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Introduction

The Adult Education Guidance Initiative (hereafter referred to as 'AEGI') was established on a 'pilot' basis in 2000 in response to [Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education \(2000\)](#). *Learning for Life* which describes 'guidance' as referring to 'a range of activities designed to assist people to make choices about their lives and to make transitions consequent upon those choices.' The AEGI offered free and confidential Guidance and Information Services to adults, including impartial adult educational information, one-to-one guidance and group guidance, to help people make informed educational, career and life choices.

From 2000 – 2007 the AEGI evolved through 4 'Pilot Phases' from 11 local services based in the Vocational Education Committee (main providers of Adult and Literacy Education, VECs) to 39 local VEC based AEGIs.

The AEGI had National Coordination support from NCGE through the 'pilot phases', developing an adaptive, professional and accountable model of Adult Guidance and Information delivery.

Following significant developments and the incorporation of 'Adult Education' in to 'Further Education and Training' along with the establishment of SOLAS and the amalgamation of the 37 VECs to 16 Education and Training Boards, the AEGI became more usually referred to as the Adult Education Guidance Services (hereafter referred to AEGS) and are housed in the local ETB.

As the ETB AEGS operate within the ETB Further Education and Training (FET) sector, the following 2012 DES AEGI Operational guidelines remain in place pending the development of a nationally agreed Guidance Strategy in FET.

Per the [AEGI Operational Guidelines \(2012\)](#), the overall aim of the AEGI is:

To offer a guidance service to adults which includes impartial adult education information, one-to-one guidance and group guidance, which will help people to make informed educational, career and life choices.

The AEGI is based on an integrated model of adult educational guidance counselling which is:

- Inclusive of the pre-entry, entry, ongoing and pre-exit stages
- Inclusive of personal, educational and vocational guidance
- Working in partnership at local level, meeting a spectrum of guidance needs of the target groups, employing a range of methodologies including information provision, one-to-one guidance, group guidance and outreach provision
- Based within ETBs

Guidance is a key aspect of further education programmes and should be available at all stages including pre-entry and pre-exit on an integrated basis. Building on the AEGI model, individual ETB Adult Education Guidance Services (ETB AEGS) provide personal, educational and vocational guidance which facilitates adults and learners to make informed decisions (for example, about course choice and certification if required, progression plans, recognition of prior learning, etc). ETB AEGS provide ongoing guidance which may also support the learner's motivation to continue with a programme, especially where previous educational experiences may have been negative.

NCGE co-ordinated the development of the AEGI on behalf of the Department of Education and now supports the ETB AEGS on behalf of SOLAS. The ETB AEGS is a Department / SOLAS funded service which provides quality educational guidance services for adults.

For more information and guidelines in relation to the AEGI:

- [AEGI Operational Guidelines](#)
- [Guidelines for the Integration of Contracted Guidance Staff within the Adult Educational Guidance Initiative \(AEGI\)](#)
- [Guidelines on the Provision of Adult Educational Guidance Services to clients aged between 16 and 17 years old.](#)

The AEGI service, now known locally as the ETB Adult Educational Guidance Service (ETB AEGS) offer impartial information on local, regional and national adult education which is available to the general public, while only those within the DES target groups are eligible for one-to-one guidance meetings. The services continue to be free and confidential.

To support the development of good practice in adult guidance, NCGE co-ordinates and provides a Continuing Professional Development programme for the ETB AEGS Guidance Counsellor Co-Ordinators, Guidance Counsellors and Guidance Information Officers bi-annually. This relates specifically to the ETB AEGS guidance programme.

The purpose of this resource is to provide information that informs several specific principles of service delivery for ETB Adult Education Guidance Service staff, further to the resources outlined above.

The information below had previously been available as articles on the NCGE FET Guidance Handbook. Further articles previously available on this since-closed area of the NCGE website are now available under the FET section of ncge.ie/resources.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

NCGE designs and organises continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for guidance staff working in the FET sector. These include guidance co-ordinators, guidance counsellors and guidance information officers and other guidance staff based in FET

NCGE CPD programmes for FET guidance staff aims to:

- Offer a balance between theory and practice
- Provide opportunities to gain, develop and renew skills
- Develop effective learning and delivery methods within a lifelong and life-wide context
- Provide opportunities to model best practice in delivery and presentation skills
- Provide opportunities to actively participate in an encouraging environment
- Provide opportunities for practitioners to network and share expertise
- Provide a space for reflection on practice
- Provide a forum for NCGE and the FET Guidance Services to develop models of good practice which inform policy.

Provision of CPD

NCGE provides CPD using a blended learning approach with online communication, pre-workshop activities and attendance at workshops. NCGE provides webinars with national and international experts in guidance providing, which can be attended by FET Guidance practitioners

Guidance Counselling Supervision

Supervision can be viewed as an integral part of continuing professional development. It provides a mechanism of support for guidance counsellors and can play a key role in 'self-care'. Supervision may take place on a 'one to one' level or in a group context.

There are several reasons why it is important for guidance counsellors to have regular supervision:

Ethical requirement – Professional bodies, such as the Institute of Guidance Counsellors and AEGAI strongly recommend supervision as an integral part of the professional practice of members;

The Department of Education recognises the role of supervision in ensuring good practice and thus requires guidance counsellors working in the AEGI service to attend either individual or group supervision for at least two hours per month; PLC guidance counsellors can access supervision through the DES funded guidance counselling supervision programme for post primary schools.

Supervision helps ensure accountability in relation to guidance counsellor's one to one work with clients;

Self-care - It provides support to practitioners in relation to the management of client issues.

Quality assurance - Supervision is a way of monitoring and evaluating our practice so as to maintain the quality and standards of the service we provide;

Supervision can be provided on a one to one or group basis. Supervision must be provided by a supervisor accredited by a suitable organisation.

For example IACP: <http://www.irish-counselling.ie/infosheet12.htm> gives a list of IACP accredited supervisors by geographical location.

Policy and Practice Guidelines

National Policy on guidance within the FET Sector is determined by the Department of Education.

The **DES Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019** details the development of the Further Education and training sector in Ireland.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Education-and-Training-Strategy-2014-2019.pdf>

Section 10 Guidance and FET (pages 112-114) outlines the need for an integrated FET guidance approach and that:

'a FET Guidance Service ought build on current AEGI integrated guidance counselling aims; to offer a guidance service to adults and young people over the age of 16 who have left post primary school early, which includes impartial adult education information, one-to-one guidance and group guidance, which will help people to make informed educational, career and life choices'

The building blocks of an integrated guidance strategy for the FET sector should include:

- 1. Development of national referral protocols between Adult Guidance Services and DSP and other national agencies – HSE, disability services etc.*
- 2. Widening of the remit of the Adult Educational Guidance Services to become the Adult Guidance and Information Services for the FET sector and general public, providing quality impartial education and career/vocational information and quality guidance provision through one-to-one guidance, group guidance and outreach provision*
- 3. The Adult Guidance Service would develop and ensure collaboration with PLC-based guidance provision and will include those guidance counsellors who are currently working within and across other ETB programmes.*
- 4. All guidance staff employed by ETBs, outside of the current AEGI and PLC structure, would be linked to the adult guidance service to ensure quality assurance of service, reporting mechanisms and access to national supports and continuous professional development programmes.*
- 5. Implementation of a national quality assurance system for the guidance services based on national and EU good practice and guidelines.*
- 6. A national advisory committee of representatives from DES/SOLAS/NCGE/ETBI and other relevant stakeholders to ensure a national approach to the guidance provision within the FET sector.*

The DES Programme Recognition Framework (2016) states clearly the requirements of the Department for those who wish to be employed in the education and training sector as guidance counsellors.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Programme-Recognition-Framework-Guidance-Counselling.pdf>

Guidance is defined in the context of adult guidance, i.e. for those over the age of 18 years.

In this adult guidance context i.e. The AEGS, guidance is defined as facilitating people “...to manage their own educational, training, occupational, personal, social, and life choices so that they reach

their full potential and contribute to the development of a better society” (National Guidance Forum, 2007; pg. 6).

Activities relating to the work of the guidance counsellor in all service settings include the following:

- Designing, delivering and evaluating guidance learning and developmental programmes relating to personal and social, educational and career development for individual, group and classroom settings
- Developing effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies for the guidance class
- Providing individual and group counselling to facilitate personal and social, educational and career development and at moments of personal crisis
- Providing labour market, learning and career-related information through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and blended learning approaches
- Planning and organising workplace learning and establishing links with the wider business community, agencies and voluntary sector
- Using psychometric tests (i.e. ability and aptitude tests and career interest inventories) to facilitate career decision-making and personal development, and to support learning and educational choices
- Providing support to, and working in collaboration with, school and ETB management and staff in the planning, leading, delivery, review and evaluation of the guidance service/programme and the whole school guidance plan
- Working with parents (as appropriate) and referral agencies in facilitating the personal and social, educational and career development of students and service users
- Referring students and service users to external agencies and professionals, as appropriate
- Establishing close ties with feeder schools, where appropriate, and with centres of further education and training and higher education

In 2017 the Department of Education and Skills began the process of an overarching review of guidance services within the education and training sector. The outcomes of this Review will inform the further developments of the FET Guidance Strategy.

Departmental Circulars:

[Circular 70/04 – Adult Educational Guidance Counsellors and Co-ordinators](#)

[Circular 0015 / 2007 Adult Guidance Information officers](#)

The allocation of guidance hours within the PLC schools is outlined in the Circular:

https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0012_2017.pdf

Guidance Service Guidelines:

Until the development of the FET Guidance Strategy, DES guidelines continue to inform practice and delivery of service

http://www.ncge.ie/uploads/AEGI_Operational_Guidelines_2012_FINAL.pdf

[Minimum supervision requirements for AEGI staff](#)

SOLAS

SOLAS (An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna) is the Further Education and Training Authority operating under the aegis of the Department of Education. It co-ordinates and funds the wide range of training and further education programmes around the country. SOLAS was established to integrate the Further Education and Training Sector in Ireland and give strategic direction to that sector. The delivery of Further Education and Training is the responsibility of 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs). Guidance in Further Education and Training is informed by the publication, Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019. Section 10 of this publication, entitled Guidance and FET, looks at guidance counselling policy as well as current guidance practice pertaining to the FET sector.

<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Further-Educatio...>

Strategic Guidance Service Planning

Strategic planning asks us to consider:

- where we are now;
- where we want to go over the next number of years and
- how we are going to get there.

Strategic planning is really about how an organisation defines its direction and makes decisions about the resources it is going to allocate achieving its aims.

Strategic planning is a key element of an organisation's effectiveness. It sets out to ensure that a Service is meeting the needs of its Service users. The guidance plan for an FET Guidance Service must work within the remit of its managing agency e.g. ETB. It is an intrinsic part of the managing agency's strategic plan.

As in all other strategic plans, the outlook is for the coming three to five-year period. From this larger plan, the Service may wish to develop a one-year operational plan. This operational plan can have much more specific goals. Plans should always have some in-built flexibility, in order to take into account any changes that may arise.

The following represent an example of stakeholders, who are likely to be involved in the development of an FET Guidance Service plan:

- Adult Educational Guidance Service management and staff;
- Guidance counsellors and adult guidance information officers;
- Guidance staff based in the wider ETB
- Clients;
- Local partners and other key stakeholders;
- Appropriate statutory or funding agencies;
- Course / programme providers.

Information from stakeholders can be obtained through consultation or surveys or through analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.

Using qualitative and quantitative data as a strategic management tool can provide invaluable information to guide planning as follows:

Quantitative data available from the Adult Guidance Management System – AGMS - which includes client numbers, referrals, staff time, general public queries

Qualitative data available via the AGMS reports including issues and challenges, gaps in provision, best practice, access and social inclusion, networks and outreach, case studies

Client feedback; conducting client feedback surveys can provide valuable information on client expectations & satisfaction, accessibility of the Service, quality of the resources and information available, improvements needed etc

CPD needs of staff – conduct a staff training needs analysis and evaluation of CPD attended.

Communications – consider the communications and processes within the Service, between management/staff/clients.

Delivering the Guidance Service

To date the Adult Educational Guidance Services based within the former VECs operated based on the guidelines laid out in the DES Operational Guidelines 2012.

https://www.ncge.ie/sites/default/files/ncge/uploads/AEGI_Operational_Gu...

These guidelines stated that the overall aim of the AEGI is:

To offer a guidance service to adults which includes impartial adult education information, one-to-one guidance and group guidance, which will help people to make informed educational, career and life choices.

The AEGI is based on an integrated model of adult educational guidance counselling which is:

- inclusive of the pre-entry, entry, ongoing and pre-exit stages
- is inclusive of personal, educational and vocational guidance;
- working in partnership at local level, meeting a spectrum of guidance needs of the target groups, employing a range of methodologies including information provision, one-to-one guidance, group guidance and outreach provision;
- based within the VECs/other managing providers;

Guidance is a key aspect of further education programmes and should be available at all stages including pre-entry and pre-exit on an integrated basis. Under the AEGI, individual AEG Services (AEGS) provide personal, educational and vocational guidance which supports learners to make informed decisions (for example, about course choice and certification if required, progression plans, recognition of prior learning, etc). AEGS provide ongoing guidance which also supports the learner's motivation to continue with a programme, especially where previous educational experiences may have been negative.

All AEGS should be offered free-of-charge to any person who is in one of the target groups identified.

Guidance provision in an FET Guidance Service is based on the needs of the clients / adult learners. This provision can take place in the offices / information centre of the Guidance service itself or via outreach to adult education / community education / training centres.

We all recognise how important first impressions are and how much we are influenced by the environments we find ourselves in. A guidance environment, which is pleasant and welcoming, will create a positive climate in which to build our relationships with clients. Bright and well organised public spaces, comfortable meeting rooms and well-presented facilities will enhance the image of the Service and demonstrate respect for our clients. Being conscious of safety in our working practices will help ensure protection for our clients and ourselves

Service delivery can include **Provision of information** to clients / groups or wider information seminars / exhibitions.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance of FET guidance services should be informed by the ELGPN Guidelines on Strengthening the Quality Assurance and Evidence-Base for Lifelong Guidance.

http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/ELGPN_QAE_tool_no_5_web.pdf/

<http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-tools-no-5-strengthening-the-quality-assurance-and-evidence-base-for-lifelong-guidance-brief-summary/>

- Practitioner Competence
- Citizen / User involvement
- Service provision and improvement
- Cost benefit to individuals
- Cost benefit to government (and /or managing organisations)

Guidance Service Staff

Staff of the AEGI guidance services in FET are currently employed under the terms and conditions laid out in:

[Circular 70/04](#) and [Circular 0015/2007](#)

https://ncge.ie/sites/default/files/AEGI_Operational_Guidelines_2012_FINAL.pdf

The Physical Environment

In designing the physical environment of the Information Centre of the Guidance Service consideration should be given to:

- clear signposting (both internally and externally);
- accessible ICT facilities
- accessibility for clients with disabilities;
- comfortable and appropriate furniture, such as desks and easy chairs;
- good lighting and ventilation with a comfortable working temperature;
- attractive and well maintained appearance;

Clearly displayed information in relation to resources such as:

- software,
- media and free literature,
- photocopying facilities including copyright legislation and assurances on confidentiality and data protection legislation

A user-friendly library or resource area which has up to date information relevant to target groups and the general public

Space / spaces should be attractive and well equipped

All materials and notice boards on display are in accessible units so that clients can freely browse.

A well-equipped information technology area with workstations, PCs, web access, photocopying and video viewing facilities.

A positive environment which may be achieved through the use of:

- pictures;
- photographs;
- posters;
- video or sound recording

Group guidance sessions:

To provide a professional guidance service and confidential space for clients to engage with the guidance counsellor, the guidance environment is key.

Group guidance involves individual clients working together with a qualified guidance counsellor facilitating the session. Often, in a group context, people share quite a lot about their individual experiences, their career aspirations, together with their challenges and achievements. Therefore, it is very important that the space/environment is conducive to the aims and objectives of the group work

Information and communications technology (ICT)

Guidance Services require access to broadband and appropriate Wi-Fi to ensure provision of online information to clients.

Guidance services can consider provision of information using E-Guidance, telephone access and social media. In this context guidance services should develop a Social media policy.

Outreach

When guidance counsellors meet with their clients for 'one to one' sessions in an Outreach Centre, the space they work in should:

- be a dedicated room for the use of the Guidance Service at specific times;
- be located in a quiet area with no distractions (such as noise);
- explain the need for privacy without interruptions - consider placing a 'Do not disturb' sign on the door when the room is in use;
- be a suitable environment - suitably lit, heated and ventilated with adequate seating and ideally, a table;
- have a cupboard or storage area for the most commonly used materials and resources;
- have internet access to link into the guidance counsellor's laptop;
- be visible and integrated within the Centre

Record Keeping and Data Gathering

The Adult Guidance Management System is managed by NCGE on behalf of DES and SOLAS.

The SOLAS / NCGE AGMS database acts as a key tool in providing a quality service to adult guidance clients.

This AGMS has developed since 2004 with review and consultation with the Adult Educational Guidance Initiative staff and management.

The AGMS provides a confidential online database to assist client information management and to support review of and ensure planning for the guidance service delivery

Due to the confidential nature of the guidance service to clients, it is only the guidance staff of the former Adult Education Guidance Services that have access to the AGMS for their ETB. Management have access to the overall statistics and reports available from the data.

Professional practice is supported by the records kept.

Records should reflect interactions with clients and groups and every session, phone call, meeting and drop-in is important. Both the client's plan and progression are informed by the records. Good record keeping facilitates appropriate follow up and referral.

Accurate data supports planning of the guidance service from a local and management level and informs national planning for FET guidance services

At national level, SOLAS has access to the overall statistics to view the activities involved in the provision of guidance, number of 1-1 sessions, group sessions, information queries etc. SOLAS access the data 3 times per year in line with ETB reporting requirements. This data is collected at End May, End September and End of year.

Guidance Services provide qualitative reports through the AGMS which provide the opportunity for service self-reflection and self-evaluation. The AGMS provides a facility for services to highlight Case Studies and examples of good practice.

These reports are collated by NCGE to provide an Executive overarching report for DES / SOLAS.

NCGE makes these reports available via www.ncge.ie

Further Principles of Service Delivery

A quality guidance service is led by staff with a DES recognised qualification in guidance counselling.

- The role of the Guidance co-ordinator, as outlined in Department Circular 70/04 is to manage and supervise the work of the other guidance staff.
- The guidance service operates in the context of the wider FET programme delivery reporting within the structures of the ETB, i.e. within the management of the AEO and FET Director.
- It is the role of the Co-ordinator to liaise with course co-ordinators and education centre managers to determine the guidance provision required, whether group or 1-1, or outreach provision.
- Guidance service delivery in FET is underpinned and informed by the Codes of Principles outlined in the National Guidance Forum Quality Guidelines.
- Such principles and ethos ensure that the individual needs of clients are met and respected.

https://ncge.ie/sites/default/files/nationalguidance/documents/NGF_Quality_Report%20Final.pdf

The following represent key principles:

Accessible: Accessible to the specified target groups and without barriers in relation to learning opportunities, location, information and guidance materials;

Appropriate: to the client's needs and stage of development;

Confidential: within an ethical framework and with an awareness of legal limits within the guidance process;

Equality of opportunity: promoting and demonstrating equality of opportunity in relation to adult education with an awareness of the requirements of equality legislation;

Impartial: in order to safeguard the interests of the client;

Individual Ownership & Opportunity: provision of information on educational opportunities locally, regionally, nationally and internationally as appropriate, which best meet the client's needs.

Integrated: clients are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for their individual choices and decisions;

Quality Standards and delivery: agreed standards of delivery, professionally qualified staff, together with appropriate facilities and resources to meet the needs of the client groups;

Team Approach: adopting a team approach with education providers encourages the integration of guidance within adult education;

Transparent: The guidance process itself should be open and transparent. Guidance practitioners should explain to individuals in clear, appropriate language how they propose to work with them within the guidance process;

Complaints handling: Guidance Service providers should have a complaints procedure for clients and systems for obtaining client feedback.

The European Dimension

The EU Council resolution on better integrating lifelong guidance into lifelong learning strategies, 2008 defines guidance as a continuous process that enables citizens at any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their life paths in learning, work and other settings where it is possible to acquire and use these capacities and competences. Guidance covers a range of individual and collective activities relating to information giving, counselling, competence assessment, support, and the teaching of decision-making and career management skills.

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/council-resolution-better-integrating-lifelong-guidance-lifelong-learning>

The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN) 2008 -2015 was set up and funded by the EU Commission to support Member States to develop policies for lifelong guidance.

ELGPN published guidelines for Member States

<http://www.elgpn.eu/publications>

Guidelines for Policies and Systems Development for Lifelong Guidance A REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE EU AND FOR THE COMMISSION

<http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-tools-no-6-guidelines-for-policies-and-systems-development-for-lifelong-guidance/>

Strengthening the Quality Assurance and Evidence-Base of Lifelong Guidance

http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/ELGPN_QAE_tool_no_5_web.pdf/

http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/ELGPN_QAE_tool_no_5_web.pdf/

Designing and Implementing Policies Related to Career Management Skills (CMS)

http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/ELGPN_CMS_tool_no_4_web.pdf

To access more information regarding the EUROPEAN DIMENSION - go to Euroguidance Ireland:

<https://euroguidance.ie/useful-links>

Access to Further Education and Training for Eligible International Protection Applicants

Following the Government's decision on 26th June 2018, Ireland falls under the EU (recast) [Receptions Conditions Directive \(2013/22/EU\)](#) rendering interim measures no longer valid. This information below outlines the context, operational guidelines and eligibilities attached to this Directive in the context of delivery of guidance to adults to whom the Directive applies.

Outline

Following the Government's decision on the 26th June 2018, Ireland has now opted in to the EU (recast) Receptions Conditions Directive (2013/22/EU) and the interim measures that had been in place since 9th February 2018 giving access to the labour market for those in the protection process are no longer valid. The Directive sets out the standards for the reception of applicants for international protection.

International protection applicants who are waiting 9 months or more for a first instance recommendation from the International Protection Office will now have access to the labour market. The Directive does not apply retrospectively, it applies only to those already waiting on a first instance recommendation for 9 months or more on the date the directive comes into force (2nd July 2018), or those to apply thereafter.

Under this Directive, eligible applicants may be entitled to avail of further education and training in the same manner as Irish citizens. Eligible applicants may apply to the Minister for Justice and Equality for a labour market permission, which covers both employment and self-employment. The permission will be granted to eligible applicants for six months and will be renewable until there is a final decision on their protection application. Eligible applicants will have access to all sectors of employment, with the exception of the Civil and Public Service, An Garda Síochána, and the Irish Defence Forces.

As the Directive has now entered into force, increased access to the labour market will now be available to any individual holding labour market permission.

Access to Further Education and Training Programmes

Eligible applicants will have access to all further education and training programmes which will now include access to Apprenticeships and Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS). Access to PLC provision will be subject to the payment of the full economic fee as set out in the Department's circular letter dated 27 September 2001.

Eligibility

Eligibility to participate on these programmes on the basis of permission to access the labour market must be verified by the relevant Education and Training Board (ETB) by the production of the applicant's labour market permission letter from the Department of Justice and Equality. It should be noted that there is no right to a place on any particular programme, applications from protection applicants are assessed according to the programme guidelines in the same way as other applications. Programme Operational Guidelines With the exception of those conditions that require an applicant to hold a medical card and/or be in receipt of a Department of Employment and Social Protection (DEASP) payment (e.g. jobseekers allowance, jobseekers benefit etc.) all of the provision of the programme operational guidelines will apply to any applications received from the cohort of

eligible international protection applicants, granted permission to access the labour market as set out above and should be taken into consideration in determining applications in the usual way.

Allowances

Meal and Travel

Where participation on a programme includes the payment of meal and travel allowances, applicants will equally be entitled to these payments.

Training Allowance

As protection applicants do not have an entitlement to income support from DEASP apart from that relating to direct provision, the payment of a training allowance, in lieu of such a payment will **not apply**.

Allowances paid to apprentices during off the job phases, equivalent to wages on the job, will be paid to protection applicants recruited as apprentices by approved employers.

DEASP have indicated that protection applicants will have full access to INTREO services, including case officer engagement. It will be provided on a voluntary basis with no compulsion on eligible protection applicants to engage, given that they are not in receipt of a payment from DEASP that carried an obligation to engage in the activation process.

For this reason, access to the above FET programmes, may take place either on the basis of self-referral or on the basis of referral from DEASP.

Guidance

With the exception of those applicants referred to specific provision via INTREO under the management of a case officer, **ETBs, must in the first place, refer each eligible applicant to the Adult Guidance Service to provide support and guidance on the most suitable available FET provision to meet the needs of the applicant.**

The Department of Education and Skills is now requesting SOLAS to engage with each ETB informing them of the new arrangements on access to the labour market and to all FET programmes by eligible international protection applicants that will come into effect from 30th June 2018.