

Addendum 1 to  
LOETB Statement of Strategy 2023-2027

EXCELLENCE THROUGH  
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

# Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

Approved by SMT on  
23 October 2025



## Introduction

Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) is required under Section 42 of the *Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014* to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination,
- promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and service users, and
- protect the human rights of those to whom it provides services and of those it employs.

This legal obligation is known as the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty (“the Duty”). It requires public bodies to ensure that equality and human rights considerations are central to how they plan, deliver, and review their services, and how they operate as employers.

LOETB has developed a *Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Implementation Plan (June 2025)*, which sets out how the organisation will meet these obligations. This Strategy Addendum integrates the Duty within the *LOETB Statement of Strategy 2023–2027*. Together with the Implementation Plan and the accompanying *Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment*, it provides the framework for embedding equality and human rights across all aspects of LOETB’s work.

## Purpose

This *Strategy Addendum* updates and complements the *LOETB Statement of Strategy 2023–2027*. Its purpose is to integrate the requirements of the Public Sector Duty into LOETB’s strategic framework, ensuring that equality and human rights are explicitly reflected in the organisation’s goals, priorities, and governance structures.

The Duty is now embedded within this Statement of Strategy and will continue to be reflected through key strategic planning processes, including annual service plans, the strategic performance agreement with SOLAS, and DEIS school planning and review cycles.

## The Equality and Human Rights Framework

The Public Sector Duty comprises three interconnected steps — **Assess, Address, and Report**:

1. **Assess** the equality and human rights issues relevant to LOETB’s functions.
2. **Address** these issues through the actions, policies, and priorities set out in our *Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Implementation Plan* and annual service plans.
3. **Report** on progress each year through LOETB’s Annual Report.

LOETB’s core values of **Care, Community, Equality, Respect, and Excellence in Education** underpin our approach to implementing the Duty. These values provide a strong ethical foundation for ensuring inclusion, fairness, and dignity for all learners, staff, and partners.

### Integration with LOETB’s Strategic Goals

The Duty aligns naturally with the four strategic goals of the *Statement of Strategy 2023-2027*. The table below highlights the key areas of alignment and focus.

Strategic Goal	Integration of the Public Sector Duty
1. <b>Leading Learning</b>	Ensure equitable access to education and training for all learners, removing barriers for those most at risk of exclusion or under-representation, and embedding Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and wellbeing practices to create inclusive, supportive learning environments across all schools and centres.
2. <b>Building Sustainability</b>	Broaden the concept of sustainability to include social sustainability — advancing equity, diversity, and wellbeing alongside environmental responsibility. Promote inclusive and fair employment, education, and training opportunities that strengthen community resilience and social cohesion.
3. <b>Working in Partnership</b>	Work collaboratively with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) partners, community groups, and representative bodies to identify and address barriers to participation. Involve learners and staff in shaping inclusive policies and services, and promote open dialogue and partnership to advance equality and human rights.
4. <b>Enhancing Systems</b>	Apply Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments to the development and review of LOETB policies, programmes, and services. Strengthen governance, training, and communication structures to ensure accountability and transparency in delivering on the Duty.

### Implementation and Governance

Implementation of the Duty will be led by the Public Sector Duty Working Group, a cross-functional team reporting to the Senior Management Team (SMT). Key responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the integration of equality and human rights considerations into strategic and annual service planning.
- Supporting staff capacity-building, training, and awareness on equality and human rights.
- Monitoring progress on specific actions identified under the Duty.
- Preparing annual reports on implementation for inclusion in LOETB’s Annual Report.

The Duty will be operationalised through:

- **Annual Service Plans** – specific actions tagged for equality and human rights impact assessment.
- **Policy and Procedure Reviews** – all new or revised policies will undergo equality and human rights screening.
- **Staff Training and Induction** – continued roll-out of Public Sector Duty awareness, Dignity in the Workplace, and Equality & Human Rights training.
- **Communications** – use of LOETB communication channels to promote awareness among staff, learners, and partners.

The detailed measures and timelines for implementation are set out in LOETB's *Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Implementation Plan (June 2025)*. These measures will be incorporated into annual service plans and reviewed as part of LOETB's ongoing quality assurance and governance processes.

### Monitoring and Reporting

Implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty will be monitored by the Public Sector Duty Working Group and reported through LOETB's existing governance structures. Each directorate will include relevant equality and human rights objectives in its annual Service Plan, with progress reviewed by the SMT.

Outcomes will be reported annually through the LOETB Annual Report, as required under Section 42(2)(c) of the *Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014*, and through updates to the SMT and Board. The PSD Working Group will coordinate with responsible staff to compile an internal Duty progress report forming the evidence base for the Annual Report.

The *Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty Implementation Plan* will remain a living document, updated as progress is made or new priorities emerge, ensuring that equality and human rights continue to be embedded across all aspects of LOETB's work throughout the lifetime of the *Statement of Strategy 2023–2027*.