



LOETB Further Education and Training (FET) Support Group

Function of Group in relation to Professional Development:

- Reviewing and approving professional development applications
- Ensuring that relevant professional development programmes are provided for FET staff
- Ensuring that the FET PD Procedure is implemented and reviewed as necessary
- Reviewing feedback reports on CPD (Continuous Professional Development)

Assessment of LOETB FET Professional Development Application

LOETB FET Staff Development is resourced by an annual budget. The budgetary allocation will be dependent upon available funding and plans may have to be prioritised in the context of the amount of funding available.

The amount of this support will be determined by considering the following:

- Strategic priorities of the organisation.
- Budgetary constraints /balance.
- Number of Applications.
- Previously funded courses the applicant has availed of.

All applications will be assessed by the LOETB FET Enabler Committee. Due to the limited nature of resources available to LOETB FET and the requirement to apply resources in the most effective way, this procedure cannot cover qualifications which are primarily for the purpose of personal development, and which do not benefit the organisation.

LOETB FET Professional Development Support Scheme

Under the scheme, LOETB FET may provide partial reimbursement of fees following successful completion of a programme and attainment of its award. FET staff members will be invited to apply to this Scheme **on a monthly / bimonthly basis**, subject to budget availability.

The LOETB FET PD Support Scheme is underpinned by the below guiding principles:

- All funding is subject to the approved LOETB budget available on an annual basis.
- All applicants to the LOETB FET scheme should familiarise themselves with the Revenue Guidelines in respect of tax relief for tuition fees particularly where fees, or a portion of fees are paid by the employer. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that they are compliant with Revenue requirements.
- LOETB FET employees should discuss their application with their Principal/Coordinator/Line Manager in the first instance who must sign the form indicating if they do/do not support the application.
- For education qualifications which are identified as being necessary / mandated for an employee's role, and where the employee is requested to complete such

qualifications by the LOETB FET, tuition and examination fees will be paid in full. Travel at in-service rate is payable (as determined by Revenue Commissioners and/or the Department of Education & Skills).

- LOETB FET staff members are eligible to apply for support for the period of, but not exceeding the period of their contract of employment.
- LOETB FET applicants must state if they are applying for financial support from any other institution or body for the same course; and where they have, documentary evidence of the amount of support being received from that alternative source must be provided, failure to declare all subsidies / allowance will result in an application being declared null and void.
- Support can only be applied for, recognised qualifications on the NQF or training which is not essential to the fulfilment of job requirements, but which may carry a significant benefit to the individual and the organisation.
- LOETB FET staff members who have previously received funding from the ETB for a similar course at the same or lower level will not be eligible for funding.
- LOETB FET staff members will not be funded for another certified course at a Diploma / Degree / masters / Doctorate level within a 2-year period of completion of their previous certified course.
- LOETB FET staff who wish to apply for support for a PhD (NFQ Level 10) or doctoral programme, subject to successful application, will be granted a maximum financial contribution of €500.00 euro only per academic semester / period.
- LOETB FET staff members must be employed directly by LOETB and have a minimum of one year's continuous service to be eligible for financial support;
- LOETB FET applications for support will be evaluated and scored against several weighted criteria including, but not limited to, nature of employment (full / part time), alignment with four FET PD criteria, relevance to role, level of programme and result obtained. The evaluation and score will determine the level of funding to be provided.

LOETB FET Support Group will:

- Enable all members to collectively contribute to the development and quality of the LOETB's Further Education and Training provision.
- Approve to reimburse the PD contribution following the LOETB FET staff members successful completion of the course and upon submission of course attendance, results, certified manuscripts and original receipts.

LOETB FET Conditions of Financial Support

Fee support will be provided for external programmes only if an equivalent programme is not provided by LOETB FET.

All funding provided under this FET PD procedure is subject to availability of funds under the LOETB FET annual budgeting process.

Due to the funding parameters available and the requirement to apply resources in the most effective way, this procedure cannot cover qualifications which are primarily for the purpose of personal development, and which do not benefit the organisation.

PD Type	Programme Type	Indicative Cost Range (€) (Sliding scale)	Percentage (%) of Cost Awarded (Subject to approval)	
			1st Application	2 nd Application
Mandated PD	Recognised qualifications on the National Quality Framework (NFQ) or training which is identified by LOETB FET as necessary for the enhanced performance of an employee's post.	€50.00 - €250.00	100%	100%
		€250.00 - €500.00	100%	100%
		€500.00 - €1,000.00	100%	100%
		€1,000.00 - €5,000.00	100%	100%
		€5,000.00 - €10,000.00	100%	100%
Self-Led PD	Recognised qualifications on the NFQ or training which is not essential to the fulfilment of job requirements, but which may carry a significant benefit to the individual and the organisation.	€50.00 - €250.00	100%	50%
		€250.00 - €500.00	75%	50%
		€500.00 - €1,000.00	50%	25%
		€1,000.00 - €5,000.00	50%	25%
		€5,000.00 - €10,000.00	50%	25%
	PhD (NFQ Level 10) or doctoral programme.	-	€500.00	€500.00
Self-Led PD	Short courses and/or attendances at conferences and training opportunities that are beneficial to the professional development.	€50.00 - €250.00	100%	50%
		€250.00 - €500.00	75%	50%
		€500.00 - €1,000.00	50%	25%
		€1,000.00 - €5,000.00	50%	25%
		€5,000.00 - €10,000.00	50%	25%

- Subject to a successful Professional Development application, applicants will receive a confirmation detail relevant to their award via their LOETB email address.
- For courses which require more than one year's attendance, reimbursement (where approved) will take place annually on evidence of successful completion of each academic session.

- For education qualifications as set out above (1), which are identified as being necessary for an employee's role, and where the employee is requested to complete such qualifications by the ETB, tuition and examination fees will be paid in full. Travel at in-service rate is payable (as determined by Revenue Commissioners and/or the Department of Education & Skills).
- For qualifications as set out above (2), a contribution towards tuition and exam fee may be reimbursed to the employee on evidence of successful completion of the course. The amount of the refund may vary, subject to budgetary constraints. Travel and/or subsistence is not payable. Where an applicant applies for support to complete several modules, LOETB FET reserves the right to reduce any initial offer of support on a pro-rata basis, should the applicant fail to meet progression criteria or fail to attend/pass a complete module/module.
- For qualifications as set out above (3) a contribution towards course fees may be reimbursed to the employee on evidence of successful completion of the course. The amount of the refund may vary, subject to budgetary constraints. Where training occurs during the normal working day, travel is payable at training rates only. Where any training occurs outside of the normal working day, or at weekends, travel and/or subsistence is payable at training rates only. Where an applicant applies for support to complete several modules, LOETB FET reserves the right to reduce any initial offer of support on a pro-rata basis, should the applicant fail to meet progression criteria or fail to attend/pass a complete module/ module.
- Applicants should pay college/ course provide directly and a refund will be made on the following basis, subject to the production of the original fee receipt and transcript of results.
 - Payment will be made in euro and processed as part of regular staff payroll.
 - Agreed approved fee contribution upon written confirmation of successful completion of module / academic semester / academic year.
 - Approval of funding will be required on an annual basis for staff members.
- In the event of applications being over-subscribed, the amount of financial support provided will reflect the total number of applications and the cost of the course.
- Applicants must be prepared to provide lectures/ talks on the subject to other Staff Groupings in LOETB FET e.g., Staff Development Days.

This procedure will be subject to review in accordance with LOETB FET organisational needs and/or where it is necessary to do so due to changes in DES regulations, legislation or other such situations. All decisions are final and are the discretion of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board.

Study/Exam leave

Study/ exam leave is leave available to staff other than Teachers/ SNAs for the purposes of facilitating employees in sitting examinations for courses they are pursuing and/or preparing for same. Terms and conditions around such leave will be governed by the [Department of Education Circular Letter 0061/21](#) or the latest iteration of same.

If additional leave beyond the limits set out above is required, employees should use a mix of holidays/flexi leave and discuss with their line manager as appropriate.

Application for Study/Exam Leave

Employees wishing to avail of study/exam leave should indicate same on the Application for PD Study form. This will be reviewed and, where approved, will the number of days applicable will be confirmed and notified to the employee and their Line Manager.

The employee may then apply for the individual days required for study/exam leave through CORE in the normal way.

Termination of Employment after Completion of Course

Staff members who receive support (for recognised award qualifications e.g.: diplomas, degrees, masters etc) under this mechanism may be required to commit to service post qualification with LOETB FET. If they leave LOETB FET (or other Public Service body in cases of redeployment) in the interim, a sliding scale of fees may be recouped:

- Within one year – 100% of contributions
- Within two years – 50% of contributions
- Within three years – 25% of contributions

Deductions to the maximum of these limits will be taken from an employee's final pay on the termination of his/her employment.

LOETB FET Professional Development Contact Details

Caitriona Montgomery

FET PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR



Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board
Castle Buildings, Tara Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 E9K8
t. [057 9349400](tel:0579349400) | m. [085 8035339](tel:0858035339) | e. fetpd@loetb.ie