

INFORMATION GUIDE
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OFFICER (PERMANENT)
INITIAL DUTIES: PLANNING AND FUNDING MANAGEMENT SUPPORT
POST REFERENCE: FET 14/2026

Longford and Westmeath Education and Training Board is now holding a competition for the above permanent Assistant Principal Officer competition. Candidates must have the requisite knowledge, skills and competencies to carry out the role and be capable and competent of fulfilling the role to a high standard.

This is a senior position reporting to the Director of Further Education and Training. The appointee to this demanding senior management post will be responsible for the efficient and effective leadership and management of functions required within LWETB.

Job Specification:

Reporting to the Director of Further Education and Training

This role requires significant financial, data analysis skills with specialised expertise to perform the role to the appropriate level which includes the following:

- 1. Financial:** Activity Planning, Forecast Funding Requirements, budgeting process for circa €41M and ensuring compliance with governance and funding guidelines.
- 2. Strategic:** The role directly affects the ability of LWETB to achieve National FET Strategy performance agreements targets and the management of risk in funding allocations.
- 3. Change Management:** Leading the implementation of new funding models and digital reporting systems for the organisation.
- 4. Governance and Audit Readiness:** to ensure:
 - Financial Governance Compliance: Support FET Managers to ensure all FET spending adheres to the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs and national procurement guidelines.
 - Internal Control Environment: Establish robust internal financial controls to identify and propose risk reduction actions to reduce the risks of non-compliance or budgetary over or underspends at the local centre level.

Key Elements of the job description as follows:

- **FET Planning and Funding:** lead the planning and funding process on behalf of the Director of FET.
- **FET Planning:** In compliance with the **LWETB FET Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Planning and Funding Forecasting.**
 - Lead the planning for FET activity and services and develop the forecast funding allocations requirements to support their delivery.
 - Ensure the efficient planning of FET provision across the region which maximises alignment with the SPA targets for non-capital funding allocations.

- Produce and report on an annual activity plan covering each programme detailing the numbers present on January the 1st and the number of expected starters planned for each month with summaries for each Quarter.
- Support FET managers with planning for the delivery of Services and Activity.
- **FET Budgeting:** On behalf of the Director of FET, lead the budgeting process with OSD Finance and coordinate the budgeting process and its monthly monitoring with the FET management team for non-Capital activity and services. Prepare a report for the Director of FET outlining potential over or underspends with recommendations to bring spending into alignment with the budget. Reports should include explanations for monthly variances for the SLT along with actions planned to reduce the risk of an over or underspend of the budget.
- **FET Forecasting:** Develop and implement proactive funding forecasting systems and tools to ensure the efficient use of all available funding allocations, taking account of budget allocations and expenditure, SPA targets, and learner activity. In line with the SOP for FET Planning and Funding Forecasting, produce a revised monthly forecast outturn to year end. Collaborate with FET managers to detail in the forecast the rationale for variances and propose revisions to both the activity and funding plans to maintain utilisation of allocated funding.
- **Funding Model Complexity:** Support further implementation of the new FET Funding Model and ensuring compliance with strategic input and outcome targets.
- **System Linkages:** Lead projects that will simplify the management of FET control systems that will create linkages between the 13 different systems and the multiplicity of spreadsheets that are being used in FET.
- **Data:** Collate and analyse high-level data extracted from Financial and quantitative systems like FARR, PLSS, Tableau, and all systems used to report to management and external stakeholders.
- **Reporting:** Managing all FET related reporting as required either internally within LWETB or externally by our stakeholders and funders such as DFHERIS and SOLAS.
- **Communicate with the FET Team:**
 - Support and work close with the FET management team on all the above elements to facilitate the implementation of efficient systems and practices.
 - Lead the monthly meeting with FET and Finance /OSD managers reviewing FET funding including expenditure and activity.
- **Collaboration across LWETB:**
 - Ensure monthly collaboration between the FET and OSD team and the establishment of inter and cross unit groups in the organisation to facilitate the flow of information and data for the purpose of **Planning, Forecasting, Budgeting, Expenditure, System Linkages, Data and Reporting**

General Duties

In addition to the requirements above are the administrative duties including:

- Assist the Director/CE, as appropriate, in the provision of an efficient and effective service in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Coordinate the day-to-day activities of the Department.
- Assist in the planning, control, management and co-ordination of the efficient operation of the functions of the Department/ETB.
- Supervise the activities within the Department and provide advice and guidance as necessary.
- Contribute to the provision of an efficient and effective service for internal and external customers that adheres to agreed procedures and best practices.
- Ensure compliance with Legislation, Policies & Procedures and Departmental Circular Letters within the functional area(s) of the ETB including, inter alia; Risk Management, Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Planning and Development and Office of Government Procurement.
- Maintain accurate and effective records management to comply with legislative and organisational requirements.
- Identify risk levels of non-compliance within the Department and develop and implement adequate systems/processes to eliminate those risks.
- Review and Update the Risk Register as it pertains to the functional areas of the Department in accordance with the agreed timeframe.
- Undertake quality assurance checks on all aspects of the work of the Department.
- Compile accurate Data Returns for the functional area for relevant bodies e.g. ETBI, Department of Education, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science, (DFHERIS), Department of Expenditure and Reform (DPER), SOLAS, FOI, Data Protection, OGP or other relevant body or Departments
- Act as the main Approver in the processing of work-related data in line with agreed procedures.
- Prepare, review and update Reports for the CE/Director, Heads of Department, Senior Managers, Department Officials, Auditors or other relevant persons, as and when required.
- Coordinate the development and implementation of appropriate systems in accordance with the regulations and guidelines of the Department of Education/ETB.
- Cooperate and liaise with key stakeholders in the implementation of new systems or upgrading of existing systems within the Department.
- Comply with C&AG and internal audits.
- Supervise, manage and develop staff in a positive environment that delivers a quality customer service.
- Provide guidance and training to less experienced staff in the Department.
- Effectively administer staff Leave applications within the Department to ensure continuity of the service.

- Coordinate, evaluate and plan effectively for Team Project Work in consultation with key stakeholders.

- Coordinate Teamwork Scheduling within the Department towards the completion of tasks.
- Manage the performance of staff, dealing with underperformance in a timely and constructive manner.
- Brief staff on the progress of Project Work across relevant functional Departments.
- Act on Department/Cross Functional Project Teams from time to time.
- Attend and contribute to local, regional and national meetings attached to the functional area as appropriate.
- Be flexible and willing to readily respond to changing circumstances and expectations.
- Other tasks or project work as required by the Director/CE to contribute to the objectives of the Department.
- Assisting in the preparation and review of policies and procedures.
- Any other duties which may be assigned by the Director/CE
- This job description is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all duties involved and consequently, the post holder may be required to perform other duties as appropriate to the post which may be assigned to him / her from time to time by the CE and to contribute to the development of the post while in the role.

The above list of duties may be varied having regard to the changing needs of LWETB and the terms of the post can include delivery of responses to unpredictable work demands as they arise.

Person Specification:

Essential criteria;

- A minimum of three years' management experience
- Leadership expertise with experience of managing a department
- Managerial expertise with experience of delivering high quality results in an efficient and effective manner
- Highly developed communication skills with experience of negotiation, ICT skills including Spreadsheets, report writing and presentation skills
- Excellent judgement, problem-solving, analytical and decision-making skills
- Expertise of building productive working relationships and the ability to foster strong links with internal and external stakeholders
- Understand the main features and challenges of the Government's public sector reform plans
- Strong ability to multitask
- Drive and commitment to public service values
- Level 8 or equivalent in Business, Finance, Accounting or similar.

Desirable criteria;

It would be an advantage for candidates to hold:

- A proven track record in a multiplicity of the areas outlined in the job description
- Experience in Further Education and Training or related area.

Competencies required:

The appointee to the Assistant Principal Officer post will be required to show evidence of the following competencies in no more than 250 words per competency. Candidates must adhere to the word count identified above.

Team Leadership

- Actively contributes to the development of the strategies and policies of LWETB, as a member of the senior management team
- Brings a focus and drive to building and sustaining high levels of performance, addressing any performance issues as they arise
- Leads and maximises the contribution of the team as a whole ensuring effective delivery of tasks
- Considers the effectiveness of outcomes across the entirety of LWETB
- Clearly defines objectives/ goals & delegates effectively, encouraging ownership and responsibility for tasks
- Develops capability of others through feedback, coaching & creating opportunities for skills development
- Identifies and takes opportunities to introduce new and innovative ways to improve service across LWETB.

Analysis and Decision Making

- Research issues thoroughly, consulting appropriately to gather all information needed on an issue
- Understands complex issues quickly, accurately absorbing and evaluating data (including numerical data)
- Integrates diverse strands of information, identifying inter-relationships and linkages
- Makes clear, timely and well-grounded decisions on important issues
- Considers the wider implications of decisions on a range of stakeholders
- Takes a firm position on issues s/he considers important

Management and Delivery of Results

- Takes responsibility for challenging tasks and delivers on time and to a high standard
- Plans and prioritises work in terms of importance, timescales and other resource constraints, re-prioritising in light of changing circumstances
- Ensures quality and efficient customer service is central to the work of the division
- Looks critically at issues to see how things can be done better Is open to new ideas initiatives and creative solutions to problems

- Ensures controls and performance measures are in place to deliver efficient and high value services
- Effectively manages multiple projects

Interpersonal & Communication Skills

- Presents information in a confident, logical and convincing manner, verbally and in writing
- Encourages open and constructive discussions around work issues
- Promotes teamwork within the section, but also works effectively on projects across Departments/ Sectors
- Maintains poise and control when working to influence others
- Instils a strong focus on Customer Service in his/her area
- Develops and maintains a network of contacts to facilitate problem solving or information sharing
- Engages effectively with a range of stakeholders, including members of the public, Public Service Colleagues and the political system

Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development

- Has a clear understanding of the roles objectives and targets of self and the team and how they fit into the work of the unit and Department/ Organisation
- Has a breadth and depth of knowledge of Department and Governmental issues and is sensitive to wider political and organisational priorities
- Is considered an expert by stakeholders in own field/ area Is focused on self-development, seeking feedback and opportunities for growth to help carry out the specific requirements of the role.

Drive & Commitment to Public Service Values

- Is self-motivated and shows a desire to continuously perform at a high level
- Is personally honest and trustworthy and can be relied upon
- Ensures the citizen is at the heart of all services provided
- Through leading by example, fosters the highest standards of ethics and integrity

Terms and conditions:

Salary: Starting point on salary is €85,204

For persons entering employment at this grade for the first time or those with no prior public service employment at this grade starting pay will be at the minimum of the incremental scale. **This is not negotiable.** An incremental salary scale applies thereafter as per C/L 0058/2026. The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government pay policy. Previous public sector experience in the same grade may be eligible for incremental credit, to be determined upon appointment.

Base: LWETB's Head Office Marlinstown Business Park, Mullingar, Co Westmeath. The successful candidate will be initially assigned in the above location. However, LWETB reserves the right to assign you to any other location as the service demands require.

Hours per week: 35

Annual leave: LWETB'S Annual Leave Year runs from January to December. The annual leave allowance for this position is 30 days per annum and public holidays will be allowed together with such short periods of closure as are permitted for Christmas and Easter. Please note your annual leave entitlement will be pro-rata, based on your contract duration and start date. This allowance is subject to the usual conditions regarding the granting of annual leave. Leave will be granted, subject to Line Management approval, which must be sought in advance

Requirements and Eligibility Criteria

Citizenship Requirement:

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete for posts is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) or to non- EEA nationals with a valid work permit. The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. Swiss citizens under EU agreements may also apply. Please note you must advise LWETB if a work permit is required by you before commencing employment with LWETB. This requirement should be notified to LWETB as soon as possible.

Health and Character:

Those under consideration for a position will at the discretion of the employer be required to complete a health and character declaration and may be required to complete Garda Vetting Form. References will be sought.

Application and selection process

1. Candidates should read the guide on how to complete the application carefully.
2. Full details are available on www.etbvacancies.ie. Candidates who wish to apply, must apply through www.etbvacancies.ie not later than **13:00 hours on Wednesday 26th August 2026**.
3. Please note by submitting online an automatic message will be issued to your Etbvacancies account to confirm receipt of your application. This should not be taken as confirmation that the submission is a valid application. If you do not a confirmation message via your portal within two days, please email recruitment@lwetb.ie **PRIOR to the closing date**.
4. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that the application form is received before the stated deadline. Any technical difficulties encountered by the sender when submitting an application, are not the responsibility of LWETB
5. For details on the services LWETB provides see www.lwetb.ie
6. Provisional date for interviews is as soon as is practical post-closing date, but a provisional date is week commencing 7th September 2026. Please note there may be a two-stage selection process.
7. Interviews may take place via video conference. Candidates that are selected for interview will be supplied with guidelines in this regard.

8. Your application will be assessed on the information you submit. Please ensure all sections are completed fully and accurately, giving clear evidence of qualifications, skills and experience.
9. Incomplete applications will not be considered. **Late applications will not be accepted.**
10. Candidates must adhere to the word counts specified.
11. Shortlisting may apply.
12. Selection will be by way of competency-based interview.
13. Canvassing by or on behalf of the applicant will disqualify.
14. All enquiries regarding your application should be made to HeadofHR@lwetb.ie.
15. You must use the post reference in the subject line of the email.
16. Providing incorrect information or deliberately concealing any relevant facts may result in disqualification from the selection process or, where discovery is made after an appointment, in summary dismissal.
17. If successful referees will be contacted directly by LWETB at its convenience and without further notice to candidates.
18. LWETB is registered as a Data Controller. Data will be processed in accordance with the ETB's Data Protection Policy and retained in accordance with the records' retention schedule therein. The personal data supplied on this application form and supplementary documents are required for the purposes of recruitment (including shortlisting and interviewing), assessment of qualifications, general administration, and to fulfil our other legal obligations, including the election of staff representatives to the ETB under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. While the information provided will generally be treated as confidential to LWETB, from time to time it may be necessary for us to exchange personal data on a confidential basis with other bodies including the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Social Protection, Gardaí, the CSO, the Teaching Council, Revenue, other statutory bodies, or with former or subsequent employers. Should you wish to update or access your personal data you should write to the CE.
19. Further information on LWETB including details of our schools, centres for education and programmes can be found on our website www.lwetb.ie
20. Longford and Westmeath ETB is an equal opportunities employer.
21. Any travel or other expenses incurred by candidates whilst undertaking or attending any elements of the selection process will not be refunded by LWETB.

Ms. Siobhán Lynch, Chief Executive, Longford and Westmeath ETB