



Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board

Service Plan

2021

Foreword from CE

The Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board's (GRETB) Service Plan 2021 sets out the education and training services we will endeavour to provide in 2021. Such provision is within the resources allocated by the Department of Education (DE) and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), and in line with legislative requirements.

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, GRETB will be required to provide some services in a hybrid variety of formats. GRETB planning and service delivery for 2021 is contingent on public health advice and the decisions of Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we are hopeful that the services offered by GRETB will continue to meet the needs of our learners despite the challenges that COVID-19 presents.

The Service Plan comprehends GRETB's Strategy Statement 2017-2021 that will guide our work throughout 2021. Our core values of leadership, accountability, innovation, collaboration and inclusivity, inspire the work of all staff to deliver on our vision to actively lead the provision of high-quality education and training programmes and services that respond to the changing needs of learners and society.

Our mission is to support individuals through hybrid teaching and learning, to achieve their full potential and contribute to social, cultural and economic development. To this end GRETB provide a wide range of education services across a very large region in the West of Ireland. We cater for a diverse population with different educational, social and cultural needs. We provide high quality, sustainable education and training opportunities to primary, post-primary, Post-Leaving Certificate, 2nd Chance Education and Training, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Community, Literacy and Outdoor Education and Training, and many other programmes and services in the region.

Whilst continuing our efforts to improve services and educational outcomes, we must also focus on the cost and sustainability of services and ensure that we are achieving the best value for money for both the public and our learners. GRETB fully acknowledges the requirement to operate within the limits of the funding provided. Given the scale of the geographical and demographical challenges involved, GRETB will strive to do the maximum we can with the resources provided.

I acknowledge the continuing commitment of all staff, particularly through the challenges that COVID-19 presents, who through their daily endeavours continues to empower the people of Roscommon & Galway who engage with the service provided by GRETB.

David Leahy

Chief Executive

1. Background and Statistical Information

Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board (GRETB), was established on 1st July 2013 under the Education and Training Boards Act, 2013, as an amalgamation of three Vocational Education Committees (Galway City, County Galway and County Roscommon). The former FAS Training Centre, Mervue, Galway, came under the auspices of GRETB in July 2014. GRETB has a corporate structure which is made up of a democratically appointed committee and a management (executive) team. Our Head Office is in Athenry and sub-office in Roscommon town.

GRETB provide a wide range of education services across a very large region in the West of Ireland, catering for a diverse population with different educational, social and cultural needs. We provide educational services to a population of over 324,000 (CSO 2016). These services include, community national schools, post-primary schools, further education and training, and community-based education programmes and training, and the Outdoor Education Centre in Petersburg. GRETB also runs and manages an Education Service in Castlerea Prison and an Education Centre for refugees in Ballaghaderreen. GRETB is the lead partner for three Music Generation projects (County Galway, Galway City and Roscommon). These programmes are currently being rolled out in the region. In accordance with the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, we are also responsible for supporting the provision, coordination, administration and assessment of youth work services in counties Galway and Roscommon.

GRETB's target clients are:

- Students and their parents/guardians
- Adult learners
- Communities
- Young people and volunteers
- Applicants and grant recipients under the various student support schemes administered directly by the ETB
- Employers seeking to address skills gaps
- Employed people wishing to upskill

Service	Locations	No of Participants 2020/21
Community National Schools	2	80
Second Level & Post Leaving Certificate	20	7545*
Evening Classes in Schools 2019/2020		1830**
		Beneficiaries 2020
Further Education and Training Centres	40	12,438
Music Generation (regular participants)		2624
Music Generation - taster courses, workshops		325

*Post Leaving Certificate and Evening Classes in schools are recorded under Schools in this Service Plan.

** Evening class figures are for the 2019/2020 academic year.

*** Beneficiaries refer to the total number of participants on our programmes from the 1st January 2020 to the 31st of December 2020



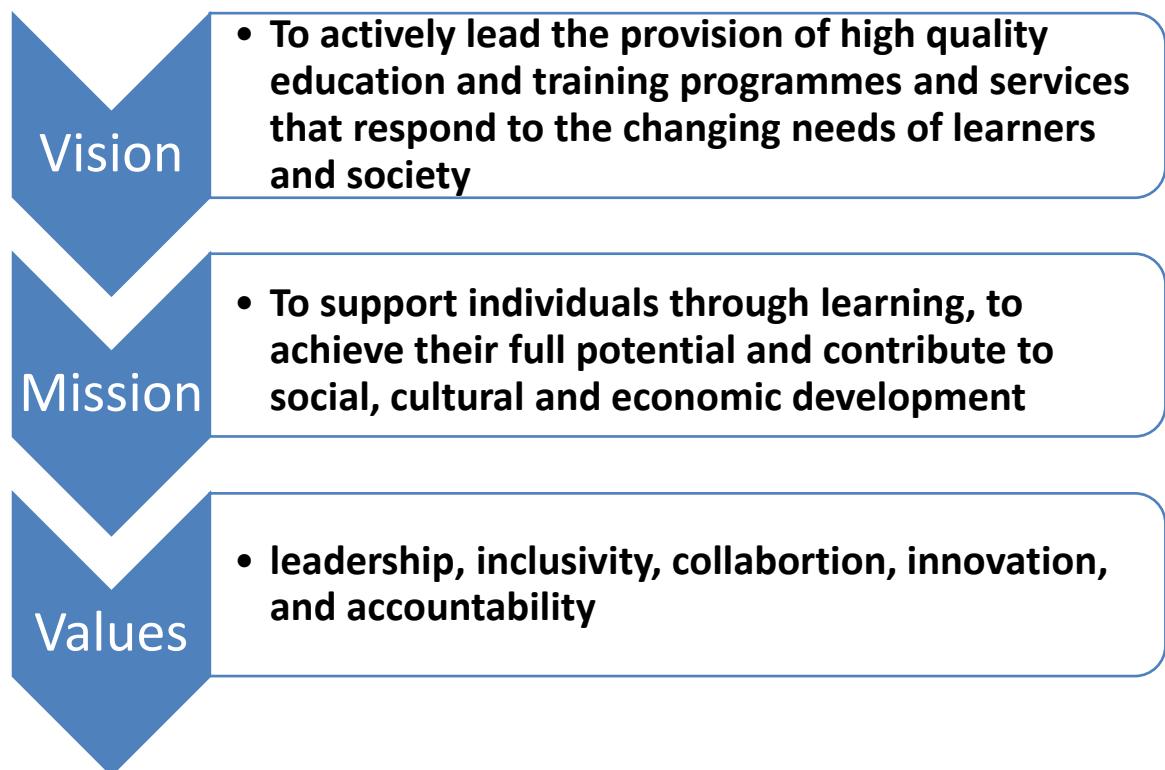
GRETB is the second largest ETB in the country, in terms of geographical area, and includes four islands. It extends from Boyle in Co Roscommon, to Connemara in the West, Galway City and to Portumna in the east of Galway. County Galway has the single largest and most populous Gaeltacht area in the country. Promoting Gaeilge is an essential element of GRETB's core service. We have eight Coláistí Lán-Ghaeilge and a number of our Further Education and Training centres in Connemara, operate through Irish.

Population 2016	Galway	Roscommon
Population 2016	258,552	64,544
Population Change (2011-2016)	7.50%	0.70%
Population Density (2016)	42.04 persons per sq km	25.33 persons per sq km
Source: CSO Census of Population 2016		

2. Vision, Mission and Core Values

GRETB Strategy Statement 2017-2021 was approved by our Board in June 2017. In preparing this Strategy Statement, key national strategies, such as the DES's Action Plan for Education 2016–2019, the FET Strategy 2014-2019, and the other national strategies were considered. Common themes were identified, and these formed the basis for the development of GRETB's strategy. A collaborative cross-sectoral consultation process took place with key stakeholders. Arising from this, strategic goals and priorities were identified, and an action plan has been developed and time lined. These goals, priorities and actions will form the basis of implementation plans for each strand of the organisation. Progress on the actions will be monitored on an annual basis by the Senior Management Team.

Vision, Mission and Core Values



Strategic Goals

GRETB's Strategy Statement sets high level objectives for the organisation under four strategic goals, which are in line with national strategies on education:

1. Improve the learning experience and success of learners

2. Improve the progresss of learners at risk of disadvantage, those with special needs or with lanugage, cultural or social differences

3. Provide high quality education and training programmes

4. Ensure our organisational infasrtucture (people, process and structure) is efficient and effective

Each goal has its own set of strategic priorities which will be met through a series of supporting actions. These goals and priorities have been designed to assist GRETB to avail of the opportunities which will arise and to meet the challenges it faces over the next five years.

3. 1 Statement of Service – Schools

Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board is Patron to 20 post-primary schools including PLC provision and two Community National Schools. As Patron, GRETB provides a range of supports and services to each school including, information and communications technology, programme development, human resource, governance, financial, building and maintenance, quality assurance, policy development, enhancing teaching and learning for the 2020-2021 academic year, and child protection oversight.

GRETB engages directly with ETBI and other national bodies and education partners to develop Education Policy and to assist GRETB Schools in having their input included within education policy and education practice decision and discussion forums.

Whilst COVID-19 presented many challenges within GRETB schools many opportunities consider new approaches hitherto not of focus were presented in particular remote teaching and learning, remote curriculum support, IT support, CPD and wellbeing. GRETB schools have adapted their remote Teaching & Learning practices since March 12th, 2020 when Covid-19 first resulted in school closures, deploying existing ICT resources and where necessary, purchasing new resources and devices for students and staff, providing training and ICT support.

GRETB is currently devising methods and structures to support the mentoring of newly appointed Principals & Deputy Principals. Several of GRETB's senior management team have volunteered as recognised Mentors offering support and guidance to their newly appointed colleagues, at both Principal and Deputy Principal level. Provision of this mentoring support is considered vital as the role of Principal/DP involves constant multi-tasking and decision making, often with incomplete information in addition to navigating some complex systems which can be somewhat daunting.

A multi-million capital funding project for GRETB commenced by Department for Education for the rebuild of Clarin College, Athenry, commenced in December 2018 and is now complete. The new school for Clarin College opened its doors to students for the first time in September 2020. Coláiste an Eachréidh moved to new temporary accommodation in Athenry whilst a development plan for a campus for Coláiste an Eachréidh and Gaelscoil Riada is proceeding.

Galway and Roscommon Education & Training Board's Community Colleges are an integral part of their local communities. They are inclusive and facilitate young people in meeting their full potential in society through the provision of high standards in education and informed citizenship within empowering, supportive and progressive schools.

Programmes being offered in our Community Colleges include:

- Junior Certificate
- Junior Certificate Schools
- Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied Programme
- Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
- Post Leaving Certificate courses
- Music School
- Fishing Skills Programme
- One academic year offshore island scholarship
- Adult Education & evening classes programme

A full range of subjects including languages, the humanities, arts, technology and science is offered at both junior and senior cycle. Students are encouraged to take part in all aspects of school life including extra-curricular activities such as drama, music, debating, sport, cultural, Leargas/Erasmus and Irish Language activities.

In order to ensure the highest quality of teaching and learning and the best possible educational experience for our students, supports will be offered by GRETB to all schools in:

- Special Education and Learning Support;
- CPD for teachers and support staff, Numeracy and Literacy, Technology Enhanced Teaching and Learning;
- CPD Child Protection (*on school request for existing teachers and as an integral part of GRETB new staff induction*);
- Oideachas trí mheán na Gaeilge chomh maith le hoideachas Gaeltachta, 8 GRETB schools provide Irish-Medium Education;
- Development programmes for GRETB's Principals, Deputy Principals and Middle Management post holders in conjunction with PDST, JCT, Teaching Council and other relevant agencies;
- Other key staff cohorts, including SNAs, administration and caretaking staff.

In addition to the above, support will also be offered in the areas of policy making and governance through ongoing work and training with schools and Boards of Managements (BOM). A nationally agreed training programme for School Board of Managements will commence in February 2021, supported by ETBI. Modules including Governance, Child Protection and Finance will be explored. GRETB normally organises GRETB schools across Galway and Roscommon to facilitate the training but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the training will commence remotely in February 2021.

In the latter part of 2019, a GRETB Parents' Forum was established, its implementation was initiated in 2020 as new members were elected following the establishment of new ETB/School Boards. This service provision whilst being structurally sound has however been reduced during Covid-19 but will be revitalised when schools reopen.

GRETB work with Universities from which participants in Professional Masters in Education (PME's) programmes undertake teaching placements in GRETB schools and formalised an agreement with regard to Garda Vetting and Child Protection Tusla online training.

Tá 20 scoil ag GRETB agus 8 gcinn díobh seo ag múineadh trí mheán na Gaeilge, seacht (7) gcoláiste Gaeltachta ina measc. Is é GRETB an t-aon ETB sa tír le trí iarbunscoil ar oiléain scóite amach ón gcósta. Tá fás leanúnach ar earnáil na scoileanna i GRETB le deich mbliana anuas agus leanfaidh an fás sin ar feadh roinnt bhlianta eile. Tá aontú le linn 2020 go mbunófaí Coiste Gaeilge nua i GRETB chun tacú le Col Gaeltachta agus Gaelcholáistí, maraon le tacú le seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge GRETB.

GRETB's island schools present a unique set of challenges regarding securing adequate and appropriate resources to support and sustain them. Notwithstanding the absence of any national education policy for island communities, GRETB has developed support strategies to resource our island schools.

GRETB has and will continue to engage with DES, other Government Departments, and agencies to secure DES and Roinn Ealaíon, Oidhreachta, Gnóthaí Réigiúnacha, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta assistance in sustaining vulnerable island post primary schools through the creation of national policy in this area.

As GRETB's pupil cohort has increased by approximately 25% since 2013, the Board will continue to engage with DES to have this growth fully comprehended within the financial resourcing model in use since 2012.

In addition, GRETB took over the Patronage of two Community National Schools, Lecarrow CNS, Roscommon (formally St. Johns National School) and Cuan na Gaillimhe Community National School (formally Galway Steiner School), Knocknacarra, Galway. Lecarrow CNS welcomed 16 pupils into the two-teacher school for the 2020 academic year. It is a welcome increase from the cohort of eight pupils who were enrolled just a year ago. Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS had an enrolment of 55 pupils in 2019, enrolment for 2020 increased to 63 pupils.

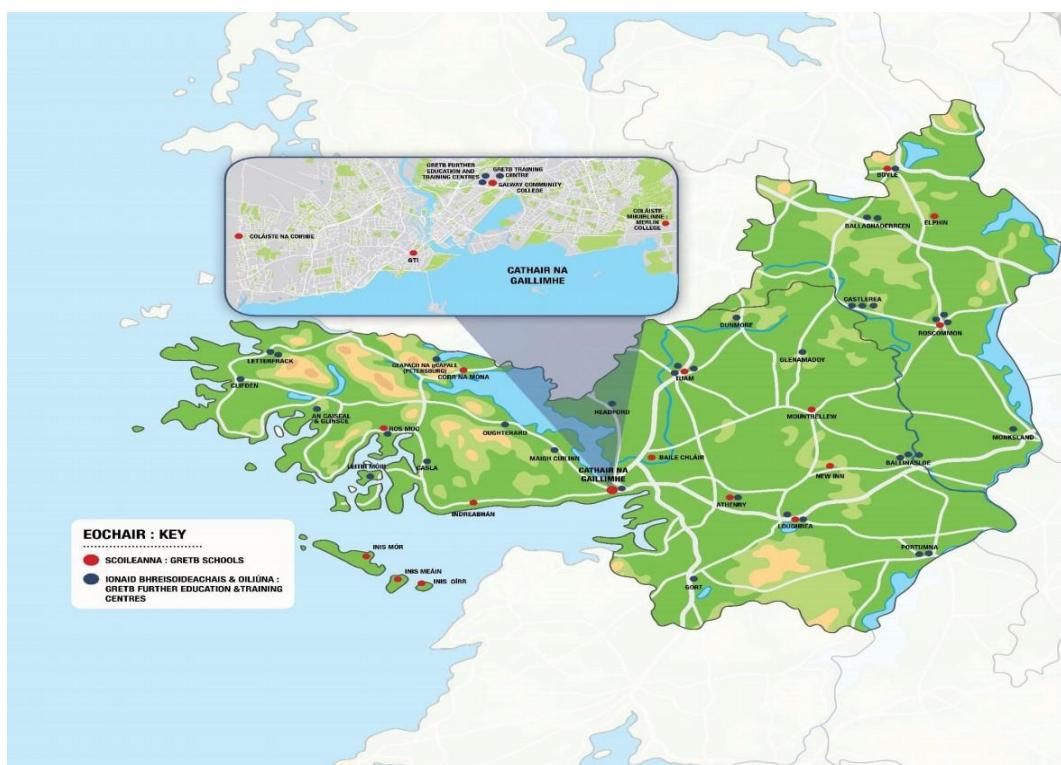
Post–Primary Schools

GRETB School Name	Enrolment figures 2020/2021	PLC figures 2020/2021
Abbey Community College, Boyle	438	
Archbishop McHale College, Tuam	265	
Clarin College, Athenry	604	67
Coláiste an Chreagáin, Mountbellew	77	60
Coláiste an Eachréidh, Athenry	252	
Coláiste Bhaile Chláir, Claregalway	1174	
Coláiste Chilleáin Naofa, New Inn	162	
Coláiste Cholmcille, Indreabhán	103	
Coláiste Ghobnait, Inis Oírr, Oileán Árann	31	
Coláiste Mhuirlinne/Merlin College, Galway City	660	
Coláiste na bPiarsach, Ros Muc	60	
Coláiste na Coiribe, Galway City	608	
Coláiste Naomh Éinne, Inis Mór, Oileán Árann	39	
Coláiste Naomh Eoin, Inis Meáin, Oileán Árann	32	
Coláiste Naomh Feichín, Corr na Móna	74	
Elphin Community College, Roscommon	143	
Galway Community College, Galway City	269	290
Galway Technical Institute, Galway City	N/A	1001
Roscommon Community College	513	
St Brigid's College, Loughrea	623	
Total	6,127	1418

Adult Education/Evening Classes in schools 2019/20: **1830**

Community National Schools:

GRETB School Name	Enrolment figures 2020/2021
Lecarrow Community National School	16
Cuan na Gaillimhe Community National School	64
Total	80



4.2 Statement of Service – Further Education and Training

The SOLAS FET Strategy 2014-2019 reflected the principles articulated in the Action Plan for Jobs, National Skills Strategy 2025, Pathways to Work and broader education policy. The Strategy addressed the unique challenges faced in the sector and promoted targeted skills programmes to support job seekers to re-skill and up-skill in areas where suitable employment opportunities were emerging. In doing so, Further Education and Training developed and expanded to deliver higher quality, flexible, and progressive programmes of education and training. The 2020-2024 FET Strategy proposes to build on the previous initiatives. The development of strategic performance agreements between SOLAS and ETBs identified six core aspects of further education and training, with associated FET system targets. These core areas are as follows: *Supporting Job Creation; Learning Pathways; Active Inclusion; Lifelong Learning and Workforce Upskilling, Meeting Skill Gaps and New Models of Delivery.*

The onset of Covid 19 in March 2020 forced a reconsideration of education and training plans with immediate effect. The closure of many industries particularly the hospitality and retail sectors changed the unemployment rates considerably. A large proportion of people were now unemployed and were seeking alternative programmes of training and education. The FET Department moved swiftly to a blended approach to delivery of programmes, this was facilitated by the TEL unit which had significant expertise in online teaching and learning.

GRETB had completed and signed off on a Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS for the period 2018-2020 which identified sector specific targets and strategic priorities for GRETB. These priorities included an increase in Traineeship and Apprenticeship provision, integration of literacy across programmes, upskilling employees in the workforce and provision of programmes for those returning to the workforce. The targets included increases in certification, increased progression to employment and further education as well as increases in people accessing lifelong learning provision. Galway and Roscommon ETB specifically supported the principles of the FET Strategy in all planning and provision by continuing to align skills development and training with the enterprise needs of the region and by continuing to contribute to the primary objective of the Action Plan for Jobs in increasing employment in the region by 10-15% in the period up to 2020 (Action Plan for Jobs West 2015-2017). In 2021 we will see a continuation of the measures in 2020 and will work closely with SOLAS in addressing key initiatives such as those linked to the Hospitality sector. The Skills to Advance team are actively engaging with SOLAS presently to roll out a number of targeted programmes in this sector. FET senior management are working closely with the Midlands Transition team and colleagues in ETBs to ensure our programmes support sustainability in areas hit by the closure of industries such as Bord na Móna.

GRETB will continue to maintain its leadership in FET provision in the region, across all sectors from basic education to specific skills and work-based training. As the provider of choice, GRETB will be at the heart of relevant and innovative partnerships with industry driving the development and delivery of quality programmes of education and training. This will be achieved whilst maintaining a community focus where the vulnerable and those on the margins of society are included. This will be the marker of the success of FET in the region. The Aquafarm collaborative project which is in the process of designing virtual supports for teaching aquaculture programmes is an example of new technologies in teaching and learning supporting the marine industry.

GRETB has significant facilities infrastructure, skill, and competence for the delivery of Apprenticeship programmes, and it will continue to deliver Craft Apprenticeships such as Electrical, Carpentry & Joinery, Metal Fabrication and Motor in line with demand. A new Plumbing Apprenticeship began in Q4 2020 and there are two intakes scheduled for 2021. GRETB is currently in consultation with SOLAS regarding additional space to support the backlog of apprentice training which is a national issue.

New models of apprenticeship and traineeships continue to be rolled out in line with national targets. The delivery of new apprenticeships and traineeships is supported by coordination and collaboration with industry and other providers. In 2019, GRETB rolled out the Auctioneering Apprenticeship in collaboration with CDETB, a third intake on this programme is scheduled for September 2021. We are currently working with LCETB on the Hairdressing Apprenticeship with an expected start date of September 2021. The Butchery Apprenticeship is scheduled to start in March 2021 and registrations are ongoing for the Sales Apprenticeships. The Accounting Technician Apprenticeship in association with Accounting Technicians Ireland was rolled out in GTI with a new intake of apprentices scheduled for September 2021. An additional apprenticeship in Professional Cookery is scheduled to start in Q4 2021 in collaboration with the Food Innovation Hub in Athenry.

GRETB led out on the development of a *National Apprenticeship in Arboriculture* and obtained validation in 2020. Due to COVID, the programme commencement date was delayed and it is now scheduled to start in April 2021, with a second intake scheduled for October 2021.

Traineeships offer flexible, responsive, occupational skills development training programmes which are tailored to the identified needs of a specific industry sector or sub-sector. They lead to nationally recognised qualifications. In 2018 and 2019 GRETB began to roll out Traineeships in some of the FET centres throughout its region for example, a traineeship in Childcare began in both Galway City and in Ballinasloe, a Hospitality traineeship started in Ballinasloe, and an Audio-Visual traineeship in collaboration with Screen Training Ireland was rolled out. These traineeships will continue in 2021. GRETB worked in partnership with MSLETB and WWETB to develop new awards in Agriculture at Level 5 and 6, these programmes will continue to be offered in 2021 to support local farming communities.

GRETB is represented on the Udarás na Gaeltachta, Marine Park initiative in Cill-Chiaráin where skills development in the Aquaculture and Marine sector is identified as critical to the success of this industry led initiative. Aquaculture and Boat building courses are now running in the area to support the sector and will continue in 2021.

GRETB has designed a range of TEL initiatives to upskill FET staff and have created a panel of TEL champions across FET centres to support on-line TEL based education and training. These measures have impacted positively on the outcomes and opportunities for learners and provide flexibility in our reach to learners, especially during the current pandemic. We are also planning to develop a TEL Hub in our Training Centre in Galway City.

The Skills to Advance Initiative prioritises employees whose skills level is below level 5 on the NFQ and who are classified as vulnerable. For these learners Level 5 programmes are free and only a 30% contribution needs to be made by the learners for a Level 6 programme. A Skills to Advance Coordinator is now in place in GRETB as part of the Employer Engagement Unit with a remit to support companies in developing the skills of their workforce. The Coordinator works closely with companies and bodies such as *Bord na Móna* where employees are displaced and require upskilling and reskilling.

The GRETB Community Education Service (CES) Plan focused on engaging the hardest to reach learners in community settings to identify their learning needs, engage them in a short term and part-time programme and aid their progression into other accredited FET options. This will continue with a particular emphasis on areas of low employment such as recognised economic blackspots. With the onset of COVID 19 in 2020 Community Education programmes were delivered primarily online. Community groups were encouraged to apply for funding under the Mitigating Disadvantage fund in Dec 2020

The EROC (Emergency Reception and Orienteering Centre) opened in Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon in 2017 and GRETB began the delivery of a range of education programmes to support the residents.

There are currently 4 primary teachers in the EROC as we have a Transition programme in place for children who are ready to enter mainstream classes in the local area, there are three local primary schools involved in the Transition programme and two 2nd level schools. In 2020 there were 46 children in primary education in the EROC with 21 post primary and 67 adults accessing education classes. In December 2020, 32 primary children and 14 post primary children arrived to the EROC as well as 67 adults. These are in addition to the those already in attendance. Most primary children are now attending local schools apart from the children who have recently arrived. All post primary children are attending the local Secondary level school.

Throughout 2021 FET will:

- continue its work as an active member of the Regional Skills Forum
- maintain quarterly meetings with DSP throughout the region facilitating the identification of the training needs of the unemployed
- continue to work with Chamber of Commerce strengthening links with employers
- Roll out the Arborist Apprenticeship
- continue its work developing new apprenticeships in partnership with industry
- work with MSLETB on roll-out of a new Butchery and Sales Apprenticeship
- work with LCETB on roll-out of the new Hairdressing Apprenticeship
- rollout a third iteration of the CDETB Auctioneering and Property Services Apprenticeship
- rollout of a Software Development Apprenticeship in collaboration with FIT
- rollout the new Agriculture awards at Level 5/6 in conjunction with MSLETB and WWETB
- increase provision in key areas including Tourism, Hospitality, Marine and manufacturing
- implement the TEL Action Plan
- implement the SOLAS CPD Strategy
- deliver on its Public Sector duty
- Implement the new 10 Year Literacy, Numeracy & Digital Skills Strategy.
- Work collaboratively with industry to support employers, employees and the community at large to support economic development.

Youth Services

GRETB Youth Services will continue to administer the Department of Children and Youth Affairs funded Local Youth Club Grant Scheme to voluntary youth groups and will roll out the new UBU Youth projects. GRETB Youth Officers are also responsible for implementing the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) with staff led Youth Services.

Western Regional Drugs Task Force.

The Community Liaison Officers will roll-out initiatives such as Planet Youth to support young people and communities to engage proactively in a positive lifestyle.

Traveller Interagency.

GRETB will support the work of the Traveller Interagency in the delivery of its strategy and work closely with the LCDCs to support integration and inclusiveness.

Other Supports

GRETB also co-operates with agencies engaged with vulnerable groups such as those physically or intellectually impaired; prison services, providing 53,400 teaching hours through co-operation to support their work.

FET provision 2020 figures		
Programme Category	Distinct Learner	Beneficiaries
Apprenticeship Training	467	467
Adult Literacy Groups	1227	1804
Blended Training	238	243
BTEI Groups	1895	3080
Community Education	1300	1881
Community Training Centres	33	33
ESOL	811	1114
Evening Training in FET	368	384
FET Cooperation Hours	331	1077
ITABE	41	41
Justice Workshop	61	64
Local Training Initiatives	128	141
Other Funding	84	90
PLC (recorded under schools in this Service Plan)*		
Skills for Work	174	200
Skills to Advance	192	208
Specialist Training Providers	128	141
Specific Skills Training	443	476
Traineeship Employed	17	17
Traineeship Training	202	226
Voluntary Literacy Tuition	16	16
VTOS Core	357	463
Youthreach	235	272
Distinct Learner v Activity:	8748	12438

*Beneficiaries refer to the total number of participants on programmes from the 1st January 2020 to the 31st of December 2020

*PLC and evening training in school enrolments are recorded under post-primary school in this service plan

In addition, GRETB had over 2600 regular participants on Music Generation programmes and over 10,000 beneficiaries from Youth Service, Adult Guidance Service and grants provided in the region.

4.3 Statement of Service – Organisational Support and Development

The Organisational Support and Development (OSD) team are located in GRETB's Head Office in Athenry and our sub-office in Roscommon Town. GRETB has an annual budget of €111m, over 2000 staff and approximately 25,000 learners/beneficiaries and students (this figure decreased somewhat in 2020 due to Covid-19). The back office supports required to service this vast organisation are provided by the OSD team and cover the following administrative areas: HR, Finance, Corporate Services, IT and Buildings.

The OSD team's goals are to enhance the processes and procedures that underpin good corporate governance in GRETB and to ensure that human, financial and infrastructural resources appropriate to the delivery of front-line services are deployed efficiently and effectively across our Schools and Centres.

The OSD team are committed to implementing GRETB's Strategy Statement 2017-2021 and the associated actions. Projects and initiatives planned for the coming year include:

- continue to support Schools/Centres/HQ in relation to the Health and Safety measures required during the pandemic
- continue to guide the rollout of the new health and safety statements, the supporting management structure, and training for staff in GRETB
- provide IT support for schools and centres for remote learning
- commence a project to improve the security and efficiency of device management in the organisation
- monitor and review implementation of the Code of Governance ETBs (2019)
- continue to work with the ESBS on shared services projects, which includes:
 1. the rollout of a new financial system, this is scheduled for transfer in Q3 2021
 2. shared services T&S project scheduled for October 2021
 3. wave 2 learner payment project where VTOS and Youthreach learner payments will transfer to a new system
 4. Upgrade of HR/Payroll system Q1/Q2 2021
 5. pilot Core recruitment module
 6. commence work on other pension related projects
- work with ESBS to ensure GRETB's operational and governance requirements are met as part of both the payroll and the financial shared services projects
- continue to embed good practice around GDPR
- provide on-going support on the rollout of Music Generation programmes in County Galway, Galway City and Roscommon
- support implementation of the Digital Strategy for schools and the TEL Strategy in FET
- manage a significant capital programme (major projects in 2021 include – a new Gael Campus for Coláiste an Eachréidh and Scoil Riada Athenry, large extensions in St Bridget's Loughrea, Coláiste Cholmcille Indreabhán, St Killian's New Inn, a new ASD unit in Abbey Community College, significant refurbishment works in the sub office in Roscommon. Proposed capital projects in FET include a TEL HUB in the Training Centre Mervue, car park upgrades in Athenry and Gort FET Centres, refurbishment works for the Arborist Apprenticeship, to name a few)
- provide support for major devolved capital projects in non-ETB schools (as resources allow)
- continue rollout SharePoint sites in schools /centres and HQ and replace 5/6 servers

- continue to work with ETBI and associated forums on national issues
- implement new circulars, relevant legislative changes and any new national policies and initiatives as applicable to the sector in 2021
- liaise with ETBI and the DoE on the national Organisational Design Phase II process to ensure GRETB has the admin structure and expertise to meet GRETB's statutory obligations, to support schools and centres, and to implement both national strategies and GRETB's Strategy

5 Strategy Statement 2021

The following actions will be either commenced or delivered during 2021 in line with GRETB's Strategy Statement

Strategic Goal 1:

Improve the learning experience and success of learners

Priority 1.1: Provide responsive and innovative programmes

- Commence the newly accredited arborist apprenticeship, as well as the new hairdressing, sales, cookery and butchery apprenticeships
- Progress the aquafarm collaborative project which is supported by SOLAS
- Ongoing engagement with employers in the region to support programme development, particularly in the area of Skills to Advance and Skills to Complete programmes

Priority 1.2: Provide relevant knowledge and skills for lifelong learning, personal development, progression and employment.

- Offer programmes with entrepreneurial and digital skills elements
- Offer Microsoft exams to staff and learners
- Commence implementation of the new 10 Year Literacy, Numeracy & Digital Skills Strategy
- Ongoing work with organisations across the region to develop new programmes and traineeships
- Continue to expand Music Generation provision in the region

Priority 1.3: Promote positive learning experiences and environments.

- Continue to implement government guidelines in relation to health and safety measures associated with working and learning remotely during the pandemic
- Guide schools/centres /HQ in the rollout of the new health and safety statement, the supporting management structure and training for same
- Assist with the development of a Plan for Outdoor Education and Training Centres
- Continue to provide wellbeing initiatives for staff and learners.
- Progress the pilot of IBEC's Keep-Well Mark in HQ
- Continue work on the Planet Youth Project
- Work with the 8 schools who are participating in DES Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme
- Continue to promote and support Erasmus Programmes in schools and centres
- Promote Employee Assistance Programme

Priority 1.4: Provide technology enhanced learning environments.

- Support our staff and learners with remote working and learning
- Review and improve device management in GRETB in terms of efficiency and security
- Continue to rollout TEL training for staff.
- Implement the digital strategy in schools and TEL in FET
- Continue with the rollout of SharePoint in schools/centres and HQ
- Replace outdated hardware and servers.
- Continue developing the platform for subject-specific networks within GRETB where teachers can collaborate in the development of teaching and learning resources, and share ideas, solutions and resources

Strategic Goal 2:

Improve the progress of learners at risk of disadvantage, those with special needs or with language, cultural and social differences

Priority 2.1: Promote equality and active inclusion.

- Provide funding for Community Groups through the Mitigation Against Education Disadvantage fund which was launched by SOLAS in Dec 2020
- Continue to support remote learning for disadvantaged students/learners and those with special needs through the loan of IT equipment and other support measures
- Progress work on the Public Sector Duty plan

- Participate in ETBI Characteristic Spirit/Core Values process and plan with emphasis on multidenominational provision in the ETB

Priority 2.2 Provide accessible and flexible education and training programmes.

- Support our staff and learners with remote working and learning
- Monitor and review online provision in terms of quality and standards
- Progress capital projects which will improve accessibility e.g., Gael Campus, Coláiste Colmcille
- Continue to liaise with Galway City Council to identify a suitable site for Cuan na Gaillimhe
- Continue to raise nationally and at EU level, the need for a policy on island education

Priority 2.3: Provide high quality inclusive education with improved learning outcomes.

- Extend GRETB's highly successful literacy and numeracy programme for apprentices to support learners on other FET programmes
- Continue to seek a dedicated disability fund for FET learners
- Implement the Quality Improvement Plan

Priority 2.4: Improve the transition of learners at critical stages in the education and training system.

- Conduct a review of the Turas pilot programme for 12-15-year-olds who do not transition to 2nd level
- Continue to build relationships with third-level colleges through representation on the NUIG FE to HE Working Group, and collaborate with GMIT & NUIG on programmes and access pathways
- Research the challenges faced by students' transitions from primary to secondary schools and identify agreed action areas for GRETB schools.

GRETB Strategic Goal 3:

Provide high quality education and training programmes

Priority 3.1: Promote quality assurances in our education and training programmes.

- Prepare for the inaugural review meeting by QQI and complete the QA self-assessment
- School to participate in self-evaluation (SSE) programmes and to ensure their "Know Your School" document is up to date

Priority 3.2: Support staff in the pursuit of quality teaching and learning standards.

- Encourage ongoing collaboration in cluster groups of teachers which have been established in subjects across GRETB schools, and expand this to include a TY Co-ordinator's cluster group
- Develop expertise in child protection and SEN best practice through supporting CPD and establishing a collective coordinated approach across GRETB Schools.
- Develop expertise in new teacher induction best practice, through supporting and resourcing CPD and establishing a collective coordinated approach to mentoring NQTs and PME placement teachers
- Develop strategic alliances with PME colleges to give best effect to the needs of GRETB
- Establish communities of practice in fields of learning across FET and share collaborations

Priority 3.3: Increase the use of quality data, analysis, research and evaluation to inform service delivery and identify emerging issues.

- Continue to collate, review and measure state exam results against national norms
- Review MLL and WSE reports and schools to share WSE experience at PPF
- Continue to use PLSS and CSO data to track learners and use the NDP to plan programmes
- Work with Regional Skills Forum and IBEC to monitor economic trends
- Reengage with Parents Associations and support the newly established Parents Forum for schools

Priority 3.4: Promote leadership, innovation, continuous improvement and sharing of knowledge.

- Establish methods and structures to support the mentoring of newly appointed Principals & Deputy Principals
- Actively engage in CE/Director forums and other ETBI forums such as PLC, Principals, Finance, HR, IT and Corporate Services

Strategic Goal 4:

Ensure our organisational infrastructure (people, processes and structure) is efficient and effective

Priority 4.1: Ensure GRETB has the capacity to successfully meet the current demands and to influence the future direction of the sector.

- Develop a new five-year Strategic Plan for the organisation
- Actively promote, support and track CPD for staff
- Continue to engage with the DE/SOLAS to ensure GRETB has the appropriate administrative structure to meet our clients' needs and legislative requirements
- Continue to engage with DE and SOLAS regarding funding to ensure it meets our increasing student /learner numbers and increasing costs
- Work with ESBS on various projects including the rollout of the new financial system, the new shared services T&S module, wave 2 of the learner payment transfer to shared services, as well as pension related projects
- Pilot the Core Recruitment module
- Work with ESBS to ensure payroll and the financial shared services project meet GRETB needs in terms of operations, governance and business continuity

Priority 4.2: Enhance our internal and external communication systems.

- Establish a Communications Working Group
- Rollout a SharePoint site for all staff for GRETB wide policies, forms, communications and so on.
- Progress work on GRETB's customer charter and associated plan
- GRETB's representatives to actively engage on the LCDC in Galway City, County and Roscommon, Regional Skills Forum and Action Plan for Jobs West representation
- Enhance links with NUIG, GMIT, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Údarás na Gaeltachta, GRD, Forum Connemara, Councils in the area

Priority 4.3: Provide the best possible teaching, learning and working environments while maximising resources.

- Continue to seek funding for capital projects as needs arise
- Manage a significant capital programme (major projects in 2021 include – a new Gael Campus for Coláiste an Eachréidh and Scoil Riada Athenry, large extensions in St Bridget's Loughrea, Coláiste Cholmcille Indreabhán, St Killian's New Inn, a new ASD unit in Abbey Community College, significant refurbishment works in the sub office in Roscommon. Proposed capital projects in FET include a TEL HUB in the Training Centre Mervue, and car park upgrades in Athenry and Gort FET Centres, to name a few)
- Work with DE on approval for further capital projects – new school for Cuan na Gailimhe, Phase II for Roscommon Community College and Archbishop McHale College
- Explore with SOLAS the potential of a new facility for expansion of apprenticeship and traineeship programmes
- Continue to seek to extend the high-speed broadband available in schools to FET Centres
- Implement a number of projects to improve IT security - replacing servers, device management policy, support and training around use of Office 365

Priority 4.4: Ensure best practice in corporate governance throughout GRETB.

- Review the risk management process in the organisation and consider risks it in the context of GRETB's Strategic Plan
- Implement new governance structure associated with the UBU programme for Youth Services
- Review the new Charities Code of Governance and the implications for GRETB
- Monitor implementation of the Code of Governance for ETBs
- Develop a customer charter and a related customer action plan
- Provide ongoing training for Boards of Management and other Committees
- Promote ETBI's online training tool on GDPR and best practice around data protection
- Ongoing review and updating of existing policies

6 Performance Delivery Goals and Priorities

In addition to GRETB's strategic priorities for 2021, the Service Plan also includes relevant actions, performance indicators and targets in line with the priorities identified by the Department of Education as part of their Performance Delivery Agreements with ETBs (see table below). Many of the priorities identified by the DoE overlap with the strategic priorities of GRETB.

Priority	Action	Performance Indicator	et
Goal 1 - Optimise Student /Learner Experience			
Provide a positive learning experience for all learners, including learners from marginalised groups	Provide funding for Community Groups through the Mitigation Against Educational Disadvantaged fund which was launched in Dec 2020	Funding administered	Q4
Provide a broad-based curriculum	Continue to offer new NCCA subjects e.g. Politics /PE and short courses in schools	Subjects offered	Ongoing
Implement Quality Assurance systems	Prepare for the inaugural review meeting with QQI and conduct the related QA self-assessment process	Successful Review	Q3
Support students/learners at risk of educational disadvantage in line with current national policy	Put in place support measures for remote learning for disadvantaged students and learners with special needs e.g. provision of IT equipment	Supports in place	Ongoing
Provide guidance and counselling services	Streamline GRETB's Course Recruitment Section and Guidance Services	Single line manager in place	Q4
Provide high quality learning/training facilities	Develop a business case for SOLAS to purchase an additional facility for FET, to support the expansion of apprenticeships and traineeships	Approval to proceed secured	Q4
Promote and develop outdoor education	Continue to assist with the development of a Plan for Outdoor Education and Training	Plan Published	Q2
Plan for changing demographics	Continue to monitor and plan for changing demographics in area using SLMRU and AIRO Maps, and also the NDP		Ongoing
Engage effectively with employers	Employer Engagement Unit to work with employers on the development of Skills to Advance and Skills to Compete programmes	Programmes Developed	Ongoing
Provide and develop traineeship and apprenticeship programmes	Rollout the newly validated arborist apprenticeship programme	Programme Rolled Out	Q2
Ensure all necessary child safeguarding measures are in place in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary/Post-Primary Schools	Provide Child Protection Training for BOM Conduct re-vetting programme in line with national regulations		Q1 Ongoing
Priorities STEM/STEAM in schools	Promote initiatives to increase participation in STEM/ STEAM in	Increases in uptake for Physics	Q3

	schools e.g. the skype programme to encourage uptake in Physics		
Provide high quality ICT learning supports in schools/centres	Implement the Digital Strategy for schools and TEL Strategy for FET, and continue to offer blended learning	Funding for same utilised in line with parameters	Ongoing

Goal 2 – Staff Support

Recruitment and retention of staff	Provide additional competency-based interview training for Board members and review recruitment policy and procedures	Training provided Policy Updated	Q3 Q1
Support staff in ongoing professional development	Continue to support staff with ongoing promotion of CPD policy and financial support for same	Staff upskilled	Ongoing
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	A review of Organisational Learning and Development will commence to ensure structures are in place to accommodate training requirements.	Ongoing
Support and develop high quality leadership in the ETB	Review implementation of PD National Strategy. Expand the mentoring programme for new Principals and Deputy Principals and support secondments	Review complete	Q4
Promote awareness of health and safety	Agree and implement strategic priorities for H&S in GRETB for 2021		Q4
Provide a positive and supportive work environment	Progress pilot of IBEC Keep-Well Mark in HQ	Attain Keep-Well Mark	Q4
Support staff wellbeing	Continue to deliver wellbeing workshops and online resources on wellbeing Promote EAP for staff	Workshops delivered Raised Awareness	Ongoing

Goal 3 Governance

Develop organisational structures and systems to meet the changing needs of the organisation	Board and Finance/ARC Committee to conduct self-assessments, identify training needs and keep Board appraised of their work. Implement risk management policy and system of internal control	Assessments complete and training provided as required Systems in place. Reviewed and updated regularly	Ongoing Ongoing
Effectively manage finances and risks	Work with ESBS on implementation of new financial system	New system in place and rolled out in schools/centre	Q3
Efficiently use resources	Continue to roll out Corporate Procurement Plan		Ongoing
Communicate effectively	Develop a Customer Service Charter and Action Plan	Plan in place	Q2

Develop Service Level agreements with external stakeholders	Develop a register of SLA's with external stakeholders	Register in place	Q4
Ensure effective data protection	Update GDPR policy and roll out Review contracts with UK suppliers re GDPR as required in light of Brexit		Q2 Ongoing
Engage effectively with stakeholders and develop partnerships	Continue to develop and expand partnerships, for example, new Bio Innovator Centre in Athlone	SLA /MOU in place for any new Partnerships	Ongoing
Follow best practice in procurement	Raise awareness and provide training on best practice in procurement	Updates and training provided	Ongoing
Ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements	Complete financial statement, service plan and annual report in line with statutory deadlines	Deadlines met	Annually
Assist the DE, as needed, to meet the needs arising from the Irish Refugee Protection Programme and provision for international protection applicants	Co-operate with all stakeholders as the need arises	Co-operated as required	Ongoing
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 Register	Ongoing
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.	Appraisals performed	Annually
Financial expertise on audit and finance committees	Appointments to audit and finance committees 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.	External members appointed to A&R & Finance Committees have experience and expertise in finance & audit	As required
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 as required under the Code of Practice for Governance of ETBs.	Reports and minutes submitted by A&R and Finance Committee to the Board.	As required
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-assessment carried out and noted in the minutes.	As required

Department reporting deadlines	Reporting deadlines set by the Department should be adhered to.	Submission of reports as requested by Department in the required deadlines	As required
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 audit and risk committee should support the board in this role.	Risk Management Policy in place with active Risk Register in place with bi-annual reviews. Regular reporting to ARC	As required
Internal Controls	The Board of each ETB should ensure that it receives adequate assurance that specified controls are operating as intended	Internal controls systems in place. Systems reviewed and assurances provided to A&R Committee and Board	As required

GRETB Financial Summary		
	Year Ended	Estimated Year Ended
	31/12/2020¹	31/12/2021²
RECEIPTS		
Schools & Head Office	54,944,321	54,117,454
Further Education & Training	49,713,387	50,504,464
Youth Services	2,570,707	2,600,000
Agencies	2,693,561	2,500,000
Self-Financing	1,988,896	1,700,000
Capital	7,163,659	5,000,000
	119,074,531	116,421,918
PAYMENTS		
Schools & Head Office	53,135,087	54,117,454
Further Education & Training	46,531,672	50,504,464
Youth Services	2,496,076	2,600,000
Agencies	2,402,956	2,500,000
Self-Financing	1,631,023	1,700,000
Capital	4,942,280	6,000,000
	111,139,094	117,421,918
Changes regarding FET 2021		
Funding for support staff in stand-alone PLC Colleges and for Adult Education Officer posts to transfer from DE to SOLAS from 01 Jan 2021		
<small>¹ 2020 Receipts & Payments are subject to change following completion and audit of the Financial Statements</small>		
<small>² 2021 Schools & Head Office receipt includes superannuation and prior year receipt credits. 2021 FET Estimates are subject to approval from SOLAS following submission of the FAR4</small>		

GRETB SCHOOLS & HEAD OFFICE		
	Year Ended	Estimated Year Ended
	31/12/2020¹	31/12/2021
	Payments	Payments
PAY	46,918,954	47,806,219
NON PAY	3,355,157	3,365,783
ASSOCIATED PROGRAMMES²		
Book Grant Needy Pupils	185,015	164,616
Bus Escort	75,704	75,000
Covid 19 Grants	558,795	1,202,796
DEIS Grant & Home School Liaison	108,485	58,000
Digital Strategies for Schools 2015-2020	485,534	
Gaeltacht School Recognition 2018	433,612	452,367
Island Schools Additional Funding 2018	27,490	45,000
School Services Support Fund (SSSF) ³	556,515	680,960
Special Class Grant (Equipment)	29,958	
Transition Year	157,178	75,430
Traveller Capitation	19,142	54,870
Other	123,901	36,413
	2,761,329	2,845,452
Community National Schools	99,647	100,000
	53,135,087	54,117,454

¹ 2020 Payments are subject to change following completion and audit of the Financial Statements

² Expenditure may include funding from previous years

Further Education and Training

	Year Ended 31/12/20	Year Ended 31/12/21
FE PLC	5,959,446	6,933,157
YOUTHREACH	5,492,961	5,838,002
VTOS	5,236,731	5,290,100
Co-Operation Hours	3,184,273	3,230,000
Apprenticeship	2,781,730	3,700,000
Literacy	2,767,859	3,073,639
Skills Training	2,622,599	2,575,000
BTEI	2,368,090	2,456,708
Specialist Training Provider	1,989,213	2,100,000
Traineeship	1,729,766	2,015,000
Local Training Initiative	1,101,537	1,170,000
Skills To Advance	823,065	945,000
Community Training Workshop	779,706	780,000
TEL	641,794	375,000
Community Education	465,185	527,000
Adult Refugee Programmes	398,860	415,000
Adult Education Guidance Service	394,571	495,000
FET Disadvantaged Learners	320,541	
Innovation Projects	314,209	185,000
Evening Training	264,007	265,000
Justice Workshops	217,583	217,000
Breacadh Gaeltacht Literacy Project	198,208	205,000
On-line	140,723	140,000
Other Programmes/Supports	265,585	878,858
Quality Assurance	184,020	350,000
Training Centre Pay	3,089,448	3,200,000
Operational Costs	2,799,962	3,145,000
TOTAL FET	46,531,672	50,504,464

¹ 2020 Payments are subject to change following completion and audit of Financial Statements

² 2021 FET Estimates are subject to approval from SOLAS following submission of the FAR4