

Governance Unit	FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice)
Document	Terms of Reference
Approved by/Date	FET Quality Council: Chief Executive signature:
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PURPOSE OF THE FET QUALITY COUNCIL SUB-GROUP (Stakeholder Voice)

The purpose of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group for Stakeholder Voice is to fulfil the role and responsibilities delegated to it by the FET Quality Council, for the development and promotion of stakeholder engagement in relation to further education and training programmes and the related activities of Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB). KWETB FET services are committed to the equitable participation of students as key partners in the development of these services and to the ongoing inclusion and participation of students in all aspects of quality assurance. KWETB will provide supports to ensure that students participating in these processes are enabled to do so to ensure fair representation. KWETB is committed to engaging with external stakeholders such as employers; regulatory bodies; awarding bodies; State agencies; community groups and potential European project partners to determine and fulfil the strategic goals of KWETB.

FET QUALITY COUNCIL SUB-GROUP (Stakeholder Voice) TERMS OF REFERENCE

The FET Quality Council of KWETB has delegated certain governance responsibilities to the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice), as detailed below. The FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) is accountable to the FET Quality Council for carrying out its functions, regardless of whether working groups are formed to advance these tasks.

The FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) is responsible for the following:

Operational matters

- Due to the role of this sub-group in establishing connections with stakeholders, the operations of the group should be as informal and welcoming as possible to enable positive, open dialogue, interaction and sharing – the focus is on sharing; creativity and innovation, as well as establishing an environment which is conducive to building constructive relationships relevant to the KWETB strategy.
- Agreeing its operating procedures in consultation with the Chair and Secretary of the FET Quality Council
- Establishing sub-groups or working groups to advance stakeholder engagement related matters, if required
- Making recommendations to the FET Quality Council to inform its decision making and in line with its terms of reference
- Preparing an Annual Report for the FET Quality Council on key decisions and actions taken, and making associated recommendations to the FET Quality Council, as appropriate

- Participating in the review of its terms of reference and formally making recommendations to the FET Quality Council as appropriate
- The FET Quality Council and each of its sub-groups will promote and raise awareness of the functions of the Governance Groups charged with governance of quality.
- Exercising any other functions, which may be formally delegated to it by the FET Quality Council.

Developing initiatives to ensure engagement with key stakeholders

- KWETB FET Stakeholders include students; trainees and apprentices; employers; and external agencies and partners. In this document, the term 'students' covers all learners and people availing of KWETB's FET services, across all kinds of centres and provision.
- Explore good practice for stakeholder engagement through interacting with State agencies.
- Develop a thematic programme for engagement/workplan
- Establish strategies for regular and consistent engagement with stakeholders to give them a voice that will inform the development and improvement of KWETB's FET services.
- Provide opportunities for students to participate and give their opinions on key thematic areas, and to raise thematic areas that are appropriate for consideration. (*Thematic areas will include, for example, reviews of education and training programmes; student experience; programme development; overall development of FET services*).
- Provide opportunities for students to participate in consultation.
- Develop and provide mechanisms for consultation with employer and community stakeholders on strategic and operational activities.
- Collaborate with the QA Sub-group to recommend policies and procedures regarding stakeholder engagement to the FET Quality Council for approval.
- Review and recommend standard tools for communication with students, including systems for gathering feedback regularly.
- Conduct regular meetings with selected groups of stakeholders. This is operational.
- Identify and provide training for students to encourage their further participation in governance of QA groups.
- Appraise the FET Management Team and Quality Council of forthcoming consultations at national level and lead participation in these.
- Participate in engagements with external bodies or agencies, and organise student and staff input into these.
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Monitoring and review responsibilities

- Document meetings and interactions with students and other stakeholders
- Record and document outcomes to inform recommendations to the Quality Council
- Report regularly to the FET Quality Council on activities and escalate findings where appropriate.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE FET QUALITY COUNCIL SUB-GROUP (Stakeholder Voice)

Chair: The Chair is appointed by the Chief Executive (CE) and can be internal or external.

Secretary: The Secretary is appointed by the CE and should be an individual capable of liaising closely with the Secretary of the FET Quality Council and with any sub-groups of governance or working

groups that are reporting to the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice), or other groups providing information to inform the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice).

Ordinary members

- Normally up to six staff members with relevant experience from across KWETB, as the CE determines appropriate.
- One representative from the FET Quality Council
- Invited stakeholders will be invited to participate in dialogue - the group will operate an 'open door approach' to these invitations.

External Members

In the first cycle of this sub-group, students and other stakeholders will be invited to address the Stakeholder Voice Sub-group on specific themes.

Additional Expertise

From time to time, the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) may request that the Secretary source specialist expertise to inform its deliberations if necessary.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

The responsibilities of the Chair of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) include:

- Working closely with the Secretary to agree meeting agendas
- Ensuring meetings function efficiently and effectively
- Providing adequate time for discussion of agenda items
- Ensuring that members have been provided with materials in advance of the meeting to support informed decision-making
- Ensuring that a quorum is present before commencing a FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) meeting
- Ensuring that decisions are taken in the context of the remit of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) and that they are recorded.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary is a full member of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice). His/her responsibilities include:

- Agreeing a schedule of meetings with the Chair in consultation with members and having regard to the business of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) and the meeting dates of the FET Quality Council
- Convening meetings of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) and determining the agenda of the meetings, in consultation with the Chair
- Circulating the agendas for meetings, associated documentation and reports for review by FET Quality Council (Stakeholder Voice) Sub-Group members

- Liaising with the Secretary of the FET Quality Council, and managing a smooth flow of information
- Preparing draft minutes of meetings and circulating these to members
- Liaising with and inviting a range of stakeholders to meetings
- Ensuring that the decisions of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) are made known to the appropriate individuals/governance units
- Reporting to the Chair on the implementation of the decisions of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice)
- Ensuring that membership terms are managed, and new member induction/briefing provided.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

- The FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) will meet at least six times per year (it is recommended that it meet eight times in its first year).
- Duration of membership: Members are expected to commit four years to the Quality Council and/or its sub-groups. Opportunities to review or adjust membership will be provided for every two years, in December of each calendar year. There is a maximum turnover of 50% of the members (i.e. staff and learner representatives) per cycle to maintain the knowledge base within the group. Where members need to step down for personal reasons at any time during the year, force majeure can be applied. A formal communication to the Chair of the Quality Council or Sub-group is required in advance of a resignation.
- In order for a quorum to be established, 50% of members plus one additional member must be in attendance
- The meeting agenda and supporting documentation must be circulated to members at least **one week** in advance of a scheduled meeting and external members may be invited to present agenda items
- Decisions are made by consensus or by the exercise of a vote if necessary. The Chair has the deciding vote in the event of a split decisions
- Meeting outcomes are recorded and circulated in draft form within **two weeks** of a meeting
- The minutes of meetings are approved at the beginning of the subsequent meeting of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice)
- Confirmed minutes are submitted for noting to the next meeting of the FET Quality Council. In some cases, at the discretion of the Chair, an incorporeal meeting of the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) may be held where reports can be circulated virtually and accepted by members without the FET Quality Council Sub-Group (Stakeholder Voice) having to meet.
- Incorporeal meetings only take place in the event of an emergency and are normally held over phones or e-mail. The incorporeal meeting should be followed up immediately by a written note recording the decision of attendees.

