



BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA CHIARRAÍ  
KERRY EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

**Kerry Education and Training Board**  
**Fees and Fee Waiver Policy**  
**Further Education and Training**  
**(FET) Pillar**

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## INTRODUCTION

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Kerry Education and Training Board (Kerry ETB) is committed to implementing a fair, equitable and transparent system for determining, collecting and refunding course fees across all FET provision. Kerry ETB calculates fees to minimise barriers to participation for all learners.

## PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

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The purpose of this policy is to outline in a clear and transparent manner for management, staff, learners and all key stakeholders the principles and procedures that Kerry ETB adopts in relation to fees across all FET provision.

## SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

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This policy applies to all FET provision across Kerry ETB with the exception of fees and fee waiver/exceptions applicable to *Skills to Advance* and *Non EU National Asylum Seekers*.

For information in relation to the aforementioned please refer to:

- *Kerry Education and Training Board Skills to Advance Policy*
- *Kerry Education and Training Board Fees and Fee Waiver Policy Addendum – Non-European Nationals.*

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Circular Letter 0013/2011 - Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Programme Capitation Changes and Participant Contribution
- Circular Letter 0057/2014 – Revised Pay Rates and Allowances for Self-Financing Adult Education Classes
- Circular Letter 0046/2000 – Self Financing Part-Time Adult Education Programme
- Student Support Act 2011
- Skills to Advance Policy (See Appendix 7)
- Kerry ETB Fees and Fee Waiver Policy Addendum – Non-European Nationals.
- Kerry ETB Receipts and Lodgements Policy
- Kerry ETB Continuous Professional Development Policy
- Relevant SOLAS documentation and memos.

## DEFINITIONS

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### **Further Education and Training**

Further Education and Training (FET) is the provision of education and training services to a wide range of beneficiaries. The services provided range from full-time programmes of varying duration, to shorter part-time programme options designed to meet a specific learner need, linked either to skills acquisition for employment, or the possibility of progression to further studies.

### **Line Management**

Line Management in the context of this policy includes Principals/Centre Managers/AEOs/ Co-Ordinators under the direction of the Director of Further Education & Training.

## **Full Time Provision/Programmes**

Full Time Provision/Programmes includes:

- Courses for Employment
- Courses for Progression
- Apprenticeships
- Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)
- Youthreach
- Community Training Centres
- Specialist Training Providers

### **Courses for Employment**

A course for employment is a course primarily focused on providing the learner with the knowledge, skills and competences required to move directly into employment upon completion.

### **Courses for Progression**

A course for progression is a course preparing the learner to move directly to a course at a higher level on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

### **Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeship is a work based structured education and training programme that formally combines and alternates learning in the workplace with learning in an education or training centre.

### **Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)**

The VTOS Scheme provides a range of courses to help people who are unemployed re-enter the workforce. The courses are full-time and are usually delivered over two academic years on a full-time basis of 30 hours per week.

### **Youthreach**

Youthreach is a full-time programme, usually over two years, for young people, aged 15 to 20, who left school early and are not working. It leads to awards typically at Levels 3 and 4 on the NFQ.

### **Community Training Centres**

Community Training Centres provides training, educational and employment related services for young people in a friendly and informal manner.

### **Specialist Training Providers**

Specialist Training Providers provide learner-focused training and related services, to assist individuals to enter or re-enter the labour market.

## **Part Time Provision/Programmes**

Part Time Provision includes:

- Back to Education Initiative
- Adult Literacy
- ESOL
- Skills for Work
- Night/Evening Training
- Self-Financing/Evening Courses
- Community Education

### **Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)**

The BTEI Programme is a part time education programme offering accredited courses leading to QQI awards from Level 3 to Level 6 on the NFQ. The BTEI's primary target group are adults who have not completed upper second level education.

### **Adult Literacy**

Adult Literacy programmes support people, inside and outside of the labour force, who want to improve their communication skills in the areas of reading, writing, and numeracy and information technology. Programmes are typically delivered for 2-4 hours per week during the academic year.

### **ESOL**

ESOL classes support unemployed migrants, asylum seekers and refugees with limited or no English language skills.

### **Skills for Work**

Skills for Work is a national programme aimed at providing opportunities to help employees deal with basic skill demands of the workplace. Programmes are 35 hours' duration and designed in a flexible way to meet the needs of employer and employees. Most programmes are accredited.

### **Night/Evening Training**

Night/Evening Training are programmes offered in Kerry College Monavalley Campus or in a facility around the county.

### **Self-Financing/Evening Courses**

Part-time evening courses of typically 30 hours' duration over 10 weeks provide short up-skilling modules for both unemployed and employed persons.

### **Community Education**

Community Education works with adults who wish to, return to, or continue their education, offering a learner-centred approach involving personal supports and tuition leading to positive personal, social and economic outcomes.

## **PAYMENT METHODS**

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Presently Kerry ETB encourages all learners, where possible, to use the online payment facilities.

Kerry College at its centres/campuses accepts payment by:

- **Debit/Credit Card (online)**
- Cheque

- Bank draft
- Postal order

Where such provisions are not in place in other centres/for other programmes cash payments are acceptable, but only by exception.

In line with Government policy, Kerry ETB endeavours to **remove cash transactions** completely and implement alternative payment arrangements.

## **FULL TIME PROVISION/PROGRAMMES – KERRY COLLEGE**

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### **COURSES FOR EMPLOYMENT**

**No fees** apply for any full time Courses for Employment.

### **COURSES FOR PROGRESSION**

A once-off registration fee of €130 applies for Courses for Progression. This fee is payable on registration to the course. **Course fees are refundable only if a scheduled course does not go ahead.**

This registration fee includes, but is not limited to, the cost of services, materials and supports directly to the learner. Examples would include photocopying, binding, technical support etc. The fee also includes the QQI certification fee.

A government levy of €200 applies for Courses for Progression. This levy is set in line with Circular Letter 0013/2011. This fee is payable before the end of the first semester.

Learners on a course of more than one year in duration must pay the government levy for each year of their course.

Learners that can confirm one of the following exemptions are exempt from this government levy. The following exemptions apply:

- Students who hold a valid medical card
- Students in receipt of a SUSI grant
- Students in receipt of a Back to Education Allowance (BTEA)
- Students in receipt of a Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS).

**Note:** where a learner's medical card expires before the completion of the course date line management must receive copy of the renewed medical card for the records. **The responsibility of recording same rests with the line manager.**

### **APPRENTICESHIPS**

There are **no fees** applicable for Apprenticeships.

#### **Fee Waiver (Kerry College)**

Kerry College recognises that some learners may face financial difficulties. In this instance, a learner may seek a waiver by submitting a completed '**Special Consideration for Fee Waiver**' form to their relevant principal/manager (please refer to Appendix 1 for form).

Applicant must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Person must be of an EU nationality, or a state within the EEA and/or Swiss Confederation
2. Person must have official refugee status in the Republic of Ireland
3. International Protection Learners
4. Learners eligible under the Pilot Support Scheme
5. Evidence based criteria (please refer to Appendix 6 for 'Weighted Criteria' form).

The Principal/Manager shall satisfy themselves that the case presented by the learner is genuine before signing approval. Where learners are applying for a fee waiver under **criteria no. 5** as set out above, Appendix 6 'Weighted Criteria' must be completed.

The Special Consideration for Fee Waiver form (**and** where applicable the Weighted Criteria form) must be submitted by the Principal/Manager to the Director of FET. The Director of FET must authorise same **before** any agreement of fee waiver is made in respect of a learner. A centralised log/register of fee waivers must be kept in each college. All records of same must be maintained for a minimum of four years.

Annually the Kerry ETB Head of Finance must receive a Schedule of Fee Waivers from each principal/manager.

### **Structured Payment Plan (Kerry College)**

Kerry College recognises that some learners may face financial difficulties. In this instance, a learner may seek a structured payment plan by submitting a completed '**Structured Payment Plan**' form to their relevant principal/manager (please refer to Appendix 2 and 3 for forms). This form is submitted following their acceptance of a place in Kerry College.

Applicant must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Person must be of an EU nationality, or a state within the EEA and/or Swiss Confederation
2. Person must have official refugee status in the Republic of Ireland
3. International Protection Learners
4. Learners eligible under the Pilot Support Scheme
5. Evidence based criteria (please refer to Appendix 6 for 'Weighted Criteria' form).

The Principal/Manager shall satisfy themselves that the case presented by the learner is genuine before signing approval. Where learners are applying for a structured payment plan under **criteria no. 5** as set out above, Appendix 6 'Weighted Criteria' must be completed.

The Structured Payment Plan form (**and** where applicable the Weighted Criteria form) must be submitted by the Principal/Manager to the Director of FET. The Director of FET must authorise same **before** any payment plan is confirmed in respect of learners. A centralised log/register of all structured payment plans must be kept in each college/centre. All records of same must be maintained for a minimum of four years.

Annually the Kerry ETB Head of Finance must receive a Schedule of Structured Payment Plans from each principal/manager.

### **Structured Payment Conditions (Kerry College)**

In agreeing to a structured payment plan, the following principles must be applied:

- The learner must pay back the fee in full within the agreed period.
- Part payment agreements should generally be structured over the minimum possible period.
- Part-payment agreements should never extend beyond the end of December.
- The learner must receive a copy of the signed structured payment plan.

- Learners who fails to adhere to the terms of the agreement may be prevented from receiving certification outcomes until all obligations are met and may be asked to leave the course.
- The fees of a course will not be waived in respect of learners who fail year-end exams and wish to repeat the year.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES SCHEME (VTOS)

There are **no fees** applicable for VTOS programmes.

## YOUTHREACH

There are **no fees** applicable for Youthreach Programmes.

## COMMUNITY TRAINING CENTRE

There are **no fees** applicable for CTC programmes.

## SPECIALIST TRAINING PROVISION

There are **no fees** applicable for Specialist Training Provision programmes.

## PART TIME PROVISION – BACK TO EDUCATION INITIATIVE (BTEI)

The following fees are set out:

Module	Price
QQI Level 3	€ 75 per module
QQI Level 4	€ 75 per module
(Occupational First Aid) QQI Level 5	€ 75 per module
QQI Level 5 and 6	€150 per module

**Note:** Where the Level 5 or Level 6 module has low value credits i.e. 5 or 10 credits, the fee applicable is €75.

### Free Tuition

In order to assess a participant's eligibility for free tuition fees please refer to the table below. Participants in categories 2A, 2B and 3 are eligible for free tuition fees.

Category	Participant Eligibility	Participant Entitlements
<b>Cat 2A</b>	Persons entitled to, or dependants of persons entitled to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a medical card;</li> <li>• an unemployment payment;</li> <li>• a means-tested welfare payment;</li> <li>• a Family Income Supplement Payment</li> <li>• participate in VTOS or Youthreach and who <b>have less</b> than upper second level education</li> </ul>	Free Tuition  Continued welfare payment is subject to satisfying the conditions of the Department of Social Protection



<b>Cat 2B</b>	Persons entitled to, or dependants of persons entitled to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a medical card;</li> <li>• an unemployment payment;</li> <li>• a means-tested welfare payment;</li> <li>• a Family Income Supplement Payment</li> <li>• participate in VTOS or Youthreach and who <b>have completed</b> upper second level education</li> </ul>	Free Tuition  Continued welfare payment is subject to satisfying the conditions of the Department of Social Protection
<b>Cat 3</b>	All persons with less than upper second level education who are not eligible under Category 2A e.g. persons not in the labour force, persons in employment	Free Tuition
<b>Cat 4</b>	Others	Fees will be charged
<b>Skills to Advance Dispersed</b>	The learner must be Employed and not already have a qualification in the skill area of the course being applied for, and; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be over 50 years, or;</li> <li>• In a low skilled job role, or;</li> <li>• In a vulnerable sector, at risk of displacement due to technology or other changes in work practice</li> </ul>	If a learner is employed they may be eligible for a fee exemption under Skills to Advance Route 1 dispersed. Eligible learners pay no fees Level 5 or pay only 30% of the fee at level 6.

### Category 4 Fees

Category 4 Participants are invoiced for their tuition fees at the point of enrolment by either the BTEI Programme Co-ordinator, Resource Worker or the FET Centre Manager. For management responsible for collecting fees, please refer to Kerry ETB Receipts and Lodgements policy.

A consolidated report of all fees charged must be returned to the relevant AEO annually.

### QQI Certification

Learners will be notified when QQI Certification fees are due.

Learners eligible to pay fee are required to pay a certification charge on completion of the programme. This fee is payable to the Centre Reception/Office.

Learners completing minor awards are required to pay a €20 certification charge on completion of the course. This fee is payable to the Centre Reception/Office.

### Fee Waivers

Learners registering on a BTEI Course who seek an exemption from course fees must submit evidence of their eligibility. Unemployed learners in receipt of a social welfare payment (or those who are a dependant of someone in receipt of a Social Welfare Payment/Training Allowance) must submit a DEASP approved **BTEI Social Welfare Form 2** (Please see appendix 4).

Original copies of all “BTEI Social Welfare Form 2” must be retained on file by the Course Co-ordinator and/or the Centre Manager. Records of same are subject to audit and must be retained for a minimum of 7 years (ESF-funded programmes).

### Skills to Advance

For more information on Skills to Advance fees and exemptions, please refer to *Skills to Advance Policy* (See Appendix 7)

### **PART TIME PROVISION –ADULT LITERACY**

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There are **no fees** applicable for Adult Literacy programmes.

### **PART TIME PROVISION - ESOL**

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There are **no fees** applicable for ESOL programmes.

### **PART TIME PROVISION – SKILLS FOR WORK**

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There are **no fees** applicable for Skills for Work programmes.

### **PART TIME PROVISION - EVENING TRAINING**

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Fees apply to learners who are not in receipt of the payments as listed below.

#### **No Fees**

Learners in receipt of one of the following payments are eligible to pay no fees:

- Job Seekers Allowance
- Deserted wife's benefit (DWB)
- Job Seekers Benefit
- Disability Allowance
- One-Parent Family Payment (OPFP)
- Signing for credits
- Carer's Allowance & Benefit
- Short-time working payment
- Part-time workers in receipt of a DSFA payment
- Widows / Widowers (Contributory & non Contributory pension)
- Farm / Fish Assist (FA)
- Blind Pension
- Invalidity Pension
- Illness Benefit
- Rural Social Scheme (RSS)
- TUS Participants
- Internship Programme Participants
- Current Community Employment participants are also free

To qualify for a fee waiver, learners must confirm to the Kerry ETB Programme tutor/instructor they are unemployed (Appendix V).

On application, learners must self-declare they are in receipt of one of the above payments and qualify for a fee waiver. For the fee waiver to be granted written confirmation must be received from the learner. Responsibility for acquiring written confirmation of eligibility rests with the programme tutor/instructor.

**Note:** A Discount of 50% may be given to existing apprentices or those on full time day provision who wish to undertake a related evening course on the recommendation of their tutor/instructor/teacher and approved by the College Manager/Principal. A fee waiver may be considered also following the criteria laid out in this policy under Appendix 1 & 6. Kerry ETB staff seeking to undertake evening Training

as part of CPD can also seek a fee waiver after consultation with their line manager and the Director of FET.

### **Skills to Advance**

For more information on Skills to Advance fees and exemptions, please refer to *Skills to Advance Policy* (Appendix 7)

## **SELF-FINANCING NIGHT CLASSES**

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Fees payable for Kerry ETB Self Financing Classes are set in accordance with Circular Letter 0046/2000 i.e. 130% of tuition costs. Fees are split on the basis of 10 paying learners (minimum class number). A fee schedule is prepared annually prior to autumn enrolments and is approved by the Director of FET. This fee is non-refundable except where classes are cancelled.

### **Kerry ETB Staff**

Kerry ETB Staff, with the approval of their line manager, may be eligible for a fee waiver once minimum numbers are achieved. If the minimum number has not been reached, then a fee will apply. Please refer to relevant Kerry ETB CPD Policy and Plan for more detail.

### **Cancellation of Night Classes**

In the instance that a self-financing night class does not go ahead as scheduled, all fees will be returned to learners. Course fees are returned to learners by Electronic Funds transfer.

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

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For Community Education programmes a nominal fee may be payable to Kerry ETB. This applies to certain courses to cover the cost of materials i.e. cooking.

## **NON-EUROPEAN UNION NATIONALS**

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For information on Non-European Union Nationals, fees please refer to the *Kerry Education and Training Board Fees and Fee Waiver Policy Addendum – Non-European Nationals*.

## **QQI APPEALS**

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There is a €40 charge per appeal where a learner should choose to appeal their results. Fee waivers and exemptions do not apply for appeals.

## **CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION POLICY**

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Kerry ETB Management & staff were consulted, and their views canvassed in the preparation of this policy. This process involved consultation with our FET Management Team & FET Forum.

This policy will be subject to periodic review and change as required.

## **ETB APPROVAL DATE**

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The Fees and Fee Waiver Policy Further Education Training was formally approved by the Board of Kerry ETB on

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

***Mr. Colm Mc Evoy***  
***Chief Executive Officer***

## APPENDIX 1: SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FOR FEE WAIVER

# Kerry Education & Training Board

## Further Education & Training (FET) Programmes



## Special Consideration of Fee Waiver under Exceptional Circumstances

Student Name		
PLSS Student ID Number		
Kerry ETB Centre Name & Location		
Course Title & PLSS Code		
Original Amount of Fees Due		
Fee Due After Special Consideration		
Reason for Special Consideration		
<b>Originated by the Programme Co-Coordinator/Centre Manager</b>		Date
<b>Reviewed and Approved by the (Principal /AEO</b>		Date
<b>Authorized by the Director of FET</b>		Date



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## APPENDIX 2: STRUCTURE PAYMENT PLAN

# Kerry Education & Training Board Further Education & Training (FET) Programmes



## Structured Payment Plan

Student Name		
PLSS Student ID Number		
Kerry ETB Centre Name & Location		
Course Title & PLSS Code		
Fee Balance Outstanding		Date
Monthly payment of		Date
I agree to follow the payment schedule above The student is responsible to ensure the payment schedule is adhered to		
Student Signature		Date
Originated by the Programme Co-Coordinator		Date
Reviewed and Approved by the (Principal / Centre Manager / AEO		Date
Authorized by the Director of FET		Date



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# Kerry Education & Training Board

## Further Education & Training (FET) Programmes



### Structured Payment Plan

#### Student Agreement

I confirm that the reasons that I have presented for requesting this structured payment plan facility are true and valid, and agree that I will make the regular payments below to

\_\_\_\_\_.

I confirm that I understand and accept that by availing of this payment plan, that any equipment, materials, kits, etc. that are provided to me remain the property of the campus/centre until such time as I have made full payment.

I further acknowledge and accept that I will not be eligible to receive certification results from \_\_\_\_\_ until such time as the full amount of the payment has been made.

I agree to pay \_\_\_\_\_:

- € \_\_\_\_\_ per week
- Commencing on \_\_\_\_\_)
- For a period of \_\_\_\_\_ and/or until the fully paid the amount.
- 
- The full amount due to be paid is € \_\_\_\_\_

Learner Signature:

Principal/Manager/Co-ordinator Signature:

Date:

## APPENDIX 4: BTEI SOCIAL WELFARE FORM 2

BTEI SW – FORM 2

### Confirmation of receipt of a Social Welfare Payment or income through participation on a Training Scheme

Name & Address of Participant:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



To Whom It May Concern:

The above named participant whose PPS Number is \_\_\_\_\_ has been offered a place on a part-time QQI Course under the Back to Education Initiative at \_\_\_\_\_. For the purposes of establishing his/her entitlement to free tuition we require confirmation of their DEASP Payment or income through a Training Scheme. We would therefore appreciate if you would fill in the relevant details below.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Kerry ETB/ BTEI Co-ordinator/FET Centre Manager

#### Statement by DEASP or other relevant interest

The above-named person is currently in receipt of the following DEASP Payment/Training Allowance or the above-named person is a dependant of .....whose PPS Number is .....and who is currently in receipt of the following DEASP Payment / Training Allowance:

Please tick below as appropriate:

One Parent Family Payment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Farm Assist	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supplementary Welfare Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Back to Work Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Widow's/ Widower's Non Cont. Pension	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jobseekers Benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pre-Retirement Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jobseekers Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability Allowance/ Illness Benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family Income Supplement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guardian's Payment Non Contributory	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Economy Initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>
State Pension Non Contributory	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job's Initiative Scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invalidity Pension	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Employment Scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blind Pension	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carers Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed & Stamped: \_\_\_\_\_  
On behalf of Local DEASP Office/Other Relevant Interest


Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX 5: EVENING TRAINING FEE EXEMPTION FORM

**To establish if a Client is eligible for an Evening Training Course Fee Exemption please complete this Form**



**BORD OIDEACHAIS  
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KERRY EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING BOARD

**PART A: To be Completed by Course Applicant and Kerry ETB**

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____ _____	PPS Number: _____
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Kerry ETB Staff Name: _____	Telephone No. _____
Kerry ETB Staff Signature: _____	Date: _____

**PART B: To be completed by Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection**

1. Is the client in receipt of a Department of Social Protection Payment?


Yes		
No		
Pending		If pending, state Scheme Type: _____

2. If **YES**, please tick the relevant payment category listed below:


Job Seekers Allowance Deserted wife's benefit (DWB) Job Seekers Benefit Disability Allowance One-Parent Family Payment (OPFP) Signing for credits Carer's Allowance & Benefit Short-time working payment Part-time workers in receipt DEASP Payment	Widow(er)s Contributory / Non Contributory Farm / Fish Assist (FA) Blind Pension Invalidity Pension Illness Benefit Rural Social Scheme (RSS) TUS Participants Internship Programme Participants Community Employment
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DEASP Staff Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
DEASP Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_


Department of Social Protection Stamp




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## APPENDIX 6: WEIGHTED CRITERIA

Line Management must satisfy themselves that the case presented by the learner is genuine before signing approval of a fee waiver or a structured payment plan.

The following are the criteria must be considered and weighted with respect to each individual application.

Copies of this Weighted Criteria Form must be kept with Appendix 1, 2, and/or Appendix 3, where relevant, for the records.

**The responsibility of recording same rests with the line manager.**



Evidence based criteria	
Award Criteria	Maximum Marks Available %
<b>Rationale</b> - The degree to which the learner has demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a clear case of the need for the funding arrangement</li></ul>	50%
<b>Evidence of Need</b> - The degree to which the learner has supported their application with evidence	30%
<b>Added Value to Learner</b> - The degree to which the learner has demonstrated how the waiver/structured payment plan will have a direct added value to their education.	20%
<b>Total</b>	

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (Principal/Manager): \_\_\_\_\_

*Copy submitted to Director of Further Education and Training*



## APPENDIX 7: SKILLS TO ADVANCE

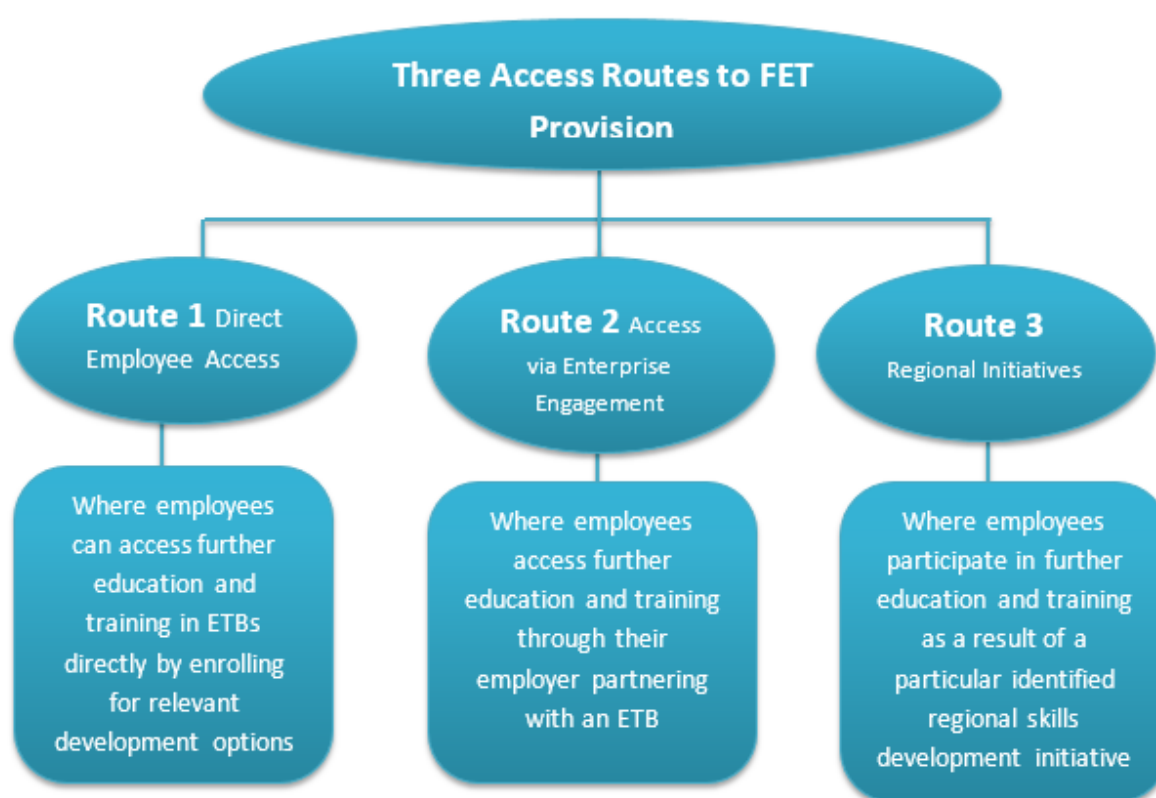
### KERRY ETB SKILLS TO ADVANCE DISPERSED FEE POLICY

Skills to Advance is a national policy to support employees and businesses to upskill and engage with lifelong learning. It was designed by SOLAS for the FET sector.

The **Skills to Advance** initiative is designed to target employees in all parts of the workforce and prioritises employees whose **skills level is below level 5 on the NFQ** and who are classified as **vulnerable** – that is, those that are:

- currently in a lower skilled job and/or
- age 50+ and/or
- at risk of economic displacement.

#### **Skills to Advance Implementation**



#### **1.1 Scope**

This fee policy is an outline of how to handle fees for dispersed Skills to Advance learners. The only two possible categories of dispersed learners are eligible employees on Evening Training or BTEI courses.

## 1.2 Skills to Advance Dispersed - Route One Fees Policy

Dispersed Learners who are **eligible** under the Skills to Advance Route 1 criteria will be exempt from fees at Level 5, and should only pay 30% of the fee for Level 6 courses on all Evening Training and BTEI courses.

## 1.3 Eligibility criteria

- **Be in employment** either full time, part time or self-employed. Casual workers and those with a part time DEASP payment are included. International Protection learners are included. Public sector workers and workers in multinational companies are included under route one only. CE workers are not included. While Skills to Advance is open to all employees, priority will be given to employees whose skills level is below level 5 on the NFQ and who are deemed as *vulnerable* (see below).
- **Be a vulnerable employee.** Within this policy context there are three primary criteria that define an employee as vulnerable:
  - those employed in a lower skilled job; and/or
  - those employed in a sector or occupation at risk of displacement: and/or
  - Those employees who are over 50 years of age
  - Employees do not have to satisfy all 3 criteria. ETBs will prioritise those that do. For example employees under 50 years can be classified as vulnerable employees (and therefore eligible under the policy) if they are employed in a low skilled job and/or employed in a sector/occupation at risk of displacement.

Kerry ETB Further Education and Training Courses up to and including Level 6 are available to all employed people. This policy however, is designed to specifically target ***Employees in all parts of the workforce whose skills level is below level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).*** These employees are the least likely to receive or seek out training and as such will need support and encouragement to bring them into the education and training domain. They are also least likely to be offered upskilling and/or reskilling opportunities by their employers.

- **How can ETBs confirm that participants under route 1 are employees and that their highest qualification is as stated?** The learner provides of their employment status through the ETB registration process. Existing qualification level is not a criterion under the policy.
- **If an employee has a level 5 qualification or above in another area and is seeking to access a programme below or at level 5 in a different area free of charge, can they do so?** Yes, once learners are classified as employees and meet the criteria for Skills to Advance.
- **Are employees under 50 years being discriminated against regarding access to provision under this policy?** No. An employee can be deemed as vulnerable if they meet any one of the criteria for Skills to Advance. Employees under 50 years can be classified as vulnerable employees (and therefore eligible under the policy) if they are employed in a low skilled job and/or employed in a sector/occupation at risk of displacement.
- **Does the ETB have to record a route 1 applicant's employer details?** Recording employer details is not a requirement for applicants under route 1.
- **Vulnerable occupations/sectors** are those that are at risk of becoming obsolete or displaced due, for example, to changes in technology, global markets, the changing nature of jobs or

increased automation of routine job tasks. Sectors/occupations deemed as vulnerable may vary from ETB to ETB as identified in their strategic agreements.

- **Occupations and Sectors at risk of displacement are named under the policy as:** Sectors where there are a high proportion of lower skilled employees and/or older employees, for example, elementary, operative, sales, administrative, caring and other service occupations. The highest numbers of lower skilled workers are in seven sectors - the wholesale and retail trade, industry, accommodation and food service, health and welfare, construction, agriculture, transportation and storage  
(ref *SUPPORTING WORKING LIVES AND ENTERPRISE GROWTH IN IRELAND. 2018-2021 further education and training policy framework for skills development of people in employment. Frequently Asked Questions. National Innovation, CPD and Workforce Development Unit, SOLAS.*)
- Employees **currently in a lower skilled job** refers to those in a low skilled job such as an entry level job. These jobs usually do not require qualifications and mainly involve carrying out physical and repetitive tasks. Note these employees may include those that have higher than level 5 qualifications who are working in low skilled jobs and wish to progress. There is a high level of turnover in many of these lower skilled jobs and a significant minority appear to be trapped in a low pay cycle. Equally these lower skilled jobs are growing in numbers, particularly in sectors such as personal care, retail, customer service, leisure and travel, and food preparation. These jobs are also undergoing significant change in relation to how tasks are carried out, thus requiring employee reskilling. Note: employees could have applied for a level 6 programme and still be classified as vulnerable.
- Employees **at risk of economic displacement** refers to employees who have a job that is at risk of becoming obsolete/displaced due to changes in technology and increased automation of routine job tasks. Employees classified as working in elementary occupations or as operatives can be considered as being particularly vulnerable to displacement unless they reskill.
- **Have a skills level below level 5 on NFQ.** This refers to a situation where the existing skills level of the employee in a particular area is below NFQ level 5 or equivalent. Skill level of employees is indicated by the programme applied for. For example where an employee applies for a level 5 programme, it is then indicated that their skill level *in that area* is below level 5. It is important to distinguish the skills level which an employee has from the level of qualifications which they hold. For example, an employee could have a level 6+ qualification in a particular area such as healthcare, but have a skills level below level 5 in a different area, for example digital skills.

#### **1.4 Registration & Evidence of eligibility for route one – Evening Training or BTEI only**

- The learner provides evidence of their employment status through the ETB registration process.
- Learners are tagged as Skills to Advance on PLSS

#### **1.5 Skills to Advance – Routes Two & Three**

Costs to companies availing of Skills to Advance Routes Two and Three are outside the scope of this policy and dealt with separately in the SOLAS Skills to Advance Guidelines listed below:

- *SUPPORTING WORKING LIVES AND ENTERPRISE GROWTH IN IRELAND, 2018-2021 further education and training policy framework for skills development of people in employment, Frequently Asked Questions. October 2019 V1.2*

- *SUPPORTING WORKING LIVES AND ENTERPRISE GROWTH IN IRELAND. 2018-2021 further education and training policy framework for skills development of people in employment. Explanatory Notes DRAFT. January 2020.* (The Explanatory Notes are always marked as Draft as they are subject to change. Amendments are uploaded to the STA Moodle on a continuing basis.)

## APPENDIX 7.1: SKILLS TO ADVANCE EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY FORM

*The Skills to Advance initiative is designed to target employees in all parts of the workforce and prioritises employees whose skills level is below level 5 on the NFQ and who are classified as vulnerable – that is, those that are:*

- *currently in a lower skilled job and/or*
- *age 50+ and/or*
- *at risk of economic displacement.*

*This form can be used by ETBs to determine an employee's eligibility for participation and funding on the Skills to Advance initiative.*

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ PPS Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee is accessing *Skills to Advance* via (please tick):

Route 1 – Direct employee access \_\_\_\_\_

Route 2 – Access via Enterprise Engagement \_\_\_\_\_

Route 3 – Access via Regional Initiatives \_\_\_\_\_

### SKILL LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE

*Note: The skill level of the employee/learner is indicated by the **course** applied for. For example where an employee applies for a level 5 course, it is then indicated that their skill level in that area is below level 5. Indicate the title and the NFQ level (or equivalent) of the course applied for:*

PLSS Course reference	Course title	NFQ level

Please tick here if the employee's skills level is below level 5 on the NFQ: ☐

Note: Under route 1, if the course applied for is level 5 or below, it will be free of charge to the employee. If the course applied for is a level 6 course, the employee will pay a 30% contribution towards costs. Under routes 2 and 3, it will be free of charge to the employee and the employer will make a contribution.

## DETERMINATION OF PRIORITY GROUP

### Priority group criterion 1: Lower skilled job

Please tick here if the employee is employed in a lower skilled job: ☐

Sector: \_\_\_\_\_

State the job role and skills level associated with the role (e.g. low, medium, high)

Job role	Skills level

### Priority group criterion 2: Age

Please tick here if the employee is age 50+: ☐

### Priority group criterion 3: Risk of economic displacement

Please tick here if the employee is at risk of economic displacement: ☐

*Note: Employees **at risk of economic displacement** refers to those whose skills level is below level 5 and who have a job that is at risk of becoming obsolete/displaced due to changes in technology, work practices, or as a result of structural changes.*

### Employer details required for routes 2 and 3:

Name of employer:



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Employer address:

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Number of employees in company: Please tick relevant box below:

☐ 1-9      ☐ 10-49      ☐ 50-249      ☐ > 250

Sector/ Subsector: Please tick relevant box below:

Agriculture		Finance, insurance & real estate	
Industry/manufacturing (other)		Professional services (e.g. legal, accounting & consultancy)	
Industry /manufacturing (pharma, medical devices, electronics)		Admin & support services (e.g. security guarding, facilities & cleaning, call centre)	
Construction		Public admin & defence (e.g. army)	
Wholesale and retail		Education	
Transport (including courier services)		Health & welfare	
Accommodation & food services		Arts, leisure & other services (e.g. hairdressing)	
ICT (including broadcasting)		Other	

#### DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SKILLS TO ADVANCE

If the employee's skills level is below level 5 on the NFQ and **at least one** of the priority criteria has been met, the employee is eligible for participation on the *Skills to Advance* initiative.

#### Recommendation

Employee is suitable for participation on *Skills to Advance* initiative route 1

Employee is suitable for participation on *Skills to Advance* initiative route 2

Employee is suitable for participation on *Skills to Advance* initiative route 3

Programme is free of charge to employee (level 5 programme or below)


Employee pays 30% contribution towards training costs (level 6 programme)



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_