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*Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
an Longfoirt agus na hIarmhí*
Longford and Westmeath
Education and Training Board

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**Teaching and Learning Strategy -
Information and Technology**

**Schools, Further Education and
Training Programmes**

Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board (LWETB), was established on 1st July 2013 under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013 and provide educational services to a population of over 129,000 (CSO 2016) across the two counties. LWETB have 8 Post-primary schools, 2 PLC colleges, 1 Training Centre, 5 FET centres, 4 Youthreach Centres of Education, 2 VTOS programmes, Music Generation and administrative offices. In accordance with the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, LWETB are also responsible for supporting the provision, coordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in counties Longford and Westmeath (50+ youth projects and clubs). LWETB administers an annual budget of over €54 million, has over 900 staff and over 14,000 learners, trainees and beneficiaries.

In line with the Statement of Strategy 2017 – 2022, LWETB seeks to develop and implement technological integration and skills development for all ETB staff, students and stakeholders. Central to this is the development of an Information and Technology Strategy that will:

- Identify infrastructural needs of the organisation.
- Support integration of ICT systems enabling quality learning, teaching, training and administrative functions across LWETB
- Provide ongoing and relent CPD.

LWETB – ICT GOALS

- Develop a wide vision for LWETB that includes digital technology as a key element and facilitator of learning, teaching, training and administrative functions for the 21st century
- Develop an ICT Infrastructure plan that will support learning outcomes, best practice in teaching methodologies, key administrative functions.
- Develop productive use of technology across the ETB
- Provide quality ICT training and integration workshops to all education leaders to develop and support a vision for 21st Century learning
- Provide quality ICT training workshops/webinars and learning opportunities for all staff
- Provide a suite of products relevant to the needs of the organisation and learners.
- Provide relevant infrastructure and devices to support collaborative learning practices across all programmes
- Provide CPD for staff in the use of mobile devices to support learning and teaching across all programmes
- Introduce collaborative learning platforms for senior management, head office staff, school leaders, programme leaders, teachers, tutors and students.
- Deployment and training of SharePoint to include set up, training and implementation of rollout across all areas of the organisation.

To support integration of digital systems across LWETB, three areas have been identified as being key to delivering on the goals outlined above.

1. ICT Integration and Infrastructure
2. Service Delivery Management
3. Quality Training and Professional Development

ICT INTEGRATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

To ensure a full integration of technology into work practices across schools, centres and ETB administration, a centrally managed infrastructure to be provisioned to schools and centres across LWETB required. This will include:

- The development of an ETB wide ICT infrastructure plan that will support individual plans of each service as appropriate to that service.
- Procure project management services to support the implementation of any changes to the LWETB ICT infrastructure, support and training services
- Upgrading of networks where appropriate across all services
- Upgrading of devices across all schools, FET provision and administrative offices
- Upgrading of phone systems, print management systems
- Constant review of ICT systems across schools and FET to ensure devices are up to date and fit for purpose.
- The introduction of video conferencing facilities which will enable the provision of online teaching and learning.
- Rollout the use of Microsoft Teams across LWETB

SERVICE DELIVERY MANAGEMENT

Ensure coordination of LWETB vision for learning, and development of infrastructure upgrade, by engaging with project management expertise and services to support LWETB in the implementation of the following:

- Define and plan infrastructure changes that are require and prioritise these changes.
- Establish Timelines for commencement and implementation of plan
- Design new LWETB Website and upgrade websites for all programmes
- Provide expertise to LWETB admin staff to ensure that procurement requirements including the preparation of tender documents and the analysis of tender proposals are in line with guidelines are fully compliant
- Engage project management expertise to support the management of any IT works with contractors and vendors from commencement of works to sign off
- Ensure maximum return on investment and value for money for all LWETB ICT projects
- Develop the use of SharePoint by instigating projects which will bring about efficiencies in the delivery of services or supports to learners, staff and stakeholders.

QUALITY TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This ICT strategy for technology enhancement and CPD across LWETB aims to ensure that all functions of ETB service delivery and administration can benefit from the technology

resources available to them to empower them to be more productive, collaborative and engaged with LWETBs strategic goals. This will be supported by:

- Enhance administrative efficiency through admin staff training in Office 365 applications (Word, Excel, OneNote and PowerPoint)
- Reinforce the corporate identity of LMETB with all its staff and learners using LWETB Intranets
- Create collaborative networks of learners and staff at every level of LWETB using Office 365 SharePoint Online
- Provide training workshops to all staff members – to include Clinic Days, On-site Training and Centralised Training in the use of Office 365, SharePoint, use of mobile devices to support learning and teaching,
- Specialised training programmes to be developed for programme leaders in the use of collaborative leaning networks across schools and programmes.

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

In line with the Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020, Digital Action Plan 2017, and TEL Strategy for FET, LWETB will support all its services in the delivery of quality education and training programmes by providing state of the art facilities to support outcomes for all members of the LWETB community.

SCHOOLS:

LWETB schools will engage with the Digital Strategy for Schools and will deliver on the following:

- Ensure curriculum remains contemporary and introduces relevant programmes at junior and senior level in digital learning.
- Use all digital learning platforms available to them to support delivery of teaching and learning.
- Digital Learning Committees to be established in all schools and the assessment and improvement of the Digital Learning Framework to be implemented in all schools
- Ensure schools adopt all measures available to ensure schools and students are protected against cyber bullying or crime that may affect the well-being of students
- Support schools to engage with school community and stakeholders in the usage of smart phones and tablet devices in schools.
- Ensure schools have excellent infrastructure to ensure no disruption to learning and teaching
- Ensure ICT infrastructure grants are spent in compliance with circular and support schools in the identification of relevant hardware, software and equipment that will support learning and teaching.

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Further Education and Training division within LWETB is focused on the implementation of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) for the benefit of learners and staff. This has been developed in reference to the SOLAS FET Professional Learning and Development: Statement of Strategy 2020-2024 and the SOLAS Technology–Enhanced Learning in Further Education and Training 2016–2019. Within FET there is an ambitious programme of ICT related Professional Development (PD) planned for staff and learners as outlined here:

- Organise a staff workshop on Teaching and Learning Pedagogies to incorporate blended learning.
- Develop a PD plan for 2021 with direct input from Centre Managers/Co-ordinators to support ICT training.
- Carry out a needs analysis with co-ordinators and educators as to what their centres require in terms of PD.
- Develop a PD calendar which is accessible to all staff members.
- Formalise the TEL link person in centres mentoring role and organised PD for them starting in the area of content development.
- Invite FET learners to contribute their experiences via the TEL Link Persons Working Group.
- Develop a webinar on the accessibility features to support teaching & learning in the classroom.
- Involve centre co-ordinators/managers in forming annual plan for PD.
- Develop staff skillsets in the area of content creation for blended learning to support development of repositories of resources.
- Network with Peers using Twitter as a platform.
- Develop a Class Notebook Template for using ePortfolios.