBI partnered with five Education Centres across the country to offer primary school colleagues an opportunity to train as IL facilitators:

- Cork Education Support Centre;
- Kilkenny Education Centre;
- Donegal Education Centre;
- Carrick-on-Shannon Education Centre;
- Limerick Education Centre.

The training was provided, in the main, by post-primary graduates of the Programme. Nine primary school facilitators graduated from the programme in March 2019 and have since facilitated the delivery of the Programme as a summer course for primary school teachers.



## Senior & Middle Leader Conference

The Instructional Leadership Programme hosted the third Annual Conference for Senior and Middle Leaders in June 2019 with 120 delegates in attendance. The Conference, with the theme, “The Dialogic Classroom: Instructional Leadership Activating Learner Voice”, focused on supporting schools in developing, leading and embedding a culture of authentic student voice and creating rich learning experiences in the classroom. Keynote speakers included:

- Dr Paula Flynn, Associate Professor, DCU;
- Dr Domnall Fleming, UCC;
- Mr Norman Emerson, Director of Assessment, NCCA;
- Ms Veronica Walsh, Deputy Principal, Coláiste Treasa, Kanturk.

## Learner Voice Project in partnership with the NCCA

The IL Programme and the NCCA are partnering to invite schools to participate in a project aimed at supporting them in activating the Learner Voice. The principle of the project is broadly based on the NCCA Bridge to Learn Project and the IL Programme.

The project will run over the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. Schools will be supported by opportunities for professional development of their staff, as well as the provision of resources and a platform to share practice. Information on the Bridge to Learn Project is available on [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie) and on the Instructional Leadership Programme at [www.instructionalleadership.ie](http://www.instructionalleadership.ie).

## The History of the Instructional Leadership Programme

A history of the ETBI-led programme was published as part of the Tenth Anniversary Celebrations.

## Instructional Leadership Programme Newsletter

Three editions of the IL Newsletter were published during the year and issued to schools.

## Further Education and Training

### Work Based Learning


ETBI engaged with and supported ETBs in the development of apprenticeships by, *inter alia*, attending Consortium Steering groups meetings, curriculum development and programme team meetings, and employer engagement briefings. Three apprenticeships were validated during the year:

- Auctioneering and Property Services (led by City of Dublin ETB);
- Craft Butchery (led by Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB);
- OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) Engineering (led by Cavan and Monaghan ETB).

Five further apprenticeships are in development:

- Scaffolding (led by Laois and Offaly ETB);
- Sales Associate (led by Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim ETB);
- Wind Turbine (led by Kerry ETB);
- Arboriculture (led by Galway and Roscommon ETB);
- Hairdressing (led by Limerick and Clare ETB).

In addition, ETBI developed and established a number of other sectoral supports:

- Various Moodle courses were created;
- Workplace mentoring and training was developed;
- An Initial Monitoring and Enhancement panel was established;
- A teaching and Learning Enhancement Day was held;
- A working group was established to coordinate and facilitate a review of the Service Level 

Agreement between SOLAS and ETBs;

- Subject matter advisory groups were established, and met as required;
- Programme Boards were established in respect of pre-2016 Apprenticeships;
- Guidelines were produced for Blended Learning for Apprenticeships;
- An Academic Writing Guide was devised to support learners;
- A Referencing Guidebook for Learners was produced.

### Communications

Progress has been made in respect of efforts to publicise and promote the FET sector, across the full range of media and communication channels. These include:

- A bi-monthly FET newsletter was issued for the first time in November 2018. This is intended to disseminate information around FET activities nationally;
- Work is on-going to update the FET section of the ETBI website. The initial amendments to the website, to include information on the restructured unit and apprenticeships, have been drafted, and the final content is to be agreed;
- A team licence for an Infogram system has been purchased;
- ETBI networks have been established to facilitate the objectives of the Directors of FET Forum;
- A joint ETB/ETBI Sectoral Marketing stand has been developed;
- A Sectoral Digital Library has been developed.

## Further Education and Training Systems Management

Work continues to further embed PLSS in business processes and operational practices within ETBs, with the aim of using PLSS to provide a continuity of data business intelligence. The work this year involved:

- The first year-end PLSS file was created. Together with month-end files already operational, these were distributed on an ongoing basis to ETBs by ETBI;
- Training on NCC and NLDB was delivered to all ETBs;
- A New PLSS Change Request process was adopted by all ETBs and SOLAS;
- An online payments pilot scheme was completed with Laois and Offaly ETB;
- The Learner Detail Form underwent comprehensive review with all stakeholders;
- The FETCH website has been considerably improved;
- Employability Statements were agreed and published.

There was significant engagement with DEASP around the creation of potential interfaces between ETB systems and their management information systems. This will have the potential to streamline work processes for both agencies and to reduce duplication. The work has been fully scoped and awaits the next stage of development.

Employability Statements were agreed and published on behalf of the ETB sector and DES. Guidance has been issued to ETBs on use of Employability Statements, which are published on the PLSS National Programme Database.



A Guide to Making Online Applications has been developed for applicants and PLSS Users. The FETCH Working Group has been established to document and make recommendations on improving user experience of, and systems on, the [fetchcourses.ie](https://fetchcourses.ie) website.

ETBI provided technical support and training to the sector to support the collection of data on FET provision for reporting and sharing as appropriate with local, regional and national stakeholders.

## Quality Assurance

Work continues to further embed QA in FET. In this regard, ETBI advanced the following sectoral initiatives, assisting collaborative practice and service sharing in QA processes and activities across the ETBs:

- Identified QA Practice Areas and Development initiatives to support programme and assessment development for Governance and Management of Quality, Enhancement, Evaluation and Review;
- Drafted a model and approach for External Authentication, and delivered briefings nationwide to potential EAs on behalf of the 16 ETBs;
- Developed sectoral exemplar reference material -
  - Assessment Procedures Reference Framework;
  - Quality Assurance Governance Handbook;

- Hosted an ETBI/QQI Collaborative Conference examining the QQI Assessment Green Paper;
- Drafted a conceptual model for shareable curriculum and collaborative programme development, with direction towards devolved responsibility for the ETBs  or  de submissions on behalf of the sector to
  - To QQI on QQI Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and Learning;
  - To Oireachtas Committee on Education on proposed amendments to Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012;
  - To Oireachtas Committee on Education on uptake of Apprenticeships and Traineeships.

## Professional Development

ETBI supported ETBs in the implementation of required actions under three goals of the FET Professional Development Strategy and Action Plan for Education. ETBI also influenced and agreed key actions with the sector as appropriate and reported to the National Steering Group for Professional Development.

ETBI worked to enhance ETB understanding of the new PD model, strategic FET PD priorities and staff development plans.

ETBI reviewed sectoral PD policies and relevant DES circulars prior to the development of appropriate sectoral consultation papers, with a view to streamlining and developing coherence of professional development across the sector.

Sectoral consultation papers were produced, and submitted to the DFET for agreed recommendations:

- Draft Further Education and Training Professional Development Framework;
- Access to Professional Development;
- Local Professional Development Planning Process.

ETBI worked to embed effective co-ordination of PD activity, resulting in an enhanced communication flow to ETBs.

An ETBI PD network was established, which submitted papers to and consulted with Directors of Further Education and specific ETBs on PD initiatives as required. ETBI co-ordinated ETB recruitment to PD pilots and was actively engaged as a member of various national oversight committees, including providers of PD pilots.

ETBI produced and submitted a Scoping Paper to SOLAS on Vocational Upskilling and Reskilling.

## Social Inclusion

ETBI considers the promotion of literacy and numeracy across the ETBs as paramount. Among the achievements during the year were:

### Research

- Research and development of Guidelines for Universal Design in FET in furtherance of the Universal Design for Learning in FET initiative;
- Research on English Language Provision and assessment for migrants, development of good practice guidelines at NFQ Levels 1-3, and development of non-accredited ESOL programmes linked to CEFRL and mapped to NFQ Levels 1-4;
- Produced *Upskilling Pathways Report – An Irish Context*;
- Research of Literacy and Numeracy Assessment at Levels 4-6 and the development of best practice guidelines at NFQ Levels 4-6.

### Development of Resources for ETBs

- Best Practice Guidelines for RPL at Levels 1-4 with particular reference to Work Based Learning;
- Integrating Literacy Policy;
- Bespoke FET Learner Data Protection and GDPR course website;
- Initial Assessment Levels 1-3 research toolkit;
- Framework for an ETB FET Learner Charter;
- Vulnerable Adult Policy and Child Protection Policy framework, and briefings delivered;
- Best Practice Guidelines for Inclusion of Learners with Intellectual disabilities.

### Sectoral Supports

- Seminar to support LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy with a Guide for Teachers, Youth Workers and Social Workers distributed to all ETBs;
- Supported the implementation of the SOLAS/NALA National Literacy Awareness Raising campaign with ETBs;
- Supported the sectoral implementation of the Migrant Integration Strategy Action and Refugee Resettlement Programme;
- Review of Levels 1-4 and the development of broad standards for language including ESOL;
- Consultation on the development of Best Practice Guidelines for Family Learning;
- Worked on enhancing governance in relation to policies and procedures for ETB FET professional associations funding applications.

## Governance and Change

### Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs

ETBI engaged extensively with DES regarding the drafting and finalisation of a sector-wide Code of Governance for ETBs. This document was published in February 2019. The work undertaken by ETBI included:

- Providing feedback to DES from stakeholders from the Reserve and the Executive side;
- Briefing the OSD, School and FET Directors Forums on the role of the new code in supporting good governance across the sector;
- Providing the CEs, Board and Audit Committee chairs on the roll-out of the new code, clarifying its place within existing legislation;
- Providing the context for the training project: DES will lead the project, with delivery provided by ETBI;
- Creating and agreeing with DES an appropriate training specification with key metrics to measure outcomes;
- Completing a procurement process to select an appropriately skilled trainer to create and deliver a tailored training programme. This will conclude in Q3 of 2020. The training will be targeted at the key leadership positions within the ETB Sector –
  - Chief Executives
  - Board Members
  - Board Chairs
  - Directors
  - Chairs of Audit Committees
  - Chairs of Finance Committees.

### ETB Financial Statement development

A financial reporting template was finalised in consultation with DES and the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General.

### Education Shared Business Services (ESBS)

ETBI provided support in a number of areas in relation to ESBS which included:

- ETBI supported DES in the implementation of Shared Services across ETBs through interaction with staff representatives on the IR Forum.
- ETBI provided support for local line management in the implementation of this Change Programme.
- ETBI participated in the Steering Committees of both Finance and Payroll Shared Services.
- ETBI engaged with ESBS and ETB staff to facilitate resolution of various issues.
- ETBI engaged with ESBS and other stakeholders on unwinding dependence on legacy systems.

## Phase II Organisation Design

ETBI assisted DES on the determination of job titles, roles and responsibilities.

ETBI also supported DES External Staff Relations section as required in discussions with staff representatives.

## Performance Measurement

ETBI supported DES in the design of a draft Oversight Agreement and Performance Delivery Agreement to be presented to CEs for clarification and/or amendment and final ratification.

ETBI supported DES and individual ETBs in agreeing the content of their individual ETB/DES Agreements.

ETBI provided support to ETBs in understanding their responsibilities under the agreements and assisted them in meeting the targets set.

## Youth Services

ETBI liaised with DCYA and the various stakeholders in relation to the draft SLA for Youth Services in ETBs.

ETBI established a team (two Grade VII officers) to provide administrative support to Youth Officers across the ETB sector (commencement date 8 July 2019);

- The main focus of this unit will be to provide supports to ensure a consistent approach to how Youth Grants are administered by ETBs;
- The work will include specific supports such as the identification and creation of templates and checklists for ETBs. Additionally, a help desk support will be made available to Youth Officers.

## Apprenticeship services on behalf of SOLAS

ETBI supported ETBs in providing apprenticeship services on behalf of SOLAS and as collaborating providers in the provision of pre-2016 apprenticeships.

- A working group was established to coordinate and facilitate a review of the SLA between SOLAS and ETBs;
- Subject advisory groups were established;
- Programme Boards were established for Pre-2016 Apprenticeships.

## Circulars and Guidance

ETBI assisted DES in development of Human Resource circulars appropriate to the ETB sector. ETBI and DES also collaborated in producing a Primary Schools Governance manual for the ETB Community National Schools.

The governance arrangements in ETBs are different in many respects from non-ETB schools and centres and it is important that all relevant circulars are consistent with ETB structures.

## Submissions to Committees

### Submissions and presentations to Government Bodies and Committees

A number of papers were submitted by ETBI and presentations made to various government bodies and committees setting out the sectoral views concerning particular pressing issues. These included:

Directorate(s)	Nature of submission	Submitted to
<b>Schools</b>	1. History and Geography in the Junior Cycle Curriculum	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
	2. Proposed commencement of Sections 62 and 63 of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act, 2018	Department of Education and Skills
	3. The Current Use of Reduced Timetables	Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills
<b>Schools and FET</b>	4. Progression of Travellers from Primary to Secondary and Third-Level Education	Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills
<b>FET</b>	5. Proposed amendments to the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012	Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills
	6. Uptake of Apprenticeships and Traineeships	Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills
	7. Generic and transversal skills module pool in the Common Awards System	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
	8. QQI Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and Learning	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
	9. Status of non-teaching staff in schools	Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills
<b>OSD</b>	10. Department of Education and Skills Strategy Statement 2019-2021	Department of Education and Skills



## Organisation Support & Development

### Human and Industrial Relations

#### Supports to ETBs

ETBI provides assistance and advice to ETBs on the practical application and implementation of nationally agreed policies and procedures emanating from the ETBI/Unions Consultative Forum and circulars under the remit of the Teachers Conciliation Council and the ETBI IR Forum. A repository has been created of clarification and advisory documents issued to ETBs. This is now the first port of call for any ETB dealing with HR/IR issues.

The HR & IR Group and its sub-groups have been engaged throughout the year in a variety of projects, including:

- Working with ESBS on issues relating to the Payroll Shared Services project;
- Issuing recommended practice guidance in relation to -
  - Sequencing of Filling Teaching Posts/Hours;
  - Transfers/redeployments;
  - Pensions;
  - Promotion campaign for the Recruitment of Teachers to the ETB sector;
  - Liaising with and building relationships with National Shared Services Office (Pensions).
- Work on the development of a HR Operations Guide for the sector has progressed significantly –
  - Working Group A: Annual Leave/ Statutory Annual Leave/ Public Holiday Entitlements/ Work Share/ Shorter Working Year/ Job-share
  - Working Group B: Sick Leave/ Study Leave/ OHS/ Employee Assistance
  - Working Group C: Maternity Protection Entitlements/ Adoptive Leave Entitlements/ Remote Working/ Lone Working/ E-working
  - Working Group D: Paternity Leave Scheme/ Force Majeure Leave/ Parental Leave/ Carer's Leave.

#### IR Sectoral Representation

The issue of tutor terms and conditions of employments is currently the subject of conciliation under the auspices of the WRC. It is expected that this issue will conclude in the short to medium term.

ETBI represents the ETB sector at various levels and through various forums and concluded a number of key pieces of work, including:

- TCC, including associated subcommittees –
  - An Appeals Procedure for Principal and Deputy Principal Appointments. Agreement was reached on the final text of the Appeal Procedure in March 2019, and the document was submitted to the DES for action/ implementation.

- IR Forum -
  - Acting-up Arrangements for staff other than teachers and SNAs – a CL was published in October 2018;
  - A draft CL on the implementation of an Assault Leave Scheme for staff other than teachers and SNAs was issued to the staff side for consideration in March 2019;
  - DES agreed in principle to a Scheme of Leave for living donors, the draft CL yet to issue;
  - Marital Breakdown Leave (1½ days) – DES has confirmed to ETBs the entitlement to such leave for former SOLAS staff on a personal-to-holder basis;
  - Access to Health Screening – DES has confirmed to ETBs the entitlement to such screening for former SOLAS staff on a personal-to-holder basis;
  - Terms and conditions of employment for Regional Skills Co-Ordinators were finalised.
  - A range of issues continue to be negotiated on an ongoing basis.

## Development and Interpretation of Circulars

ETBI assisted, supported and consulted with DES in the production and interpretation of a large number of HR circulars. These included, *inter alia*:

- Recruitment of ETB staff other than teachers and SNAs (draft);
- Revision of salaries;
- Acting-up arrangements for staff other than teachers and SNAs;
- Home School Liaison Review;
- Voluntary Search and Rescue;
- Brief Absences (draft);
- Procedures for Suspension and Dismissal of Principals of Community National Schools;
- Supplementary Assignment Arrangements for Special Needs Assistants;
- Revisions to the Career Break Scheme for Special Needs Assistants;
- Teacher Sharing Scheme;
- Recruitment and Promotion and Leadership for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary Schools (draft);
- Recruitment and Promotion and Leadership for Registered Teachers in Recognised Post-Primary Schools (draft);
- Seniority and Recruitment and Appointment Procedures for Special Needs Assistants;
- Assault leave for staff other than teachers and SNAs.

## Pensions

ETBI co-ordinates and supports the operation of the Pensions Task Group. The Group considers relevant pensions matters and consults with the DES Pensions Unit to provide guidance to the sector on these issues. The Group also responds to specific pension queries. These queries and responses are subsequently anonymised and circulated to practitioners in the sector to share learning and improve consistency of approach.

The following work has also been completed during the year:

- Ill Health Retirement documents have been reviewed, updated and re-published on ETBI's website;
- The pensions section of the ETBI website has been updated and includes Circular Letters, Guidance Notes, etc.

A Working Group was established to work with the National Shared Services Office regarding the payment of pension increases to ETB pensioners and other on-going operational matters, and significant progress has been made in this regard.

### Appeal Board Secretariat

ETBI operates the Appeal Board Secretariat with regard to Post of Responsibility appeals in the ETB sector. Information gathered from appeal determinations helps to inform improved practice in the sector, and the production of guidance and advices aimed at reducing the number of appeals in the sector.

The appeals process:

- Assists in mitigating risk and expensive claims, whether via State IR machinery or civil claims, and potential reputational damage;
- Identifies where sectoral gaps may exist, and where upskilling and training may need to be provided for;
- Helps resolve matters within the sector and mitigates the risk of escalation to national fora such as the TCC.

37 appeals were received and processed in the course of the year, 27 of which were rejected, eight upheld and two withdrawn.

### Data Gathering

Throughout the year, ETBI gathered and collated sectoral data on behalf of stakeholders, including:

- Pensions – Retirements under interim arrangements; Membership of Pension Schemes (DES);
- PAYE Modernisation Readiness (DES).

## Information & Communications Technology

### Training & Upskilling

ETBI and SOLAS hosted a joint TEL Supports Information Seminar, the purpose of which was to:

- Inform ETB FET staff of the resources and materials available to both FET staff (CPD) and the FET learner;
- Raise awareness of the Adobe Licenses purchased by SOLAS for the FET learners and staff of ETBs. To date approximately 4,500 licenses have been allotted on this scheme. That equates to a broadly approximate saving of circa €2.5m across the sector.

A process to identify required ancillary ICT skillsets has commenced, with a view to making relevant CPD available to ICT staff. A multi-year programme is being devised with a view to achieving internationally recognised certifications in identified areas.

### Policy Development

The ICT Support Officer in conjunction with the ICT Group have identified the core ICT policies required by the sector. These policies will be developed in two main tranches. The ICT Support Officer and the ICT policy sub-group are in the process of going to the market to procure the necessary services to develop certain critical policies. It is envisaged that these policies will facilitate ETB alignment to industry best practice.

The policies for immediate consideration are a Security/Cyber Security Policy and an Acceptable Use policy for end-users. It is anticipated that a “parent policy” would then inform a range of sub-policies, such as Electronic Communication, Social Media, BYOD (Bring Your Own Device), Third Party Access, etc. The initial batch of policies are to be considered by ICT Group for end of Q3 2019.

All remaining policies are to be developed in tranches throughout 2019/2020.

### Software Register

A Software Register has been created on the ICT Group SharePoint to gather details of the different software packages in place/in use across the ETB sector. The collation of this data is nearing completion and will be analysed to establish:

- Common applications in use;
- Applications where collaboration across ETBs can be increased;
- Possible applications that might benefit from shared procurement.

### Business Continuity & SLA

A BCP sub-group was established to consider the broader area of BCP to identify the key business processes throughout the sector and to eventually produce a disaster recovery plan.

A sector-wide ICT asset register of hardware and software ownership is currently under review and a sub-group is currently engaged in investigating the viability of a sector-wide SLA that could be used for the majority of ETB suppliers.

## SOLAS/ETB Migration

A technical working group was established to re-prioritise the migration of all legacy SOLAS networks and infrastructure that remains in use in some ETBs. This work is expected to be completed in the short term.

## Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular Letter & Procurement

ETBI has fully engaged with the sector around the provisions of DPER CL 02/2016, which sets out the procurement standards in the acquisition of ICT across the public service. All ETBs submitted their Start of Year summary reports of total planned ICT-related expenditure for 2018 in compliance with DPER CL 02/2016. The submissions were recommended by the ICT Steering Group for DES approval. ICT staff at ETBI are undertaking a project to create workflows around DPER CL 02/2016 approval to streamline and expedite the process.

A number of procurement competitions were facilitated and supported by ETBI, including:

- Contracts awarded to Datapac and PC Peripherals – drawdown of devices to date is valued at €800,000;
- DES Framework for Procurement of Projectors and Interactive Display units;
- OGP/ICT Category Council Framework for PCs/Laptops.

## Video Conferencing

ETBI ICT is currently investigating the provision of improved video technology to enable greater and easier use of online meetings, web conferencing and webinars. To this end, ETBI has tested a prospective solution and plans to install it as soon as possible.

## Invest to Save

Work has commenced on creating a new framework for a Student Management Information System. A strategic project team has conducted a scoping exercise for the project and there is ongoing engagement with DGOU and in turn DPER in this regard. EPS is providing procurement support.

To ensure the achievement of optimum results, the ETBI ICT Department has:

- Conducted focus groups composed of system practitioners, i.e. principals, deputy principals and school secretaries to comprehend and map the requirements of any new system;
- The ICT Support Officer and the FET Systems Manager Co-ordinator are currently investigating whether any potential overlap exists between the current SMIS and PLSS, with a view to streamlining the system functionality in any new framework.

The VOIP project, with the support of PMO and DGOU at DES, is now at pilot basis/proof of concept stage, with Cavan and Monaghan ETB taking the lead. It is aimed that the learning from this initial roll-out will inform the development of a tender for a sector-wide roll-out.

## System Development

Two websites were developed for use by learners across ETBs.

- The ICT Unit designed and developed a new website for a course on Data Protection for FET students ([www.dataprotectionforfet.ie](http://www.dataprotectionforfet.ie));
- ETBI ICT developed a web form for the QA Authentication panel project, which went live in Q1 2019.

In excess of 17,000 tests in the GDPR compliance tool were undertaken by ETB and ETBI staff, with over 7,000 certifications awarded.

## ETB Legal Services Support Unit

### Reporting and Communications

To ensure that information is disseminated adequately across the sector, the LSSU reports to the various stakeholders, as follows:

- Quarterly reporting on ETBs' engagement with the legal services framework;
- LSSU information newsletters provided to ETBs, providing legal updates on the progression of relevant legislation, etc;
- Quarterly reports to DES ETB/SOLAS Project Management Office (PMO), on ETBs' progress under each of the Framework Lots.

### Legal Training and Resources

The LSSU also engages in *ad hoc* training as required by the sector, including:

- GDPR training;
- Child Protection training;
- Changes brought about by the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.

The GDPR online training and resource pack for use by all ETB employees is being updated to reflect changing caselaw and interpretation, and a number of relevant templates have been devised and issued to ETBs, including:

- School applications forms;
- School acceptance forms;
- Template data-processing agreement;
- Consent forms for photographs;
- Data Protection Policy.

A website training tool for all learners preparing for work-experience has also been created to introduce them to the principles of data protection and the requirements that will be placed on them in the workplace with respect to data privacy.

## Legal Assistance and Advices

The LSSU provides legal advices to the sector on an ongoing basis, which reduces the need for seeking external advices. Since the inception of the LSSU, in excess of 350 legal queries have been resolved across 26 different areas, equating to approximately 550 hours. The Unit has also dealt with a range of projects at the request of the sector, ETBI and DES, amounting to approximately 900 hours between August 2017 and the end of March 2019. The LSSU also reviews sectoral policies to ensure consistency with legislation and circulars. Overall total savings to the sector based on a median hourly rate have been estimated at circa €360,000.

## Legal Service Procurement

The LSSU provides ongoing assistance to ETBs in the completion and finalisation of SRFTs. In consultation with the ETBs, the LSSU has refined the SRFTs to better meet the needs of the sector and to reflect changes in legislation.

The Unit also engages in ongoing collaboration with the OGP's Legal Procurement Department to provide advice about the procurement of legal services available under public sector frameworks that may not be available under the current ETB Frameworks.

The LSSU monitors the use and status of engagement with the Framework by each ETB through a log maintained in real-time by the Unit. The framework is in seven lots, as follows:

- Property;
- Commercial and Corporate;
- Employment;
- FOI and DP Regulation;
- Child Protection;
- Criminal Defence.

The LSSU also provides supports for the ETBs in their use of the Direct Drawdown process. This occurs where urgent external legal services are required by an ETB but where a Framework Lot is not yet operational for use by that particular ETB.

## **Procurement and Public Sector Reform**

### **Procurement Projects**

Following the compilation of a plan by a working group in early 2018 which identified projects that would support and facilitate ETBs in becoming compliant with procurement regulation, the following projects were supported during the year:

- Procurement of bus services;
- Canteen Services Procurement Guide and accompanying market engagement strategy;
- Facilities management and buildings maintenance expert SRFT.

The key role played by both the OGP and EPS was significant and reflected the strong working relationship built between all stakeholders.

### **Sectoral Representation**

Given the size of the ETB sector, and the nature and extent of goods and services required, it is important that ETBI represents their interests at both a local and national level. ETBI has represented ETBs throughout the year on the following networks:

- Education Sector Procurement Network;
- Marketing Print and Stationery Category Council;
- Payments in Schools Steering Group;
- ICT Category Council;
- Facilities Management Category Council.

The PSR Manager represented the sector and made a presentation on the various ICT devices initiatives at the OGP ICT Procurement Conference in Dublin Castle in April 2019.

The work led by the PSR Unit was shortlisted for five national procurement awards in 2018.

### **Upskilling and Training**

Significant work has been done by the PSR Unit in upskilling and training key ETB procurement personnel. The ETBI/UCC Certificate in Procurement Management (NFQ SP Level 8) commenced in 2018 and the first cohort of ETB personnel to engage in this programme completed it in May 2019. The Certificate is an innovative programme incorporating a blended learning model, with ETBI-based lectures and on-line tutorials. This programme is a major initiative in fully professionalising the delivery of procurement services across ETBs.



The Unit has also been running a number of Continuing Professional Development type courses, on the themes of:

- EU Directives and public procurement compliance;
- Using the ETB suite of tender templates;
- Developing frameworks;
- Using E-Tenders;
- Developing specifications.

Additionally, the ETB Procurement Network met on a number of occasions to discuss strategic and operational issues. Representatives of each ETB attend, and this facilitates the sharing and embedding of good practice.


### ETB Procurement Compliance

To support ETBs in identifying, managing and delivering on their procurement responsibilities, a template Multi-Annual Corporate Procurement Plan was developed, underpinned by analysis of expenditure across the sector. This plan will assist ETBs to achieve improved procurement outcomes.

The development of the plan drew on expertise from across the ETB sector, with strong collaboration between the significant stakeholder groups. Following the necessary approvals, the plan was formally launched at the Corporate Procurement Planning and Compliance Conference in April 2019.

ETBs will be requested to submit their CPPs and MAPPs to the PSR Unit by September 2019 for sectoral collation and subsequent submission to EPS and OGP.

A dedicated procurement best practice SharePoint for ETB procurement personnel was established, in addition to the development of a Procurement Compliance section on the ETBI website which is available to all ETB personnel. This provides, *inter alia*:

- Policy and procedures;
- National and international best practice;
- Templates and guidance documents;
- Sharing of  and tender specifications.

## **Finance**

### **Procedures Manuals**

The ETBI Finance Group continues to work to develop and embed good practice across the sector. In this regard, significant work has been done in the development of Procedures manuals and Guidelines for the sector to ensure high standards are set and uniform practices applied.

### **Shared Services**

The ETBI Finance Group has continued to engage fully and constructively with ESBS in relation to all their projects and initiatives, including:

- Implementation of Learner Payments Payroll System for all ETB learners;
- Payroll Shared Service;
- Finance Shared Service.

### **ETB Financial Statements**

A sub-group of the Finance Group worked with DES and the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General to develop a revised template for the annual ETB financial statements. Additionally, engagement has been ongoing with DES around clarifying specific aspects of the report.

### **Tax Compliance**

The Finance Group has created linkages with the Revenue Commissioners in relation to various aspects of tax compliance. All such advices received are circulated around the sector.

### **SOLAS**

The Finance Group has continued to work proactively with SOLAS around their reporting requirements. Changes to the reporting required have been agreed and steps are being taken to deliver reports on a timely basis.



# Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in Ireland



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