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KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Service Plan 2026

Plean Seirbhíse 2026



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Message from Chairperson

On behalf of the Board of Kildare and Wicklow ETB (KWETB), I am pleased to present the Service Plan 2026, developed in accordance with KWETB's statutory obligations as set out in Section 47 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 (the Act).

In accordance with the Act, the KWETB Finance Committee reviewed and recommended the Service Plan 2026 for adoption at a meeting held on 18th February 2026. The committee monitor the implementation of the Service Plan at regular intervals throughout the year, keeping the Board and Executive updated on progress and targets as set out. The Board of KWETB subsequently adopted the Service Plan 2026 on 24th February 2026.

A wide range of planned activities in the directorates of Schools, Further Education and Training and Organisation Support and Development are set out in the Service Plan 2026. Related financial information and budgetary projections are also included in Service Plan 2026 as per the Act. Aligned with KWETB's Strategy Statement, KWETB remains committed to providing high-quality education and training, upholding the highest standards of governance, fostering sustainability, and ensuring operational excellence. These objectives are central to the vision for 2026, with a focus on continuous development of our organisation and enhancement of our services to meet the evolving educational and training needs of our students, learners, society, and the broader economy.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of all staff of KWETB and their individual and collective contributions and continued commitment to KWETB and the communities they serve.

Cllr. Paul O'Brien

Chairperson KWETB



Message from Chief Executive

Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) is the leading provider of education and training services within Kildare and Wicklow serving over 25,000 young people and adults each year. Our provision includes primary, post-primary and special schools, Further Education and Training (FET), Youth Services and Outdoor Education. In addition, we co-ordinate and support programmes such as Music Generation, School Completion and many other local training and development initiatives, including the Local Alcohol and Drugs Task Force programmes. KWETB also continues to co-ordinate the work of the Regional Education and Language Teams (REALTs) as established and funded by the Department of Education and Youth (DEY).

We contribute positively to the socio-economic development of our communities by delivering high-quality, inclusive and learner-centred education and training services. KWETB remains committed to providing responsive, sustainable services aligned with the needs of learners, communities and employers within an evolving environment. Our work is delivered to the highest standards and in line with funding provided by the DEY, SOLAS, the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Department of Children, Disability and Equality, and the European Social Fund.

This Service Plan outlines our priorities for 2026 and aligns with the KWETB Strategy Statement 2025–2029. These priorities reflect the views of our stakeholders and respond to the changing social, economic and demographic landscape of Kildare and Wicklow. We remain focused on delivering high-quality education, training and youth services, underpinned by good governance and value for money. Our work is guided by key strategic pillars including teaching and learning, human resource support and development, operational excellence, environment and sustainability.

KWETB remains committed to the promotion of equality and human rights in line with our public sector duty as set out in the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act of 2014. Our core values of inclusion, respect, equality, integrity, excellence and community underpin all aspects of our work. Clear communication and consistent implementation of these values are central to our organisational culture and to meeting our statutory and ethical obligations.

Our estimated expenditure for 2026 is €242 million, supporting a workforce of approximately 2,865 staff and the delivery of services across 3 Community National Schools, 1 Special School, 23 post-primary schools and 25 FET Centre's which serve over 17,000 FET learners and beneficiaries.

The successful delivery of the programmes and initiatives outlined in this Service Plan will rely on the professionalism, commitment and dedication of our staff, Board members and stakeholder groups. I sincerely thank them for their continued hard work and dedication to providing high-quality education, training, and learning opportunities across Kildare and Wicklow.



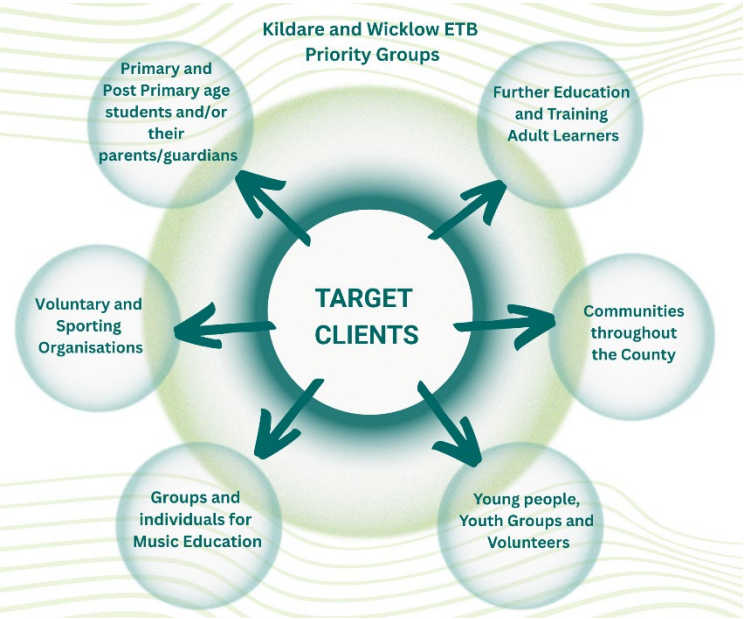
Dr. Deirdre Keyes

Chief Executive

Profile of Kildare and Wicklow ETB

Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board (KWETB) was established on 1st July 2013 under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013. KWETB under its remit has responsibility for the delivery of education and training throughout counties Kildare and Wicklow. It has a corporate structure made up of a democratically appointed committee 'the Board' and a management team ('the Executive').

Kildare and Wicklow ETB serve a population of approximately 403,625, representing approximately 8% of the national population. Census data highlights sustained and significant population growth across the KWETB area, with growth of 10.6% since the most recent census and 16.3% over the past ten years, above the State average. In population terms, KWETB is the second fastest growing ETB nationally and the fourth largest. This long-term growth trend has seen the KWETB population grow at twice the national average since 1981, reflecting strong and continuing demand for education and training services across the region.



The area served by KWETB extends across the counties of Kildare and Wicklow, stretching from Carnew in South County Wicklow to Maynooth in North County Kildare. The region combines diverse landscapes and population patterns from the imposing natural landscape of the Wicklow Mountains and the plains of County Kildare between. KWETB's catchment area includes both major urban centres such as Maynooth, Naas, Bray, Greystones alongside numerous towns and villages and extensive rural hinterlands with low density population. This geographical mix presents unique challenges and opportunities in the planning and delivery of education, training and community services across both counties.

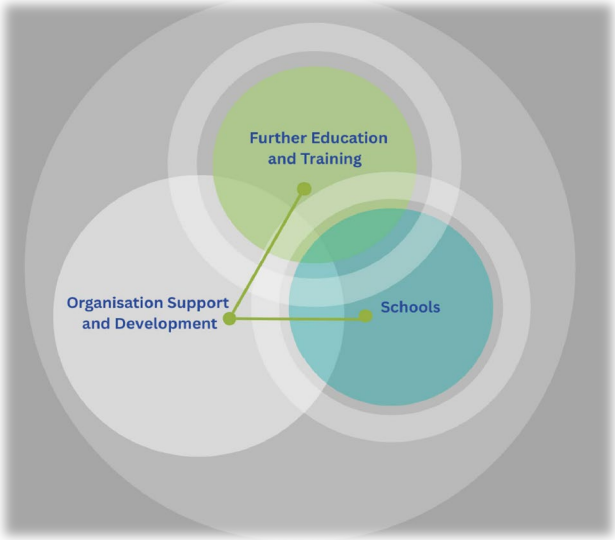
KWETB, in line with its Public Sector Equality and Human Rights duty obligations has given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of staff and all the learners and groups to whom we provide services.

KWETB adheres to the legislative requirements of the ETB Act 2013, the Education Act 1998, Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004, Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018, Further Education and Training Act 2013, Disability Act 2005, Equal Status Acts 2000-2018, Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015, giving due regard to compliance with the human rights and equality obligations contained therein.



Overview of Services 2026

Kildare and Wicklow ETB, supports and co-ordinates education, training and youth services in Kildare and Wicklow. We specifically provide primary, post primary, post leaving certificate, apprenticeships, traineeships, youth services, music, community, outdoor and adult further education and training. We deliver excellent services that provide for the needs of all learners in our community. KWETB operates through four directorates—Schools, Further Education and Training (FET), and two directorates within Organisation Support and Development (OSD).



KWETB is the patron of;

- **23** Post Primary Schools
- **3** Community National Schools
- **1** Special School for learners with ASD and Complex needs
- **25** Further Education & Training Centres
- **2** Large Post leaving Certificate Colleges
- Joint patron of 6 Community schools
- Serving a total of approximately **33,877 students** and learners of all age groups at various levels across the communities of Kildare & Wicklow.
- Approximately **17,128 learners** in further education annually, with circa 9,640 QQI certification issued.
- Employee of **2,865** staff members.

Organisation Support and Development

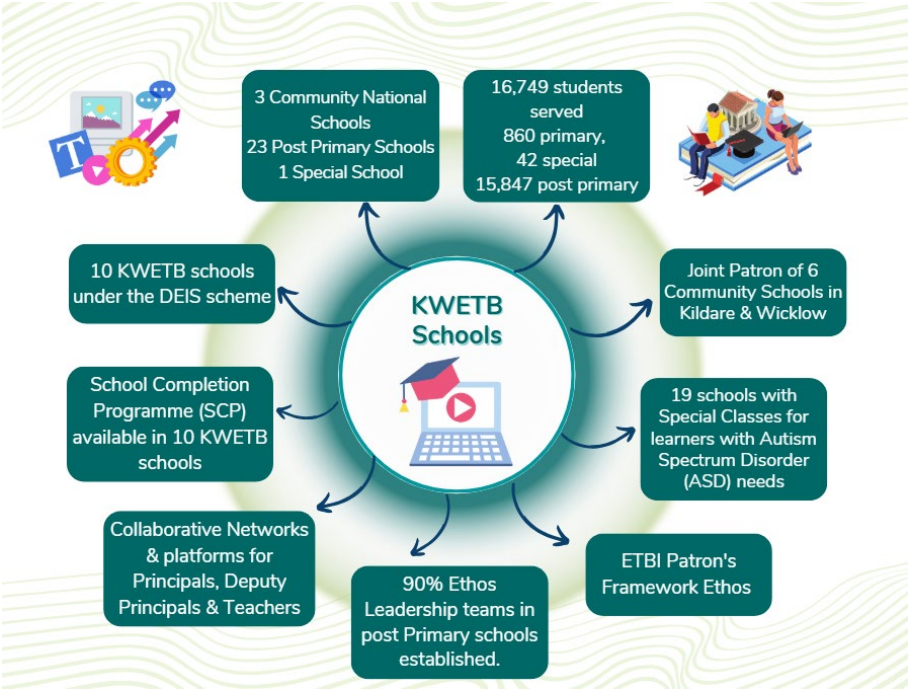
The OSD Directorate, led by two directors, supports the work of Schools and FET by providing essential administrative and operational services, as well as managerial and strategic guidance, ensuring all functions are efficiently managed.

The goal of the KWETB OSD team is to deliver effective and efficient services that meet the needs of those we serve, underpinned by best governance practices. OSD is responsible for key areas including HR, Finance, Corporate Services and Governance, ICT, Buildings, and Procurement.

Functional Team	Services
Human Resources (HR)	Recruitment Payroll Pensions Gardaí Vetting Leave Management Allocations & Utilisation Personnel Policies & Procedures Staff Contracts Control and Management Employee Relations & Communications Industrial Relations
Corporate Services Governance and Communications	FOI and Data Protection Insurances Health and Safety (Corporate) Customer Service, Post, Reception, general payments Corporate Governance & Compliance Corporate affairs (Board Services, CE Support, Corporate Brand, Website Management)
Finance	Creditor Payments including Training Contractor payments Travel and Subsistence Receipts Budgeting and Financial allocation to schools, centres and offices Annual Financial Statements and Audits Treasury ESF Returns and Audits Finance for Social Inclusion Projects VTOS/Youthreach/Trainee Allowance Payments Financial Policies & Procedures Asset Management
ICT	Organisation ICT Support and advice to all Schools, FET and OSD sites ICT Security ICT policy Provision for all ICT services Network, Hardware and Software and Cloud Support User account and Device management Office 365 Administration
Capital and Energy Sustainability Programme and Procurement	Procurement Energy and Sustainability Capital Programme Management Office Buildings and Property

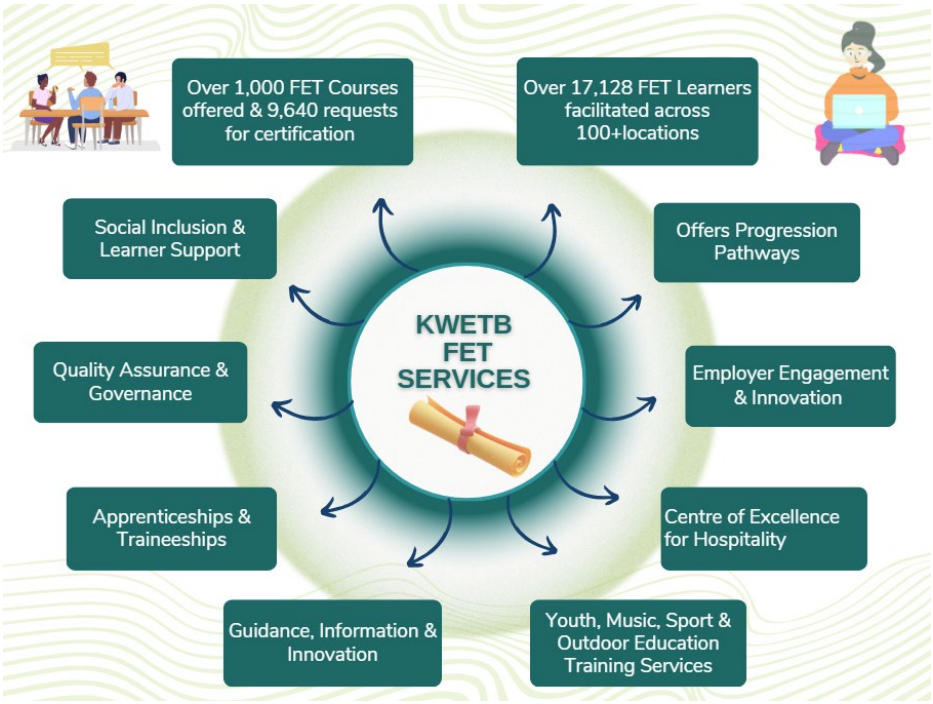
Schools

KWETB provides educational services across primary and post-primary levels throughout the counties of Kildare and Wicklow. In line with the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013, KWETB is responsible for the provision, co-ordination, administration, and assessment of youth work services in Kildare and Wicklow. Youth Work Services are supported by two Youth Officers who work under the Schools directorate.



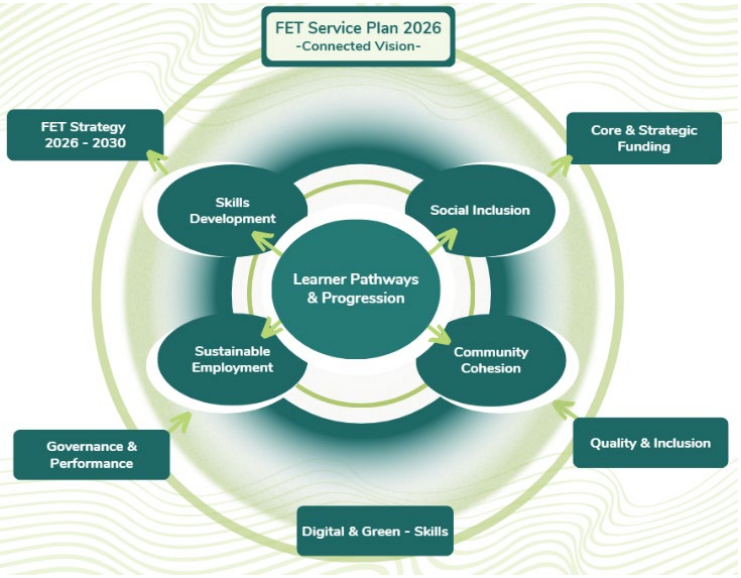
Further Education & Training (FET)

SOLAS primarily funds FET with an annual budget of approximately €39.455 million. FET delivers a broad range of further education and training programmes across 25 locations in Kildare and Wicklow. These programmes support diverse learners, offering pathways for educational progression, labour market skills development, and social engagement, helping individuals gain the skills and knowledge needed to live and work in modern society.



FET provision in 2026 will be delivered in alignment with the FET Strategy 2026-2030 and the continued implementation of the FET College model, ensuring a coherent, learner-centred and outcomes-focused system across Kildare and Wicklow. Provision will be planned and delivered under nationally agreed course categories, supporting skills development, progression, inclusion and community cohesion, while responding to regional labour market demand and demographic growth.

FET provision is funded through core funding and strategic investment funding, primarily from SOLAS. Core funding supports staffing, governance, quality assurance, learner supports, digital systems, and the effective operation of FET centres, while strategic investment funding supports targets initiatives, including workforce upskilling, inclusion measures, innovation projects, climate action, and specialist skills development. Funding is allocated in line with performance agreements and national policy priorities.



FET provision will be organised and reported under the following nationally aligned programme categories. Programmes delivered by KWETB's Further Education Service are outlined under each category:

- **Employment Progression** - a provision designed to help learners gain skills and qualifications needed to move into employment or progress further within their careers, in line with regional skills needs.
    - **Apprenticeship** - Administration of apprenticeship in the ETB region and direct delivery of craft and non-craft apprenticeship
    - **Specific Skills Training –** programmes aimed at training adults to fill identified specific skill gaps
    - **Traineeships** – work-based learning programme for adults who wish to retrain/upskill
- **Learning in Employment** - provision supporting people in work to upskill or reskill through employer-engaged training to meet workforce needs.
    - **Skills to Advance** programme for employed learners from L3 to L6 of the NFQ
- **Pathways** – a provision that supports learners to progress into further education, training, or employment through structured, step-by-step learning.

- **Vocational Training and Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)** – a programme for adults who are unemployed and in receipt of a social welfare payment who wish to retrain and/or upskill to increase their employment opportunities offered at Levels 3-6 on the NFQ
- **Back to Education Initiative** – a part-time programme for young people and adults offering programmes at Levels 3-6 on the NFQ
- **Bridging and Foundation** – programmes for adults wishing to upskill at Level 3 and 4 of the NFQ

- **Adult Education Guidance Service** – a service providing education and career guidance and some personal counselling to adults.
- **Adult Literacy for Life** - a part-time community-based programme supporting adults returning to or continuing education.
- **Youth Provision Community Education** - supports young people to complete education, gain skills, and progress to further training, apprenticeships, or employment.
  - **Youthreach** – a full-time, two-year programme for early school leavers (16 - 21 years) leading to Level 3 or 4 NFQ qualifications.
  - **Advocacy Service** – a career and education guidance and counselling service for early school leavers between 16 and 21 years of age
- **Higher Education Progression** - a programme that prepares learners to move on to higher education by developing the skills, qualifications, and supports needed for successful transition.
  - **Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)** – a comprehensive full-time programme of education at Level 5 and 6 of the NFQ for school leavers and returning adult learners.
  - **Tertiary Programs** - pathway from Further Education and Training (FET) to Higher Education, allowing students to progress smoothly toward earning a full bachelor's degree. These programs are designed and co-delivered by ETBs and Higher Education Institutions, providing seamless pathways from FET to higher education.
- **Discretionary and Specialist Provision** - targeted programmes to meet specific learner, local or industry needs.
  - **Refugee Programme** – Orientation and Language programme to support adult residents of the Hazel Hotel Emergency Reception Orientation Centre (EROC)
  - **Prisoner Education** – the provision of education in partnership with the Irish Prison Service in Shelton Abbey Open Prison, Arklow
  - Support and administration for **Youth Services and Music Generation** in Kildare and Wicklow

- **Specific Training Programme for People with Disabilities** – contracted, full-time programme for adults with disabilities or other needs who wish to upskill/retrain

Projected learner participation for 2026 reflects planned provision across all programme areas, based on regional demand and capacity. Workforce-focused provision through Employment Progression and Learning in Employment is expected to support approximately **6,800** learners, while Pathways, Youth Provision, Community Education and Adult Literacy for Life will engage around **8,560** learners. Apprenticeships are projected to support approximately **1,550** learners, with further participation in Higher Education Progression and specialist programmes. Learner numbers will be monitored and adjusted through the annual planning and performance agreement.

A key priority for 2026 is to further embed FET College branding across all provision and locations, creating a consistent learner identity, clearer progression pathways, and better access to information. This will involve coordinated communications, aligned signage, improved digital platforms, and stronger organisational alignment across campuses and centres—presenting FET as a single, integrated system while maintaining local strengths.

All provision will embed cross-cutting priorities, including quality assurance, digital and blended delivery, climate action, equality and inclusion, and employer engagement. These will shape programme design, delivery and evaluation to ensure relevance and responsiveness to learner, enterprise and community needs.

Delivery of the Service Plan will be overseen through established governance and performance agreements, with regular monitoring of participation, progression, quality and financial performance to support accountability and continuous improvement.

FET Service Provision 2026 Template is inserted at pg. 38 of the Appendix.

FET Programme	Beneficiaries
FE Part-time Inclusion	1,675
ESOL	2,372
FE Part-time	3,695
FE Full-time	441
Youthreach	446
Skills to Advance	2,180
Training incl. traineeship	2,305
PLC	2,709
Other Funding	305
Total 2025	17,128

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Map of KWETB Locations & Services

KWETB Map of Education and Training Services

Provision Key

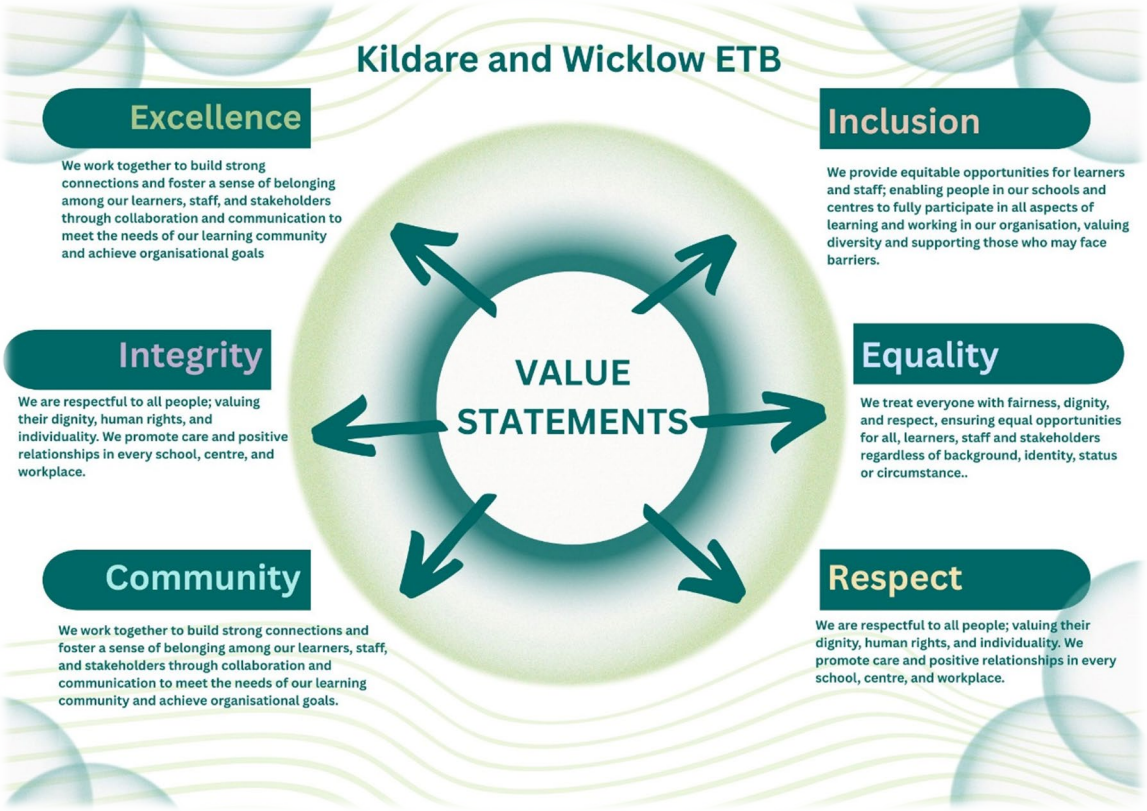
- ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
- COMMUNITY NATIONAL SCHOOL
- POST PRIMARY SCHOOL
- COMMUNITY SCHOOL
- CENTRE OF FURTHER EDUCATION & TRAINING
- OUTDOOR EDUCATION
- MUSIC GENERATION
- PRISON EDUCATION
- YOUTH SERVICES
- ADULT GUIDANCE



Strategy Statement 2025 – 2029

Our vision is to deliver high-quality, inclusive, innovative education, training, youth and support services. We are committed to promoting excellence in all that we do and to being a leader at both community and national level, guided by our core value statements.

To support the public sector Equality and Human Rights duty, KWETB acknowledges the importance of creating a culture of respect in line with its core values as set out in its Strategy Statement.



KWETB's Strategy Statement 2025-2029 sets high-level objectives for KWETB to achieve, underpinned by our four pillars of strategic priority.

1. **Teaching and Learning**
2. **Human Resource Support and Development**
3. **Operational Excellence**
4. **Environment and Sustainability**

These four pillars support the delivery of the highest standards in teaching and learning, in an inclusive, learner-centred and innovative manner. KWETB is committed to developing professional networks, offering skills training, and delivering comprehensive staff development programs, while fostering a supportive, positive and inclusive work environment for all.

KWETB will continually refine its operations to effectively support its mandate, mission, and strategic objectives, ensuring efficiency, strong governance, clear accountability, and transparent decision-making. We are also committed to sustainability by embedding environmentally responsible practices across our facilities and services, reducing environmental impact, promoting resource efficiency, and supporting initiatives that contribute to a greener future. This commitment is underpinned by active engagement with staff, learners, and communities in environmental stewardship.

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EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

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

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KWETB Statement of Strategy 2025 - 2029

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Performance Delivery Agreement and Strategic Priorities for 2026

Goals and priorities have been identified through the Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) between the Department of Education and Youth and KWETB, alongside our Strategic Priorities for 2026. The actions required to deliver on these priorities, together with the corresponding performance indicators and targets, are outlined below

KWETB has 4 key areas of Strategic Priority named in our Strategy Statement 2025-2029. These key pillars of Strategic Priority inform our own strategic targets for 2026. The 4 areas are:

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.

Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) Goal 1 and 2: **Optimise Student/Learner Experience and Protection Programs**

Links to KWETB Strategy Statement (SS) 2025-2029: **Strategic Priority 1 Teaching, Learning and Learners**:

Strategic Priority 1: **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.

PDA = Performance Delivery Agreement. SS = Strategy Statement

Priority	Action	Performance Indicator	Target
PDA Optimise Student/Learner Experience: Provide a positive learning experience for all learners, including learners from marginalised group	1. Ensure our Core Values are embedded across our schools	1. Greater awareness and of our Core Values across our schools, students, parents' boards of management and stakeholders	1. All KWETB schools to have an ethos Coordinator and ethos work.
	2. Deliver FET service plan 2026 as agreed with SOLAS and set out in the Funding Allocation Requests (FAR) narrative submission and FARR online database.	2. Implementation of the FET service plan 2026 as evidenced in PLSS interim and annual reports.	2. 80% of projected beneficiaries across all programmes

	3. Support the participation of KWETB FET learners in the National Learner Forum and Regional Learner Forum	3. FET participating in the fora and contributing to the development of national policy and capturing the 'learner voice'.	3. 90% of places available filled by KWETB learners at national and regional fora.
	4. Support planning and implementation of School Completion Programme (SCP) and Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) across DEIS schools. ETBI/KWETB are currently working in collaboration with the Department of Education and Youth and TESS to support the establishment of a new employment framework for the SCP workforce.	4. Active engagement in SCP Management committees and HSCL Coordinators, work planning and work reviews. Active engagement with the HSCL coordinators. The necessary measures to enable the transition of SCP to KWETB will be progressed in line with the Department of Education and Youth's project timeframe.	4. Increased school attendance rates and programmes/supports for at risk students. Enhance consistency, accountability, and long-term sustainability in the provision of SCP supports at a national level.
	5. Continue to implement recommendations from DEIS audit report	5. Active reviews and tracking of all Audits related to DEIS schools.	5. Audit recommendations fully implemented
	6. Support students with Special Educational Needs	6. Increase provision through increased special classes and Special School places in	6. Increased Provision for students with SEN needs

		line with DEY resource allocation.	
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
PDA Optimise Student/Learner Experience: Support students/learners at risk of educational disadvantage in line with current national policy	1. Active DEIS plans in all KWETB DEIS Schools	1. Practical, dynamic and evidence based DEIS Plans	1. To improve attendance and achievements of students in all our DEIS schools and addressing educational disadvantages
	2. Established Student Support Teams in all KWETB Schools	2. Active and relevant School Support and Care Teams in place.	2. School Support teams reaching their targets for 2026 and overall improvement in student retention
	3. Clear Student Support and well-being initiatives, guidance and procedures in schools in line with Department of Education and Youth requirements.	3. Student Support and well-being initiatives active and published in schools and Youth Reach, with strong student awareness and understanding. Access to guidance counsellors in schools and FET centres.	3. Improved access, retention and progression. Issues arising are dealt with effectively and promptly. All students have access to guidance support and Whole School Guidance (WSG) Plans
	4. Continue to support the delivery and continuous development of responsive FET programmes for learners who are early school	4. Delivery of the programmes to target groups. Engagement with county and national fora	4. Targets in FET Service Plan for 2026 achieved.

	leavers, educationally disadvantaged and from priority groups including those with disabilities, members of the Traveller community, asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, those experiencing rural or urban disadvantage.	concerning inclusion.	
	5. Continue the establishment and development of Special Classes in ETB schools and college.	5. Open new SEN Classes in consultation with SENO and DEY.	5. Increased SEN enrolments, provision and allocations in our schools
	6. Continue to implement the recommendations of the EDI Working Group.	6. Staff aware of Public Sector Duty.	6. Public Sector Duty compliant
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
PDA Optimise Student/Learner Experience: Ensure all necessary child safeguarding measures are in place in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools	1. Continue to ensure necessary child safeguarding measures are in place for all FET Learners under the age of eighteen	1. KWETB operate overarching Child Safeguarding Committee.	1. Child safeguarding oversight committee in place.
	2. All schools implement in full the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2025) by the end of 2026.	2. Policies and procedures in place in centres and services and reported on in line with	2. Full compliance with Policies, procedures and legal responsibilities.

	3. Confirm that the appropriate procedures for child protection and safeguarding are in place in line with the Child Protection Procedures for Schools 2025	governance requirements. 3. All schools to confirm compliance with Child Protection procedures and to develop checklists in line with Child Protection and safeguarding Inspection guideline	3. Recommendations from Child inspection reports implemented
PDA Optimise Student/Learner Experience: Ensure full compliance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.	All schools implement in full the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2025) by the end of 2026.	Policies and procedures in place in centres and services and reported on in line with governance requirements.	Full compliance with Policies, procedures and legal responsibilities.
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
PDA Protection Programs: Assist the DEY, as needed, to meet the needs arising from the Irish Refugee Protection Programme and provision for international protection applicants	KWETB have a REALT coordinator in place. KWETB actively partners with other agencies to provide appropriate services for refugees and asylum seekers	Integration and progression into primary, secondary, Youthreach and further education for international protection applicants.	All applicants supported and placed in suitable education programmes.
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
SS Teaching, Learning and Learners: Foster a quality-	Improve our data gathering and research methods to improve decision making	Analysis of WSE reports across a selection of post-primary schools conducted. This data is	Principals and Deputies up to date and informed on developments in Teaching and Learning Planning.

driven learning culture in our schools		used to inform T&L aspects of Network Meetings	
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
PDA Teaching, Learning and Learners: To effectively deliver on and expand our role as Patron	1. To provide continued support to the embedding of the ETB Ethos in all our schools 2. To support any national or DEY requirements on the ETB patron 3. The ETB will continue to promote our growing number of Community National Schools and Community Colleges as a multidenominational school of choice for communities	1. Ethos Coordinator working with school stakeholders in promoting ETB Core Values 2. BOM and School Leadership Team training 3. Additional Community National Schools via divestment	1. Ethos Leadership Teams (ELTs) established in all schools. 2. Professional Learning Network (PLN) meetings with Ethos Leads in schools. 3. All BOMs trained on ETB Core Values KWETB engaged successfully in the DEY on divestment
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
SS Teaching, Learning and Learners: Promote Inclusive, Flexible, and Quality-Led Learning Pathways for Adults	1. Conduct an inclusivity audit to identify access barriers for underrepresented groups. 2. Increase learner flexibility by delivering programmes in more accessible formats 3. Strengthen cross-programme interactions and expand local	1. Audit Report 2. Staff trained for accessibility 3. All multiplex facilities will have a report on pathways	1. Adults in Kildare and Wicklow have access to inclusive, flexible, and high-quality learning pathways that support meaningful participation and progression across FET.

	offerings to support clear progressions within centres and nearby locations 4. Finalise accessible learner handbooks and progression information for all FET pathways.	between programmes. 4. Handbooks finalised and to standard.	
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
SS Teaching, Learning and Learners: Strengthen Employer, Higher Education and Community Partnerships	1. Build partnerships with Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) and regional Chambers of Commerce. 2. Develop an Erasmus programme plan and establish links with EU providers, expanding opportunities for learner engagement in EU partnership 3. Host regional skills forums to gather employer insights. 4. Develop two new Tertiary programmes for 2026 delivery.	1. Representatives on regional networks and committees 2. Annual Erasmus Plan 3. Host at least one meeting per county 4. Engage with key stakeholders and put plans in place.	1. A coordinated regional skills ecosystem is established, delivering new Tertiary programmes, strengthened community, employer, higher education and EU partnerships, and fully compliant, SLA-supported grant provision

	5. Create a framework for ongoing collaboration with community organisations. 6. Ensure all grants and external provision are covered by SLAs. 7. Develop an Erasmus programme plan and build links with EU partners 8. Expand programmes to engage learners in EU partnerships.	5. Develop framework and plans 6. Monitor and review the CTC/LTI/STP contracts and implement changed guidelines when published. 7. Programme Plan in place	
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
SS Teaching, Learning and Learners: Priority Develop Integrated FET College Provision.	1. Action Conduct a resource utilisation review to identify areas for streamlining.	1. Perform Review of funding and programming of current vs future structure	1. Integrated FET college provision

Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) Goal 3: **Governance**

Links to KWETB Strategy Statement 2025-2029: **Strategic Priority 3 Operational Excellence**

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

PDA = Performance Delivery Agreement. SS = Strategy Statement

Priority	Action	Performance Indicator	Target
PDA Governance: Attendance rates at board meetings.	Individual boards should re-emphasise the requirement for attendance at all board meetings as per the Code of Practice for Governance of ETBs	Attendance Tracker is kept up to date and reported on in annual report. All Member actively encouraged to attend.	Full attendance at KWETB Board meetings
PDA Governance: Board Self Assessments	All boards should carry out self-assessments, using the questionnaire included in the Code of Practice, to identify areas where improvements are required	Board, Finance and Audit Committees Self-Assessment completed on an annual basis and formal record maintained.	Self-Assessments issued and completed by Board Members
PDA Governance: Financial expertise on audit and finance committees	Appointments to audit (ARC) and finance committees (FC) should be made by the board in consultation with committee chairs. External members of committees should bring the required audit and financial skills and experience to the role	Appropriate financial and audit expertise and experience on ARC and Finance Committee	External Appointees to ARC and FC have experience and expertise in finance and audit
PDA Governance: Board appraisal of work carried out by Finance and Audit & Risk Committees	The Chair of each Board should ensure that Board members are provided with written reports on the work carried out by finance and audit & risk committees	Reports are submitted to the Board and Board representatives from ARC and FC are available to the Board for clarifications	Reports are submitted and appraisals completed annually.

	as required under the Code of Practice for Governance of ETBs.		
PDA Governance: Self-Assessment by Finance and Audit & Risk Committees	The Chairs of both the audit & risk committee and the finance committee should ensure that a self-assessment exercise is completed annually as required under the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs.	Self-Assessments are completed annually	Assessments performed annually and any identified areas for improvements addressed
PDA Governance: Staff Development	The Chief Executive should ensure that. -a member of staff is appointed as the training manager -training needs analysis in financial management is carried out on an annual basis - a training programme on financial management is developed and implemented.	OSD Staff complete personal development plans annually that cover on the job required training and developmental needs.	Personal Development Plans for OSD Staff. Procurement training to all budget holders annually. Financial updates and guidance at principal/coordinator meetings. Quarterly finance updates to SMT.
PDA Governance: Departmental Reporting Deadlines	Returns to the Department of Education and Youth must be accurate and reporting deadline adhered to.	Statutory and Department of Education and Youth Reports tracker in place.	All Statutory and Department of Education and Youth reporting deadlines adhered to.
PDA Governance: Risk Management Policy	The Board of each ETB should ensure that there is an ongoing process designed to identify and address significant risks involved in achieving an entity's outcomes. The	Up to date Risk Management Policy Updated Corporate Risk Register Review of Risk Management performed by Board / ARC	Up to date Corporate Risk Register and Risk Management Policy in line with policy requirements

	Audit and Risk Committee should support the Board in this role.		
PDA Governance: Internal Controls	The Board of each ETB should ensure that it receives adequate assurance that specified controls are operating as intended.	Annual review of Statement of Internal Controls (SIC), Audit Registers, Compliance Assessment Tool for the Code of Practice of ETBs	Assurances provided to the Board. SIC reviewed annually. Annual Report of ARC and FC submitted to the Board
Priority	**Action**	**Performance Indicator**	**Target**
SS Operational Excellence: 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	1. Maximise employee engagement and development, creating a culture of learning and ensuring employees feel motivated, valued and empowered to contribute their best work 2. Optimise our processes and procedures ensuring continuous improvement in all aspects of our operations	1. Team coaching L&D for identified OSD Managers. Performance Development Plans for OSD Staff 2. Establish an audit ready environment through paperless practices 3. Adult Education Processes and Procedures completed	1. Strong people management skills. Staff have necessary skills to perform roles to high standards. 2. Establish a digital repository for file storage 3. Adult Educator fully established in our ETB
SS Operational Excellence: Protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information and systems in a	1. Full engagement with ISMS National Project	1. Deliver on the 2026 KWETB objectives under the ISMS Plan for ETBs	1. Security of KWETB Systems advanced by achieving all targets of ISMS project for

networked environment, including safeguarding data, communication channels, and ICT	2. Drive centralised and streamlined cloud adoption to meet the business needs of KWETB.	2. Multifactor authentication Password controls Cleanse of accounts Advance privileges access controls	2026.
SS Operational Excellence Improve efficiency and effectiveness of our teams by embracing the opportunity provided by Artificial Intelligence (AI)	1. Develop our functional teams' capability to take advantage of the opportunity provided by AI. 2. Ensure all staff are trained in responsible usage of AI.	1. Develop training plan for specific staff.	1. All staff identified trained competent in effective use of AI.
SS Operational Excellence Mitigate Financial Risks	1. Develop and implement best practice in school and centre finance management 2. Implement a strategy to eliminate prompt payment interest and penalties in schools and centres 3. Enhance payment controls to mitigate against the risk of fraudulent or inappropriate payments	1. Budgeting and Reporting process analysis 2. Regular tracking, reporting and communication on PPI 3. Review and improve all controls, deliver training and communication on control procedures	1. Best practice Financial Management in place 2. Eliminate PPI 3. Strong controls in place, with no fraudulent or inappropriate payments.
SS Operational Excellence Deliver and maintain high	1. Establish a scalable Programme Management Office and develop a	1. Develop and issue toolkit. 2. Project Manager in place	1. All capital projects delivered on time.

quality physical learning and working environments	Programme and Project Management Resource toolkit		
SS Operational Excellence Procure high quality, sustainable, value for money goods and services	1. Eliminate non-compliant expenditure by 2029.	1. Corporate Procurement Plan 2. Procurement Training for all budget holders. 3. Quarterly reviews	1. Reduction in non-compliant expenditure in line with elimination target for 2029.

KWETB Strategy Statement (SS) 2025-2029: **Strategic Priority 2 Human Resource Support and Development**

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.

PDA = Performance Delivery Agreement. SS = Strategy Statement

Priority	Action	Performance Indicator	Target
SS: Human Resource Support and Development: Continue to build human resource capacity, ensuring we have people with the skills, knowledge, to deliver	1. Attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre, by developing flexible, innovative and efficient recruitment and on-boarding strategies relevant to our sector	1. Full review of advertising in KWETB. Implement new advertising procedures, methods and protocol for advertising. New Processing Procedures for	1. To attract, recruit and retain high-calibre staff by implementing modern, efficient advertising, recruitment and onboarding processes

on our statutory mandate and strategic priorities.	2. Enhance the leadership capacity of our staff by providing tailored leadership development programmes/in-service and related support initiatives. 3. Automation of Leave Types on CORE System	HR Staff for OSD, FET and Ancillary recruitment 2. Design and Delivery of Workshops for line managers on key staff related policies and procedures 3. Phase one complete in 2026 – OSD and Training	2. Managers have skills and knowledge to manage staff effectively. 3. Efficient method of tracking and managing lea 4. Efficient method of tracking and managing leave
SS: Human Resource Support and Development: Promote actively a positive values-based workplace culture, including promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion in our ETB	1. Promote actively KWETB values to support a positive and productive workplace culture 2. 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	1. Design and implement a Reasonable Accommodation Policy for KWETB. 2. Have an annual disability action plan.	1. Functioning and effective Reasonable accommodation process. Managers informed on their public duty. 2. Fulfilling our Public Sector Duty Requirements.
SS: Human Resource Support and Development: Support Staff Wellbeing:	1. Develop and implement a comprehensive Staff Wellbeing Strategy that fosters a culture of	1. Develop and implement a Staff Wellbeing action plan for 2026	1. An operational Staff Wellbeing Strategy that delivers improvements in staff health,

	health, safety, welfare, and overall well-being for all employees, both individually and collectively across the ETB		safety and wellbeing. Managers competent in supporting wellbeing in the workplace.
SS: Human Resource Support and Development: Foster excellence in staff engagement by prioritising internal customer service, clear and transparent staff communication, and good work processes.	1. 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 arrangement 2. Promote KWETB Customer Service Charter to support excellence is service to all staff, students and learners.	1. Develop and implement an internal communication action plan for 2026. 2. Relaunch KWETB Customer Service Charter	1. A fully implemented 2026 Internal Communication Plan that improves clarity, consistency and engagement across the organisation 2. Achieve full awareness of the Customer Service Charter for all key staff.
SS: Human Resource Support and Development: To promote inclusion, support equality, actively encourage diversity among our staff and service users, and ultimately deliver on our obligations under Public Sector Duty Legislation.	1. Ensure Compliance with Government Regulations and Public Sector Duty Legislation. 2. Support education and shared understanding of inclusion and diversity within our ETB. 3. Proactively identify and address obstacles to access, participation and engagement for both students and staff.	1. KWETB Equality Diversity and Inclusion Working Group annual plan. 2. Provide training on EDI to all managers.	1. KWETB is compliant with Public Sector Duty.

	4. Promote our ETB as an equal opportunities' employer.		

KWETB Strategy Statement (SS) 2025-2029: **Strategic Priority 4 Environment and Sustainability**

Strategic Priority 4: **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.

PDA = Performance Delivery Agreement. SS = Strategy Statement

Priority	Action	Performance Indicator	Target
SS: Environment and Sustainability: By 2030, reduce energy related greenhouse gas emissions by 51% and improve energy efficiency by 50%	1. 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	1. Climate Action Roadmap for 2026 2. Energy Audit Reports for FET Buildings	1. All 2026 actions complete on the Energy Efficiency and Sustainability action plan for KWETB

		3. 5-year strategic energy plan for FET owned buildings 4. Solar PV Schools Program 5. Solar PV Plan for identified FET buildings	
SS: Environment and Sustainability: By 2030, ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development	1. Integrate sustainability modules into existing programmes (where it supports the learning outcomes). 2. All locations to develop "Green Teams" including staff and learners in the team. 3. Identify quick wins for green practices, such as reducing paper usage and promoting digital tools.	1. Review of all programmes to confirm sustainability incorporated. 2. Green teams fully functional and making improvements 3. A log of all actions maintained	1. Sustainability fully integrated into FET programmes. 2. Sustainable practices embedded in all schools and centres.
SS: Environment and Sustainability: Transform Learning Environments to advance sustainability	1. 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.	1. Continue to support the sustainability working group and delivery of their action plans in schools.	1. Sustainable schools meeting all planned targets.

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KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Projected Receipts and Expenditure 2026

Receipts

	Note	Year Ended 31/12/2026 €	Year Ended 31/12/2025 €
Schools & Head Office Grants		139,532,131	133,352,953
Further Education & Training Grants		39,545,952	39,904,118
Youth Services Grants		3,617,291	3,406,424
Agencies & Self-Financing Projects		11,500,000	11,448,785
Capital		38,713,705	18,504,292
		232,909,079	**206,616,571**
Payments			
Schools & Head Office Grants	1	139,804,187	131,984,673
Further Education & Training Grants	2	39,545,952	38,264,972
Youth Services Grants	3	3,617,291	3,432,914
Agencies & Self-Financing Projects		11,500,000	11,602,341
Capital		47,741,064	11,932,220
		242,208,495	**197,217,119**
Cash Surplus/(Deficit) For Period		**-9,299,415**	**9,399,452**

Outturns for year ended 2025 are provisional and may change in audited accounts.

1. Schools & Head Office

Schools & Head Office Payments

	Note	Year Ended 31/12/2026	Year Ended 31/12/2025
Pay		€	€
Instruction (including Community National Schools)		116,431,852	109,298,630
Administration (including Community National Schools)		5,859,632	5,584,866
Maintenance		2,340,946	2,201,911
		124,632,430	**117,085,407**
Non-Pay		6,430,618	7,130,860
Associated Programmes			
Student Support Services		1,537,767	1,454,092
Book Grant (incl. Deis book grant)		0	220,029
Transition Year		222,000	132,958
Leaving Cert Applied		78,864	44,012
Junior Certificate School Programme		28,980	26,130
Travellers Capitation		18,500	24,064
Senior Cycle Science Grant		116,350	102,338
Special Class Grant		7,650	13,984
		2,010,111	**2,017,606**
Target Expenditure Grants			
Free Post-Primary Schoolbook Scheme		4,439,786	3,569,857
ICT Policy Unit Funding		566,102	499,878
DEIS Funding Home School Liaison		371,837	481,464
Bus Escort Payment		329,792	333,453
M365 Project Licensing		199,706	164,589
Free Post-Primary Schoolbook Scheme - Admin Support		121,219	89,982
Assistive Technology Grants		27,175	64,102
Mobile Phone Storage Fund		202,793	56,207
School Attendance Campaign		69,263	28,230
Foreign language Assistant Scheme		24,000	23,614
Teacher Education Travel & Subsistence		1,500	960
Gaeltacht Education Funding		71,579	0
		6,424,752	**5,312,337**
Community National Schools			
Capitation Grant		236,182	224,015
Ancillary Services Grant		-	115,418
Book Grant		70,094	69,011
		306,276	**408,444**
Total Schools & Head Office	1	**139,804,187**	**131,954,654**

2. Further Education & Training Payments

	Note	Year Ended 31/12/2026	Year Ended 31/12/2025
Further Education & Training		€	€
Apprenticeship		1,145,244	1,085,576
Core Funding		9,089,072	9,309,152
Strategic Investment		496,888	387,033
FET Pathways		18,628,880	17,637,844
Workforce Skills Development & Transition		10,185,868	9,845,367
Total Further Education & Training	2	**39,545,952**	**38,264,972**

3. Youth Service Grants

	Year Ended 31/12/2026	Year Ended 31/12/2025
Youth Services Payments	€	€
Drug & Alcohol Task Force	638,751	611,637
UBU	2,262,399	2,100,727
Youth Work Act	258,523	257,061
Youth Club Grants	233,218	187,881
Youth Information Centre	119,400	115,922
Integration Fund Allocation	40,000	39,737
Targeted Youth Employability Support Initiative	65,000	69,749
Summer Meals	-	28,200
Youth Night Grant Scheme 2025	-	22,000
3	**3,617,291**	**3,432,914**

Appendices

Appendix 1

Further Education and Training Service Provision 2026 Template

Overview of Further Education and Training (FET)

Overview of FET Services

FET services within KWETB provide education and training opportunities for young people and adults after primary education. These include Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, apprenticeships and traineeships, Youthreach for early school leavers, and programmes such as VTOS and Skills to Advance. KWETB also offers adult education services like literacy support, part-time accredited courses, and guidance services. Overall, FET focuses on developing skills, improving employability, and supporting progression to further or higher education.

Short paragraph to detail types of provision, number of centres/colleges and learner numbers

The 2026 provision reflects a broad mix of adult and vocational education delivered across a range of centres, supporting an estimated 16,921 learners in total. Adult Literacy for Life represents the largest element of provision, delivered across 9 centres and supporting approximately 5,054 learners, followed by Employment Progression provision across 10 centres for around 3,069 learners, and Learning in Employment programmes delivered through 4 centres with an estimated 3,727 learners. Pathways provision operates across 9 centres, supporting approximately 1,821 learners, while Higher Education Progression is delivered through 2 centres with an estimated 1,549 learners. Community Education provision spans 2 centres and supports approximately 1,281 learners, while Youth Provision is delivered across 9 centres for an estimated 402 learners. A small volume of activity is categorised as Other, delivered through 5 centres and supporting a limited cohort of approximately 18 learners, reflecting highly targeted or specialist provision within the overall programme mix.

FET Priorities in 2026 (new FET strategy objectives)

Short paragraph detailing the planned work and provision in each of the following areas to support the delivery of the new FET Strategy 2026-2030;

- **Future-Ready Knowledge & Skills**

Planned work will focus on delivering flexible, labour-market-responsive provision that equips learners with future-ready knowledge and skills aligned to regional and national priorities. This includes expanded delivery in digital, green, construction, manufacturing, health and care, and enterprise-focused programmes, supported by micro-credentials, modular learning, apprenticeships and traineeships. Provision will be informed by labour-market intelligence and delivered through colleges, training centres, online platforms and employer-linked settings to support upskilling, reskilling and progression.

- **Inclusion for Prosperity & Cohesion**
  Provision will prioritise inclusive access to FET across communities, with targeted support for adult literacy, community education, ESOL, youth provision and learners from under-represented groups. The planned activity will strengthen outreach, guidance, and learner support, embed universal design principles, and ensure flexible delivery modes to reduce barriers related to location, income, disability, or caring responsibilities. This approach supports social cohesion while enabling learners to participate in education, employment and community life.

- **Quality with Innovation**
  Work in this area will concentrate on strengthening quality assurance, curriculum relevance and innovation across all provision. This includes consolidation within an integrated FET college model, investment in staff capability, agile curriculum development, and increased use of digital and blended delivery. Quality enhancement will be supported through alignment with QQI requirements, streamlined processes, data-driven planning and continuous improvement informed by learner and employer feedback.

- **Collaborating for Impact**
  Delivery will be underpinned by structured collaboration with employers, higher education institutions, schools, community organisations, and public agencies. Planned activities include strengthening progression pathways, co-designing provision with enterprise, supporting regional skills ecosystems, and aligning with the emerging tertiary education framework. Collaboration will focus on maximising impact, avoiding duplication, and ensuring that provision responds effectively to economic, social, and community needs.

Funding Allocation for 2026

KWETB receives funding for the provision of FET Services annually from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science via SOLAS.

Table 1: Funding Allocation for Kildare and Wicklow ETB

Allocation for KW ETB	2025 Final Allocation	2026 Allocation			
	Total	Pay	Non-Pay	Allowances	Total
Core Funding for a Strategic & Effective ETB	8,919,000	4,242,257	4,846,815		9,089,072
Workforce Skills Development & Transformation	10,505,000	6,857,374	3,181,447	147,047	10,185,868
FET Pathways	18,777,118	11,600,409	3,989,233	3,039,238	18,628,880
Apprenticeship	1,210,000	125,520	856,599	163,125	1,145,244
Strategic Investment	493,000	327,026	169,862		496,888
Overall Allocation	39,904,118	23,152,586	13,043,956	3,349,410	39,545,952

In 2026, KWETB will utilise this funding to deliver

Core Funding for a Strategic & Effective ETB

Learner Support and Guidance:

Core funding will strengthen the learner experience by supporting a wide range of learner-focused services. This includes the provision of a comprehensive education and career guidance service which provides consistent access to information and guidance supports to all FET learners, accessible learner-facing information, and consistent communications that help learners navigate programmes and services. Investment in digital platforms and coordinated branding will also ensure that learners receive clear, coherent and easily accessible information across all FET College campuses and programmes.

Buildings:

Funding will contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of safe, accessible, and fit-for-purpose facilities, aligned with the Estates Strategy. This ensures continuity of provision across education and training centres in high quality education and training environments and enables the organisation to respond effectively to the evolving needs of learners, employers, and communities. Core funding will also support the consistent presentation of the FET College identity through campus signage and physical infrastructure improvements.

Quality/Certification:

Core funding will underpin essential quality assurance activities and support compliance with regulatory requirements. It will strengthen organisational capacity for strategic planning and data and performance management, ensuring programmes and services are delivered to a high standard. Developments will include capacity building in programme development, synchronous blended learning and artificial intelligence enabling teams to design, review and update programmes in line with emerging needs of learners, industry and the wider community. This will ensure that provision remains current, relevant and responsive to changing skills demands. This enables the ETB to maintain robust governance, support certification processes, and ensure consistent delivery aligned with national standards.

Other Central Supports:

Beyond direct learner and facility supports, core funding will sustain a stable and predictable financial base for overall organisational effectiveness. It will resource governance and leadership structures, staffing, digital systems, and coordinated communications. This funding will also help embed the FET College branding across all areas of provision, supporting organisational alignment and the development of a clear, strategic and unified identity.

Funding for FET Provision for Workforce Skills Development & Transformation

(Employment Progression, Learning in Employment)

Learning for Employment Progression:

Funding will support Employment Progression provision for approximately 3,500 learners, enabling targeted upskilling and reskilling aligned with priority sectors and labour market needs. This includes the delivery of full-time and part-time industry-related programmes, as well as micro qualifications linked directly to industry requirements, ensuring learners can progress into employment or advance within their chosen sector. Funding will further enable the development and updating of industry-aligned curricula, strengthen employer engagement, and support modular and blended delivery approaches. These measures ensure learners gain relevant, current skills that support progression and economic mobility.

Programme details:

Learning for Employment provides a comprehensive suite of full time and part time vocational and transversal skills courses designed to prepare unemployed learners for meaningful re-entry into the labour market. The portfolio spans key growth sectors including healthcare support, early learning and care, community care, business administration, ICT, hospitality, tourism, horticulture, manufacturing technologies, and applied social studies. Learners develop industry-aligned competencies through programmes such as Professional Skills for Healthcare Assistants, Special Needs Assisting, Early Learning and Care, Office Administration, Tourism and Business, Information

Processing, and Digital and AI-related modules. These courses build occupational capacity while strengthening personal effectiveness, communication, job-readiness, and career planning.

KWETB delivers structured traineeships designed to provide unemployed learners with industry-relevant, job-ready technical skills for pathways into advanced manufacturing and engineering roles. The Advanced Manufacturing Technician Traineeship, and its associated foundation programme, offer applied training in areas such as industrial automation, robotics fundamentals, electrical systems, and precision manufacturing environments. Learners gain hands-on experience through CELTEC's specialised training ecosystems—digital smart manufacturing labs, calibration environments, and immersive control-room simulations—providing exposure to real-world processes aligned with Industry 5.0 practices. These programmes combine classroom learning, practical laboratory skills, and workplace-focused competencies, enabling participants to progress into sustainable employment within regional manufacturing and engineering sectors. This programme enables businesses to adopt new technologies.

A strong emphasis on future-oriented learning is evident through modules in Artificial Intelligence, environmental sustainability, digital literacy PLCs, leadership and management, project management and modern hospitality and food skills. Innovation is supported through hands-on learning in technical workshops, culinary labs, creative studios, and simulated care environments.

These programmes are delivered in collaboration with state agencies, employers and community-based organisations, ensuring alignment with labour-market needs and contemporary practice. Collectively, they enhance employability, broaden progression opportunities, and support social and economic participation by equipping learners with the skills, confidence, and adaptability required for evolving workplace demands.

Projected learner numbers for Learning for Employment in 2026 is approximately 3,500 learners, incorporating PLC and Specific Skills Training.

Learning in Employment:

KWETB will continue to lead the delivery of upskilling and reskilling across industry and business in the Kildare and Wicklow regions with a strong emphasis on the workplace learner and flexible on the job learning models. Provision will be closely aligned to employer needs and delivered through learning in employment. Learning in Employment provision will support approximately 4000 learners through flexible, employer-linked and work-based learning opportunities Full-time and part-time industry-related programmes, alongside industry-focused micro qualifications, will also play a central role here by enabling employees to acquire new skills, adapt to emerging technologies, and contribute to productivity and organisational transformation. Funding will be used to enhance educator capacity, provide specialist equipment, and deliver training closely aligned with workforce needs. This ensures the provision remains responsive, supports ongoing professional development, and contributes to both individual career advancement and broader workforce transformation.
Skills to Advance (L3–L6 NFQ) provides targeted upskilling and reskilling across six core areas: Healthcare, AI & Digital Skills, Industrial Engineering & Automation, Maintenance Technology, Hospitality & Customer Service, Leadership & Management, and Culinary & Barbering Skills. Specialist vocational programmes—barista skills, culinary techniques, artisan bakery, horticulture,

environmental sustainability, forklift operations, pneumatics, electronics, and floor-covering installation—expand employees' technical capability and workplace contribution.

A key enabler for KWETB is our CELTEC centre in Celbridge which supports the businesses through the Skills to Advance offering which provides advanced technical and leadership and management upskilling, including robotics and automation, PLC programming, industrial control systems, electrical diagnostics, instrumentation calibration, 3D printing, and asset-management digitisation. Leadership, team development, innovation, performance management, negotiation, project management, and change-management programmes further strengthen organisational capacity.

All programmes are delivered in close partnership with employers and industry specialists, ensuring alignment with real workforce needs, supporting career progression, and contributing to productivity, innovation, and long-term economic resilience. We are currently involved with specific industry focus groups looking at emerging skills through AI which are needed within the advanced smart manufacturing world.

Projected learner numbers for Learning in Employment in 2026 is approximately 4,000 learners.

Funding for FET Pathways

(Pathways, Youth Provision, Community Education, Adult Literacy for Life)

Pathways:

The KWETB Pathways suite of full and part-time programmes delivers a coordinated progression route into Further Education, Higher Education, and employment, directly supporting the economic and social development of communities across Kildare and Wicklow. Programmes span business, administration, ICT, healthcare, social care, horticulture, creative studies, security, and general education—ensuring that local learners can access industry-relevant skills without leaving their communities.

Business-focused modules equip learners with organisational, analytical, and communication skills demanded by local employers. By strengthening administrative and commercial capability, these programmes contribute to a more resilient regional workforce and support small and medium enterprises across both counties.

A comprehensive ICT offering builds digital competence essential for modern work environments. This directly benefits local industries adopting new technologies and ensures that individuals can progress into higher-level ICT programmes or emerging digital roles, reducing skills shortages in the region.

Healthcare and community-care pathways strengthen the local care workforce. These programmes ensure that Kildare and Wicklow communities have access to well-trained care professionals, supporting quality provision in residential, early-years, and community-based services. Courses in Communications, Career Planning, Work Experience, and Preparation for Education and Employment reinforce learner confidence and provide clear progression routes into employment, apprenticeships, and advanced FET programmes.

Practical and creative pathways—including Art, Craft and Design, Painting, Wood Crafts, Horticulture, Sustainability and Green Skills, and Brick & Block Laying—offer hands-on skills development relevant to local enterprise, community initiatives, the green economy, and construction. These programmes enhance individual wellbeing, support community engagement, and contribute to local economic activity through the development of practical and creative skillsets.

Collectively, the Pathways suite strengthens workforce capacity, supports inclusive economic participation, and fosters community cohesion by linking learners, educators, local employers, and industry partners. Continued investment in Pathways will expand opportunities for progression, address regional skills needs, and ensure that individuals across Kildare and Wicklow can contribute fully to the social and economic life of their communities.

Projected learner numbers for Pathways in 2026 is approximately 3,200 learners.

Youth Provision:

Youth provision across Kildare and Wicklow operates through centres in Naas, Celbridge, Athy, Bray, Wicklow Town, Blessington and Arklow, offering full-time education and training to young people aged 16–20 who have
left school early. The programme provides a structured, supportive environment that enables learners to complete QQI Level 3 and 4 qualifications and develop the foundational skills required for sustained participation in education, work, and community life.
All centres deliver a broadly consistent curriculum comprising general education, digital skills, woodwork, personal care, culinary skills, art, health and fitness, and personal development. Programmes also integrate AI awareness and green-skills learning, supporting the development of adaptable and future-focused competencies. Personal, social, and career development is embedded through mentoring, counselling, and the Youthreach Advocacy Service, which provides tailored guidance and progression planning.
Partnerships with community organisations, employers, guidance services, counselling providers, and local agencies enhance programme quality and extend learning beyond the classroom. These collaborations facilitate work experience, wellbeing initiatives, and specialist workshops, strengthening community engagement and learner confidence. All Youthreach centres support progression to PLC courses, FET courses, apprenticeships, traineeships, and higher education, contributing to positive long-term outcomes and increased social and economic participation.

Community Education:

The community education programme delivers a diverse range of creative, wellbeing, environmental, and digital-skills courses that directly advance equality, inclusion, and social participation across Kildare and Wicklow. These programmes act as accessible entry points into lifelong learning, supporting progression into Further Education, particularly for learners who may face economic, social, or educational barriers.

Creative arts—such as sewing and sustainable fashion, upcycling, woodwork, felting, ceramics, mosaic craft, painting, and storytelling—are delivered through women's sheds, men's sheds, Traveller groups, active-retirement associations, and community organisations. These activities

build confidence, strengthen social networks, preserve cultural skills, and encourage re-engagement with structured learning, often serving as first steps toward further FET pathways.

A wide wellbeing strand supports physical and emotional resilience. This enhances community wellbeing, reduces isolation, and equips participants with the personal stability needed to progress into education, training, or employment.

Environmental and green-skills learning—through horticulture, gardening, climate-justice training, outdoor education, and sustainability-focused craft—promotes environmental awareness and practical skill development while supporting local community initiatives. These modules introduce learners to emerging green-economy pathways available through FET progression routes.

Digital-literacy courses delivered through family resource centres, men's and women's groups, and outreach settings build essential digital confidence. Learners gain the skills required for communication, online safety, employment readiness, and engagement with public services.

Integration, Life-in-Ireland, advocacy, money-management, and homelessness-support courses strengthen individuals' ability to navigate systems independently and participate fully in community life. These activities promote social cohesion and remove barriers to further learning by equipping participants with core functional and communication skills.

Train-the-trainer initiatives further strengthen community capacity by enabling participants to deliver learning within their own groups, supporting long-term sustainability, civic participation, and peer-led inclusion.

Collectively, this programme enhances literacy, digital competence, wellbeing, and community participation, providing clear, supported pathways into wider FET provision, skills development, and employment opportunities. Continued investment will enable KWETB to widen access, deepen social cohesion, and ensure that individuals across Kildare and Wicklow can progress confidently into education, work, and active community life.

Projected learner numbers for Community Education in 2026 is approximately 1,280 learners.

Adult Literacy for Life:

The adult literacy programme provides flexible, inclusive learning that strengthens core reading, writing, communication, numeracy, and digital skills. One-to-one and group literacy, ESOL, English literacy, and creative approaches such as Literacy Through Art ensure accessible pathways for adults of all levels, including beginners, and SEN learners. These pathways act as critical stepping stones into Further Education, Higher Education, and employment.

Digital upskilling remains a core priority, with courses ranging from beginner ICT and internet skills to everyday technology use, word processing, and smartphone skills. These essential competencies enhance learners' independence, employability, and capacity to engage fully in community and civic life.

General Learning modules broaden personal and practical skills in communication, personal effectiveness, numeracy, media literacy, sustainability, horticulture, and personal care. Courses

offer support re-entry routes for adults returning to education, strengthening long-term progression across Kildare and Wicklow.

Employment-focused options—including Career Preparation, Employability Skills, Spreadsheets, Retail Knowledge, Access to FET and Employment, and Driving Theory Workshops—provide direct preparation for work or next-step training, linking local learners to labour-market opportunities and expanding workforce participation.

The KWETB Regional Adult Literacy Coalition enhances social cohesion by coordinating partnerships between ETB services, libraries, community groups, CIS, MABS, employers, and national partners. Joint initiatives—including events for International Literacy Day and Social Inclusion Week and shared training in Literacy Awareness, Plain Language, and digital-badge programmes—embed literacy awareness across community services and strengthen collaborative capacity.

Both counties host multiple IPAS and Designated Accommodation Centres, creating a continued need for strong ESOL provision to support rapid integration, community cohesion, and equitable access to local services. While overall ESOL demand is gradually declining, significant need remains among expanding migrant communities, making sustained investment essential for inclusive participation and successful progression to FET, higher education, and employment.

Projected learner numbers for Adult Literacy for Life in 2026 is approximately 4,078 learners, comprising Adult Basic Education, ESOL and Refugee Resettlement.

Apprenticeship Funding
(Craft and Consortia led)

Craft Apprenticeship:

KWETB will continue to deliver the Farriery craft Apprenticeship in the Curragh at phase 2, 4 and 6. We have just rolled out version 6 to the new students this year.
Craft apprenticeship provision will continue to support all registered craft apprentices in the Kildare and Wicklow regions. Approximately 800 new apprentices in 2026 will be registered. Our six authorised officers will continue to work with the NAO to deliver a very high-quality service to our 2400 apprentices and 1300 employers for which the Defence Forces in the Curragh make up about 100 apprentices in Kildare.

Apprenticeship 2016+:

KWETB will continue to offer the NHA apprenticeship for which we have 5 groups between Kildare and Wicklow. We have standardised this programme in line with LCETB and our Employers are benefitting locally from this and are coming into the salons and upskilling themselves to keep on top of the programme. We have collaborated with Kildare County Council in Kildare and started a Commis Chef programme in a new Food and Drinks hub in Athy where local employers are now coming in and doing lots more short courses. We have software, cybersecurity and ICT networking

apprenticeships in Bray and Celbridge and are going to take on another four this year. We will be the first ETB to run the new Data Analytics/AI Apprenticeship with FIT in September.

Strategic Investment Funding
(Reach Funding, Specialist Skills Development, Skills to Advance Innovation Projects, ETB Strategic Initiatives,
Climate Action Initiatives, Self-Financing Courses)

General:

Strategic funding will support targeted, time-bound initiatives that enable innovation working with partners in state agencies and industry. This includes future specialist skills development projects aligned to priority sectors, and Skills to Advance innovation projects that respond to emerging enterprise needs. Funding will also support ETB strategic initiatives, climate action measures to improve sustainability and energy efficiency that includes centre Green Teams, staff upskilling and incorporating sustainability programmes within FET provision, and the development of self-financing courses that extend provision and support sustainability. This investment will be used to pilot new approaches, build organisational capability, support capital and equipment requirements, and strengthen partnerships, ensuring the FET system remains agile, innovative and aligned with national policy objectives. We are currently working with the equine industry land Kildare County Council looking at innovative ways to marry education with industry to encourage more people into the industry.

REACH:

In 2025 KWETB supported 16 REACH projects with circa 1700 beneficiaries, and in 2026 KWETB FET expect to build on this activity. Initiatives across the wider Kildare Wicklow region support an extensive range of community-based learning projects designed to strengthen participation, promote engagement, and reduce barriers to education among diverse groups. Activities involve collaborative work with disability service providers, enabling mixed-media art exhibitions, inclusive performance projects, and creative literacy-focused initiatives such as adapted choir programmes that develop communication, digital skills, and self-advocacy.

Further projects are delivered in partnership with rural women's groups, community development organisations, and local voluntary networks, facilitating cultural, seasonal, and heritage-based activities that foster connection, wellbeing, and community integration following periods of social isolation. Environmental and sustainability projects, often implemented with community gardening groups and inter-generational learning participants will provide hands-on education in horticulture, food growing, and sustainable living through the development of shared polytunnels, planters, and related infrastructure.

Digital inclusion remains a significant focus, with REACH funding supporting ICT upskilling for men's community groups, older learners, and individuals facing barriers to accessing essential online services. Additional targeted initiatives with Traveller-led groups provide peer-supported

learning, sewing and craft programmes, and education pathways that build confidence and support long-term engagement.

Collectively, these activities broaden access to learning, strengthen community connections, and create sustainable pathways into further education and lifelong participation.

Specialist Skills Development:

Currently linking in with industry looking at emerging skills for new Micro quals in the pharma industry. We are rolling out our new CX micro qual to Industry in 2026. It is a special purpose award where is looks at human skills in the workplace, design thinking tools for the workplace and leading within the workplace.
We will be looking at more micro quals at the latter end of the year.

Innovation Projects:

Due to current budgetary constraints and the lack of funding for innovation projects at present, KWETB aims to secure additional funding through partnerships, with the prospect of supporting innovation projects towards the end of 2026.

ETB Specific Initiatives:

KWETB's Baltinglass Outdoor Education Centre provides accessible outdoor and environmental learning that promotes inclusion, confidence, and participation for diverse groups. Its activities strengthen social cohesion by bringing learners together through shared challenges and community-based environmental projects. The centre supports collaboration with schools, youth services, and community organisations, while fostering future-ready skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, and environmental literacy.

Shelton Abbey Prison Education Service delivers inclusive and rehabilitative learning opportunities that address educational disadvantage and support equality of access. Through programmes such as Computer-Aided Design, Open University Key Skills, Pre-Release preparation, and General Learning, the centre equips learners with practical, future-focused competencies in digital skills, communication, and independent learning. These programmes contribute to social cohesion by supporting positive reintegration, strengthening community ties, and reducing barriers to participation. Both centres collectively enhance community wellbeing, promote sustainable development, and prepare learners for meaningful engagement in a changing society.

KWETB Sustainability and Green Activities 2025 –2030:

Kildare and Wicklow ETB (KWETB), through its Green Teams and Senior Management Team, has adopted a structured, phased approach to improving environmental performance across its estate. This strategy combines capacity building, operational efficiency, minor capital works, and major infrastructure upgrades, supported by robust governance, monitoring, and centre-level engagement.

A central focus is developing climate-competent staff and learners through climate-leadership training, SEAI Energy in Education professional development, and green-procurement training.

KWETB prioritise sustainability and green skills development embedding green skills micro qualifications and bespoke sustainability for enterprises. This includes integrated approaches combining sustainability policy development, workforce training and certification to assist businesses in meeting regulatory environmental and ESG requirements. Sustainability is embedded across learning pathways via induction modules, QQI programmes, and climate-focused vocational offerings. Every centre operates an active Green Team to oversee energy monitoring and awareness initiatives.

KWETB is implementing a suite of low-cost efficiency measures, including LED lighting upgrades, PIR and daylight sensors, draught-proofing, heating-control optimisation, zoning, and pipe-insulation improvements. These measures reduce carbon emissions, improve building performance, and lower operational costs. Additional resource-efficiency actions include enhanced waste segregation, composting, digital-first workflows, and water-conservation measures such as metering, leak detection, and low-flow fixtures.

To promote biodiversity, suitable centres are developing pollinator-friendly areas and native planting schemes, supported by updated pesticide-free landscaping guidelines. Beyond these measures, KWETB has identified major capital priorities—deep energy retrofits, multi-site solar PV deployment, heating-system decarbonisation, centralised BEMS, water-infrastructure upgrades, and sustainable transport improvements—to significantly reduce its environmental footprint and support national climate goals.

In addition to low-cost measures, the plans identify a portfolio of major capital interventions that exceed local budgets and require coordinated ETB-level governance, technical expertise, and specialised procurement, including deep energy retrofits of priority buildings, multi-site solar PV deployment, heating-system decarbonisation and modernisation, the implementation of centralised Building Energy Management Systems (BEMS), water-infrastructure upgrades, and the development of sustainable transport and grounds infrastructure such as EV-charging facilities and active-travel enhancements.