

Cork Education and Training Board

Strategy Statement 2017 – 2021



cetb

Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Chorcaí

*Cork Education and
Training Board*

A Pathway for Every Learner

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Profile of Cork Education and Training Board

Cork Education and Training Board (hereinafter referred to as Cork ETB) was established under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013 and is responsible and accountable for the proper direction and control of its functions in the Cork City and Cork County Councils' local authority areas.

The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 was passed in May 2013 to take effect from 1st July 2013. The Act provided for the dissolution of Vocational Education Committees (VECs) and for the establishment of the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) through a process involving the merger of some of the 33 existing VECs. Following the amalgamation of former County and City of Cork VECs, Cork Education and Training Board (Cork ETB) was established with responsibility for the delivery of primary, post primary and further education in line with their predecessor VECs.

The Further Education and Training Act 2013 was signed into law in July 2013. The Act established SOLAS (The Further Education and Training Authority) with responsibility for the planning, funding and co-ordination of the Further Education and Training services provided locally by ETBs. The Act also provided for the transfer of the former FÁS Training functions and staff to the newly formed ETBs.

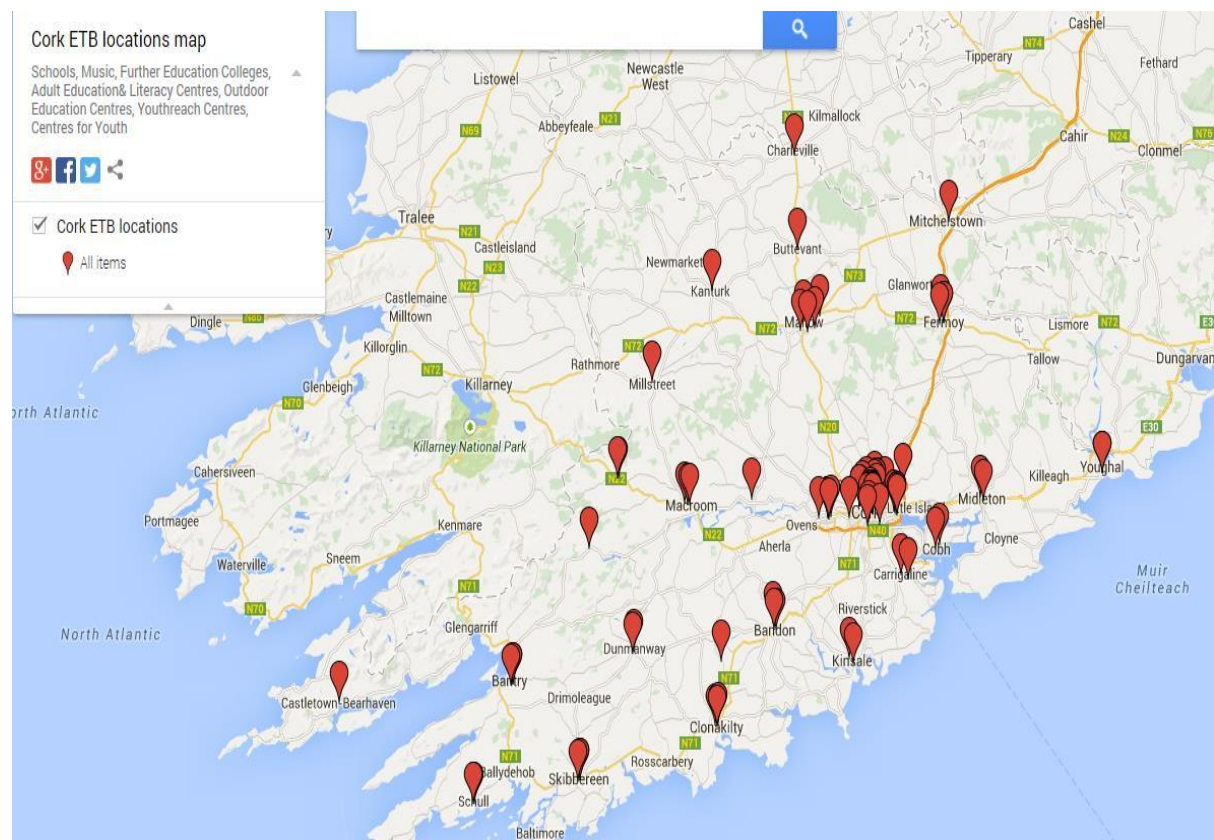
Cork ETB is the only statutory body in Cork with the responsibility to provide education and training across a broad range of services. The services provided bring challenges to the organisation when combined with the number of learners and the diversity of what the expectations of learners are. The number of learners and participants engaged in Cork ETB education, training and activities in 2017 were:

Primary Students	113
Post Primary Students	10,985
Full time FET Participants	7,529
Part time FET Participants	7,947
Community Education Participants	5,749
Adult Literacy Participants	4,353
Trainees	932
Apprentices	447
Total Learners	38,055

Cork ETB's target clients are:

- Learners in our schools, colleges, training centres and community settings
- Applicants under the various learner support schemes administered directly by Cork ETB
- Youth Service Providers
- Community Education and Training Groups
- Voluntary Community Organisations
- Communities throughout the County

Geographical Map of Cork ETB



Primary Education, Post Primary Education, Further Education and Training

The aim of our schools, colleges, training centres and our community based programmes is to provide a positive and vibrant learning environment in which our learners will be supported and challenged to reach their full potential. We are community orientated and equality based with a focus on the provision of excellent teaching and learning.

The attainment of academic achievement through excellent teaching and learning is at the core of what our schools and colleges do. However, we strive for this in an environment that is supportive and nourishing of all aspects of the learner's personal development. The celebration of individual achievement is central to this development.

Cork ETB delivers a range of supports to our education services including financial, human resource, building, ICT, governance support as well as educational planning support.

Primary Education

Cork ETB is patron of two Community National Schools (CNS). When the schools were first established, the Minister for Education and Skills was the patron but on 1st September 2016, in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of the Education Act, 1998, the patronage was transferred to Cork Education and Training Board.

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) has established a Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity Process to address the 2016 Programme for Government commitment to increase the number of multi-denominational and non-denominational schools with a view to reaching 400 by 2030.

ETBs, as statutory authorities, have responsibilities under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 to plan, provide, co-ordinate and review the provision of education in their functional areas. On this basis, the *Identification Phase* of the Schools Reconfiguration for Diversity Process, will be managed by the relevant Education and Training Board (ETB) and be based on parental demand.

Post Primary Education

Cork ETB is patron to twenty-four post primary schools and colleges. Twelve of these colleges are designated community colleges. The local catholic diocese is a trustee partner in these community colleges. Cork ETB is also co-patron with a diocese or religious order of twelve community schools in Cork. We have two Gaeltacht schools, two Gaelcholáistí and four schools with an Aonaid lán-Ghaeilge. The Aonad lán-Ghaeilge in Coláiste Choilm has an enrolment of 350 students making it larger than a significant number of post primary schools in the country.

In addition, Cork ETB provides a number of educational settings of a post primary nature to support the provision of post primary education to students who are not in the main stream provision.

Further Education and Training

Cork ETB provides a range of Further Education and Training services, both full-time and part-time, in a variety of centres and settings across the region. Full-time provision includes:

- Post Leaving Certificate courses
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Specific Skills Training
- Youthreach
- Community Training Centres
- Local Training Initiatives
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

The courses offered are designed to meet the employment and future progression requirements of a diverse cohort of learners.

Part-time FET programmes are delivered in a variety of settings and locations under a number of funding headings with specific target learner audiences:

- Back to Education Initiative
- Adult Literacy
- Adult and Community Education
- Skills Training
- Night/Evening courses
- Skills for Work

The diversity of programmes and target populations for these programmes requires Cork ETB to continuously monitor and review its delivery, engage actively with local employers and communities, to consult and be advised by employers, as well as industry groups, and other government departments and agencies, while being advised by, and taking direction from, national policy.

Colleges of Further Education

Cork ETB has four stand-alone Colleges of Further Education (PLC Colleges)

- Cork College of Commerce
- St John's College
- Coláiste Stiofáin Naofa
- Mallow College of Further Education

In addition, a PLC delivery is provided for in units attached to eight post primary schools located in:

- Kinsale
- Middleton
- Macroom
- Dunmanway

- Knocknaheeny
- Mitchelstown
- Bantry
- Cobh

Operational funding for the PLC provision is provided through the Further Education and Training budget allocation issued through SOLAS, with the staffing allocation administered through the Department of Education and Skills.

The colleges systematically review course provision, to ensure that they meet the needs of learners and are relevant to the world of work. Significant opportunities have been developed by Cork ETB and the PLC colleges to facilitate learners who wish to continue their studies and progress onto commensurate or cognate programmes in Higher Education settings, both in Ireland and abroad.

Some of the PLC colleges and centres deliver night courses that provide for both professional upskilling and hobby type engagement.

Training Centres

Cork ETB operates two training centres, Cork Training Centre in Bishopstown, Cork, which is the largest ETB training centre in the country, and the specialist BioPharma training centre in Carrigaline, Co. Cork.

Cork Training Centre provides facilities and accommodation for apprenticeships, training, traineeships, specialist skills training, amongst others, and co-ordinates and manages the training provision across the region, including training delivered by Specialist Training Providers, Community Training Centres and Local Training Initiatives, under the guidance of the Area Training Manager and the training management team. Cork Training Centre also administers apprenticeship training (off-the-job) phases delivered by Cork Institute of Technology (CIT).

The Carrigaline BioPharma training facility was established in 2007 to provide specialist programmes designed in conjunction with the pharmaceutical companies located in the Cork region.

Close relationships and engagement with industry and local businesses ensure that training programme development and delivery are designed to meet existing and emerging requirements, both for new entrants/employees into these industries and businesses, or employees already in place who require reskilling/retraining.

Youthreach Centres

Cork ETB operates twelve Youthreach Centres across the region in:

- Bandon
- Bantry
- Ballincollig

- Macroom
- Youghal
- Mallow
- Fermoy
- The Glen (Cork City)
- Mahon (Cork City)
- Knocknaheeny (Cork City)
- Dean Street (Cork City)
- Cork Learning Support Services (CLSS) (Cork City)

Youthreach is a programme designated by the Department of Education and Skills to provide education, training and work experience programmes for early school leavers aged 15 – 20, and funded under the FET budget by SOLAS. Very often characterised as a “second chance” option for young people who have left the mainstream post primary system without completing their studies there, the programmes offered in Youthreach provide young people with opportunities to identify options within adult life, and while also providing them with opportunities to acquire certification at Levels 3 and 4 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

Youthreach operates on a full-time, year-round basis and has a continuous intake policy.

Adult and Community Education Provision

Cork ETB’s Adult and Community Education service encompasses the Adult Literacy Service, Community Education service, Skills for Work, BTEI and VTOS (core) programmes. Cork ETB’s Adult and Community Education services are managed and co-ordinated on a sub-regional basis, with four planning and delivery areas aligned to the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) areas, Cork North, Cork South, Cork West and Cork City.

While the majority of the courses offered under these programmes are part-time, they are structured in a manner which facilitates access, transfer and progression onto full-time programmes, if the participants so desire. They offer a mixture of accredited/certified programmes, generally at Levels 2 to 4 of the NFQ, with some unaccredited capacity development programmes aimed at learners who have had not completed formal education.

Adult and Community Education courses are delivered in a variety of local settings, some delivery occurs in partnership with local community organisations, including Family Resource Centres, Community Partnerships, Local Development Companies, Active Retired Groups, etc., all of which allow Cork ETB to deliver programmes that meet the needs and requirements of learners in their local communities.

Cork ETB’s Adult Guidance Service provides an important assistance and advisory service for participants on Adult and Community Education Programmes, from the provision of pre-entry guidance to the identification and signposting of progression and further development links for learners completing programmes.

The Skills for Work provision managed by Cork ETB engages with local employers to identify specific education and training requirements in local areas and industries, generally at Level 2 or 3 on the NFQ, with the primary focus being to improve and enhance foundation literacy and numeracy skills amongst workers employed in these settings.

Co-operation with Other Institutions

Cork ETB, through the Co-operation with other Institutions scheme, provides support through tuition hours to a wide variety of programmes and agencies to deliver education and training courses. The main categories of services supported and delivered through this mechanism include:

- Prison Education
- Post-release education services
- Probation services
- Literacy and numeracy supports for Community Training Centres
- Youth services
- High Support units within the HSE
- Special Education services
- Music education

Youth Services

Under the Education and Training Board Act, ETBs have been given the responsibility to;

“Support the provision, co-ordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in its functional area and provide such information as may be requested by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in relation to such support.”

(Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Section 10 (1) (j))

Cork ETB engages with a number of Youth organisations to deliver Youth Services on its behalf, including:

- YMCA
- Foróige
- Youthwork Ireland Cork
- Cobh Youth Services
- Cork Simon
- Meitheal Mara
- Good Shepherd Services
- Churchfield Trust.

Cork ETB has responsibility for administering funding of over €2.5million to over 35 youth projects and services across Cork City and County.

Their work and delivery are supported and monitored by Cork ETB's Youth Officer and is overseen by a Cork ETB sub-committee which is responsible for strategic planning and monitoring.

Organisational Support

Governance

Cork ETB is governed by a Board comprising of twenty-one members representing Cork City and County Councils, staff, parents of children who are registered students who have not yet reached 18 years of age, business community and management of schools.

The Board is responsible for the compliance with all statutory obligations applicable to the ETB and for promoting the success of the ETB through good governance. The Board is supported by several Boards of Management in Cork ETB schools, colleges and education centres. It is also supported by independent Finance and Audit Committees.

Executive Support

The Organisation is underpinned by a network, spanning all non-teaching activities to support, enable and assist front line staff to focus on the experience, achievements and well-being of our learners. The hub of the administration support is located in the Board's Head Office at 21 Lavitt's Quay, Cork. This administrative network provides a range of services to the various strands of the organisation across six main functional areas:

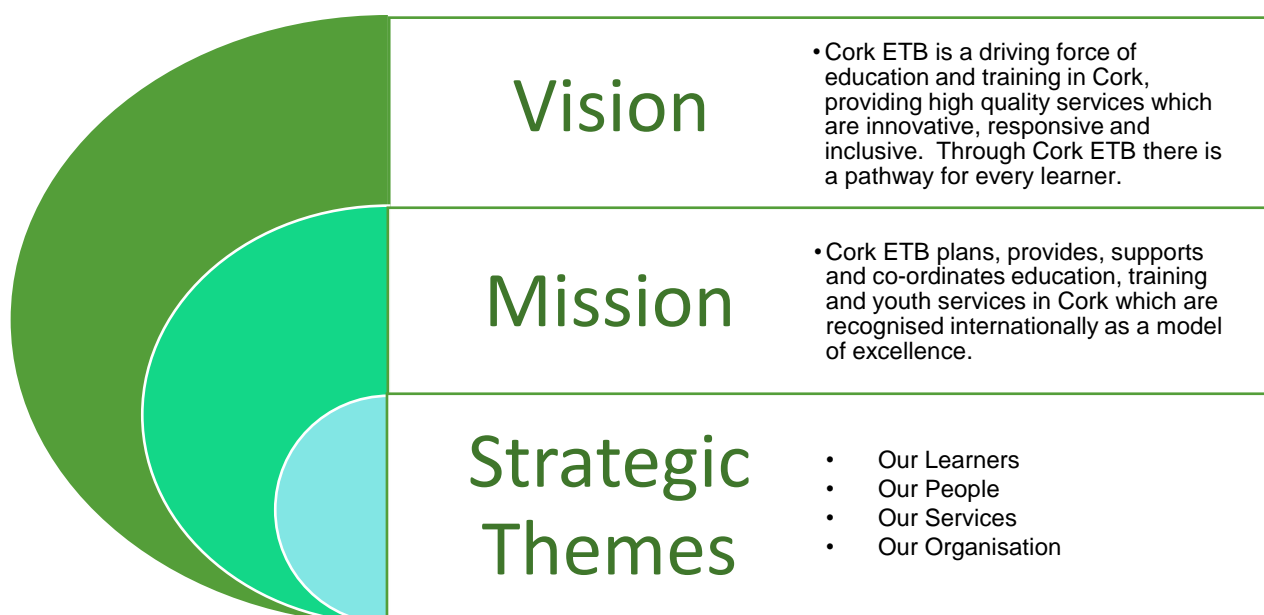
- Human Resources
- Corporate Services
- Legal and Compliance
- Capital and Procurement
- Finance
- ICT

Within these areas there is a range of expertise covering all aspects of administrative support. A significant level of corporate knowledge has been developed and accrued over time relevant to the services provided, including the legislative and regulatory framework under which ETBs operate.

Guiding Principles

Vision, Mission, Strategic Themes

In developing strategic themes, Cork ETB gave particular cognisance to the vision and mission of the organisation which was developed through a consultative process with our staff and stakeholders. Our strategic themes are to further develop our vision and mission statements for the organisation. All aspects of our strategy are underpinned by the guiding principles and values that have been identified by staff and stakeholders as being an integral part of what it means to be a part of Cork ETB and, also what Cork ETB is to stand for.



Cork ETB will always act in the best interests of learners. The following principles and values underpin our strategic thinking, planning, decision making and our everyday actions.

Guiding Principles

Prioritising the needs of learners

Delivering a high quality service

Acting with professional integrity

Doing the right thing

Treating people with dignity and respect

Being fair, open and accountable

Ensuring value for money

Operating to the highest ethical, professional, moral and legal standards.

Values

Brave

Committed

Positive

Leading

Innovative

Caring

What our Values Mean

Value	Brave	Committed	Positive	Leading	Innovative	Caring
What It Means	We put our learners needs first and are not afraid to make the hard decisions required to deliver the best possible service.	We have a clear vision and purpose with which we are fully engaged and on which we are determined to deliver.	We are optimistic and confident about our opportunities and challenges and believe we can make a positive difference to the lives of the people we serve.	We expect our people to be leaders – to have a clear vision, take the initiative, and to inspire and motivate learners and colleagues through their example.	We are focused on constant improvement and being at the forefront of change and innovation in education and training.	We adopt an inclusive and respectful approach to our learners and staff and strive to ensure that each person using our services reaches his/her potential.
We Expect Our People To:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the right call • Push the boundaries to get the best outcome • Be tenacious in pursuit of improvements for learners • Support good decisions and change bad ones • Be happy to explain our decisions • Stand up for what we believe in • Advocate for learners and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work hard • Go the extra mile • Put learners' needs first • Be persistent • Be loyal to the organisation • Support colleagues • Work as a team member • Be cooperative • Have a strong work ethic • Be focused on getting results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be optimistic • Respond positively • Be proactive • Look for opportunity and act on it • Embrace change • Deal with issues promptly • Be part of the solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a vision • Step up to the challenge • Communicate • Motivate • Encourage • Aspire • Build trust • Tell the truth • Act as a role model • Be results-oriented • Drive innovation • Influence • Collaborate • Demonstrate personal integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try new approaches • Be creative • Drive change • Be flexible • Seek to improve • Find solutions for problems • Support new ideas • Contribute positively to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with learners and colleagues • Be genuine • Be understanding • Be empathetic • Acknowledge effort • Encourage inclusivity and diversity • Be sensitive • Look out for colleagues • Listen • Treat people well • Ask for feedback • Support those who need it

Our Strategic Themes, Priorities and Actions

Consultation Process

Our strategic themes are the result of a consultation process which commenced in March 2017. In accordance with Section 27 (4) of the Education Act 2013, consultation consisted of focus groups involving board members, Principals, managers, staff within the organisation, learners, parents and business partners. An online survey was a key element of the process to ensure that a broad view was obtained in respect of identifying and refining the priorities and the actions for achieving our strategic priorities.

Strategic Themes

Our strategic plan contains four primary pillars.

1. Our Learners
2. Our People
3. Our Services
4. Our Organisation

1. Our Learners

Our aim is to provide a high quality experience for every learner.

In providing a high quality experience for every learner, cognisance has been taken of the national context within which we operate as well as the strategic plans of relevant stakeholders, in particular those of the Department of Education and Skills and SOLAS.

Cork ETB recognises that providing a high quality experience for every learner depends on the quality of relationships at the point of delivery to the learner. Fundamental to this is the quality of teaching and learning in our schools, colleges and other centres. It also depends on our ability to implement national initiatives, provide appropriate learning programmes and develop technology as a learning tool.

Please note: Dates will be inserted following consultation.

Priorities	Actions	Date
1.1 Positive and holistic learning experiences for every learner	→ We will work to promote and foster the personal development of our learners and to enhance their wellbeing as members of our learning communities	
	→ We will engage actively in the current reform DES programme (DES Action Plan) that seeks to nurture and develop the critical skills, knowledge and competencies of our learners	

	→ We will implement DES guidelines in relation to teaching and learning at all levels	
	→ We will actively work to improve results in formal school assessments and state examinations through the promotion of good learning and teaching	
	→ We will seek to actively engage our learners in both how and what they learn by promoting the use of student feedback as an integral part of our School Self-Evaluation process	
	→ We will aim to provide our learners with life skills to meet their needs as active citizens	
	→ We will expand direct and indirect support services over the lifetime of the strategic plan to support our learners	
	→ We will, in accordance with the DES priorities, improve the learning experience and learning outcomes for learners impacted by disadvantage	
	→ We will target supports for learners with special education needs to support their participation and progression within education	
	→ We will identify and develop appropriate supports and opportunities for our learners who have been identified as exceptional or talented	
1.2 Provide excellent teaching, training and learning for all	→ We will focus on the development of quality teaching and learning as the core activity of Cork ETB	
	→ We will promote the use of the School Self-Evaluation model as a method of school/college improvement	
	→ We will promote review and, where appropriate, implement the recommendations of Mór Thuairisc/WSE/MLL and School Inspection reports	

	→ We will utilise national and international research to identify and engage with best practice in building strong communities of learning	
1.3 Positive learning environments with suitable resources	→ We will continue to identify improvements to Cork ETB buildings and facilities and will develop these in line with learner and programme requirements while seeking and making available the necessary funding	
	→ We will proactively engage and negotiate with DES and SOLAS to endeavour that all necessary resources, both budgetary and staffing, are available to Cork ETB	
1.4 Commitment to technology-enhanced learning to support independent and collaborative learning	→ We will continue to review and invest in our ICT infrastructure	
	→ We will develop specific strategies to build the capacity of our schools and colleges in the use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool	
	→ We will develop and commence implementation of an ICT Strategic Plan for our Education and Training Centres taking account of National ICT Strategies in the ETB sector	
	→ We will further explore and develop opportunities made possible through the utilisation of ICT capabilities, on how to provide accessible educational opportunities for remote and hard to reach groups/categories of individuals	

2. Our People

Our aim is to recruit, engage and develop high quality professionals across all our services.

Cork ETB is an organisation that embraces diversity and challenge. Our learners and our staff are at the centre of the organisation. Meeting their needs is our first priority. The culture of the organisation, as embodied in our guiding principles and values, is only possible through the engagement and commitment of our existing staff and our ability to recruit talented people.

The diversity of the service provision means that there is a range of roles within the organisation. This requires targeted initiatives in the areas of recruitment, staff development and positive workplace environments to ensure that the organisation retains high calibre staff, develop the skills of staff while at the same time developing highly effective leaders.

We recognise establishing Cork ETB as a provider of choice for learners in Cork is only possible through positive engagement with staff who believe in the principles and values of the organisation.

Priorities	Actions	Date
2.1 To attract and recruit the best people for the organisation	→ We will, through active planning, identify the roles required within the organisation and develop targeted recruitment campaigns, with particular focus on roles where there is a supply skills deficit in available resources	
	→ We will engage proactively with tertiary educational providers to identify and develop appropriate responses to address supply skill deficits in particular roles which we advertise	
	→ We will continue to review and develop our recruitment processes and practices to ensure they are flexible and attuned to the needs of the organisation	
	→ We will further develop our short-term staff cover systems to ensure the right people are available when required for the continued delivery of our services	
2.2 To support the professional development of our people	→ We will foster a culture of professional development and support for all staff through the targeted provision of appropriate learning and development initiatives to improve and develop their knowledge and capabilities	

	→ We will nurture leadership capacity by supporting staff to avail of learning, development and mentoring programmes	
	→ Develop, within available resources, a model of support which allows for the release of staff to partake of relevant and appropriate CPD opportunities	
	→ Encourage staff to get involved with national bodies in the development and implementation of national policy initiatives and support their involvement	
	→ Develop opportunities for staff to avail of work placement opportunities for staff to avail of in Industry / business and other training / learning settings	
2.3 To provide a positive, professional and supportive work environment for all staff	→ We will support our Leaders in promoting positive staff relations through the provision of information, training and ongoing advice on key management and leadership skills	
	→ We will ensure all staff have access to an Employment Assistance Programme	
	→ We will develop an intranet system for all staff to ensure access to information by all staff	
	→ We will target specific initiatives to promote staff wellbeing and encourage the positive engagement of our staff throughout the organisation	

3. Our Services

Our aim is to deliver high quality, appropriate and relevant education and training programmes in a variety of environments and settings across primary, post primary, further education and training where high quality teaching and learning are at the centre of all activities.

Primary Schools

Our Community National Schools are multi-denominational and are founded on the principles of equality, excellence and inclusivity. We offer the full primary school programme delivered in a child centred and holistic way. We are innovative and strongly support the introduction of new elements of the curriculum such as STEM and the new language initiative. We promote a culture of growth and development in which students are encouraged to give full expression to all their talents and gifts. We offer a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to support this holistic development.

Post Primary Schools and Colleges

Our schools and colleges offer a comprehensive and responsive curricular experience, based on delivery of a full range of subjects, including languages, the humanities, arts, technologies and science, with subjects offered at different levels in both junior and senior cycles to allow students achieve at their level of ability and capability. Students are actively encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life including extra-curricular activities.

Programmes offered in our schools and colleges include -

- Junior Certificate
- Junior Certificate Schools Programme
- Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied Programme
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Further Education and Training (FET)

Further Education and Training (FET) is the provision of education and training services to a wide range of beneficiaries. The services provided range from full-time courses a year or more in duration, delivered by Cork Training Centre, PLC colleges and Youthreach Centres, to shorter part-time course options designed to meet a specific learner need, linked either to skills acquisition for employment, or the possibility of progression to further studies. The range of programmes encompassed by the further education service include:

- Post Leaving Certificate
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- Back to Education Initiative (BTEI),
- Adult Literacy,
- Intensive Adult Basic Education (ITABE)
- Community Education,
- Specific Skills Training

- Youthreach,
- Community Training Centres,
- Local Training Initiatives
- Prison Education Service
- Post Release Prison Service
- Skills for Work
- Co-operation with other institutions

The diversity of programmes and target populations for these programmes requires Cork ETB to continuously monitor and review its planning and delivery structures while increasing access for individuals, improving relevancy for employers and maintaining and increasing the quality of programmes on offer.

Cork ETB will engage and consult actively with local employers, as well as industry groups, and other government departments and agencies, to ensure that its provision is up-to-date and appropriate. These will include the Department of Social Protection, Enterprise Ireland and the Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), to ensure the development and delivery of courses across the various FET programmes that provide appropriate qualifications and opportunities for progression to employment and/or further studies.

Youth Services

Cork ETB, through a number of funded Youth Service providers, delivers a range of youth services to young people across the region under a variety of Youth programmes funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. With an annual Youth funding allocation of in excess of €2.5 million, Cork ETB's youth service aims to provide youth engagement activities outside of the formal education setting to encourage and support young people to become active within their communities, as citizens, role models and peer leaders.

Priorities	Actions	Date
3.1 Seek to develop and promote the Community National School model of primary education.	→ We will develop our existing CNS schools as models of best practice → We will engage fully and proactively in the DES primary school diversification process	
3.2 Implement and develop new initiatives in the primary school curriculum.	→ We will deliver a full and rich learning experience, fully in line with the national curriculum → We will continue to develop programmes that support the wellbeing and holistic development of each child	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → We will continue to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy → We will promote the new STEM in our CNS schools → We will implement the new language curriculum in full → We will seek to be early adaptors of the new National Digital Literacy Strategy at primary level 	
3.3 Implement and develop the new Junior Cycle at post primary level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → We will implement the new Junior Cycle programme and will engage fully in all national CPD. We will also seek to develop best practice through the sharing of best practice among our family of schools 	
3.4 Specific Curricular Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → We will continue to engage proactively with new curricular options such as the new Computer Science subject at Leaving Certificate 	
3.5 Provide courses that meet the needs of learners and industry with high levels of achievement and accreditation by learners through evidence based planning, co-ordination and review of education and FET programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Undertake regular stakeholder consultation and develop delivery of flexible FET courses 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → We will develop and implement an integrated FET planning process that ensures that the needs of local communities, learners and employers are identified and responded to in an appropriate and timely manner 	
3.6 Enhance relevant knowledge and skills for lifelong learning, personal development, progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → We will develop new and enhance existing progression schemes for all learners, both within Cork ETB and with providers of education and training in Cork and elsewhere as appropriate 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Facilitate the roll-out and development of education and training supports through the provision of online services, including 	

and employment	Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) and other ICT based systems	
	→ Promote, develop and manage the Apprenticeship programme to ensure apprenticeship training meets industry needs	

4. Our Organisation

Our aim is to enhance the profile of the organisation through the delivery of effective and efficient services to support our education and training provision.

Cork ETB is committed to the continuous review and monitoring of its structures, governance and infrastructure to ensure a culture of improvement and maximising of resources is prioritised in order to have an organisation which operates effectively and efficiently in the delivery of its services.

There are several elements that will be focused on over the lifetime of the statement, in particular new school builds, regulatory compliance, accountability, Scéim na dTeangacha Gaeilge Oifigiúla, marketing, communication and strategic partnerships.

The enhancement of the organisation's ability drive efficiencies will be driven by the staff who are central to the delivery of services. However, it will also be driven by serving, supporting and partnering with a range of stakeholders in order to enhance the profile of the organisation.

Priorities	Actions	Date
4.1 To ensure an appropriate infrastructure is developed to make the best use of available resources	→ To bring current new school building and school extension projects to completion by the earliest dates possible: Coláiste an Chraoibhín, Fermoy St. Colman's Community College, Midleton Carrigaline Education Campus Clonakilty Community College Davis College Mallow Scoil Chlíodhna, CNS, Carrigtwohill Carrigtwohill Community College St. Johns Church Building West Side Training Campus	
	→ To pursue approval for further major capital projects identified as part of the Government's 2016 to 2021 Major Capital Investment in School Building Plan	

	Carrignafoy Community College, Cobh Coachford College Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig Coláiste Ghobnatan, Baile Mhuirne	
	→ We will continue to identify priorities for new buildings and/or improvements to existing buildings and to proactively seek the necessary resources to deliver same	
	→ We will continue to review ICT software systems to ensure that they are appropriate, fit for purpose, secure and deliver efficiencies for all users	
4.2 To continue to develop an organisational structure which supports CETB services	→ Continue to develop and enhance governance structures across the organisation in line with Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs	
	→ Continue to review Cork ETB structures to ensure that services are delivered in a cost efficient, effective and compliant manner	
	→ Undertake a review of our self-financing services to ensure that they are structured in a manner which will enable continued viability and compliance with regulatory obligations	
4.3 Support ethical governance to ensure accountability and value for money	→ We will continue to develop and monitor our processes to ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements	
	→ We will regularly review Cork ETB's expenditure to identify procurement opportunities to ensure value for money across the organisation	
	→ We will continue to develop, communicate and monitor implementation of Cork ETB's Procurement Policy and Procedures to all entities within the remit of Cork ETB	
	→ We will make the necessary arrangements to ensure compliance with our data protection obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	

	→ Enhance Management Accounting and Financial Reporting Systems to support improved decision making in Education and Training Services	
	→ We will continue to improve efficiencies so as to ensure value for money in the management of all Cork ETB properties, in keeping with the Government's Property Asset Management Delivery Plan	
4.4 To develop a strong recognisable Cork ETB Brand	→ Develop and implement a co-ordinated marketing and branding campaign to raise awareness of Cork ETB as an organisation and the services it delivers	
	→ We will recognise and celebrate the achievements of our learners and staff as a means of supporting and fostering a culture of excellence	
4.5 Develop and enhance internal and external communication systems	→ We will develop a fit for purpose Customer Charter which will establish good practices and procedures and facilitate feedback	
	→ Commitments given in Scéim na dTeangacha Gaeilge Oifigiúla to be carried out within the lifetime of the current scheme	
	→ We will support schools / colleges in the implementation of the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022	
	→ We will ensure that all staff have a corporate email account for effective communication, security protection and access to ICT systems	
	→ We will positively and proactively utilise social media for the promotion of Cork ETB and its services	
	→ We will develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy over the lifetime of the Strategic Plan	
4.6 Strategic networking and partnerships	4 We will ensure that Cork ETB is represented on relevant Boards, Bodies and Fora related to the provision of education and training	

with key stakeholders		
	5 We will continue to develop relationships with our stakeholders that are based on mutual respect, sharing of experiences and enhancing knowledge	

APPENDIX 1

Education and Training Boards – A Sectoral Overview

Introduction

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are Ireland's sixteen statutory regional education authorities. They were established by the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 (ETBs Act 2013) and replaced the Vocational Education Committees (VECs) (and their predecessors) which have been providing formal technical and vocational education in Ireland since 1902.

Following the commencement of the ETBs Act 2013 and the transfer of the former FÁS training centres to ETBs, also in 2013, ETBs became statutorily responsible for the provision of state-funded Further Education and Training (FET) in Ireland. Across the country, ETBs deliver a range of programmes and courses at Levels 5 and 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), as well as traineeships and apprenticeships.

In addition to FET provision, ETBs deliver a wide range of services across many educational levels throughout Ireland. They operate 278 second-level schools, Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) colleges, vocational training centres, and over 500 education centres. ETBs are trustees of 92 Community Colleges. They also manage a growing number of multi-denominational primary-level Community National Schools (www.cns.ie). ETBs are involved in Youth Work, Youthreach programmes, Prison education, Back to Education Initiatives, Vocational Training Opportunities Schemes (VTOS), workplace learning programmes, outdoor education and training, adult and community education, and other educational programmes. There are ETB-run schools, colleges and centres in every corner of Ireland.

Vision for the ETB sector

The sixteen Education and Training Boards play a major role in the rapidly-changing world of Irish public-sector education and training. Within the coming years, ETBs will be the leading providers of high quality, locally responsive, inclusive and innovative public sector education and training in their areas.

Mission

Education and Training Boards offer education and training programmes that enable learners to achieve their full potential. They aim to achieve excellent outcomes for learners at all stages of lifelong learning, and so enhance social and economic cohesion in the communities they serve.

ETBs are supported in this mission by Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), which is a central resource for the ETB sector, providing, procuring and co-ordinating a range of support services which are most appropriately and efficiently delivered at national level. It is a shared repository of best practice providing research, development and specialist expertise for the sector.

Values of the ETB sector

The core values describe enduring, collective beliefs that underpin the work of ETBs and ETBI:

- ETBs work collectively with ETBI to promote the development of a coherent unified education and training sector
- ETBs provide high-quality, locally responsive public sector education and training services in their areas, aimed at achieving national policy objectives and strategic targets
- ETBs promote an inclusive ethos of learning, underpinned by excellence and innovation
- ETBs operate in an environment of partnership, trust, integrity and respect, which guide and inform all aspects of their work
- ETBs' working relationships with their staff, Boards and other stakeholders are based on fairness, transparency and professionalism
- ETBs foster a sense of shared responsibility for the successful performance of their executive and reserved functions, in the interests of achieving the very best outcomes for all learners
- ETBs promote a culture of collaboration and collegiality between the professionals working in ETBs and the members of boards, based on common shared values and commitment to quality in education and training
- ETBs seek to build on the strong legacy of vocational education established over the past 80 years.

The National Context

Establishment of Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

The [Education and Training Boards Act 2013](#) established ETBs as statutory bodies operating under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills, providing education and training locally in accordance with government policy and strategy, while having the flexibility to cater for local education and training needs. ETBs manage and operate second-level schools, further education colleges, community national schools and a range of adult and further education centres delivering education and training programmes.

Under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) was established as an association to collectively represent education and training boards and promote their interests.

Establishment of SOLAS

Under the [Further Education and Training Act 2013](#), SOLAS was established as a statutory agency of the Department of Education and Skills, with responsibility for funding, co-ordinating and monitoring further education and training (FET) provision and ensuring that it is responsive

to the needs of learners and the requirements of a changing economy. ETBs now have a new set of interactions with SOLAS, with three main aspects:

- Planning and development of FET
- Administration and support of FET
- Governance and funding of FET.

In 2014, SOLAS published the [Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 - 2019](#) setting out five strategic goals for ETBs:

- Skills for the Economy
- Active Inclusion
- Quality provision
- Integrated Planning and Funding
- Enhanced Standing of FET.

The Strategy requires ETBs and SOLAS, as the main statutory authorities delivering FET in Ireland, to engage with learners to:

- Ensure that programmes and courses are learner-focussed
- Ensure that learners are equipped with the relevant knowledge so they can make informed choices about their participation in FET (role of Guidance)
- Ensure that all courses and programmes have easily accessible progression options that provide for the needs of all learners.

Establishment of QQI

QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) was established as a state agency under the [Quality Assurance and Qualifications \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#). QQI is responsible for making awards and setting standards for awards in the National Framework of Qualifications. QQI also validates education and training programmes and in the Further Education and Training sector including those provided by Education and Training Boards.

In the area of quality assurance, QQI is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of quality assurance in further and higher education providers in Ireland, including ETBs.

The National Skills Strategy 2025¹

The six chief objectives of the Government's National Skills Strategy 2015, published in January 2016, set a large number of challenges for the ETBs.

The very first of those objectives:

Education and training providers will place a stronger focus on providing skills development opportunities that are relevant to the needs of learners, society and the economy.

places a particular onus on ETBs to develop new programmes, including new apprenticeships and traineeships. The other objectives require deeper engagement with employers, deeper

¹ https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf

engagement with learners, increased focus on active inclusion, continual enhancement and evaluation of teaching and learning, and making effective use of technology to improve the relevance and attractiveness of educational provision. ETBs have responsibility for a large proportion of the hundreds of actions set out in the strategy to realise those objectives.

The Action Plan for Education 2016-2019²

The central vision of the Action Plan for Education 2015-2019, published by the Department of Education and Skills in September 2016, is that the Irish Education and Training System should become the best in Europe over the next decade. The Plan sets challenges for stakeholders in education and training through a series of high-level goals and objectives, as well as hundreds of targets and indicators aimed at achieving those goals and objectives. The goals include:

- Improving the learning experience and the success of learners
- Improving the progress of learners at risk of educational disadvantage or learners with special educational needs
- Helping those delivering education services to continually improve
- Building stronger bridges between education and the wider community
- Improving national planning and support services

Again, ETBs have responsibility for a large proportion of the hundreds of targets and deliverables in the Action Plan.

A Programme for a Partnership Government³, the Programme for Government document was agreed between the Fine Gael Party, the Independent Alliance and Independent TDs in May 2016. Under the Programme, the Department of Education and Skills has a range of commitments, which are reflected in the actions outlined in the Action Plan for Education 2016-2019.

A number of key national education and training strategies are driving the planning and implementation of significant changes by the Department across the continuum of education. The Department's "whole-of system" approach enables the integration of these strategies and the monitoring of their progress as they each contribute towards the Department's vision for education and training. These include:

- National Skills Strategy 2025
- National Strategy on Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020
- Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020
- Further Education and Training Strategy 2014 – 2019
- National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030
- Framework for Junior Cycle
- National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland, 2014-2020
- 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030
- Gaeltacht Education Strategy

² <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Department-of-Education-and-Skills-Strategy-Statement-2016-2019.pdf>

³ http://www.merrionstreet.ie/MerrionStreet/en/ImageLibrary/Programme_for_Partnership_Government.pdf

The Department has also developed the following strategies, which have yet to be published.

- Ireland's International Education Strategy
- Foreign Languages in Education Strategy
- DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) Review

Every one of these strategies has and will have implications for ETBs and their work.

The European Context

According to Article 165 of the 2012 [Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#), the European Community:

shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States, through actions such as promoting the mobility of citizens, designing joint study programmes, establishing networks, exchanging information or teaching [languages of the European Union](#). The Treaty also contains a commitment to promote life-long learning for all citizens of the Union.

There is a broad consensus that education is essential for Europe's economic vitality, driving the employability, productivity, innovativeness and entrepreneurial spirit of tomorrow's working population and that its role in creating a better and more inclusive society is of equal importance. Education and Training have been identified as having a very significant role in the regeneration of economies.

The promotion of lifelong learning, the European framework for quality in education, the identification of the need for transversal skills and competencies; all reflect the continuous drive by policy makers, teachers, education leaders and managers to enhance both the quality and capacity of education and training across Europe. The EU gives this policy direction and substance through a range of communiqués, reports and plans such as [Europe 2020](#), [Youth on the Move](#), [New Skills for New Jobs](#), etc.

In the Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU repeatedly underlines the significance of better equipping young people for the job market. [Towards a Job Rich Recovery](#) further emphasises that lifelong learning invested in skills, and ongoing European sectoral social dialogue, are crucial for a sustainable labour market. It is within this framework that education policies have become closely linked to employment policies. Such policies have a direct influence on labour market and employment issues like teacher mobility and working conditions.

The EU's role in Education and Training

Each EU country is responsible for its own education and training systems. EU policy is designed to support national action and help address common challenges, such as ageing societies, [skills deficits in the workforce](#), technological developments and global competition.

[Education and Training 2020 \(ET 2020\)](#) is the European [framework](#) for cooperation in education and training. ET 2020 is a forum for exchanges of best practices, mutual learning, gathering and dissemination of information and evidence of what works, as well as advice and support for policy reforms. In order to ensure the successful implementation of ET 2020,

Working Groups composed of experts nominated by member countries, including Ireland, and other key stakeholders work on common EU-level tools and policy guidance. Funding for policy support and innovative projects is available through Erasmus+ for activities that promote learning and education at all levels and for all age groups.

In 2009, ET 2020 set four common EU objectives to address challenges in education and training systems by 2020, which were (a) making lifelong learning and mobility a reality, (b) improving the quality and efficiency of education and training, (c) promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship, and (d) enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training

Lifelong Learning and mobility are enhancing the quality and efficiency of education and training, promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship, while also increasing creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. These are matters that interest and concern the Education and Training Boards, and ETBs are determined to be part of the process of change where they can influence policy and processes in the EU.

These concerns and this determination are at the core of ETBI's involvement in Europe. Through its membership of the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE), ETBI participates in the bi-partite (employers and unions) European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education. ETBI is also a founder member of EUpromVET, which voices the interests of providers of vocational education and training and adult education within the European Union, and works to contribute to the European agenda to achieve effective and feasible VET policy development for implementation in a unified manner across Europe.

The roles of ETBs and ETBI in a changing context

Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

The main challenges for ETBs arising from the implementation of the above-referenced new legislation (ETB/FET/QQI) fall under several major headings:

- Structural change and reform
- Strategic planning and implementation
- Capacity building and leading change
- Partnership and collaboration
- Programme development in Further Education and Training (FET)

Aside from meeting the internal and external challenges arising from the establishment of the ETBs, SOLAS and QQI, and the requirements of the new legislation already mentioned, the ETBs are also dealing with a number of **sectoral priorities** that have come to the fore, and which require negotiations (with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and a number of other relevant stakeholders), as well as far-reaching actions by the ETBs.

- *Multi-denominational state primary schools:* While the ETBs' predecessors the VECs were piloting the Community National Schools (CNS) model of state-sponsored primary schools on behalf of the DES since 2008, the Minister has now (1st September 2016) transferred full patronage of the CNS schools to the ETBs. ETBs now have the

responsibility to establish and grow the CNS model throughout the state, which requires negotiations with the DES; negotiations with religious bodies regarding transfer of patronage; conducting and managing, on behalf of the state, surveys of parents regarding preferences of primary school models in their local areas; purchasing of land; dealing with landlords; managing building and ancillary works; hiring and training of personnel; establishing the CNS ethos across the CNS schools; promotion of the CNS model to parents and the wider general public; and many other related issues.

- *New forms of apprenticeships:* Apprenticeship, as defined in the 2013 Review of Apprenticeship Training in Ireland ⁴, is a programme of industry-led structured education and training which formally combines and alternates learning in the work place with learning in an education or training centre, (a dual system i.e. a blended combination of on-the-job employer-based training and off-the-job training) whose completion (a) prepares the participant for a specific occupation and (b) leads to an award, recognised under the National Framework of Qualifications from Level 5 to Level 10. The Apprenticeship Council, established in November 2014, is tasked with the expansion of Apprenticeships into new sectors of the economy and mapping out the sectors where new apprenticeships can make a real difference to both employers and employees. ETBI is represented on the Apprenticeship Council, and several ETBs are currently in the process of developing, with relevant industrial partners, proposals for new apprenticeships in new sectors (catering, insurance, IT, etc.). With QQI, they are also developing, in parallel, quality assurance processes for these new apprenticeships. Once operational, it is hoped that these new apprenticeships may be rolled out in the other ETBs.
- *Traineeships and work related training programmes:* In parallel with working to bring on-stream new apprenticeships, ETBs are also collaborating with local industries to develop a range of new traineeships and work-related training programmes; part of the government initiative to promote a well-educated, highly skilled and adaptable Irish workforce in the National Skills Strategy 2025. Providing these new programmes requires ETBs to work alongside local companies to develop and deliver courses, promote and recruit trainees, and provide tutors, mentoring and certification for trainees.

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)

Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI) is the national representative body for Ireland's sixteen regional Education and Training Boards (ETBs), and works to protect, promote and enhance the interests of member ETBs and of vocational education and training within the wider education sector in Ireland and in Europe.

In the period leading up to and immediately following the establishment of ETBs, there was an intensive focus on re-structuring ETBI's predecessor, the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) as a new organisation, Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), to support ETBs in the performance of their functions. There was strong and unanimous agreement among ETBs that the establishment of ETBI was an important element in reinforcing the success of ETBs over the coming years.

⁴ <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Review-of-Apprenticeship-Training-in-Ireland.pdf>

The new governance and corporate structure of ETBI was designed to ensure that the organisation would be fit for its expanded role and functions. It was envisaged that with the re-imagining and re-invention of ETBI, the entire ETB sector would gain the following benefits:

- A strong, unified, dynamic, fit-for-purpose organisation that would position ETBs as a major force in Ireland's changing education and training landscape, by aligning its professional support structures to promote the effective implementation of the ETB legislation
- An enhanced culture of collaboration and collegiality among the professionals working in the sector, based on common shared values and commitment to excellence in education and training
- A renewed sense of purpose for all involved in ETBs, building on the strong legacy of VECs over the previous 80 years.

ETBI is a central resource for the ETB sector, providing, procuring and co-ordinating a range of support services which are most appropriately and efficiently delivered at national level. ETBI acts as a repository for best practice, providing research, development and specialist expertise to the sector. ETBI provides a range of co-ordinated and cost effective services that include:

- Representation for the sector
- Staff negotiations
- Policy analysis, research and administrative support services
- Management services required by ETBs in the performance of their executive and reserved functions, with specific reference to schools, further education and training (FET) and organisational development and support;
- Specialised supports to assist ETBs in promoting equality of opportunity in education and training, and in responding to the needs of disadvantaged communities
- Services as required by the Minister for Education and Skills.

ETBI fulfils its role through collaborative practice between the secretariat staff and the expertise that exists within ETBs. It also promotes effective working partnerships among ETBs, the Department of Education and Skills, SOLAS and a large and diverse range of external bodies.