

The FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-19

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 IRELAND

Timeline

2016 Approved/Agreed

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

2019 Completed

ID number 28304

Background

The strategy stemmed from a commitment in the Further education and training (FET) strategy 2014–19, and reflected the strong links between the professional development of FET staff and the quality of the education and training they provide. It also reflected national and European policy, which places the professional competence of the workforce as central to the ability of FET to respond to the changing needs of employers and learners.

Education and training boards (ETBs) are statutory FET providers; they manage centres for FET and adult education and training throughout the country. There are 16 ETBs in Ireland.

Description

In November 2016, the 2017–19 FET professional development strategy was published by the Further Education and Training Authority (SOLAS) and the Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI). The strategy acknowledged that provision specific to the FET practitioner was not adequately addressed within the existing formal learning offer. It stated that in the period to 2019, the implementation of the strategy would include an examination of the feasibility of developing a suite of qualifications/modules for the FET learning practitioner that could be used at entry level and for skills updating. The strategy also provided for implementation actions which included establishing local and national continuing professional development (CPD) structures, coordination of CPD actions, CPD planning, relevance control, delivery method development, ensuring better access to CPD opportunities for part-time and occasional staff, increasing staff capability in the use of digital technology to enhance learning and staff reskilling and upskilling.

Funding channels were established. These included a plan for ETBs to receive dedicated funding for professional development activity, through the SOLAS-managed funding allocation process. SOLAS planned to establish a central FET professional development budget to fund the development of interventions to address strategic development needs at a national level; and a plan to establish a new professional development innovation fund as an enabler for joint action at national level and across groups of ETBs. Over the lifetime of the strategy, mechanisms were to be developed to enable the recording and tracking of professional development activities at individual, ETB and national level. Since 2015, SOLAS has also supported the ETBs in profiling the skills of teachers, tutors and trainers working in FET, including their qualifications. Skills profile is an IT-based tool to capture the necessary

data and inform the overall CPD strategy that SOLAS and its partners are developing.

2016 Approved/Agreed

2017 Implementation

In 2017, within the framework of this strategy, a number of ETBs staff were trained to be able to identify their training needs within individual companies.

2018 Implementation

2019 Completed

In 2019, a national FET co-ordinator for professional development was appointed in ETBI and is collaborating with SOLAS, ETBs, and the national steering group on implementation of the FET CPD strategy. Working groups have been established or planned for staff development plans, quality assurance, leadership and management (ETBI).

The work on the new strategy started.

Bodies responsible

- Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI)

Target group

Education professionals

Teachers
Trainers
Adult educators

Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

Thematic categories

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Professional development strategy 2017-19](#)

“ … ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). The FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-19: Ireland. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28304>