



BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
CHILL DARA AGUS CHILL MHANTÁIN

KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Strategy Statement

2025-2029





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Welcome by Chairperson

I am delighted to present the Strategy Statement for Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) for the period 2025 to 2029. This five-year Strategy Statement was formally adopted by the Board at its meeting on 25th March 2025. It is a comprehensive and forward-looking document that outlines the vision and plans for the ETB over the next five years.

This Strategy builds upon the previous strategic framework of the ETB and incorporates the valuable insights gained through extensive consultation with key stakeholders and agencies involved with the work of KWETB.

The Strategy Statement serves as a strategic roadmap for the continued development of our organisation and the enhancement of our services to meet the evolving educational and training needs of our students, learners, society, and the broader economy.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the staff of the ETB, our students, learners, parents, and all other essential stakeholders for their contributions to this Strategy Statement. I extend my best wishes to all our staff and stakeholders as we continue to work together to empower and enrich the lives of the people in our region through education and training.

Cllr Paul O' Brien
Chairperson



Foreword by Chief Executive

This Strategy outlines our vision for meeting the education and training needs of Kildare and Wicklow communities over the next five years. Developed through extensive consultation, it addresses the social, economic, and cultural opportunities and challenges ahead. Our core focus is delivering a high quality, professional, and responsive educational and training experience for all learners.

The Strategy is built on four key pillars: Teaching; Learning and Learners; Human Resource Support and Development; Operational Excellence; and Environment and Sustainability. These pillars guide our goals and objectives across schools, Further Education and Training, Youth Services, and Organisational Support and Development, ensuring the highest standards of service delivery.

Informed by input from staff, parents, learners, leaders, the ETB Board, and key partners, the Strategy aligns local community needs with national priorities set by the Government, the Department of Education, The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and SOLAS. Achieving these goals and objectives requires shared ownership of our vision across the organisation.

Building on the successes of our previous Strategy, we remain committed to excellence, innovation, and continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Guided by our core values, we will continue to lead in education and training, serving our communities with dedication over the next five years.

Dr Deirdre Keyes

Chief Executive, March 2025



KWETB at a Glance



Executive Summary

Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) was established in 2013 under the Education and Training Boards Act. A key statutory function of the Education and Training Board is to develop a five-year strategy statement outlining objectives, priorities, and implementation, in consultation with stakeholders and in alignment with government policy and available resources.

In January 2024, KWETB commenced the development of its new strategy to build on our previous achievements in education, training, youth work, and support services. An initial reflective session, with senior leadership identified the need for a more strategic and forward-looking approach, more collaboration and improved communications. Key priorities included quality teaching and learning, good service, operational excellence, equality, diversity, inclusion, sustainability, and fostering stronger collaboration across the organisation.

A Strategy Development Team was formed in March 2024, drawing on internal expertise to ensure the strategy reflected KWETB's values and long-term vision. Stakeholder engagement began in May 2024, involving, staff, learners, parents, industry representatives, community groups and KWETB Board members. Feedback strongly emphasised the importance of organisational values, particularly respect, inclusion, communication, and cross-organisational collaboration. There was a clear expectation that these values and priority areas would be embedded into strategic goals and objectives, reinforcing KWETB's role as a leader in education and training.

A Senior Leadership seminar in October 2024 analysed consultation insights, refining the strategy's pillars and priorities.

Further engagement continued with our new ETB Board in November 2024 and the KWETB Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group. In January 2025, the first draft of strategic pillars, goals and objectives was completed, ensuring alignment with stakeholder feedback and organisational aspirations. Key pillars of strategic priority were finalised and agreed as: Teaching, Learning and Learners, Human Resource Support and Development, Operational Excellence, and Environment and Sustainability. Following final consultations this Strategy Statement, goals and objectives were finalised in March 2025 and was presented and approved by the Board on the 25th March 2025.

This strategy sets a clear direction for the next five years, strengthening the organisation's impact on learners, staff, and the wider community while reinforcing our mission to provide high quality education and training opportunities in line with our statutory responsibilities and Government policy.

Mission Statement

To provide high quality and innovative education, training, youth and supports, which are accessible, responsive to the developing needs of learners, of the community and of society and which promote excellence, equality and social inclusion.

Vision Statement

To deliver high quality, inclusive, innovative education, training, youth and support services. To promote excellence in all we do and to be a leader at both community and national level.

Mission, Vision and Values

During the consultation phase, our stakeholders emphasised the importance of continuity between the previous and current strategy statements. In line with this, Kildare and Wicklow ETB reaffirm its commitment to the ETB Mission to provide high quality and innovative education, training, youth services and supports, which are accessible, responsive to the developing needs of learners, of the community and of society and which promote excellence, equality and social inclusion.

KWETB are committed to delivering education, training, youth work, and support services that meet stakeholder needs, in alignment with our community needs, the Programme for Government and national targets.

Our vision is to deliver high quality, inclusive, innovative education, training, youth and support services, to promote excellence in all we do and to be a leader at both community and national level. As an ETB we aim for excellence in everything we do in all our education services. We will provide high quality, inclusive, and innovative youth services, support programmes, and training opportunities. KWETB will be a leader in education and training both in the community and nationally.

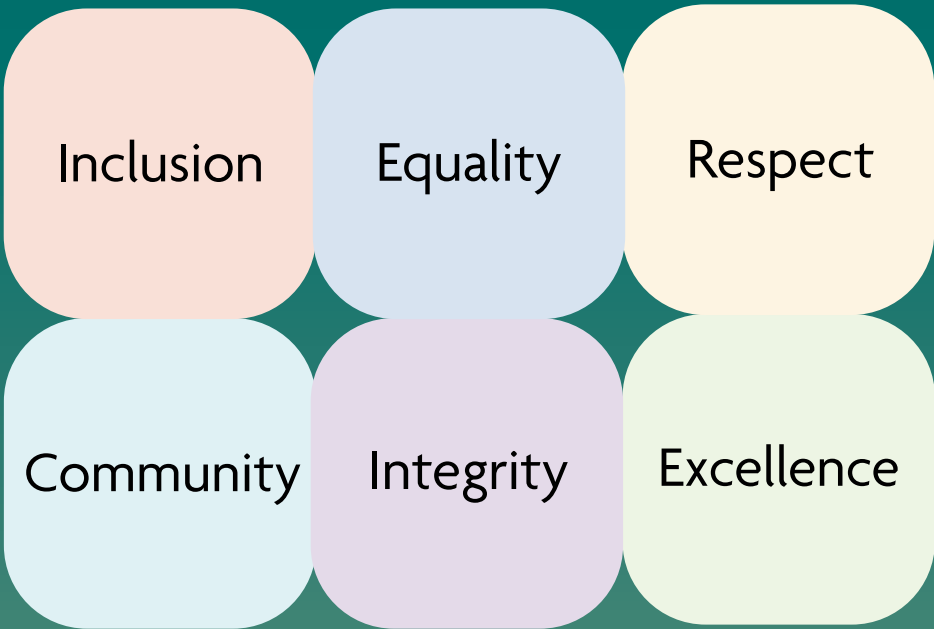


Mission, Vision and Values

Our Values

Kildare and Wicklow ETB's values were reviewed throughout the consultation process and refined by the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group. Our Values were confirmed as Excellence, Respect, Equality, Inclusion, Community and Integrity and are aligned with Public Sector Duty values. It will be a strategic priority of our ETB to actively promote and embed these values into our day-to-day work practices and decision-making processes.

Learner-centred



Inclusion

We provide equitable opportunities for learners and staff; enabling people in our schools and centres to fully participate in all aspects of learning and working in our organisation, valuing diversity and supporting those who may face barriers.

Equality

We treat everyone with fairness, dignity, and respect, ensuring equal opportunities for all, learners, staff and stakeholders regardless of background, identity, status or circumstance..

Respect

We are respectful to all people; valuing their dignity, human rights, and individuality. We promote care and positive relationships in every school, centre, and workplace.

Community

We work together to build strong connections and foster a sense of belonging among our learners, staff, and stakeholders through collaboration and communication to meet the needs of our learning community and achieve organisational goals.

Integrity

We are respectful to all people; valuing their dignity, human rights, and individuality. We promote care and positive relationships in every school, centre, and workplace.

Excellence

We work together to build strong connections and foster a sense of belonging among our learners, staff, and stakeholders through collaboration and communication to meet the needs of our learning community and achieve organisational goals.

Strategic Context

Kildare and Wicklow ETB's Strategy Statement was prepared against a backdrop of economic, social, demographic, environmental, legislative and technological change.

Whilst the country has emerged from the challenges of the pandemic, the overall outlook for the country at this time remains uncertain, with the impact of the climate emergency, potential policy shifts in the United States which could affect domestic investment, employment and economic activity, the war in Ukraine, challenges of Artificial Intelligence, labour market constraints - an unemployment rate of 4.5% indicating near full employment and a consequential challenge meeting labour market demands, particularly in sectors requiring specialist skills.

There is an overall ageing population along with high migration and population growth in both counties. There are significant socio-economic regional variations within the ETB. All these factors put additional demands on service delivery. Our ETB continues to be in a growth situation with an increased demand for flexibility in how we deliver our key services.

Legislative and Policy Context

The Education and Training Boards Act 2013 established 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and introduced a Code of Practice for Governance of ETBs. Section 27 of The Act requires KWETB to prepare and submit a 5-year Strategy Statement to the Board and the Department of Education. The Strategy Statement must specify the objectives of the Board, the priorities of the specified objectives and the strategies for achieving those objectives. In addition, KWETB's Strategy Statement is required to be delivered in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance for ETBs 2024.

SOLAS was established under the Further Education and Training Act, 2014 and The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 established Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). Since the publication of KWETB's last Strategy the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) was established in 2020. KWETB must operate in accordance with the strategy, policies and directives of both organisations along with those of the Department of Education and DFHERIS.

Other key acts of law that inform and guide the strategy of the ETB are the Education Act 1998, Education (Welfare) Act 2000, Youth Work Act 2001, EPSEN Act 2004, Children First Act 2015, Equal Status Act 2000 & 2004 and the Further Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Official Languages Act 2003, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014

The ETB sector is central to government policy on education, training and skills. It also has an important role in promoting social inclusion and mobility, economic growth, employment generation and social cohesion. Excellence and innovation in education and training are key to enabling individuals to fulfil their potential and to ensure Ireland's success.

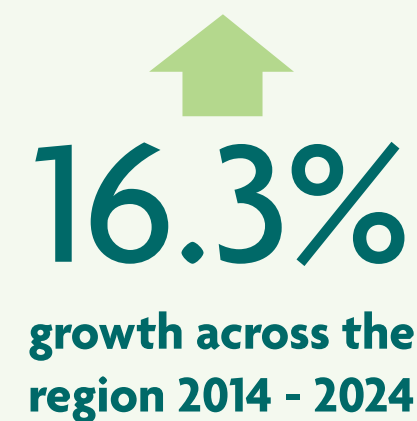
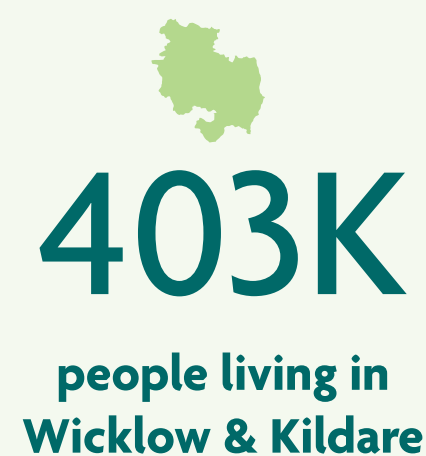
The ETB must take account of many government strategies which inform the work of an ETB. Examples of government led strategies and directives that influence the priorities and strategy of the ETB include, but are not limited to: Department of Education Statement of Strategy 2023-2025, DFHERIS Statement of Strategy 2023-2025, the imminent SOLAS Further Education and Training Strategy 2025-2029 and associated Strategic Performance Agreements, Department of Education Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines, Public Sector Climate Action Strategy 2023-2025, Green Skills 2030, Opportunities for Youth: National Strategy for Youth Work and Related Services 2024-2028, Housing for All, Adult Literacy for Life Strategy, Framework for Junior Cycle Reform, Digital Strategy for Schools, Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS), Disability Action Plan 2024-2026, Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024-2030, Strategy on Leadership and Management in Schools, Action Plan for Jobs and Pathways to Work, Patronage of Community National Schools (since 2016) and Government policy on Patronage of Primary Schools, Project 2040 National Development Plan 2021-2030 and EMRA's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and the National Skills Strategy 2025.

Similarly, EU policy articulated in the Education and Training 2020 Strategic Framework (ET2020) sees education as essential for the economic, social and political development of Europe. It promotes life-long learning and mobility, quality and efficiency of education systems and seeks to ensure inclusive education systems, reducing inequality and promoting active citizenship.



Strategic Context

KWETB Region



Demographic Context

Kildare and Wicklow ETB's catchment area has an overall population of 403,625 i.e. 8% of the national population. Recent census data shows significant population growth in the KWETB area. Since the last census the population grew 10.6%. In population terms it is the second fastest growing ETB, and is the fourth largest after CDETB, DDLETB and CETB. Kildare is one of the fastest growing Counties in the State.

Over the past ten years the population in the region grew 16.3%, significantly faster than the State average. The long-term growth pattern (since 1981) shows KWETB growing at twice the national average. Both Kildare and Wicklow are seeing high natural and migration growth.

Kildare and Wicklow have relatively young populations - younger than the State average evidencing a growing need for services into the future: 34% of the population of KWETB is under 25, and 27% are under 18. Kildare is one of the youngest Counties in the State with an average age of 36.9 years.

KWETB is unique in that its land area is divided into three spatial regions, the Dublin Metropolitan Area (DMA), the Core Region and the Gateway Region. The highly urbanised densely populated towns of Maynooth, Leixlip, Celbridge, Bray and Greystones form part of the DMA and absorb some of the growth of Dublin. Much of the rest of the Counties are in the Core Region. Key towns identified in Spatial Strategy as towns playing an active socio-economic role and the potential to act as growth drivers are: Maynooth, Bray, Naas and Wicklow-Rathnew. Bray, Celbridge, Naas and Newbridge have been identified as large towns in the Town Centre First Strategy.

KWETB provide education and training delivery throughout the region, however there are important regional variances within KWETB which will inform strategic planning, with less dense populations to the south accompanied with higher unemployment rates and rates of disability and lower levels of education. There are areas of disadvantage in both counties, the Electoral Districts of Carnew, Rathmichael, Kilpatrick, Kilberry and Athy West are designated as disadvantaged in the Pobal HP Index.



Strategic Context

Employment Context

The unemployment rate in Ireland is currently 4.5% and the labour market participation rate is 66.6%. The female participation rate is the highest it has ever been in the history of the State. In the Mid-East the unemployment rate is considerably lower at 3.9%, the participation rate of 67.6% is higher than that of the State. (LFS Q3 2024) This, coupled with high educational attainment levels in both Counties, particularly in the GDA belt and a higher proportion of the workforce serving as professionals or managers, gives Kildare and Wicklow a competitive advantage.

The top enterprise areas in Kildare and Wicklow are Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences, Agriculture, Agri-tech and Food Production, Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Financial Services and Technology, Logistics and Distribution, Tourism and Hospitality and Renewable Energy. The Wicklow Skills Strategy recommends development of FET-specific responses to needs identified and promotion of work-based training initiatives, apprenticeship and vocational training in the Screen and Content Creation; renewable Energy and Maritime Industries; Agri-Food and Forestry; and Tourism and Hospitality sectors. KWETB are working closely with other Stakeholders to develop the Kildare Skills Strategy.

KWETB are both leading and supporting initiatives to address skills shortages and upskill the existing workforce by our strategic contribution to the Regional Skills Forum; to support development work focussing on current and future needs; and encourage engagement on a daily basis (locally and regionally) with employers to develop a well skilled economy in Kildare and Wicklow while building on the unique strengths of our region and by providing more specific skills in areas where job opportunities exist and upskilling our existing workforce.



Strategic Priorities 2025 - 2029



Teaching, Learning and Learners



Human Resource Support and Development



Operational Excellence



Environment and Sustainability

Strategic Priorities

The development of Kildare and Wicklow ETB’s pillars of key strategic priority, goals and objectives were informed by the organisation’s mission, vision and values, the comprehensive consultation phase completed throughout 2024, and the wider national and sectoral strategic context in which the ETB operates. This Strategy Statement seeks to make a strong link between the organisation’s values, ways of working and strategic priorities, goals and objectives.

Pillar of Strategic Priority	Descriptor
Teaching, Learning and Learners	We are committed to excellence in teaching and learning through an inclusive, innovative, and learner-centred approach. By upholding the highest standards, we support learners in reaching their full potential while responding to evolving community, economic, and societal needs. We will continuously enhance quality, fostering the unique ethos and learning experience of KWETB schools and centres.
Human Resource Support and Development	We will position KWETB as a leading public-sector employer by attracting, developing, and retaining skilled staff. Rooted in our values, we will promote a positive, respectful, and inclusive workplace. Through professional development, and support, we will enable staff to excel and contribute to a collaborative learning and working environment.
Operational Excellence	We will refine our operations to ensure efficiency, transparency, and accountability in achieving our statutory mandate and strategic goals. With strong governance, responsible resource management, and stakeholder engagement, we will drive continuous improvement and high quality service delivery.
Environment and Sustainability	We will integrate sustainability into all aspects of our work, ensuring environmentally responsible practices. Committed to reducing our impact, promoting resource efficiency, and supporting national and global sustainability goals, we will actively engage staff, learners, and communities in building a greener future.

Strategic Priority 1

Teaching, Learning and Learners

We will position the ETB as a leader in education and training, delivering excellence through an inclusive, innovative, and learner-centred approach. We are committed to supporting all KWETB students and learners in reaching their full potential while addressing the evolving educational and training needs of our communities, the wider economy, and society.



Goal	Objectives
Foster a quality-driven learning culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthen learner-centred quality assurance systems, uphold standards, and support continuous improvement in teaching and learningImprove our data gathering and research methods to improve decision making

Goal	Objectives
Deliver effectively on and expand our role as Patron	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide continued support to the embedding of the ETB Ethos in all of our schoolsContinue to engage with the Department, parents and other patrons to expand our role as patrons in the primary sector, in particular the promotion of the Community National School model

Goal	Objectives
Provide equal access for all to education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Embed UD and UDL principles to further develop inclusive, flexible and accessible learning environmentsExpand SEN Provision Mapping to support inclusive and data-driven special education leadershipDevelop flexible and inclusive FET and Tertiary pathways to meet diverse learner needs by supporting lifelong learning and progressionContinue to integrate language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills and promote literacy as an essential skill

Goal	Objectives
Strengthen employer and community partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Foster collaboration with employers, industry bodies, and local communities to align skills training with labour market demandsExpand apprenticeship provision working with LEOs, County Councils, and enterprise partners

Goal	Objectives
Deliver effectively on and expand our role as Patron Develop a strategic, integrated FET College Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Optimise resource integration to enhance programme delivery, learner support, and sectoral responsiveness

Strategic Priority 1

Teaching, Learning and Learners

Goal	Objectives
Advance excellence in teaching and learning and establish KWETB as the first choice for education and training for parents, students, learners, and employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue to deliver excellence in teaching and learning practices that are innovative, evidence-based, and responsive to learning needsPromote and integrate emerging pedagogical approaches and develop digital and blended learning

Goal	Objectives
Continue to use our Professional Development resources to meet current and future challenges for Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support the development of new networks and communities of practice where needed to support the roll out of curriculum, course development, quality and state exam reform across FET and schoolsEnhance further the existing networks (Principals, FET Managers and Coordinators, Deputy Principals) and mentoring programmesBuild on the ETB's Erasmus+ Accreditation to expand international partnerships and support staff to engage with inbound and outbound mobilities

Goal	Objectives
Strengthen learner voice through more structured engagement and partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop learner engagement structures and feedback mechanisms to capture the diverse range of learner voices to inform continuous improvement

Goal	Objectives
Provide high quality information, supports, initiatives and guidance counselling to promote student and learner wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilise existing networks in our ETB to share knowledge and implement initiatives to support the wellbeing of our students and learnersEnsure pathways for onward referral for learners are embedded across all school and FET settings as appropriate

Goal	Objectives
Embrace innovative and ethical AI integration in teaching and learning practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a centre of excellence for use of AI in teaching and learning practiceEnsure students use AI ethically in their learning and work practicesEnsure Teaching and Learning uses AI appropriately in the application of pedagogical practice

Goal	Objectives
Strengthen governance and compliance in the provision of Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintain robust governance processes to ensure transparency and accountability in all youth service operations by conducting regular compliance audits and adhering to national programme guidelines, ensuring high integrity and effectiveness

Goal	Objectives
Expand access and participation in Music Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Empower children and young people to realise their full potential by providing inclusive access to high quality performance music education.Foster creativity and self-expression by offering diverse opportunities to create, play, and perform music within their communities



Strategic Priority 2

Human Resource Support and Development

We will position KWETB as a leading public-sector employer by attracting, developing, and retaining skilled staff. Rooted in our values, we will promote a positive, respectful, and inclusive workplace. Through professional development, and support, we will enable staff to excel and contribute to a collaborative learning and working environment.



Goal	Objectives
Continue to build human resource capacity, ensuring we have people with the skills and knowledge to deliver on our statutory mandate and strategic priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre, by developing flexible, innovative and efficient recruitment and on-boarding strategies relevant to our sector• Ensure a strategic and needs-driven approach to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) by identifying key areas for growth within the ETB and aligning CPD initiatives with strategic priorities, thereby reinforcing our commitment to employee development and excellence• Enhance the leadership capacity of our staff by providing tailored leadership development programmes/in-service and related support initiatives

Goal	Objectives
Foster excellence in staff engagement by prioritising internal customer service, clear and transparent staff communication, and good work processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a KWETB Internal staff communications strategy and action plan to keep staff informed, engaged, and to afford all staff easy access to quality information to support their work and employment arrangements• Promote KWETB Customer Service Charter to support excellence in-service to all staff, students and learners

Goal	Objectives
Promote actively a positive values-based workplace culture, including promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion in our ETB	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote actively KWETB values to support a positive and productive workplace culture• Develop and implement our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan as part of our Public Sector Duty, ensuring support for our staff and actively promote a diverse and inclusive workplace• Establish open forums to gather feedback and implementation actions to improve the experience of staff in our ETB

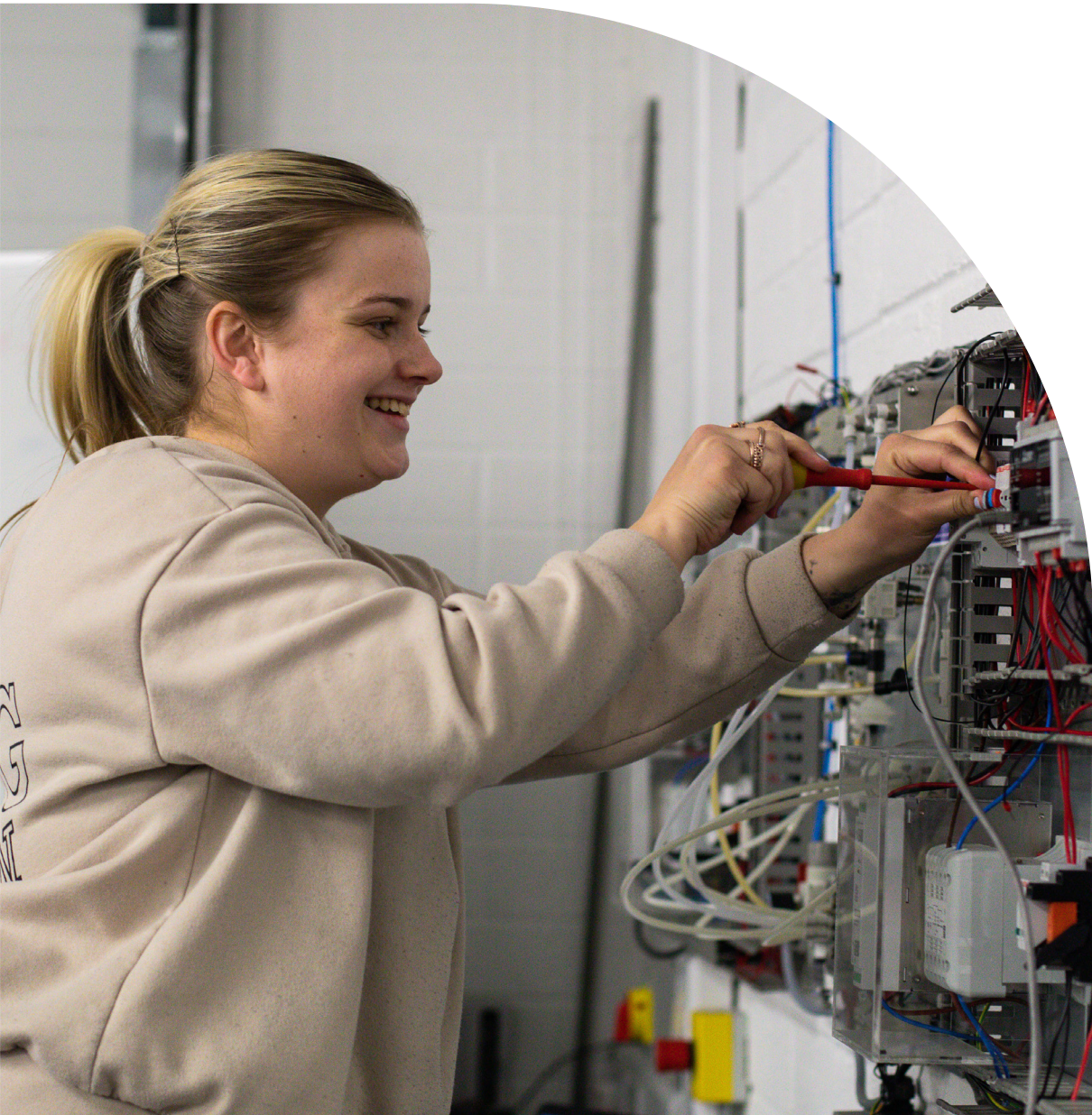
Goal	Objectives
Support Staff Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement a comprehensive Staff Wellbeing Strategy that fosters a culture of health, safety, welfare, and overall well-being for all employees, both individually and collectively across the ETB• Continuously review, explore and implement modern work practices that support organisational goals, productivity, staff fulfilment and wellbeing

Goal	Objectives
Promote inclusion, support equality, actively encourage diversity among our staff and service users, and ultimately deliver on our obligations under Public Sector Duty Legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure Compliance with Government Regulations and Public Sector Duty Legislation• Support education and shared understanding of inclusion and diversity within our ETB• Proactively identify and address obstacles to access, participation and engagement for both students and staff• Promote our ETB as an equal opportunities' employer

Strategic Priority 3

Operational Excellence

We will refine our operations to ensure efficiency, transparency, and accountability in achieving our statutory mandate and strategic goals. With strong governance, responsible resource management, and stakeholder engagement, we will drive continuous improvement and high quality service delivery. Our operations include Finance, Buildings, Procurement, Corporate Services, Human Resources and ICT.



Goal	Objectives
Enhance the effectiveness of the Finance, Human Resources Operations, Buildings, Procurement, ICT and Corporate Services teams performance in the successful delivery of KWETB strategic goals and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimise our processes and procedures ensuring continuous improvement in all aspects of our operations• Maximise employee engagement and development, creating a culture of learning and ensuring employees feel motivated, valued and empowered to contribute their best work• Deliver consistently high quality services that exceed our stakeholder expectations, building strong relationships and ensuring satisfaction• Enhance existing risk management systems through audit review, performance tracking, and risk assessments to proactively identify and address vulnerabilities, ensuring long-term operational stability• Increase levels of automation of manual processes ensuring good responsiveness and service efficiencies

Goal	Objectives
Facilitate and optimise the creation, storage, processing, transmission, and secure access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimise KWETB ICT infrastructure to enable seamless and secure access to information resources• Develop and deploy a strategy to upgrade and consolidate KWETB network domains with disaster recovery embedded

Goal	Objectives
Protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information and systems in a networked environment, including safeguarding data, communication channels, and ICT infrastructure from various threats like unauthorised access, cyberattacks, data breaches, and service disruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement a strategy to reduce cyber threat risk through the planning, implementation and maintenance of an Information Security Management System that fully complies with the Cyber Security Baseline Standards and 365 security recommendations• Drive centralised and streamlined cloud adoption to meet the business needs of KWETB• Develop and deploy a strategy to optimise secure mobile and remote access

Strategic Priority 3

Operational Excellence

Goal	Objectives
Ensure KWETB has the ability to maintain essential processes before, during and after a disaster	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitate the development and implementation of a Business Continuity Plan (BCP)Facilitate the development and implementation of a Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP)

Goal	Objectives
Improve efficiency and effectiveness of our teams by embracing the opportunity provided by Artificial Intelligence (AI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop our functional teams' capability to take advantage of the opportunity provided by AIImprove efficiency and effectiveness of our operations by embracing the opportunity provided by Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Goal	Objectives
Enhance communication and stakeholder engagement to promote understanding, collaboration and delivery of our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improve communications and promotion of our services through a communications strategy for KWETB for both internal and external communications, PR and marketing initiativesDevelop strong relationships with key stakeholders by implementing a structured framework for communication with educational partners, community groups and local representativesCommunicate our ETB values and support a shared understanding of these values in practice to support good decision making and ethical behaviours in our ETBReview, develop and enhance our systems, policies and protocols to ensure the effectiveness and accessibility of our internal communicationsDeliver on KWETBs targets under the Irish Languages Scheme and promotion of the Irish Language

Goal	Objectives
Mitigate Financial Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhance payment controls to mitigate against the risk of fraudulent or inappropriate paymentsImplement a strategy to eliminate prompt payment interest and penalties in schools and centresDevelop and implement best practice in school and centre finance management

Goal	Objectives
Deliver and maintain high quality physical learning and working environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish a scalable Programme Management Office and develop a Programme and Project Management Resource toolkitDevelop a single source of data for effective ongoing building management and capital worksDevelop and implement a comprehensive, centralised, Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) programme



Strategic Priority 4

Environment and Sustainability

To integrate sustainability into all aspects of our operations, ensuring environmentally responsible practices across our facilities, services and activities, we are committed to reducing our environmental impact, promoting resource efficiency and fostering a culture of sustainability. This includes actively supporting initiatives that contribute to a greener future and align with national and global environmental goals, while engaging our staff, learners and communities in environmental stewardship.



Goal	Objectives
By 2030, ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand green skills training and environmental literacy across all educational programmes to meet the evolving demands of Ireland’s low-carbon economy• Embed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in education and training by promoting the use of ESD pedagogies• Develop leadership of ESD and build the capacity of educators to embed ESD in curricula by promoting Professional Development and sharing of good practice• Promote environmentally responsible practices and develop critical thinking on sustainability challenges to accelerate local level actions by empowering learners

Goal	Objectives
By 2030, reduce energy related greenhouse gas emissions by 51% and improve energy efficiency by 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement an Energy Efficiency and Sustainability action plan for KWETB, in line with the programme for Government and the national climate action strategy• Establish and embed an Energy Management Culture and awareness across KWETB

Goal	Objectives
Transform learning environments to advance sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage energetically and collaboratively with schools and centres as part of the Sustainability Working Group to ensure that national targets and potential reductions in energy consumption are identified and supported• Encourage sustainable learning environments to reduce our carbon footprint and waste and improve water conservation by raising awareness• Promote biodiversity initiatives, active and green travel, and action projects engaging learners and staff in sustainability• Support Ireland’s 2030 SDG agenda by working to align policies, practices, and programmes

Goal	Objectives
Procure high quality, sustainable, value for money goods and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement a procurement Contracts Management System and process• Procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle through the inclusion of Green Public Procurement criteria in our tender competitions• Eliminate non-compliant expenditure by 2029

Goal	Objectives
Strengthen partnerships for sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to collaborate with industry and key stakeholders to further develop courses, qualifications, and resources, positioning the ETB as a leader in sustainability and green skills education and training



Our Way of Working

In delivering the goals and objectives, KWETB commits to a way of working that is built on a foundation of integrity, transparency, and a deep commitment to high quality public service and value for money. We are committed to strengthening our work collaboratively across all pillars of our organisation. Supporting strong relationships and enabling collaboration so that our schools, Further Education and Training (FET), and Organisational Support and Development (OSD) teams are connected in delivering the best possible outcomes for learners, staff and the communities we serve.

Our Way of Working

Governance

At the heart of our work is good governance, ensuring that decision-making is open, accountable, and evidence based. We uphold the highest standards of ethical oversight, risk management, and compliance, ensuring that our operations are efficient, transparent, and responsive to the evolving needs of learners, stakeholders and society.

Embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We are committed to promoting equality, human rights, and inclusion in all aspects of our work. By ensuring that our programmes and services reflect the diverse needs of learners, we actively work to remove barriers to participation and create pathways that are fair, accessible, and learner centred. Throughout the lifespan of this strategy, we will strengthen collaboration across our schools, FET, and OSD teams to deliver more accessible, flexible and inclusive pathways in education and training, promoting lifelong learning and progression.

Collaboration and Communication

We believe that working together across all areas of our organisation enhances our ability to deliver high quality education and training. Respect and collaboration define how we work together, fostering a positive, supportive, and inclusive workplace. Through shared learning and collaboration, we create an environment where ideas can develop, learner and staff voices are heard, and innovation thrives.

Effective communication is key to our success. We engage openly, respectfully, and transparently with all stakeholders, using clear, accessible, and inclusive communication to build trust, strengthen partnerships, and ensure that our services are well understood and responsive to the needs of our communities.



Sustainability and Responsible Resource Management

Ensuring value for money is a fundamental principle of our work. We are committed to efficient resource management, prioritising strategic decisions that deliver the best possible outcomes for our learners and communities. Sustainability is central to our approach, as we work to minimise our environmental impact, use resources responsibly, and embed long-term sustainability in everything we do.

Digitisation, Innovation, and Transformation

We embrace digital transformation and innovation as key drivers of learner-centred, accessible, and future-focused education and training. We integrate technology and data-driven insights to enhance learning experience, improve service delivery, and streamline operations. We are actively exploring the potential of Artificial Intelligence to strengthen teaching and learning approaches while optimising administrative processes for greater efficiency and impact. Our commitment to AI is grounded in ethical and responsible use, ensuring transparency, inclusivity, and compliance with regulatory obligations. By continuously evolving to meet emerging trends and learner needs, we ensure that learners, staff, and stakeholders benefit from progressive and responsive education and training solutions.

By embedding these principles into our daily work and strengthening collaboration across our organisation, we create flexible and accessible education and learning pathways that support lifelong learning and career progression. Our way of working is underpinned by our core values, ensuring that everything we do is learner centred. KWETB remains committed to delivering value for money, high quality, responsible, and sustainable education and training services that align with the Programme for Government and meet the needs of our learners, industry, society and the communities we serve.



Overview of KWETB Services

Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) is a state-funded authority responsible for providing high quality, inclusive, and lifelong learning opportunities across Kildare and Wicklow. Our four directorates—Schools, Further Education and Training (FET), and two directorates within Organisation Support and Development (OSD)—work together to ensure that learners receive the best possible education, training, and supports.

As a publicly accountable provider, we are committed to delivering equality-based and inclusive, learner-centred education and training that supports all KWETB students and learners in reaching their full potential. Our schools and FET services provide progression pathways ensuring access to learning for all.

KWETB actively collaborates with local and national stakeholders, and international partners, including government departments, local authorities, higher education institutions, enterprise agencies, industry bodies, and community organisations, to align our services with regional, national, and EU priorities.



We provide a wide range of education and training programmes and services, including but not limited to:

Education and Training

- Schools: Community Colleges, Gaelcholáistí, Community National Schools, Special School and School Completion Programmes
- Regional Education and Language Teams (REALT)
- Further Education and Training, and Tertiary Programmes: FET Colleges and Centres, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Industry-Led Skills Training, Adult Education Services, and Progression Pathways to Higher Education
- Adult and Community Education
- Youth Services
- Outdoor Education
- Prison Education
- Sports Promotion
- Music Generation

Organisation Support & Development (OSD)

The OSD directorate, led by two directors, underpins the work of Schools and FET providing essential administrative, operational services, managerial and strategic support, ensuring all functions are efficiently managed.

OSD is responsible for key services that support the effective operation of education and training provision, including:

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Corporate Services and Governance
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- Buildings
- Procurement

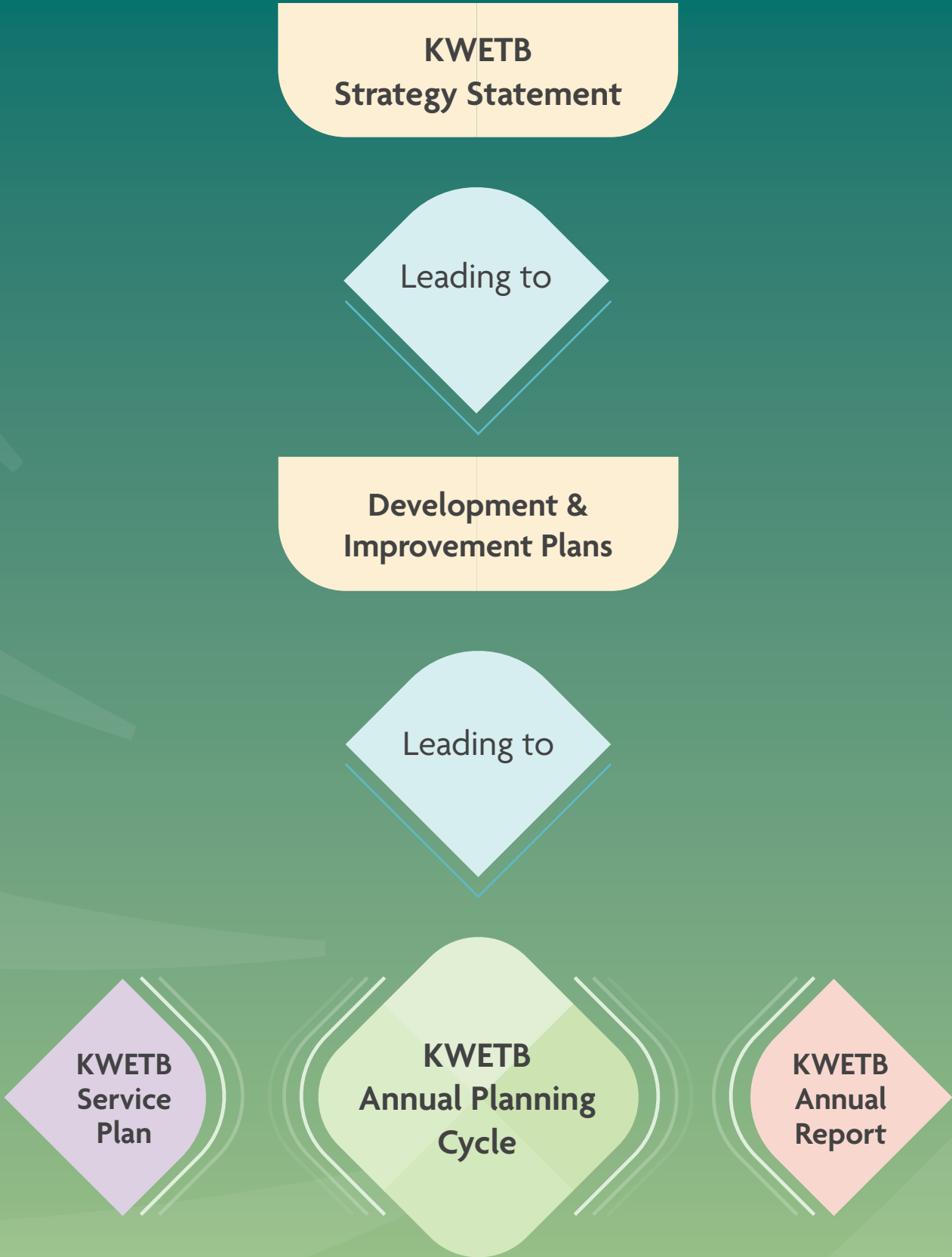
For more information on our full range of services and supports, visit our website **[kwetb.ie](https://www.kwetb.ie)**

Implementation and Monitoring

These goals, priorities, and actions will form the foundation for implementation plans within each area of the organisation. Actions from these plans will be integrated into the annual Service Plans, which will be approved each year by the ETB Board and reported on in the Annual Report. The Annual Report will be submitted to the Department of Education, other funding bodies as relevant and will be published. The organisation is committed to this 5-year Strategy Statement, its execution will depend on available resources.

Resources needed to implement the Strategy will come from current operational budgets, and additional funding will be pursued if necessary. We recognise that government policy changes, financial pressures, and budget constraints may arise during this period, requiring adjustments to our strategy and plans.

The Chief Executive and Directors will regularly track progress and provide updates to the ETB Board as needed. Additionally, a formal Performance Delivery Agreement has been signed between the Department of Education and Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board. This agreement ensures that resources are used efficiently to deliver high quality education and training services. It aligns with the Department's and ETB's goals, setting specific targets for the ETB each year. The agreement also outlines performance indicators to measure the ETB's progress and describes how the Department will support the ETB in achieving its goals and outcomes.





Appendices

Appendix 1

Strategy Development and Stakeholder Consultations

KWETB commenced the development of its strategy statement in January 2024 with a mission to set out a strategy for the future development of education, training, youth work, and support services that built on the achievements of the previous strategy. A reflective session, 'Framing our Statement of Strategy 2025-29', for the ETB's Leadership and Management Forum, a representative forum of senior leaders within the organisation, was facilitated in January 2024 which served as a review of the previous strategy. It was identified by those in attendance that the strategy had brought the organisation together and clearly established core priorities but that it may have been slightly too operationally-focussed. The key lessons that were learned from the development and implementation of the previous strategy that should influence the development of the new strategy included a recognition that the strategy statement should involve more than merely bringing together existing national sectoral strategies for example while more realism needed to be brought to bear in identifying the actual parameters of resourcing and scoping. It was recognised that the strategy statement should represent added value for the organisation and that the whole should be more than the sum of the parts from an organisational perspective.

The Leadership and Management Forum also initiated the identification of key elements for inclusion in the new strategy statement with a focus on retaining the focus on quality, teaching and learning and customer service as part of continuity from the previous to the new strategy. There was a strong desire to see a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and sustainability as core to the new strategy as they were seen very much as reflective of the enduring core values of the ETB. There was also an emerging emphasis on ways of working including a strong focus on communication and collaborative working underpinned by cross-organisation or cross-pillar working to enable the ETB to maximise its impact. The importance of stakeholders – especially learners, students and staff – was emphasised.

The reflective sessions by the Leadership and Management Forum was followed by the establishment of a Strategy Development Team in March 2024 which drew representation from across the organisation. The Strategy Development Team was tasked with managing the holistic process of developing the strategy under the leadership of the Chief Executive. It was decided to draw on internal resources in the development process rather than rely on external resources in order to ensure that the strategy statement reflected the values of the ETB and demonstrated a strategic in-depth understanding of the organisation's capabilities and potential for development.



Appendices

Appendix 1

Strategy Development and Stakeholder Consultations

Following the reflective initiation, the consultation phase was commenced in May 2024 with engagement with the KWETB Board members in line with the requirements of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013; the purpose of this engagement was to identify the key stakeholders who should be consulted and to give an opportunity for the members to identify key considerations in this regard. Following this, it was decided to conduct a series of Stakeholder Engagements throughout the summer and autumn of 2024 commencing with an online survey using MS Forms of the ETB Nominating Bodies, Youth and Community Groups, Employer Groups and Industry, County Councils, Trade Unions and other Public Bodies. This survey was also made available to members of the public through publication on the ETB's website.

The consultation then focussed on internal stakeholders with a particular emphasis on in-person consultation with FET learners and school students; this reflected a clear direction identified by both the Leadership and Management Forum and the KWETB Board members to ensure that the learner voice remained central to strategy development. Recognising the importance of the wider ETB community, the Parents' Associations were consulted with through a survey cascade supported by the ETB's Principals. A comprehensive survey with a focus on values and actions to be included in the new strategy was shared with all members of KWETB staff using MS Forms. Finally, the ETB's Senior Leadership were consulted in a seminar which took place in October 2024.

The Strategy Development Group had taken a tactical decision to ensure that the content of the consultation was consistent across each of the stakeholder groups. This allowed for a meta-analysis of the data, which would be more strategically useful to the process, rather than an overly-granular approach where divergence rather than consistency of direction might emerge. Accordingly, there was consistent common ground in the future strategic direction of the ETB identified by the stakeholders. It is notable that in keeping with the initial reflective review that there was perhaps an equal concern with ways of working as with actions to be taken in the stakeholder consultation.

The feedback from the consultations was a very valuable source of input for the development of the strategy with a very strong focus on the organisation's values with respect and inclusion coming very much to the fore across the consultation. The focus from all stakeholders was on values and how the ETB works rather than specific strategic actions; stakeholders expressed a desire to see a focus on communications, both internally and externally; increased connectivity across the organisation's pillars to build on developments including hybrid working and increased use of emerging technologies; and an affirming of the enduring core focus of the ETB on community relationships. There was strong recognition of the progress of the ETB in the governance space. There was an emphasis on the importance of the learner voice and the organisation internally challenging itself to demonstrate this through its work on a day-to-day basis; the importance of staff engagement and support was reflected throughout which ties in with the emphasis on connectivity and communications. Additionally, there was a real recognition and desire for the ETB to hold its ethos and values as central to its work and to be a leader in this space. There was a strong expectation that there would be a very clear link from the ETB's values with its strategic actions.

The feedback from the consultations was shared at the ETB's Senior Leadership consultation seminar in October 2024; indeed, the analysis of the feedback from the consultation helped to shape the seminar itself. Drawing on the importance of the ETB's values and ethos, the seminar commenced with a keynote from the Chief Executive capturing the purpose of the strategy statement and how it could be shaped; the reflections on the previous strategy; and the wider contextual considerations which might shape the ETB's strategy. The members of the Senior Leadership of the ETB were then facilitated by Dr. Seamus Conboy, ETBI Director of Schools (Community National Schools and Patronage) to reflect on the organisation's values and to identify core values which should be included in the new strategy. Finally, those in attendance were asked to reflect on the existing four strategic pillars of the strategy, including identifying any gaps, and to propose key actions for inclusion under the pillars for the new strategy.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Strategy Development and Stakeholder Consultations

Continuing the engagement and consultation phase, the Strategy Development Team presented their progress and direction to the new KWETB Board members for feedback in November 2024; this was particularly important given that the Board was the new incoming one established in the summer of 2024. In December 2024, there was a joint meeting of the ETB’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group with a focus on refining and defining the organisation’s values, drawing on the consultation feedback and input; the EDI Working Group undertook to draft value statements for inclusion in the strategy on behalf of the organisation.

Throughout the consultation phase, there had been regular briefings of the Senior Management Team with a focus on the direction of travel of the strategy and high-level decision-making including with regard to the mission, vision and values, and strategic pillars; in December, the final briefing regarding consultation was completed and the drafting phase of the process was formally commenced. (The Strategy Development Team also formed two working sub-groups at this point; one to draft the strategy itself and the second to manage the design and publication of the strategy.) Drawing on the inputs and consultation completed, each Director was invited to draft strategic goals and associated objectives under each of the pillars of strategic priority. In January 2025, the strategy drafting working sub-group completed the first draft of the strategy statement for further consultation.

It is evident from the breadth and depth of the engagement in the development of this strategy statement that there is a deep commitment to reflective and rigorous strategy development amongst all of the ETB’s stakeholders, internal and external, and an enduring adherence to the importance of ensuring that the organisation’s values are explicitly expressed through that development. The mission, vision, and values; ways of working; and strategic priorities, goals and objectives presented in our Strategy Statement are reflective of that engagement and commitment and are presented fully within that context.

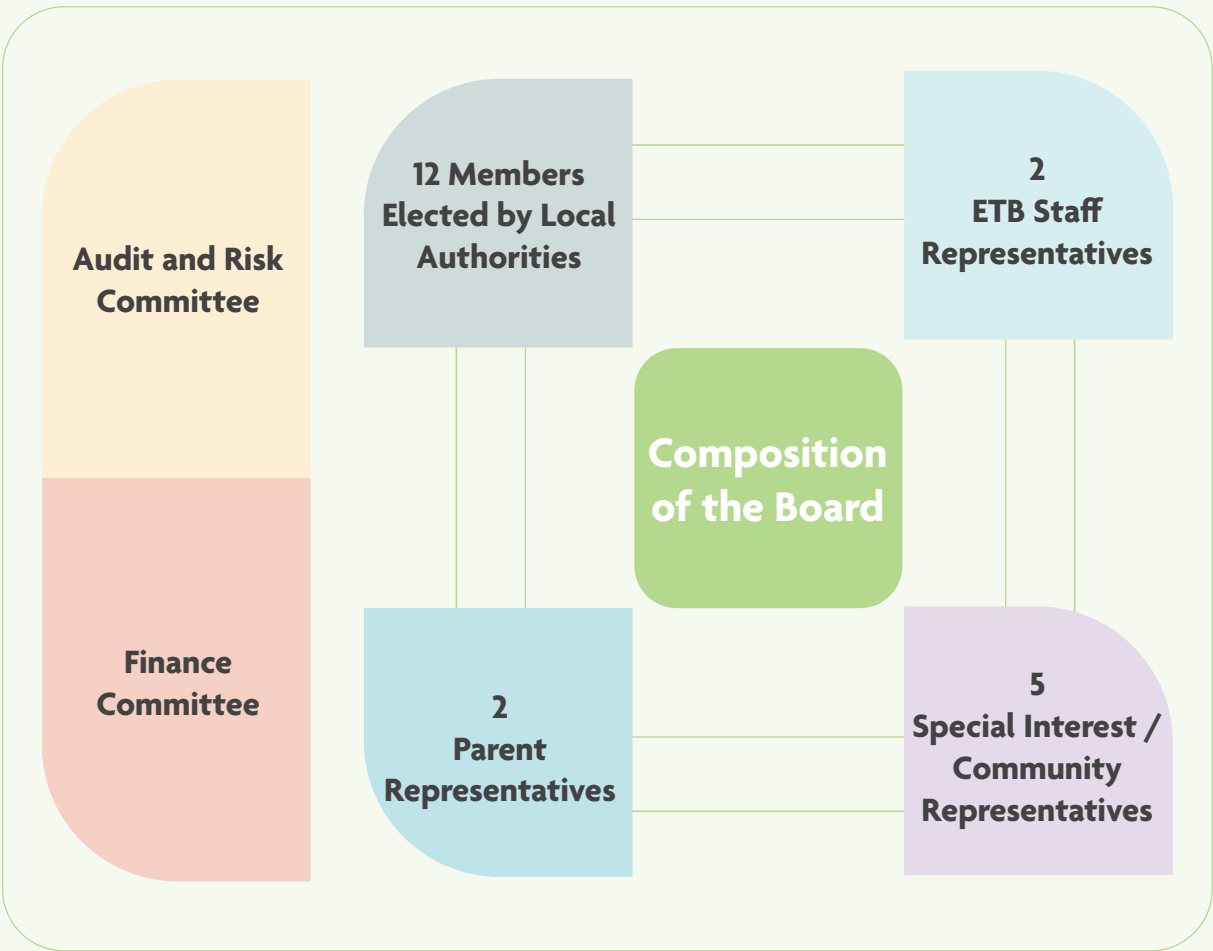
Timeline

<ul style="list-style-type: none">KWETB commenced the development of its Strategy Statement with Leadership and Management Forum	January 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Formation of Internal Strategy Development TeamInitiate Strategy Consultation with Former ETB Board	March 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Consultation with Stakeholders: Digital SurveysLaunch of Public Consultation on Website	May - November 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facilitation of Learner Voice Focus Groups	September 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Data Analysis with Presentation of Findings to SMT and the ETB Board	September - November 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Formation of Writing and Publication Groups within Strategy Development Team	September 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Senior Leadership Consultation Day with Presentation of Preliminary Feedback from Stakeholder Consultations	October 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus Groups and Decision on Strategic Priorities, Values and Guiding Principles by SMT	October - December 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus Group with EDI Working Group on Values	December 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Approval of Strategy Statement by CE and SMTPresentation to the Board for Final Approval	March 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Official Launch of the Strategy Statement 2025 - 2029	May 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Implementation, Monitoring and Review	2025 - 2029

Appendices

Appendix 2

ETB Board Members - KWETB Board



ETB Board Members

In compliance with the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, the Board of Kildare and Wicklow ETB is comprised of 21 members; 12 local authority members, 2 parent representatives, 2 staff representatives and 5 special interest representatives, presented below. Listed are our Board Members and the specified bodies from which they were nominated;

- Cllr. Paul O'Brien (Chairperson), Wicklow County Council
- Cllr. Evie Sammon (Deputy Chairperson), Kildare County Council
- Cllr. Tom Fortune, Wicklow County Council
- Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Wicklow County Council
- Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin, Wicklow County Council
- Cllr. John Snell, Wicklow County Council
- Cllr. Nuala Killeen, Kildare County Council
- Cllr. Claire O'Rourke, Kildare County Council
- Cllr. Rupert Heather, Kildare County Council
- Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick, Kildare County Council
- Cllr. David Trost, Kildare County Council
- Cllr. Brendan Wyse, Kildare County Council
- Stephen Horan, Staff Representative
- Elaine Finnerty, Staff Representative
- Lisa Campbell, Parent Representative
- John Cullen, Parent Representative
- Tom Russell, Down Syndrome Ireland
- Anne Ferris, THEA – Technological Higher Education Association
- Maria Barry, Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools (ACCS) / Joint Managerial Body (JMB)
- Eamon O'Flaherty, Institute of Professional Auctioneers and Valuers (IPAV)
- Carol Nolan, Horse Racing Ireland (HRI)

Appendices

Appendix 2

Finance Committee

As per section 45 of the ETB Act, the Finance Committee is established to assist the Board in its responsibilities in relation to financial matters. The committee members are presented below.

- Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin, Board member
- Cllr. David Trost, Board member
- Lisa Campbell, Board member
- Debbie Howlett, External member
- Martina Robinson, External member

Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

In accordance with Section 45 of the ETB Act, the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) support the Board in relation to internal control, risk management and audit. The committee members are presented below.

- Paul McEvoy, External member
- Alan Richardson, External member
- Ailish Byrne, External member
- Cllr. Aoife Flynn Kennedy, Board member
- Cllr. David Trost, Board member
- Maria Barry, Board member

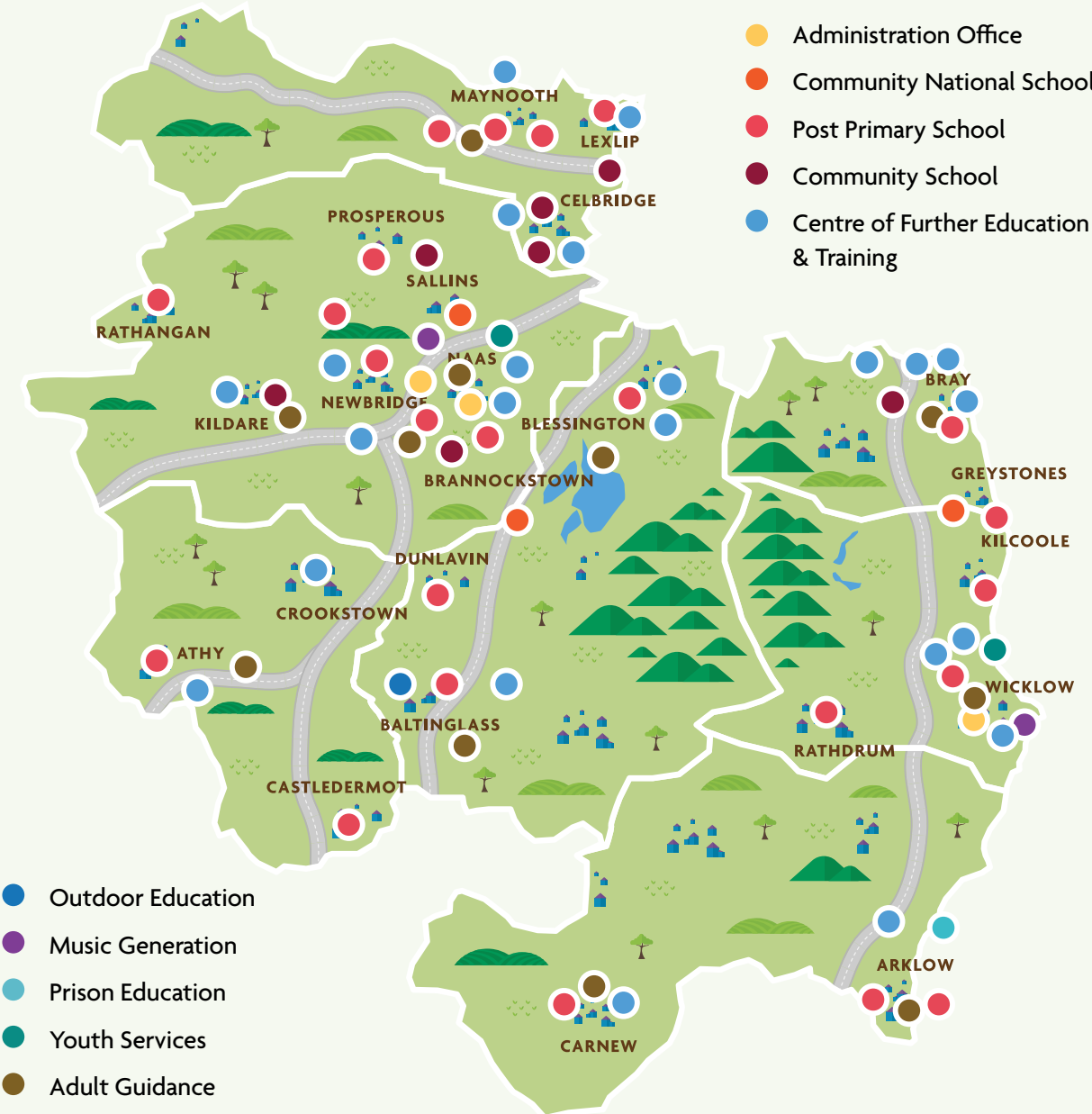
Any updates to membership of the KWETB Board or Committees will be published on our website, please refer to the *Board Composition and Committees* page for the most up to date list of membership.

Appendix 3

Our Schools and Further Education and Training Centres

KWETB Map of Schools and Further Education and Training Locations

An interactive map of Kildare and Wicklow is available on our website, where KWETB's locations and services are listed with contact details included.





Appendices

Appendix 4

Abbreviations

KWETB use many abbreviations and acronyms, both inherited and unique to KWETB. We keep this list live on our website. Should you find any common abbreviations or acronyms missing from this list, we would welcome your feedback to remedy this, please contact us at admin@kwetb.ie to advise. Please find our full list of acronyms published on our website www.kwetb.ie.

Appendix 5

Legislative Sources and Documentation

The Legislation reference:

- Education and Training Boards Act 2013
- Further Education and Training Act 2013
- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012
- Education Act 1998
- Education (Welfare) Act 2000
- Youth Work Act 2001
- EPSEN Act 2004
- Children First Act 2015
- Equal Status Act 2000 & 2004
- Official Languages Act 2003
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014



Appendices

Appendix 5

Legislative Sources and Documentation

The government documents referenced in the text are:

- Department of Education Statement of Strategy 2023-2025
- DFHERIS Statement of Strategy 2023-2025
- SOLAS Further Education and Training Strategy 2025-2029
- Department of Education Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines
- Public Sector Climate Action Strategy 2023-2025
- Green Skills 2030
- Opportunities for Youth: National Strategy for Youth Work and Related Services 2024-2028
- Housing for All
- Adult Literacy for Life Strategy
- Framework for Junior Cycle Reform
- Digital Strategy for Schools
- Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)
- Disability Action Plan 2024-2026
- Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024-2030
- Strategy on Leadership and Management in Schools
- Action Plan for Jobs
- Pathways to Work
- Patronage of Community National Schools (since 2016)
- Government policy on Patronage of Primary Schools
- Project 2040 National Development Plan 2021-2030
- EMRA’s Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
- National Skills Strategy 2025
- EU Education and Training 2020 Strategic Framework (ET2020)

Notes



BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
CHILL DARA AGUS CHILL MHANTÁIN

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