



International Conference on Employer Engagement: Preparing Young People for the Future

Futureproofing Enterprise Engagement in the FET sector in Ireland

Mary Lyons

Director, Enterprise, Employees and Skills, SOLAS

SOLAS: The Further Education & Training Authority

- SOLAS's mission is to plan, fund and co-ordinate further education and training in Ireland, as set out in the 'Further Education and Training Act' (2013)
- To strategically direct, influence and support the development of a Further Education and Training sector that is responsive to the needs of learners and employers

€993 million funding per annum

200,000 unique learners annually



A Changing Labour Market



- ❑ 1 in 3 jobs in Ireland at high risk of being disrupted by digital technologies.
- ❑ Disruption causing changes to job roles and tasks performed by individuals.
- ❑ 43% of workers are in lower skilled jobs
- ❑ Impact of automation disproportionately felt by those with lower levels of educational attainment.
- ❑ Increasing emphasis on digital and socio-emotional capabilities
- ❑ Those in lower skilled work are least likely to be offered training
- ❑ Investment in upskilling the workforce is essential to enable businesses to adapt to changing technologies, markets and the economic environment

Skills to Advance

2018-2021 further education and training policy framework for skills development of people in employment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCU6rbIk94E>

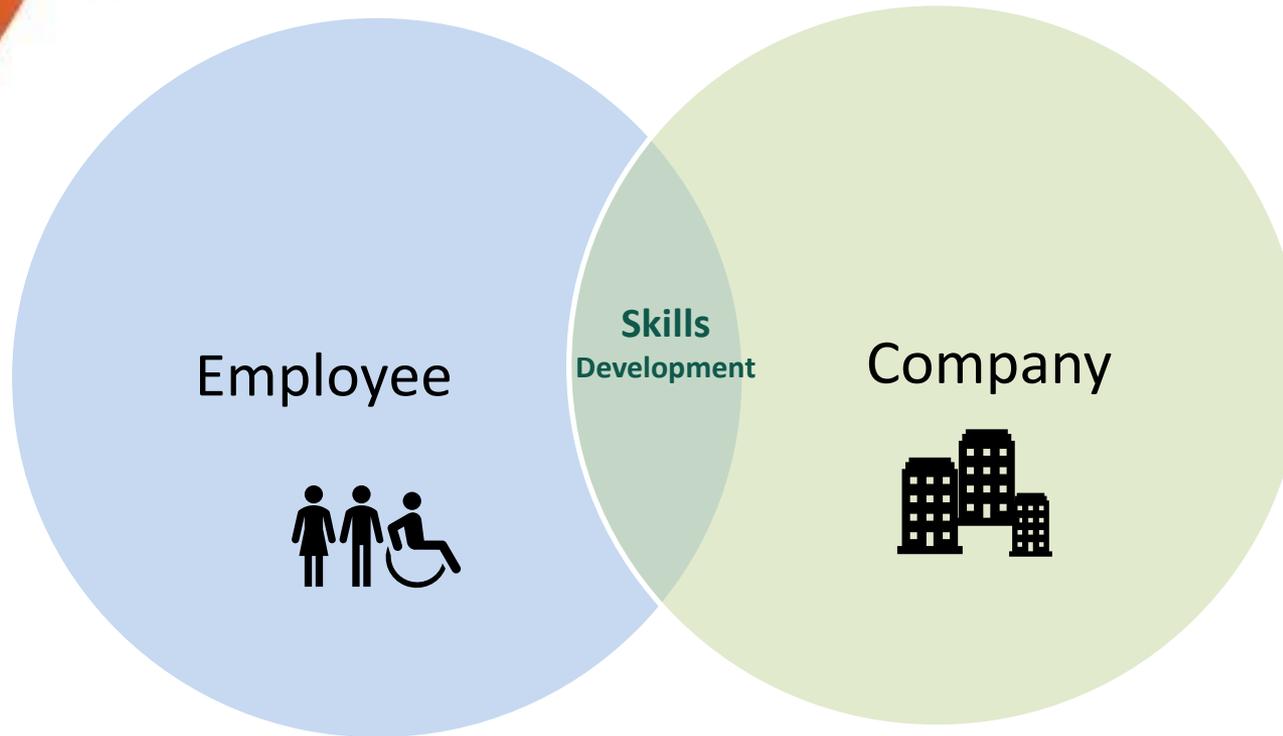
SOLAS
learning works

Policy Drivers



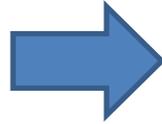
Enterprise Engagement

Dual Approach

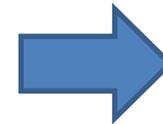


Enterprise Engagement embraces relationship building, partnership working and, ultimately, more systematic involvement of employers in the planning, design and delivery of relevant FET provision

Approach to Enterprise Engagement



Skills Profile Survey of FET



As part of the FET Strategy 2014-2019 an extensive skills profile research exercise (2015) was conducted with staff in the FET sector. It captured the first detailed national picture of the training and experience of the FET workforce

An analysis of the data identified seven key strategic priority areas in the FET Professional Development Strategy 2017-2019

Enterprise Engagement in FET

Skills Profile
Research



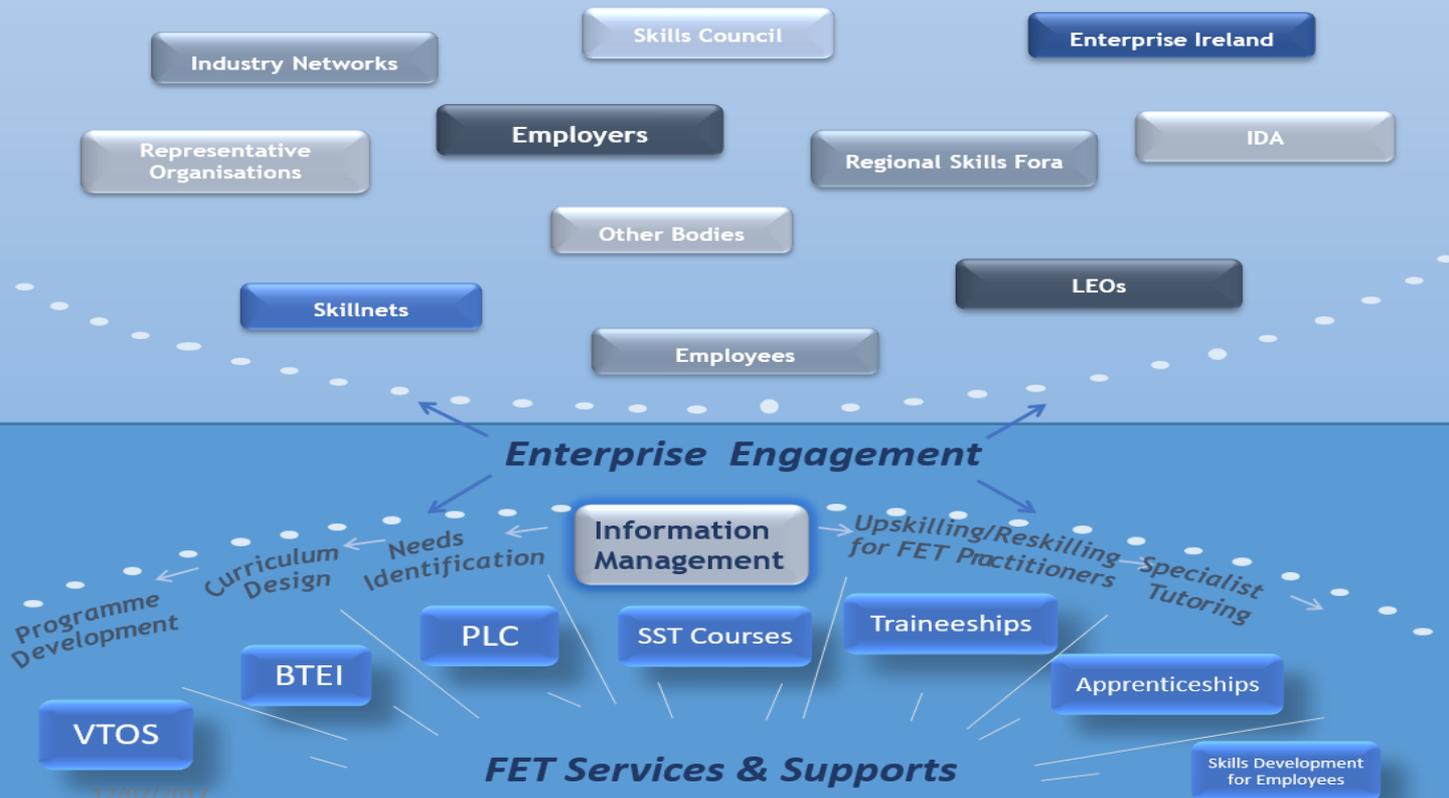
Senior Management
Focus Groups



Working Group of
FET Directors and
SOLAS personnel



Enterprise Engagement Model



Developing Enterprise Engagement Capability

The Working Group established with the ETBs identified professional development supports needed by EE staff. The following initiatives were piloted and mainstreamed:

Action Planning Workshops

Assist ETBs to ensure a planned, structured and cohesive EE approach

Stakeholder Relationship Management Workshops

Assist ETB staff to engage confidently with enterprise and build productive relationships

Training Needs Analysis Workshops

Equip participants with expertise in training needs analysis

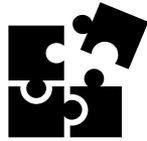
Promoting Skills to Advance Workshops

Enable ETB staff to manage two way communication with businesses and enterprise stakeholders

Achievements to Date



A professional skillset in the FET workforce to engage with small, medium and large companies across Ireland



Enterprise engagement teams brokering strong links with enterprise, analysing data and linking with delivery teams to provide relevant upskilling and reskilling solutions for SMEs



Ability to engage confidently with enterprise and develop sustained relationships

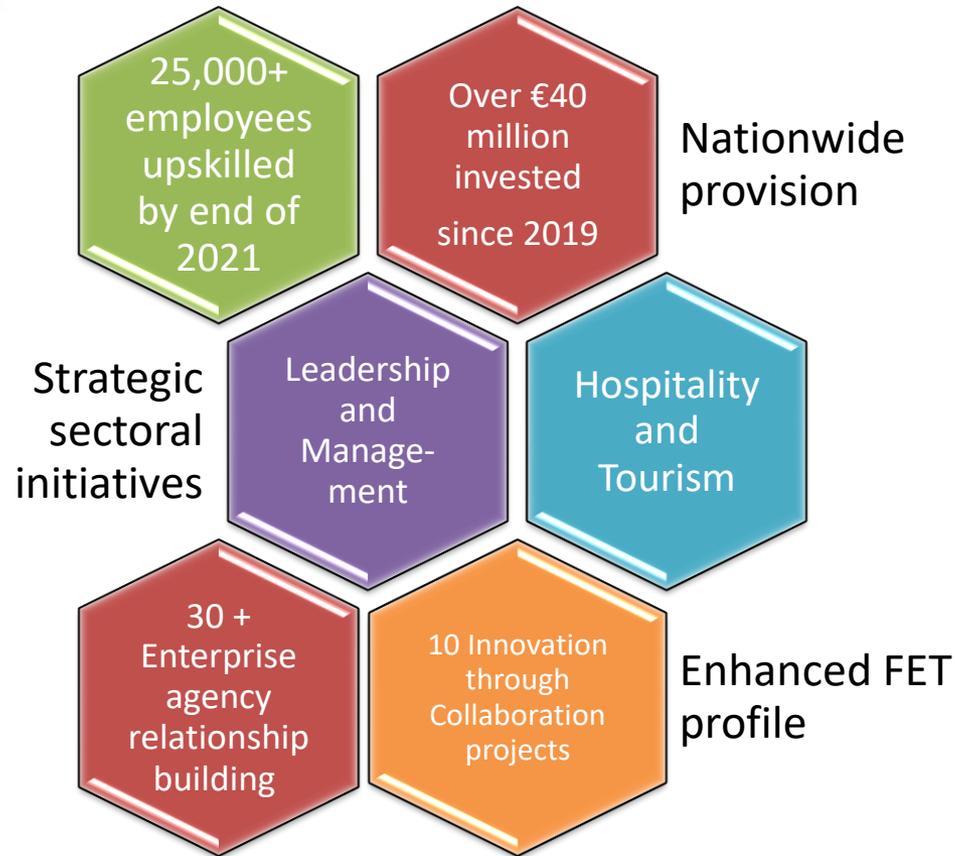


FET as a key driver of enhanced productivity, technology adoption and diversified markets in Irish SMEs



Positioning the ETBs as a key resource for enterprise upskilling and reskilling to develop an agile workforce

National Impact





From Research to Engagement

How has the Enterprise Engagement Process worked for employers?

